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Review of

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An Introduction to Italian Dialectology

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GIANRENZO P. CLIVIO / MARCEL DANESI / SARA MAIDA-NICOL: *An Introduction to Italian Dialectology*. München: LINCOM Europa 2011. 216 S. (LINCOM Studies in Romance Linguistics. 19). € 68,-*

“Originally, this book was the idea of the late Professor Gianrenzo P. Clivio, a brilliant and internationally-renowned dialectologist at the University of Toronto” (p. 7). This sad circumstance has to be kept in mind when evaluating the volume under review.

The book is divided into five chapters. The first, “Dialectology and the Italian Dialects”, deals with methodology and introduces basic information on the Italian linguistic landscape and history. Chapters 2 and 3 deal with structural issues, covering respectively “Phonological” and “Grammatical and Lexical Diasystems”. The final two chapters are devoted to external aspects (“Diglossia, Contact Phenomena and the Social Value of Italian Dialects” and “Italian and the Dialects Today” respectively); a bibliography and an index round off the volume. This bibliography is not exactly what one might expect from an up-to-date textbook, as it does not include many of the names (or work) of contemporary leading specialists in the field. Thus, not a single paper on the dialects of Veneto by, say, MANLIO CORTELAZZO, GIOVAN BATTISTA PELLEGRINI or ALBERTO ZAMBONI appears in the reference list, nor any on Piedmontese by GAETANO BERRUTO or TULLIO TELMON; there is nothing on central Italian dialects by, say, UGO VIGNUZZI or FRANCESCO AVOLIO, nor on Sicilian by GIOVANNI RUFFINO or ALBERTO VARVARO, and so on. Big names from the history of the discipline are also missing: G. I. ASCOLI and GERHARD ROHLFS each receive just one entry (viz. ASCOLI 1882–1885 and ROHLFS 1966–1969), and one can seek in vain for quotations from CARLO SALVIONI, CLEMENTE MERLO, ARRIGO CASTELLANI, HEINRICH LAUSBERG, MAX LEOPOLD WAGNER, etc. In principle, this lack of crucial bibliographic information could reflect a decision to avoid quotations and would be acceptable, were the discussion of Italian dialects accurate and/or based on first-hand data. Neither is the case, however. The methodological sections of Chapters 1, 4 and 5 are replete with references to, say, MARSHALL McLUHAN (and his Gutenberg galaxy), THOMAS KUHN (and the structure of scientific revolutions), BENOIT B. MANDELBROT (and his fractal geometry of nature) and the like. This hardly attests to solid erudition, however:

In the nineteenth century the comparison became increasingly precise, culminating in the assumption by the German philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz that most languages of Europe, Asia, and Egypt came from the same original language – a language referred to as Indo-European (p. 21).

Leaving Egypt aside, the syntactic context of this quotation makes it clear that no misprint is involved, and that the authors do indeed place LEIBNIZ (1646–1716) in the nineteenth century.

Returning to linguists, on page 25, while asserting their structuralist credo, the authors state that “the insights of Italian generativists will be used only if they are mentioned to shed light on some details of dialectological variation”. But one actually finds citations of generativists who have never worked on dialects (BELLETTI 1990), whereas no reference is made to writings by generative scholars who specialize in Italo-Romance dialect variation such as, say, PAOLA BENINÀ, LAURA VANELLI or CECILIA POLETO. Introducing linguistic atlases, §1.2.1 concludes with reference to “Internet accessible atlases” (p. 31), offering one German example and no mention of the (admittedly not many) online resources on Italian dialects such as ASIt/ASIS (<<http://asis-cnr.unipd.it>>), ASICA (<<http://asica.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/>>), or VIVALDI (<<http://www2.hu-berlin.de/vivaldi/>>).

All in all, the bibliography conveys the impression that the authors did not follow the right priorities in selecting what to quote in their textbook.

The data sources the authors draw upon, as made explicit on page 27 and 114, are ROHLFS’ (1966–69) reference grammar, PELLEGRINI’S (1977) “Carta dei dialetti italiani” and the linguistic atlases, AIS and ALI. However, as a general remark on the architecture of the book, it must be pointed out that data from the Florentine-based standard by far outnumber those from the dia-

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lects, perhaps a legacy of the book originating as a reworking of CLIVIO / DANESI (2000), which focused on standard Italian (SI). In any case, with regard to the data from both standard Italian and the dialects, the above sources do not seem to have been used carefully, and more generally, the accuracy of the presentation leaves much to be desired, as some selected examples will show.

On page 100, it says that in Tuscan “/tʃ/ > /ʃ/, /dʒ/ > /ʒ/”, and the following examples are provided as an illustration: /ʃena/ ‘dinner’, /ʒelo/ ‘frost’, /baʃo/ ‘kiss’, /kaʃo/ ‘cheese’, /ʒorno/ ‘day’. Now, in /baʃo/ and /kaʃo/ there has never been a phonetic affricate in Tuscan, but rather -ʃ- > [ʃ] (cf. CASTELLANI 1960). Moreover, this /ʃ/ was phonemic in Old Florentine, but ceased to be so, becoming an intervocalic allophone of /tʃ/, in the fourteenth century (LOPORCARO 2006). Even more seriously, this statement implies that the change in Tuscan (as such) was context-free, whereas in Florence one says, to this day, [tʃe:na], not *[ʃe:na], as deaffrication occurs only intervocalically (e. g. in [la ʃe:na] ‘the dinner’). The only part of Tuscany in which unconditioned [ʃe:na] does occur (as shown on the AIS chart 5.1031 for pt. 553, Sinalunga) is the south-eastern corner of the region, centring on Arezzo-Cortona (cf. CASTELLANI 1952, 29). On the same page (p. 100), it is maintained that “in Apulean and Lucanian, /tʃ/ is used in place [of] SI /ʃ/”. The “Apulean” examples that follow (p. 101), viz. /ʃoku/ ‘game’, /maʃu/ ‘May’ are, strictly speaking, compatible with south-western Salentino given that final -u/ excludes Apulian, whereas undiphthongized stressed /ɔ/ excludes Central Salentino (cf. e. g. MANCARELLA 1975, 34). But note that in these varieties (Salentino and Apulian) /ʃ/ and /tʃ/ are distinct phonemes (the former from Lat. -ʃ- and -G^{e/i}-, the latter from -c^{e/i}-. e. g. AIS 2.288 pt. 738 [tʃe:ra] ‘wax’).

In addition to factual errors and mistaken analyses, there are also major infelicities in basic linguistic terminology. Thus, one of the defining isoglosses of Gallo-Italic dialects is described as

the labialization of /u/ and /o/ [...] (p. 78). This phenomenon is also known as *Umlaut* [...]. Labialization involves bringing the lips close together and jutting out somewhat. Thus, the pronunciation of *duro* (‘hard’) in Piedmontese is *dur* = [dür], and of *fuoco* (‘fire’) *feu* = [fö].

Of course, the change involved was fronting, not labialization, as the (Late) Latin input vowels were already rounded. Nor can this phenomenon (fronting) be equated with Umlaut, since in some north-western Italo-Romance dialects $\ddot{o} > /ø/$ depends on the following unstressed vowel, while in other it does not (cf. Milanese [nø:f] < NOVUM, [nøva] < NOVAM, ‘new.M/F.SG’). In none of those dialects, on the other hand, does the change $\ddot{u} > /y/$ depend on the final vowels. Talking of Gallo-Italic, “Piedmontese and Lombard /küa/ (AIS #1058)” (p. 100) do not exist: the form displayed on that AIS map is [ku:a] ‘tail’.

On page 79 one reads that “in Tuscan the V[ulgar] L[atin] tonic open vowels /ε/ and /ɔ/ underwent diphthongization to /ye/ and /wo/ respectively in an open syllable or in a syllable ending in /tr/: PĒTRA(M) (‘stone’) > *pietra*” etc. One wonders which view of syllable structure, in Italian and cross-linguistically, the authors are endorsing (and this is not easy to assess, since the section on syllable structure, §2.4.1, does not cover *muta cum liquida* clusters): to the best of my knowledge, nobody has ever proposed that either the Latin or the Italian word for ‘stone’ must be syllabified as /p(j)etr^sa/. The diphthongization at issue took place on any open stressed syllable, including those followed by *muta cum liquida* clusters, which is evidence for the tau-syllabicity of the latter (/p(j)ε^stra/) in the relevant stage/variety of Late Latin (a proviso which is necessary, since other Italo-Romance dialects evidence heterosyllabicity [/VC^srV/]) to this day [cf. LOPORCARO 2008, 341–342]).

The phonetic transcriptions just mentioned are not accurate either, as the Tuscan diphthongs have low–mid stressed vowels: /je/ and /wɔ/. This inaccuracy recurs at several points (/pyeno/ ‘full.M.SG’ instead of [pʲe:no] on pages 28, 29, 65; on page 65 one also finds [yé-ri], [wó-mo] instead of SI [jɛ:ri] ‘yesterday’, [wɔ:mo] ‘man’) and concerns not only diphthongs but standard Italian mid vowels in general: Tuscan “/poho/” and SI “/poko/” ‘little’ (p. 49) have stressed /ɔ/, not /o/, and Florentine [h] is an allophone, so that the underlying representation is actually /pɔko/ for both varieties. Note that it is not the case that the symbols /ε ɔ/ are missing throughout: rather, they are employed correctly several times, both in illustrating the Italian vowel system (p. 65), in providing minimal pairs for the /ε ≠ e/ and /ɔ ≠ o/ contrasts (p. 75) as well as in adducing other

specific examples (e. g. /sento/ ‘hear.1SG’ on p. 59, /myele/ ‘honey’ and /nwovo/ ‘new.M.SG’ on p. 68). But the symbols are not used reliably throughout, as shown by dozens of inaccurate transcriptions like “/o-dʒdʒi/ ‘today’”, “/o-kkyo/ ‘eye’” (p. 73) (actually [ʼɔd:ʒi], [ʼɔk:jo]) or, on page 63, “smetto (‘I stop’) [zme-tto]” (SI [ʼzmet:ɔ], whereas [ɛ] does occur in this word in many local varieties of Northern Italy, including CLIVIO’s native one) or “[ro-za] (‘rose’), actually [ʼrɔ:za]; or, on page 59, “nonno (‘grandfather’) [no-nno]” (actually [ʼnɔn:ɔ]), “conscio (‘conscious’) [koŋ-ʃo]”, which has [ɔ], and could not be otherwise, since it is a learned (erudite) word, whereas stressed [o] occurs exclusively in indigenous vocabulary. (Note also the erroneous use of the symbol for the retroflex nasal [ŋ] instead of that for the palatal.) All in all, a non-native student using this book lacks reliable guidance, even for basic data from the standard language. Similar errors are evenly distributed over the rest of the Italian peninsula: thus, Neapolitan *a puorta* ‘the door’/ *e puorte* ‘the doors’ incorrectly projects the Tuscan diphthong onto those forms, which indeed lack it (cf. AIS 5.880 pt. 721 [a ʼpɔrt]; [e ʼpɔrt]), since this dialect only has metaphonic diphthongs (e. g. [tu ʼpwɔrtə] ‘you.SG carry’). Sicilian /ritʃi/ ‘ten’ (p. 103) does not exist: the word for ‘ten’ is [ʼd:re:(t)ʃi] across Sicilian dialects (cf. AIS 2.288). Sicilian /humi/ (p. 28) ‘river’ is actually [ʼçu:mi], an error perhaps due to the fact that, in much literature on Sicilian, [ç] is notated with [hʼ] (e. g. [hʼumi] in RUFFINO 1984, 194). And the like.

More generally, standard notational conventions are used inconsistently. While the authors do in principle use slashes for phonemic transcriptions, as opposed to square brackets for phonetic ones (cf. e. g., on p. 111, “the opposition /V:/ vs. /V/ was phonemic” in Latin) they then include vowel length in phonemic transcriptions of standard Italian data (e. g. /fa:-re/ and the host of other examples on pp. 73–74). This is incorrect, since vowel length is allophonic in SI. On the other hand, on page 86, allophonic length is notated in [ra:-ro] ‘rare’, [pa:-la] ‘shovel’, etc. but not in [na-zo] ‘nose’, [ka-ne] ‘dog’.

Latin etyma are sometimes in need of revision: “CŌRE(M)” (p. 71) makes neuter *cor*, *cordis* appear as if it were a third declension masculine on a par with preceding PĒDE(M); MELIOR > *migliore* (p. 127) should read MELIOREM > *migliore*. On page 131, dealing with “the object forms *vi* (‘you’, ‘to you’) and *ci* (‘us’, ‘to us’)”, the authors say that “the former is an analogical form based on *ovi*”. One is left wondering what they could possibly have meant by this.

The treatment of morphology and syntax is also littered with mistakes, concerning both standard Italian and the dialects: in third-class verbs such as *capisco* ‘I understand’, “/-isk-/ is an infix adding a meaning nuance of ‘ongoing action’” (p. 117). This confuses synchrony and diachrony, since inchoative meaning was indeed a feature of its diachronic predecessor (cf. Lat. *flore-sc-it* ‘it starts to blossom’), while Italian /-isk-/ is now integrated into verb inflection as a purely morphological formative.

On page 129, the description and a map reiterate the commonplace that “in most parts of the south, and especially in Sicily and Calabria, the original Latin perfect (continued in the SI *passato remoto*) is used instead” (of the *passato prossimo*). There are two inaccuracies here. First, the commonplace does not take into account the fact that Sicilian simply did not lose the *passato prossimo*: rather, as shown by MOCCIARO (1978), SKUBIC (1973–74), this tense was restricted, much like in Portuguese and the north-western Iberian Peninsula in general (cf. SQUARTINI 1998: ch. 4), to durative-iterative events that include the speech moment. In fairness, it must be said that this oversimplification is very widespread in the literature: it is mirrored for instance in the reference map by PELLEGRINI (1977, isogloss number 29). However – and this is the second inaccuracy on this page – the map is drawn in a way that the borderline between the area with a *cantai* vs. *ho cantato* contrast and the one “without *passato prossimo*” runs much to the north of PELLEGRINI’s (1977) isogloss 29 (which cuts across Calabria) and approximately corresponds to the Salerno (or Eboli)–Lucera line, a well known bundle of isoglosses (cf. AVOLIO 1989) which has nothing to do with the distribution of the different past tense forms in southern Italy. Northern Calabria, for instance, lies south of that line, yet in central northern Calabrian dialects it is the *passato prossimo* that has generalized, as the *passato remoto* was lost (e. g. in Cosentino) by the early twentieth century.

On page 128, an error occurs concerning Piedmontese, which was CLIVIO's native variety so that the mistake must be ascribed to his co-authors. This concerns the characteristic first-person plural ending, wrongly reported as /kantüma/ 'we sing', /venüma/ 'we come', /dormüma/ 'we sleep', instead of /kantuma/, etc. (cf. e. g. BERRUTO 1974, 22). On the same page, the same error affects /dizüm/, the corresponding "Lombard" form: actually, the first-person plural ending in Western Lombard dialects (such as Milanese) is /um/, not /ym/. Needless to say, the interested reader finds these first-person plural forms reported correctly in the sources the authors claim they draw upon: cf. ROHLFS (1966–69, II, 251, 253). A still more astonishing mistake occurs on page 132, where "figghiame (Sicilian)" for 'my daughter' is invented outright, to parallel "mámmete (Neapolitan)" 'your mother', as an illustration of "the process of *enclisis*, the process of attaching them [i.e., the 'possessive pronouns'] onto verb forms" which is said to occur "in many southern Italian dialects". Note, in passing, that these possessives are adnominal, rather than pronominal, and that enclisis is not well defined. But the capital mistake here is the invention of possessive enclisis in Sicilian, whereas it is textbook wisdom (but not in *this* textbook) that (contemporary) Sicilian parts ways with the rest of southern Italy, among many other things, in *not* displaying enclitic possessives. In all Sicilian dialects, today, possessives are non-clitic and pronominal, i.e. [me 'fiʝ:ʊ] 'my son' (cf. e. g. ROHLFS 1964, 286). Again, this piece of information is available in the book's declared sources: cf. ROHLFS (1966–69, II, 123, 125).

As for syntax, consider finally the following passage: "in various parts of southern Italy verbs classified as transitive in Italian are, instead classified as intransitive, thus requiring an indirect object: [...] Neapolitan *Vedo a Maria*" 'I see Mary' (p. 135). In (sensible) textbooks, this is traditionally labelled the "prepositional accusative", *et pour cause* since this argument, though requiring a preposition, is a direct object, as shown by the cliticization test: cf. the contrast between Neapolitan *veco* (not **vedo*, which is not well formed in Neapolitan) *a Mmaria* → *a/*nce veco* 'I see her.ACC/*her.DAT' vs. *rispunnetteno a Maria* 'they answered to Maria' → *nce/a rispunnetteno* 'they answered her.DAT/her.ACC', where the indirect object of 'to answer' can, under cliticization, be advanced to direct object (LEDGEWAY 2000, 17).

To conclude, the book under review is not a serious introduction to Italian dialectology, as might have been expected *a priori*, since the second and third authors have no record of previous publications on contemporary Italo-Romance dialects: after DANESI (1976), dealing with a medieval text, the second author, who is professor of Semiotics and Communication Theory at Victoria College (Toronto), has published on completely different topics, whereas the third author, in her web profile (<<http://www.vivomagazineonline.com/sara-maida-nicols-bio/>>), describes herself as a specialist in the "anthropological-semiotic analysis of the phenomenon of Italian dialect in music", "the semiotics of Italian food rituals", "the meaning of food and cultural identity". Not the best auspices for the kind of book under review. In bringing out such a volume, the publisher and the co-authors have done no service to the discipline, nor to the memory of the late GIANRENZO P. CLIVIO, who was indeed an expert in Piedmontese dialectology, the author of a number of respectable studies on those varieties and, last but not least (cf. DE BLASI 2006, ix), a passionate advocate of the necessity to pass on to future generations of speakers those endangered minority languages that we call Italian dialects.

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HELEN CHRISTEN / MANUELA GUNTERN / INGRID HOVE / MARINA PETKOVA: *Hochdeutsch in aller Munde. Eine empirische Untersuchung zur gesprochenen Standardsprache in der Deutschschweiz*. Stuttgart: Steiner 2010. 249 S. (*Zeitschrift für Dialektologie und Linguistik*. Beiheft. 140). € 47,–

Im Zuge einer andauernden Debatte über Funktionalität und Angemessenheit eines traditionellen Diglossiebegriffs (FERGUSON 1959) wird das Konzept einer relativ strikten Trennung zweier gleichberechtigter Varietäten immer wieder in Frage gestellt. Dies ist insbesondere darauf zurückzuführen, dass Kriterien wie Prestige, Oralität und Literalität, Nähe und Distanz sowie Formalität der Kommunikationssituation bei der Konzeptionalisierung eines tragfähigen Diglossiebegriffs berücksichtigt werden müssen (HAAS 2004, AMMON 1995, CLYNE 1995) und diese einem ständigen Wandel unterliegen (WERLEN 2010), da sich die Anforderungen an Sprache als Kommunikationsmedium ebenfalls ständig verändern.