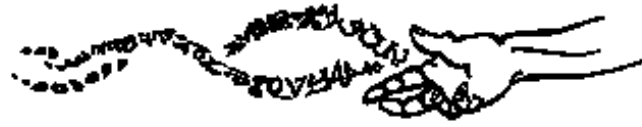


FOUNDATION FOR ENDANGERED LANGUAGES



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OGMIOS



Allama Iqbal Open University, Islamabad, Pakistan – venue of our 28th conference

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1. Editorial

As we go to press, once again a little later than scheduled, preparations are well in hand for our 28th conference, to be held in Islamabad, Pakistan, from 25 to 27 September 2024. An unprecedented number of abstracts have been submitted for papers to be presented at it, and our Conference Committee has been sifting through them and trying to find places for as many as possible of them on the conference schedule. It promises to be rich and rewarding. More detail about it elsewhere in this issue. Contributions from our members are always welcome in this journal; after all, among our far-flung membership there is a huge range of expertise available, and you who are reading these lines right now probably have an expert knowledge of something that no other member has. Write me an article about it and send it to me at the e-mail address provided on the second page! But failing that, I'm always on the lookout for items about endangered languages in the press and media. I can't make any apology for the number of articles that I reproduce in these pages, and they're mostly from the daily paper that I take, the *Guardian*, which luckily for me has a fairly keen ear for an endangered language story. You'll find some in this issue. And you read different media to mine, dear reader: why not send me something that you've found? (If you do, you can send me a copy or scan or a cutting, acknowledging the author/journalist, the source and the date.)

One article I can't reproduce here, as it's too major and too long, appeared in the *Guardian* on 22 February 2024 in 'The long read' section. It's by Ross Perlin, and his article also appeared in *The Economist* (UK). It's entitled **Disappearing tongues: the endangered languages crisis** – and it's a very perceptive account of the current state of linguistic diversity world-wide. Well worth reading. But the article itself was an extract from a book he published in March, titled **Language City: the Fight to Preserve Endangered Mother Tongues** (Grove Press). We hope to provide a review of it in the pages of *Ogmios*.

Chris Moseley

2. Development of the Foundation

FEL XXVIII: Islamabad, Pakistan,

25-27 September 2024

Oral traditions and expressions are very significant aspects of intangible linguistic and cultural heritage. They are the collective memory of a community. They also play a crucial role in keeping languages and cultures alive.

Oral traditions and expressions come in a huge variety of spoken forms: folk songs, stories, riddles, tales, legends, myths, poems, epics, chants, charms, romances and other types of folk literature and dramatic performances. Certain types of oral tra-

ditions are highly specialized occupations, but they are commonly performed by lay members of the community who transmit their skills, the communal knowledge, and artistic values from generation to generation. Oral traditions are, however, highly fragile and their viability rests chiefly on this transmission.

Languages live and prosper in oral traditions – folk songs and stories – and other forms of intangible cultural heritage. The protection and preservation of indigenous languages are, therefore, closely related to the transmission of oral traditions and expressions. When languages are threatened and become extinct, oral traditions and expressions are also permanently lost. Documenting and safeguarding oral traditions are, therefore, significant ways of protecting and preserving languages; they are important complements to such activities as writing dictionaries and creating grammars and databases.

Recent research trends in documentary and descriptive linguistics have underscored the value of oral traditions and expressions and they encourage the use of methodologies which include recording, transcribing and translating oral traditions and expressions. This is compounded by an increasing global awareness of the alarming number of languages which continue to disappear, together with their oral literature and cultural lore, and the threat that their extinction may entail for the future of humankind.

The 28th conference of the Foundation of Endangered Languages (FELXXVIII) will provide a forum for the examination of the intricate relationship between endangered languages and oral traditions and expressions. The Conference will encourage scholarship on the role that vivid oral traditions/expressions may play in the preservation and revitalization of endangered languages and, similarly, on the impact that language revitalization may have on the maintenance, development and flourishing of oral traditions.

The conference will explore sustainable ways of preserving and protecting oral traditions and expressions and ensuring their transmissions to future generations.

The conference is jointly presented by FEL and the Forum for Language Initiatives (FLI).

The conference will take place from **25 to 27 September 2024** at:

**Main Academic Complex
Allama Iqbal Open University
Sector H – 8/ 2, Islamabad-Pakistan**

The conference will be in hybrid format and will also be streamed online by video conferencing. A link will be provided to all those who register.

Registration will be open in June 2024. Please check the conference website for availability.

A One-day excursion will also be planned to an indigenous community in Hazara Division of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and will be available to those who attend physically.

About Allama Iqbal Open University

Allama Iqbal Open University, the largest university of Asia in distance education, which primarily focuses on the educational needs of masses by providing quality education at their door-steps all over the country and by blurring spatial and temporal boundaries. Currently, the university offers unique educational opportunities to a huge proportion of 1 million students in a diverse and dynamic range of programs starting from Matriculation to the PhD level. The University currently has 54 regional offices, 4 faculties, 1,027,000 enrolled students, and 4,487,044 alumni.

FEL Grants awarded for 2024

At the end of February, FEL was proud to announce the winners of this year's round of grants. This year seven awards were made, with a grant of an average of 1000 dollars as usual, from particularly stiff competition this year. The names of the grant recipients will be announced on the FEL web-site www.ogmios.org

The FEL blog

Don't forget that as an FEL member you're welcome to contribute not only to this journal but also the FEL blog, which you'll find on our web-site www.ogmios.org. Any issue relating to endangered languages that is dear to your heart and near to your experience – why not share it with other members on the Blog page?

3. Endangered Languages in the News

Jewish Voices from Siberia and Saint-Petersburg; Yiddish and other languages in the former USSR

Tjeerd de Graaf, Mercator Center/Fryske Akademy, The Netherlands
In 1999 we initiated the joint project *Voices from the Shtetl*, in the framework of a Russian-Dutch research cooperation. One part of this project was related to old recordings in the sound archives of the Russian Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg, and the other part to the study of the use of Yiddish by informants of Jewish descent. In St. Petersburg most members of the Jewish population (according to the census data of 1989 more than 100.000 of the 5 million inhabitants, but at present a much smaller number) considered Russian their mother tongue. A few representatives of this group originated from those parts of the former Soviet Union (Ukraine, Byelorussia, Latvia, etc.) where

their first language was Yiddish, but after living in St. Petersburg for more than 30 years all or most of their daily communication took place in Russian. Since 1995 we have found representatives of this group and made sound recordings of interviews with them. Within the framework of our joint project the use of this endangered language has been investigated by scholars from Groningen and St. Petersburg. Speech material in Yiddish has been analyzed in terms of terminology, grammar, phonetic interference, phenomena of language contact, code switching, etc. Our informants were not numerous and, due to their dependence on Russian, they cannot be regarded as real speakers of the language. Generally speaking, this is connected with the sociolinguistic situation in St. Petersburg and, in particular, that of the St. Petersburg Jews and their history, dating from the late 18th century, not only in St. Petersburg, but also throughout Russia. In 1991, during a fieldwork expedition to Sakhalin and Siberia, Tjeerd de Graaf visited Novosibirsk, where he met the Jewish Professor Vulf Plotkin who worked in the linguistic department of the University. In Akademgorodok a discussion took place with him and the Russian linguists Margarita Wall and Igor Kanakin. Vulf Plotkin told us (in Yiddish and Russian) about his childhood in a Byelorussian little Jewish town (Shtetl), where everybody spoke Yiddish. His report on the Yiddish language and on other languages in the Russian Federation has been recorded and part of the recorded data are presented in audio fragments, together with the results of a research project on Yiddish with the reconstructed data of old historical recordings and interviews with elderly speakers of Yiddish in Saint-Petersburg. The analogue tapes of the recorded conversation with Vulf Plotkin, the reconstructed data of the historical sound recordings and the interviews with elderly Jewish inhabitants of Saint-Petersburg were digitized in the Frisian Film and Audio Archive, where the complete data are available. Part of the material is shown on the audio presentation of the Archive at the following website:

[Stream Fries Film & Audio Archief | Luister gratis online naar afspeellijst Jewish Voices from Siberia and Saint-Petersburg; Yiddish and other languages in the former USSR op SoundCloud](#)

This presentation contains the following sections with parts of the recordings:

1. Plotkin. Lexical items and grammar of Yiddish.
2. Plotkin. Life story and use of Yiddish.
3. Plotkin. Languages in the former USSR
4. Plotkin. Borders in Western parts of the former USSR.
5. Historical recordings of Yiddish songs by Beregovski.
6. Interview in 1995 in Yiddish with Anna Efimevna Nejman in Saint-Petersburg.
7. Songs in Yiddish by Jitsik Baruchsson Ajzikov, Saint-Petersburg, 1995.

Further information about our work on endangered languages and archives can be found on the website www.mercator-research.eu/fy/undersyk-...nd-archives/

'I Gullah Geechee, too': the educators keeping a language of enslaved Africans alive

By *Adria R. Walker, from the Guardian (UK), 20 April 2024*

In 2019, Akua Page was invited to a juvenile incarceration facility in Richland county, South Carolina, to give a presentation about the Gullah Geechee language, an English-based creole created by enslaved Africans. When the teens walked into the room, Page recalled, they seemed hardened, angry and annoyed. Undeterred, she began her lesson.

"I told them: 'Hey, I understand y'all are Gullah Geechee,'" the 30-year-old educator said. "I validated them first, and said: 'Y'all are bilingual. You're not dumb, you don't have a learning disability – you're just bilingual, and here's what you can do to navigate the system you're in.'"

The kids, direct descendants of Africans who were enslaved on the Sea Island cotton plantations in the US, had a total change of demeanor. Instead of eye-rolling or irritation, Page said she saw smiles and giggles, and they began eagerly participating in the conversation.

Getting people – even Gullah Geechee folks themselves – to appreciate and understand the importance of perpetuating Gullah Geechee culture is not always this easy for educators like Page. Preserving the Gullah Geechee language, in particular, has had its own set of challenges, especially since decades of stigma have rendered the centuries-old dialect "endangered", as categorized by linguists.

A type of American creole, the language was formed by enslaved Africans who lived on islands along the country's south-east coast. Because they were isolated from the rest of the region, they were able to create a unique dialect and culture. According to the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission, Gullah began as a "form of communication among people who spoke many different languages, including European slave traders, slave owners and diverse, African ethnic groups".

Since emancipation, though, there has been an effort to forcibly assimilate Gullah Geechee people into the American mainstream, in part through the attempted eradication of the Gullah Geechee language. Many people, including teachers, considered the language to be "broken English" or "improper English". Gullah Geechee children were encouraged to speak standard English in school, and were penalized for talking in their native tongue.

"For a long time, it was considered negative to be Gullah, though we didn't grow up feeling negative about ourselves," Delo Washington of St Helena Island, South Carolina, a retired professor, said in a 2005 report on Gullah Geechee culture.

"But we were considered strange people with a strange language. You couldn't get a job speaking that way."

Gullah is still spoken today by some people in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, the states that make up the Gullah Geechee region, but it's much rarer than it once was. Page and a growing contingent of Gullah Geechee people are working to revive the language. Through their promotion of the dialect, they are shepherding it into the future, ensuring that the first documented language created by people who would go on to become Black Americans is maintained.

Though "Gullah", "Geechee" and "Gullah Geechee" are often used interchangeably to refer to a single language, Page said that there are differences among the three, both in etymology and meaning. Gullah is the "mother tongue", she said, because it developed while Gullah Geechee ancestors lived on the Sea Islands, largely shielded from outside influences. It was created because enslaved Africans from different cultures and backgrounds had to learn how to communicate with each other. The isolation allowed the language to flourish, and it is distinct for its African influences.

Geechee evolved from Gullah, Page said, once mainlanders and Gullah Geechee people started to interact more. They began learning English, and via syncretism, or the amalgamation of two distinct languages, created a new linguistic path. Gullah Geechee, then, was born of two hybrid languages that were created by linguistic influences from a variety of African cultures and countries.

The Gullah Geechee language has influenced the development of African American Vernacular English (AAVE), larger Black culture and, more broadly, American culture, Page said – but with little recognition or acknowledgment.

Highlighting that connective tissue is what the educator Sunn m'Cheaux said helps his students see the similarities between their current-day speech and the Gullah Geechee language. M'Cheaux, a Gullah Geechee expert from Mt Holly, South Carolina, has taught Gullah Geechee in the African language program at Harvard University since 2016. He said that for his students, some of whom are Gullah Geechee or have Gullah Geechee ancestry, learning the language helps them develop pride and a new sense of self.

As children, some of the students who grew up in the Gullah Geechee region or had family from that area wondered why they "talked a little bit funny" or why their parents or grandparents sounded different. M'Cheaux's class helps them feel closer to their family. "In presenting Gullah, it's allowing a lot of people to say: 'Wait a minute, we still say that,'" m'Cheaux said. "Once you break it down for them, they're like: 'I am still maintaining certain parts of my language.'"

Even though there are courses across American colleges that teach about the Gullah Geechee language, m'Cheaux's classes are different because they teach students how to actually speak

the language. “[Students] aren’t really sure what to expect,” m’Cheaux said. “They may be somewhat familiar with AAVE, but when you break it down, some of these elements have existed for generations, hundreds of years.”

M’Cheaux, who spoke Gullah exclusively until he learned English in middle school, said the notion of teaching Gullah to outsiders would have been laughable when he was younger. According to Page, some Gullah Geechee elders were physically beaten for speaking the language by educators who traveled south to teach them standard English, as recently as her grandparents’ generation.

Students were put into speech or remedial classes – contributing to a stigma that has lasted for decades. Growing up in Charleston, South Carolina, which has a high concentration of people of Gullah Geechee descent, Page said she remembers a time when saying someone “sounded Geechee” would be considered a provocation, or “fighting words”. As a result, some Gullah people only used the language privately, opting to code-switch in public, or stopped speaking it entirely, preventing their children from learning it as a means of protection.

The suppression led to a knowledge gap, and though the language is still spoken in places, educators like m’Cheaux and Page are a crucial part of ensuring that younger generations learn about the culture. “The influence of Gullah being taught at Harvard ... helps increase the visibility,” m’Cheaux said. “With the old guard in the community, many of them were satisfied to keep the language insulated, with the logic being: it’s for us, by us, nobody else needs to have access to it. But in time, people die. People get old. Generations don’t speak to one another as much as they used to, so kids aren’t exactly learning the language.”

Last autumn, Ebony Toussaint invited Ron and Natalie Daise of the groundbreaking 90s-era children’s television show *Gullah Gullah Island* to the University of South Carolina to give a talk. Toussaint, a 34-year-old southern studies postdoctoral researcher and author of the children’s book *G Is for Gullah*, teaches Gullah Geechee history and culture at the university.

During her speech, Natalie Daise spoke about the concept of cultural preservation. “She talked about keeping something stagnant, versus how ... our culture is still growing and expanding and dynamic,” Toussaint recalled. “Social media has connected many of us in so many beautiful and brilliant ways. I always tell people, I think we’re in the midst of a Gullah Geechee renaissance.”

Gullah Geechee culture has garnered some level of mainstream popularity in recent decades. Cities across the corridor offer tours of Gullah Geechee sites, shops and restaurants (Page runs one such tour in Charleston). Popular food shows such as Netflix’s *High on the Hog* and *Max’s Chasing Flavor* with Carla Hall explore the Gullah Geechee influence on southern and Black culinary traditions. In 2019, Ranky Tanky,

a Gullah Geechee band, became the first Gullah Geechee musical group to win a Grammy award. And museums such as the International African American Museum in Charleston offer exhaustive views into Gullah Geechee history and contemporary life.

In addition to his courses at Harvard, m’Cheaux has a robust social media presence – some 180,000 followers on Instagram and nearly 16,000 on X – and teaches online Gullah workshops to his followers. He creates lesson plans for some videos, in which he discusses the social linguistics, history and evolution of language. His online audiences, he said, are often as enthusiastic as his Harvard students.

Similarly, Page created a YouTube video in 2019, *Geechee 101*, in which she and a friend share the meanings and usages of Gullah Geechee words. The video has garnered almost 200,000 views and serves as an introduction to the language for many people. It also led some Gullah Geechee people to begin openly and proudly speaking the language.

“After that video, it felt different,” Page said. “People I did not know were Gullah Geechee would come up to me and start greeting me with the Gullah Geechee language saying: ‘Oh, yeah, I Gullah Geechee, too.’ I feel like it was a weight lifted off so many people’s shoulders. They were like: ‘I’m reclaiming this, this is nothing to be ashamed of.’”

Despite pushback from some people who think that Gullah Geechee language and culture should remain behind closed doors for Gullah Geechee people only, Page, Toussaint and m’Cheaux all pointed to broad community support.

“We moved away, but all of us are back home now doing this cultural-preservation work,” Toussaint said, referencing other Gullah Geechee educators, such as Sara Daise, one of Ron and Natalie Daise’s children, and Jessica Berry, who also work to promote the language and culture. “It’s still a community effort. I couldn’t do this work alone.”

The ongoing resurgence aims to remedy what centuries of Gullah Geechee cultural repression have wrought. Preserving the language, for these educators, is paramount. “Some people are under the impression that they’ve lost more than they actually have,” m’Cheaux said. “There’s a lot more that’s still there.”

Holyrood finds funding to halt job cuts in the programme to protect Gaelic

By Severin Carrell, From the Guardian (UK), 6 April 2024

Scottish ministers have given emergency funding to save a network of Gaelic community workers who faced being made redundant as a result of government cuts.

Gaelic activists, MSPs and community leaders were dismayed after it emerged last month that Bòrd na Gàidhlig (BnG), the body charged with protecting Gaelic, was removing 27 development worker posts.

They said losing these posts would deepen the crisis affecting Gaelic language and culture. Activists said Gaelic could be “dead in its heartlands by 2030.”

BnG was adamant the cuts were necessary because the Scottish government had stopped providing dedicated funding for the programme. It said its core grant had barely grown since it was set up 17 years ago, making it impossible to support the 27 posts.

The Scottish government initially defended the cuts and told BnG it had to take responsibility for finding ways to protect the programme, but announced yesterday it had found £175,000 to fund it in the short term.

Humza Yousaf, the first minister, speaking as he visited the Western Isles, where Gaelic was once dominant, said: “We recognise the significant part Gaelic plays in Scotland’s culture and we want to support the language to grow and thrive. Despite the extraordinary financial challenges facing the Scottish government, Bòrd na Gàidhlig’s core baseline funding has been protected and we are bringing forward the Scottish languages bill to provide further protection for Scotland’s indigenous languages.”

Yousaf said BnG now had to find ways to protect the programme in the long term. Ealasaid McDonald, BnG’s chief executive, said the government’s “active partnership” in the scheme was welcome and it had been in touch with the communities and organisations affected.

Hebridean TV drama aims to be the first Gaelic blockbuster

By Severin Carrell, from the Guardian (UK), 16 April 2024

The tranquillity of a remote castle in the Outer Hebrides – with its views of long golden beaches, rocky coasts and glowering skies – is about to be shattered by a woman’s murder.

Detectives will fly in from Inverness. The drama will catapult the castle and this secluded, Gaelic-speaking corner of Harris to a global audience, as a family’s long-buried secrets emerge.

Amhuinnsuidhe Castle, a baronial mansion built in 1867 and overlooking the tiny island of Taransay, has been chosen as the setting for what may be television’s first Gaelic blockbuster.

Filming begins next week for the most expensive TV drama made in Scots Gaelic, a £1m.-an-episode, four-part thriller. An

t-Eilean, or The Island, tells the story of a wealthy family torn apart by tensions seeded at a Hogmanay party 10 years ago.

Its backers, including the BBC, hope the show will share in the global success of other recent minority-language productions from Wales, Ireland and the Faroes.

The Oscar nomination for *The Quiet Girl* (An Cailín Ciúin) last year, the first for an Irish-language production; the ratings triumphs for the Welsh-language series *Keeping Faith* (Un Bore Mercher) and *Hinterland* (Y Gwyll); and the breakthrough Faroese thriller *Trom* have all prepared the ground. An t-Eilean’s director is Tomás Ó Súilleabháin, who made the Irish-language film *Arracht*.

Thanks to global streaming channels such as Netflix, modern audiences are much more comfortable with foreign-language productions and box set binges. Younger viewers, brought up on TikTok and YouTube, habitually use subtitles.

These trends have upended the old model for television commissioning, says Bill Macleod, a commissioning editor with BBC Alba, the corporation’s Gaelic service. A boon for minority languages, the trends amplify the new show’s kinship with *Shetland*, the hit detective series set in Shetland based on Ann Cleeves’s bestsellers, which lingers over its brooding landscapes.

An t-Eilean, a co-production between the Glasgow-based company Black Camel Pictures, MG Alba, the Gaelic broadcasting agency, and the funding body Screen Scotland, has already had offers from Sweden, Denmark, Germany and Belgium, partly due to the work of its other backer, the US-owned distributor All3Media.

“There is a lot of international intrigue and excitement around Gaelic culture and the Hebrides, and we definitely felt that in the market,” says Arabella Page Croft, whose firm, Black Camel, originated the idea for An t-Eilean.

She says that confidence led the producers to decide to shoot it mostly in Gaelic; English dialogue will make up about 30% of the script. “My teenage kids watch everything with subtitles – thank you TikTok.”

Nevertheless, the commissioning of An t-Eilean has highlighted a crisis affecting Gaelic broadcasting, which campaigners believe feeds into the startling decline of Scots Gaelic as a living language.

John Morrison, the chair of MG Alba, a quango funded by the Scottish government, says Gaelic broadcasting has been starved of money. The “orphan” of British broadcasting, it has been slowly withering, he says.

Unlike the programme-making overseen by the Welsh-language broadcaster S4C, Gaelic television and radio has much

weaker statutory provisions and no legal guarantee of funding.

Although BBC Alba provides it with an additional £10m a year worth of productions and free access to iPlayer, MG Alba's core funding has remained at £13m a year for a decade, while inflation has soared. Morrison estimates that by 2027 its grant will be worth half what it was when MG Alba was set up.

By contrast, S4C's funding increases with inflation. It also received £7.5m from the UK government to support the move to digital streaming; MG Alba received nothing. MG Alba once made 500 hours of original programming each year; it can now only afford to make 350 hours. Its part-funding of An t-Eilean has used up its full drama budget for the year.

This battle has reached the House of Lords where the former Tory minister Andrew Dunlop has tabled amendments with cross-party support to the new media bill, attempting to give Gaelic the same statutory footing as S4C. Culture ministers have rejected similar amendments in the Commons.

Macleod says new UK government tax breaks for shows that cost more than £1m an hour to produce helped to make An t-Eilean financially viable. But commissions of that scale are very rare. "We hope that this will be a step change, although the alchemy of putting together a project like this is difficult to repeat," he says.

Given the effective cuts to its funding, Morrison fears Gaelic broadcasting faces the same crises as Gaelic community development: Aberdeen University has heavily cut Gaelic languages degrees because too few students were applying; 27 Gaelic development jobs were only saved last week with emergency funding.

"We want the UK parliament to treat the two Celtic languages of the country in the same way," Morrison says. "Gaelic needs equity and fairness. Look at how S4C has helped grow the number of Welsh speakers over the last 40 years. We want the same growth for Gaelic."

A spokesperson for the UK government's Department for Culture, Media and Sport said ministers were considering possible changes to the funding of Gaelic broadcasting as part of its reviews of the BBC's charter and its funding.

The media bill will prioritise minority-language broadcasting on streaming services and add minority languages to the UK's public service broadcasting remit. That would boost Gaelic programming and increase commissions, the spokesperson said. "We recognise the value of minority-language broadcasting for Gaelic speakers across Scotland and the rest of the UK," they added.

4. New publications

Poetry reflecting Chinese Hakka culture

Tegan Smyth: **Mountain Songs**. Published by Proverse Hong Kong, 2023. ISBN: 13:978-988-8833-50-4.

Mountain Songs embodies two intersecting narratives; migration and how migration shapes identity. Writing as a mixed-race individual over a period of seven years, Tegan Smyth has produced a collection of poetry which centres around identity and culture.

Mountain songs or *sango* (pinyin: *shange*) are rural songs sung in the Hakka lamnguahge by Hakka people as a medium of courtship, to communicate across large distances and to recount oral histories. They are integral to Hakka culture – Tegan Smyth's maternal heritage – and have been a way of keeping alive stories by unknown authors.

The movement of mountain songs across different terrains and milieu mirrors the movement of the Hakka people themselves, a widely dispersed people, whose migration is tied to the Hakka community's experiences both within and outside China.

As spoken Hakka gives way to other, more widely spoken Chinese dialects, it is in careful written records that the cultural practices and stories of the Hakka people are captured and preserved for future generations. *Mountain Songs* focuses on the accounts of different women in the writer's family, whose existence and memories have been passed down the generations in anecdotes only, never in writing. This collection is thus a contribution to this process.

Mountain Songs explores the journey of first-generation Chinese immigrants to Australia and considers the perspective of second-generation children navigating a parent's homeland. The collection also examines contemporary issues related to migration and how this has impacted perceptions of displaced people in both Australia and Hong Kong.

Tegan Smyth is a biracial poet with roots in Hong Kong and Australia. She was born in Sydney (Gadigal) and raised between Australia and Hong Kong. Her work has been published in *Asian Cha*, *Voice & Verse*, *Where Else: An International Hong Kong Poetry Anthology*, *Twin Cities Anthology* and *The Economist*. Her writing focuses on identity and belonging, drawing from personal experiences. Tegan is also a qualified lawyer and founder of *Grassroots Futures*, a registered charity focused on refugees in Hong Kong.

New UNESCO publication: 'Celebrating the Living Heritage of Indigenous Peoples'

UNESCO press release: www.unesco.org

The publication weaves together testimonies from Indigenous People's communities in regard to their efforts to safeguard

their intangible cultural heritage, some of which are inscribed on the UNESCO Lists.

On 11 June 2024, UNESCO launched a new book Celebrating the living heritage of Indigenous Peoples in the presence of Leslie Urteaga Pena Minister of Culture of Peru. Leandro Grass, President of the Brazilian National Institute of Historic and Artistic Heritage (IPHAN), Varna Marianne Nielsen, Greenlandic Inuit researcher and artist, as well as Holikiari Enawenê and Xalokwa Enawenê, representatives of the Enawenê-nawê people in western Brazil, took part in the round table.

Discussions during the launch highlighted a key takeaway of the new UNESCO book which **calls for an innovative approach to safeguarding Indigenous Peoples' living heritage**. The safeguarding efforts must be grounded in a crosscutting perspective that englobes social, economic, political and environmental contexts. This holistic approach resonates with the way Indigenous Peoples understand and experience the universe, the world and its inhabitants.

Ernesto Ottone R., Assistant Director-General for Culture of UNESCO, said:

Through this colourful publication, we celebrate and pay tribute to the efforts of Indigenous Peoples to safeguard their living cultures. UNESCO works with communities and diverse partners to achieve greater recognition of their worldviews and rights.

Cristina Amescua Chávez, coordinator of the research team for the publication, shared her insights through a video message: Celebrating the living heritage of Indigenous Peoples is not only a way of recognizing their strength and determination to keep their cultural heritage alive, sometimes even in adverse conditions. It is also to commonly open alternative paths for the building of sustainable futures for all of us.

Holikiari Enawenê, representatives of the Enawenê-nawê people in western Brazil, walked the audience through the ritual life of his people and made a **heartfelt plea for the holistic preservation of his Peoples' sacred land and living heritage**. He remarked that the Enawenê-Nawê cosmology comprises different spirits with whom they cohabit and that are at the foundation of the Enawenê's clan organisation and society. He added:

I wanted to present to you here, at UNESCO, my Peoples' culture so that the world knows more about the Enawenê-Nawê and Indigenous Peoples.

Varna Marianne Nielsen, Greenlandic Inuit researcher and artist, presented drum dancing and singing which are forms of Inuit artistic expression in Greenland. She highlighted the challenges these practices face and explained the importance of Greenlandic spirituality and consciousness, encapsulated in the Inuit concept of *Sila*.

The publication and the event were made possible by the generous support of the **Government of Brazil**.

5. Forthcoming events

International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples 2024

On 23 December 1994, the United Nations General Assembly decided, in its [resolution 49/214](#), that the International Day of the World's Indigenous People shall be observed on 9 August every year. The date marks the first meeting, in 1982, of the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

The **International Day observance** will take place online on **Friday, 9 August 2024**.

This year's theme is: **Protecting the rights of Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact**

6. Obituaries

Ann Trevenen Jenkin (1930-2024)

By Paul Armstrong, from the Falmouth Packet, 18 April 2024

The death of Cornwall's first ever female grand bard has been announced by Gorsedh Cornwall.

Ann Trevenen Jenkin passed away on April 8, 2024 at her home in Leedstown.

Born on April 14, 1930 in Barnet, Hertfordshire to John Arnold Trevenen and Dorothy Goldsmith, the family moved to Redruth in 1932.

After school in Redruth and at Truro High School, she gained an English degree from Exeter University and, after obtaining her teaching qualification, became an English teacher.

It was during this time that she met Richard Jenkin, himself a prominent member of many Cornish organisations, and they married in 1956 and had four children.

She will be remembered as an exceptional Cornish woman and a trail-blazer in many fields.

She became a bard of the Cornish Gorsedh in 1956, taking the bardic name Bryallen, and in 1997 she was appointed the first

ever female Grand Bard, a great honour for someone who had devoted her life to so many Cornish Associations.

She was an exceptional organiser and a catalyst for many projects in the Cornish cultural sector. As Grand Bard she set up the Gorsedh Archives and organised the first Dewhelans/Homecoming for the Cornish Diaspora.

A founder member of Mebyon Kernow, she became Life President. She was also Life President of the Celtic Congress and, as well as attending many congresses in other Celtic Countries, she organised many successful ones in Cornwall.

he was a trustee of the Cornish Heritage Trust, a member of Helston Old Cornwall Society, a volunteer at Helston Museum, a Guide Leader and District Commissioner, an active member in Leedstown WI and Leedstown Village Hall Committee, a school governor and much more.

One of her greatest achievements was the organisation of Keskerdh Kernow, the March to London in 1997 to commemorate the Cornish Rising of 1497. She walked all the way, with her faithful dog, Brengy, organised much of the route and wrote a children's book about it afterwards.

Ann Trevenen Jenkin inspired many as a teacher and educator too. She taught English at Camborne Grammar School and Camborne School, introduced Cornish lessons and became the Librarian, rising to be national chairperson of The Schools' Library Association. She was in her element writing, editing and publishing. She published books of her own poems, books for children, and edited and wrote many articles about Cornwall.

As well as working tirelessly for Cornwall she also had time for her family, she researched the Trevenen family history, travelling to the Baltic and St Petersburg in the footsteps of her ancestor James Trevenen, visited relatives in Canada and Hawaii and organised several family reunions.

"She was a wonderful mother and grandmother, always supportive and encouraging. She will be greatly missed by her 4 children, Morwenna, Loveday, Gawen and Conan and her ten grandchildren."

The funeral service will be held at Crowan Parish Church on Tuesday, April 30 at 2pm followed by a celebration of her life at Leedstown Village Hall.