



Terralingua Annual Report, 1998-1999.

Presidential Address, September 1999.

Dear Terralingua Members,

This is the third time I come to you with my annual address since Terralingua has been in existence. As you will see from the enclosed report of activities, we have been working harder than ever to foster Terralingua concerns through information, advocacy, and research. As a consequence, our work is increasingly known and appreciated around the world, both locally and internationally. Our expertise is being sought by an ever-growing number of individuals and grassroots organizations as well as by several major research institutions and international organizations. We are making significant contributions to the understanding of the relationships between linguistic, cultural, and biological diversity, as well as in fostering appreciation for linguistic diversity and in promoting linguistic human rights.

At the same time, our efforts have continued to be on a purely volunteer basis, since our minimalist budget (exclusively from memberships) covers only the most basic operating expenses (see Treasurer's report below). There is a limit to what we can accomplish by working overtime, and we are rapidly reaching it. At this stage, our ability to meet the increasing demands of our continuing and newly emerging activities (see below) depends crucially on our "going to the next level" organizationally and financially - so as to be able, for instance, to delegate many of the administrative tasks to paid personnel, acquire necessary equipment, improve our communications setup, print an introductory Terralingua brochure, and all the other things necessary to transform ourselves from an organization that is run on a shoestring into one that has resources equal to the tasks at hand. We will be working on funding applications. However, previous experience strongly suggests to us that our credibility vis-à-vis funding institutions depends not only on how good our ideas are, but also on how much our ideas already seem to be appreciated also in terms of generating financial support. In other words, we need seed money to generate more funding. Since our inception in 1996, Terralingua has functioned on less than US\$5,000 total. This speaks admirably of the energy of our network of volunteers, but the reality is that funders want to invest in organizations with a stronger financial base. And this is where your membership renewals as well as additional donations come into the

picture.

In closing, on behalf of the Terralingua Board of Directors, let me express my gratitude to all of you for having stayed with us and supported us for one more year. We look forward to continuing to serve you in the future. Best regards,

Luisa Maffi, President.

Annual Report of Activities, 1998-99.

During Terralingua's third year of operation, we were increasingly busy on all of our fronts of activity: information, research, and advocacy. Most of these activities were reported on in past issues of *Langscape*. Here you will find a general overview.

Our main information tools continue to be our electronic newsletter *Langscape* and our Web site. *Langscape* is flourishing under Anthea Fallen-Bailey's editorship and is becoming a significant reference point for people interested in linguistic diversity and its relationships to biodiversity, linguistic human rights and the situation of indigenous and minority languages and their speakers around the world. Through *Langscape* we have kept you informed about major international processes such as the debate over the formation of the Permanent Forum for Indigenous Peoples within the United Nations system, the hearings of the People's Communication Charter, the new European Union policies on regional languages, the Vienna forum on Globalization and Global Ethics, the 17th. annual meeting of the U.N. Working Group on Indigenous Populations (for the latter see report in the present issue). We have also given you background and commentary on a number of situations of conflict, tension, human rights violations and threats affecting indigenous and minority groups and impinging on their security and livelihoods (from the Horn of Africa to Kosova, Chiapas, Thailand, Australia, and so forth). Numerous feature articles have brought you news and analyses on the status of linguistic communities from Kenya all the way to Borneo and on their efforts to maintain and revitalize their linguistic and cultural heritage and to affirm their human rights. Hardcopy versions of the newsletter continue to be sent to members who are not connected to the Internet.

Our Web site was recently updated and upgraded by Dave Harmon, and is now more conveniently structured and greatly expanded, especially in terms of resources: from bibliographies on linguistic and biological diversity, language endangerment, linguistic human rights, and language in education to reports on Terralingua conferences and other activities, to our electronic publications, to our listing of resources on language maintenance and revitalization, to our newest feature, a listing of universities offering training for work on the documentation and maintenance of lesser spoken and endangered languages (compiled by Heidi Orcutt). Links to many other Web sites, including those of relevant international organizations and international instruments, are found. Our bibliographies and listings are open-ended, and people are always welcome (and indeed encouraged) to keep adding to them, as well as to send us updates, new links, and so forth. We also added a completely new page entirely devoted to indigenous and minority views on language. This, too, is a work in progress open to new additions.

Finally, a "Frequently Asked Questions" page is in preparation, mainly based on Tove Skutnabb-Kangas' soon-to-be-published magnum opus *Linguistic Genocide in Education — or Worldwide Diversity and Human Rights?*.

These two media — along with information about Terralingua published in a number of journals and newsletters as well as distributed by Board members in numerous venues — have greatly extended our reach worldwide, and we have been receiving an ever-growing flow of correspondence from all continents requesting information, advice, and documentation in support of indigenous peoples' and minorities' efforts for the protection of their languages and of their linguistic and cultural rights. In a number of instances (among which the Hindmarsh case involving the Ngarrindjeri of Australia and the case of the abolition of bilingual education for Australian Aborigines), we were asked to, and did, write letters of appeal to the appropriate authorities. Numerous other appeals were published in *Langscape*. Repeatedly, we are also receiving news of situations of repression of small local languages (and of suppression of information about them). This suggests to us that if we began to have a fuller account of such situation, along with better information about languages whose existence is poorly known to the outside world, the figures of the world's linguistic diversity would probably need to be considerably modified upwards.

Terralingua concerns were discussed at the 97th. Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A., November 1998), as well as at the Linguistic Institute of the Linguistic Society of America (Urbana, Illinois, U.S.A., July 1999) as a way of bringing to the fore the need for major professional organizations to expand the scope of their human rights activism to include greater consideration of *linguistic* human rights. (You can find a report on the Linguistic Institute in this issue). Through participation in the 6th. International Congress of Ethnobiology (see below), we were involved in the discussion and passing of the International Society of Ethnobiology's new Code of Ethics, an advanced document setting principles for ethical and equitable collaboration between outside scholars and local communities in ethnobiological research. The Preamble to the Code of Ethics also affirms the existence of an "inextricable link" between cultural and linguistic diversity and biodiversity.

As a part of our information and advocacy activities we also held a workshop entitled "Supporting cultural and environmental diversity through indigenous language development and protection of linguistic human rights", which took place in Aotearoa/New Zealand in November 1998, during the 6th. International Congress of Ethnobiology, "Ethnobiology: Dialogue Between Cultures: Forging Meaningful Partnerships". We were hosted by Te Whare Wananga O Awanuiarangi, one of the Maaori institutions of higher learning, and workshop participants included both Maaori students from the Wananga and congress participants from various indigenous groups, especially from South and South-East Asia and the Pacific. Terralingua members Richard Benton, Nena Benton, Luisa Maffi, Gary Martin, and George Saemane gave short presentations on language maintenance, traditional ecological knowledge, recognition of prior learning, and linguistic human rights, and facilitated a very lively and productive discussion. Given the success of this first experience, we hope that, as circumstances present themselves (and funding permits) this will be the first of a continuing series of Terralingua workshops with and for indigenous peoples and minorities on matters of common concern.

Our research and scholarly activities also multiplied over the past year. Our Vice- President, Tove Skutnabb-Kangas, has continued to be very active on the front of linguistic human rights, and the publication of her book (see above) promises to boost this cause in a major way and to offer an invaluable tool for anyone involved in furthering linguistic human rights around the world. Tove has recently been approached about lending her (and Terralingua's) expertise to the activities of

U.N.E.S.C.O.'s International Linguapax Committee that co-ordinates data gathering for the World Languages Report. She is also involved in the follow-up Committee on the Draft Universal Declaration of Linguistic Rights, a document that was handed over to U.N.E.S.C.O. and that is now under re-examination. We will keep our members informed about developments on these two important fronts.

Other relevant forthcoming publications by Terralingua members include the book *Language, Knowledge, and the Environment: The Interdependence of Biological and Cultural Diversity*, edited by Luisa Maffi, which has been accepted for publication by the Smithsonian Institution Press and will soon go into production. The book, based in part on the conference "Endangered Languages, Endangered Knowledge, Endangered Environments" (Berkeley, California, U.S.A., October 1996), features among others several chapters by Terralingua Board and Advisory Panel members (Florey, Harmon, Maffi, Moore, Mühlhäusler, Pawley, Posey, Skutnabb-Kangas, Toledo). Its comprehensive coverage (over 34 chapters) of theoretical aspects of the relationship between linguistic, cultural, and biological diversity, case studies, and an agenda for action should make this book another significant resource for advancing the understanding of biocultural diversity and for fostering its protection.

Two related symposia were co-organized by Terralingua in 1999. The first one, "Language, Culture, and Understandings of the Environment: Lessons for Environmental Policy and Education", was held in Evanston and Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A., in April 1999, as a follow-up to the Berkeley conference, with a greater focus on practical lessons to be applied in the development of environment-relevant policies and environmental education. The three days of paper presentations and discussion brought together many threads spun by a heterogeneous group of anthropologists, psychologists, sociologists, economists, political scientists, historians, educators, and conservationists with a shared interest in the human dimensions of environmental issues (including Terralingua's Anthea Fallen-Bailey, Dave Harmon, and Luisa Maffi). The symposium was organized in collaboration with Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History and also included a video series, "Nature and Culture: Preserving the Diversity of Life", set up by Steve Bartz and featuring efforts by indigenous peoples from all continents to perpetuate their languages and cultural traditions and to protect their lands and environments. The series (possibly in an expanded version) may have a chance to be shown again at the Smithsonian Institution some time next year.

The second symposium, "Ethnobotany and Conservation of Biocultural Diversity", took place in the context of the 16th. International Botanical Congress (St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A.) in August 1999 (see report in this issue). It focused specifically on the rôle of indigenous peoples' traditional botanical knowledge in the joint maintenance of biological and cultural (including linguistic) diversity. The symposium was very well received, and it was encouraging to see considerable openness vis-à-vis the biocultural perspective at this prime botanical science venue. The papers given at the symposium were outstanding, and along with two others presented in different sessions at the congress, they are now in preparation for the volume *Ethnobotany and Conservation of Biocultural Diversity* (L. Maffi, T. Carlson, and E. López-Zent, eds.), to be submitted to the book series *Advances in Economic Botany*, published by New York Botanical Garden Press.

Three significant research developments occurred as Terralingua's expertise was sought out by such major institutions and organization as the National Geographic Society (N.G.S.), the World Wide Fund for Nature (W.W.F.), and the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History (N.M.N.H.).

Concerning the N.G.S., we were consulted for the August 1999 issue of National Geographic Magazine. As a part of a series on "Making sense of the millennium", the magazine published an issue on cultural diversity (following up on one on biodiversity) which, in addition to an article on "Vanishing Cultures", included a map of the world's language families and some discussion of language endangerment and why people should be concerned about it. Magazine writers asked Dave Harmon and Luisa Maffi, amongst other people, to comment on the map and to provide our views on the issue of language endangerment. Some of our remarks made their way into the captions to the map. While not all aspects of the map and of the issue's articles are fully satisfactory in our opinion, the aspects most closely related to languages and indigenous cultures are mostly good, and the worldwide distribution of the magazine should give this topic an exceptionally vast coverage. Furthermore, as a consequence of our conversations, magazine writers have become interested in the possibility of writing a series of articles on biocultural diversity, looking at human-environment relationships (and the threats they face) in various parts of the world. Further collaboration in this connection is likely if the series takes shape.

As for W.W.F., Terralingua was contacted by the People and Conservation Unit at W.W.F.-International (Gland, Switzerland), about collaborating on a project aimed at cross-mapping the world's indigenous and tribal peoples (I.P.) and ecoregions, with a special focus on the ecoregions recently selected by W.W.F. in its new approach to biodiversity conservation (known as the "Global 200"). This mapping was meant to provide a significant tool for awareness-raising, policy-making, implementation planning, and fund-raising for conservation work in partnership with I.P. The aim was to promote (within and outside W.W.F.) the understanding of the key rôle of I.P. in conservation in the areas in which they reside (and thus of the importance of forming partnerships with I.P., protecting their traditional knowledge and management practices, supporting their rights, etc.). Anthea Fallen-Bailey conducted preliminary work based on the Ethnologue catalogue of the world's languages. A global digital mapping, mostly based on Ethnologue data, was carried out by Manuel Lizarralde. More detailed regional maps of the Americas have also been prepared by Eric Smith (North America); Victor Toledo (Mexico); Manuel Lizarralde (South America); for Central America data were derived from an existing regional cross-mapping of I.P. and the environment. Regional maps for the rest of the world will be compiled as appropriate collaborators are found, and the initial global map will be ultimately revised. Later on an additional product might be a CD-ROM with the maps and other useful information on issues of I.P. and conservation. A companion Terralingua/W.W.F.-I report was prepared, and collaboration on the development of guidelines for partnerships with I.P. in conservation is under discussion.

Finally, a significant collaboration is emerging with N.M.N.H. Dr. William Merrill, Curator of Anthropology at N.M.N.H., finds Terralingua's integrative approach to linguistic, cultural, and biological diversity to be in agreement with his own perspective about a new rôle for natural history museums, and is interested in promoting the bio-cultural-linguistic diversity perspective at the Smithsonian. He thinks that natural history museums are excellent places for adopting and pursuing this perspective, given that all relevant disciplines co-exist under the same roof. He thus feels that museums might play a leading rôle in this field of research in the foreseeable future. Furthermore, because of the significant training and educational component of museums' activities, museums could play a leading rôle also by contributing to spreading this perspective. Over the past several months, Dr. Merrill and Terralingua have been exploring this collaboration. A number of meetings have taken place, including two at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C., which yielded the full support of N.M.N.H. and other sectors of the Smithsonian to set up an interdisciplinary initiative on biocultural diversity and led to the creation of a working group (including biologists and anthropologists from N.M.N.H., as well as Luisa Maffi as Terralingua representative). The aim is to elaborate a field research project in which this interdisciplinary perspective will be applied and put to the test by

studying patterns of diversity in nature, culture, and language and trying to understand the interactions among these patterns. Researchers from the various relevant disciplines (anthropologists, linguists, biologists, and others, from both N.M.N.H. and other research and academic institutions) will be learning to work together and to work with indigenous peoples as real partners.

There will be an important training component for students as well. The project is also meant to reflect and take into account local interests and needs (language/culture maintenance and revitalization definitely being one). It should be set up as a model of respect for indigenous peoples' rights (as per the relevant international instruments), and as a model of ethical work by researchers (as per the same instruments, as well as professional codes of ethics and other relevant documents). Additional meetings will be held in Washington in the next few months as the project takes shape. Through this process, we in Terralingua will continue to explore ways in which participation in the project may allow us to put our expertise to work to improve understanding of the relationships between linguistic, cultural, and biological diversity and to further the perpetuation of linguistic diversity and the protection of human rights. We will keep our membership informed of the relevant developments.

Organizational Report.

Over the period covered by this report (August 1998 through July 1999), the Terralingua Board of Directors did not hold a formal meeting. However, informal communications were maintained with the entire Board. In addition, the Executive Committee was in frequent contact to manage the affairs of the organization. In July 1999, planning took place for a full Board meeting (which was held in August 1999). The main points made during the meeting were:

- * As Terralingua continues to evolve as an organization, we should try to achieve a balance between research, providing information, and advocacy.
- * We should be open the possibility of affiliating with a larger organization, should an appropriate opportunity arise.
- * Anthea Fallen-Bailey was appointed to the Board, replacing Alejandro de Avila.
- * Terralingua's membership policy will be streamlined. (Look for an announcement on this in the next *Langscape*.)
- * *Langscape* will be posted on the Web, as soon as the technical details can be worked out. (More on this also in the next *Langscape*.)
- * We will renew efforts to obtain foundation funding, concentrating on project proposals.
- * The idea of starting an electronic journal devoted to linguistic diversity, linguistic human rights, and language endangerment was thoroughly discussed. No decision was taken because of a number of unresolved administrative questions.

* Board members made specific commitments to further Terralingua's work in the coming year.

Over the past year, there have been additions to our distinguished Advisory Panel, which now consists of: Pekka Aikio, E. Annamalai, Richard Benton, Nena Benton, Nancy Dorian, Joshua Fishman, Margaret Florey, François Grin, Michael Krauss, Ole Henrik Magga, Jeffrey McNeely, Denny Moore, Peter Mühlhäusler, Gary Nabhan, Andrew Pawley, Darrell Posey and Victor Toledo.

The organization maintained its corporate registration with the state of Michigan through the filing of the requisite paperwork in September 1998.

