Rethinking Languages in Contact

The Case of Italian

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CHAPTER 10

Dialectology and History: The Problem of the Adriatic–Tyrrenian Dialect Corridor

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1. Dialectology and History

The difficulties in the relationship between the disciplines of dialectology and history become clear in the pages that the French historian Lucien Febvre devoted to the subject. Febvre initially notes that ‘Il était plus facile dans ces dernières années d'apprécier le vif intérêt que pourrait présenter, pour l'étude de certaines questions particulières, la collaboration de l'histoire et de la dialectologie — que de réaliser cette collaboration même.’ He discusses in some detail a few dialectological studies that are of interest to the historian, such as the one undertaken by Paul Passy on the valley of Osass in the Pyrenees. In the Bearnis patois of south-west France, the article appears in two polymorphic variants, taking the form bu, la on the plains beneath the Pyrenees, and et, en in the mountain valleys. This is an entirely regular geographical distribution, based on the division between the plains and the mountains, except in the valley of Osass. Here we find bu, la in place of et, en, apart from in three villages in the area that forms a border between the plains and the mountains. An explanation in terms of ‘invasion of forms’, according to which the forms found on the plains would have moved up along the valley, replacing the older mountain forms, poses two difficult questions: Why are these forms not found in the three villages nearest the plains? And why would they have moved up only along the valley of Osass, which, compared to the other valleys, has no particular connection with the plains that might account for the spread of these forms in this area? In fact, there are numerous examples of proven contact between the villages of the plains and those of the mountains, yet in these cases there is no sign of article substitution. Is it possible, then, to explain this phenomenon in terms of ‘invasion of population’ rather than ‘invasion of forms’? Febvre observes how Passy began his examination of the exclusively historical dimension of this problem by carefully studying and comparing linguistic parallels between those dialects that may be grouped together according to the two types of article form. This analysis allowed Passy to conclude that the dialects in the valley of Osass with bu, la are related to the sub-Pyrenean group, while the dialects of the three villages that are the exception, having et, en, are related to the mountain group.
The French scholar underlines the contribution of linguistics in the following way:

Ainsi les recherches propement linguistiques, qui ont permis de poser le problème, viennent en précéder les termes. Elles sont plus encore : elles fournissent des éléments de solution. Car de l’étude des dialectes de la plaine, ne ressort pas seulement leur parenté générale avec ceux du val d’Ossau — mais la parenté particulière de quelques-uns d’entre eux, répartis géographiquement en deux groupes distincts, avec ceux des villages ossalais. (pp. 148–49)

And yet, according to Febvre, linguistics has only a 'preliminary' role in Passy's investigation:

Entre ces deux régions, peut-on choisir? Oui, mais non plus à l'aide de la dialectologie. D'elle elle est née le problème; avec elle, on a pu le poser correctement; par elle enfin, on a enterré d'abord, puis approché la solution; à l'historien maintenant d'adopter et de confirmer ce que l'étude des faits linguistiques a déjà commencé. (p. 149, my italics)

Of particular interest is the fact that Febvre maintains an element of scepticism about the reliability of the conclusions that Passy has drawn through the comparison of historical and linguistic data. To move from observing fairly limited similarities between dialects to looking for and (apparently) identifying some external historical motivation such as population movement for these similarities is perhaps too hasty; the conclusions that Passy reaches are ingenious but not entirely reliable.

The French historian had accurately identified the basic problem of the theory and methodology of contact linguistics based on history, that of the constant uncertainty of the results — an effect of combining the methods of the linguist and those of the historian, which has always been problematic: 'À des hypothèses linguistiques l’auteur ajoute des hypothèses historiques: d’une somme d’hypothèses ne saurait résulter une certitude' (pp. 149–50). A harsh judgement, but not inherently dissimilar to that which, expressed in purely linguistic terms, states that linguistic methods are not sufficient to prove the existence of a contact phenomenon, and that these methods are ambiguous when compared to the historical method.

2. The Adriatic-Tyrrhenian Dialect Corridor

The problem I address in this study — the 'justification' for the existence of a supposed Adriatic-Tyrrhenian corridor — poses difficulties similar to those mentioned above. It is an issue in Italian (and Romance) linguistics that is also of interest for theoretical and methodological reasons. Can we ever prove external contact through internal, purely linguistic means? And vice versa. Given the existence of structural differences between varieties, up to what point can we legitimately hypothesize external contact? And how can acknowledging the importance of external history be of use?

In an article of 1911 in the Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie, Carlo Salvioni observes:

Puo parere strano, ma è fin qui suggetta a tutti che hanno ragionato del vocalismo meridionale, una importante rivelazione che il D'Ovidio ha fatto da un perno con il dialetto di Pozzuoli. Si legge essa in tutte le successive edizioni del De vulgari eloquentia [...] e suona nel senso che Pozzuoli conosca un ditintamento delle tonalità che viene esemplificato nelle parole abite i ilica, linea cena. Vedano gli studiosi napoletani di direne di più; ma intanto già la preziosa notizia del D'Ovidio ci permetterà di riconoscere che con quei tipi di ditonghi non si ha che ripetersi sul versante mediterraneo un fatto fonetico ritenuto fin qui caratteristico di una larga sezione del versante adriatico.3

In addition to the information provided by D'Ovidio, Salvioni also notes that there is a further, previously unsuspected connection between the Tyrrhenian coast to the north of Naples (and especially on the islands of Ischia and Procida) and the Adriatic region, with regard to a significant phenomenon that has long been recognized in the latter area — the palatalization of tonic /a/.3 This term, in the tradition of Romance dialectology, denotes a variable degree of fronting and raising of the vowel. His observation of the occurrence of this phenomenon in the Sannio region (in Cerreto Sannita, in the province of Benevento) already hints at the existence of a 'corridor'4 between the Adriatic and the Tyrrhenian.

Even more interesting than the identification of corresponding features in a new area is a wider-reaching implication, rightly brought to light by Salvioni: the need to re-examine Ascoli's classification of Southern Italian dialects based on a clear geographical division formed by the Apennines. Putting into perspective the importance of this geographical distinction, Salvioni further rejects the validity of Adriatic-Puteolan diphthongization as a criterion for classification, as this is a relatively recent phenomenon, which is clear from the fact that it operates in contexts not affected by metaphony.

The whole discussion is centred on historical linguistic coordinates that may appear outdated today. But it remains interesting for two reasons: to show (a) that genetic classifications may be relative and provisional, and (b) that not all phenomena are given the same importance in determining classification. Concerning the latter, Salvioni adheres to an entirely traditional opinion in historical linguistics,according to which only older phenomena may permit genetic classification. Aside from the historical detail of this discussion, there still remain problematic aspects of the classification of Campanian dialects, such as the difficulty in identifying a dialect area with characteristics clearly different from those of other dialects of the Centre, towards the region of Lazio and towards the Adriatic coast, beyond the Apennines.5

As regards the situation outlined by Salvioni, the possibility today of integrating a number of new sources enables us to create a more detailed image of this apparent 'corridor' area. It seems, too, that the phenomena supporting a spatial characterization of this kind are now more numerous and varied, allowing us partly to overcome such difficulties as have been raised, though bringing to light new problems in the process. The very definition of a zone that stretches from the Adriatic to the Tyrrhenian is problematic, as not all the linguistic parallels between various phenomena follow the same geographical lines. If we take as a point of reference the area immediately north of Naples, where the features repeated on the opposite side of the peninsula are particularly in evidence, we see that, for some phenomena, parallels exist in the regions of Abruzzo and Molise, for others, they are found in the Apulia region, and for others still, they are common to each. In addition, there are cases in which these parallels are unique to the South, while in others they are shared by various southern regions (Calabria, Lucania, Sicily). No less problematic is the fact that the shape of the zone connecting the two areas varies from phenomenon to phenomenon.
What could be the 'explanation' for this corridor? Does it represent the continuation of an earlier linguistic situation or the emergence of a new one? In other words, is it a case of conservatism or of innovative convergence? Although Salvioni provided arguments to answer these questions, he did not directly address this issue, but restricted himself to a criticism of Ascoli's model based on ethnic substrates.  

The data presently available illustrate a very varied situation. Regarding the Tyrrhenian coast, if diphthongization is a relatively recent phenomenon (though how recent?), the palatalization of tonic /a/, which today is clearly defined in its essentially metaphoric nature, could be a relatively early conservative phenomenon, showing signs of erosion in some contexts. Furthermore, if it now seems problematic to create a classification based on polygenetic phenomena such as spontaneous diphthongization, we must ask ourselves if it is necessary for the latter to be explained by a series of independent developments in space and time. The consideration of metaphoric palatalization of tonic /a/ also leads to a not entirely different question. This phenomenon, according to some, is the final stage of the extension of an early morphy-phono logical process that began with the mid-high vowels and spread to the low vowels through independent local developments.  

Spontaneous diphthongization and palatalization of tonic /a/ are, however, only some of the phenomena that are characteristic of the corridor. But it should be noted that today there exist other phenomena that could equally support the existence of such an area, or at least confirm the connection between the Tyrrhenian region to the north of Naples and the area around the Adriatic. In this paper I shall discuss only spontaneous diphthongization and the palatalization of tonic /a/ (an examination of other phenomena is presented in the faller version of this study). Where possible, I shall take into account any available comparison with the interior Apennine region.  

3. The Phlegraean Area and Adriatic–Tyrrhenian Parallels  
3.1 Phlegraean diphthongization and Adriatic diphthongization  
The parallels with the Adriatic area are problematic. A few general features are shared by the Phlegraean area and the areas of Abruzzo, Molise and Apulia:  

(i) A general sensitivity in the vowel system to the open or closed nature of the syllable. This tendency, however, is also found in other areas of the Centre-South. Moreover, it affects the vowels that remain (more or less) stable, while the processes of diphthongization display different reactions to syllable structure (cf. the following paragraphs).  

(ii) The marked tendency to diphthongize tonic vowels.  

(iii) A notable instability (lability) in the types of diphthong that result from such a tendency, according to prosodic and syntactic factors.  

The crucial point, however, is that between the two areas significant structural differences also exist:  

(i) The Adriatic type of diphthongization occurs only in open syllables, while the Phlegraean type also occurs in closed syllables.  

(ii) The Adriatic type is sensitive to the stress pattern of the word, and is in fact blocked when the word is a proparoxytone (and sometimes when it is an oxytone), while this is not true of the Phlegraean area.  

(iii) The vowel alterations that make the Abruzzese and Apulian systems so dynamic occur more regularly and with a more far-reaching effect on the inventory: they have the same effect on all vowels that are not affected by metaphony, including the low central vowel, through entire phonetic processes, in contrast to what we find in the Phlegraean area, where in most places spontaneous modification of the vowels usually affects only the mid-vowels or at most the mid- and high vowels. In the Adriatic area, then, a wider range of vowels is affected, while in the Phlegraean area fewer vowels are affected but the phenomenon occurs in a wider range of contexts.  

There are also some basic problems in the theory and methodology that make comparison difficult. The first and most obvious is that a comparison of the modern situations may be deceptive, disguising similarities (or differences) that may have existed in the past. For example, for the Abruzzo area Gianmarco notes that at the beginning of the twentieth century all the varieties in the area exhibited breaking (frangimento) of vowels, while today the phenomenon is found only in the areas of Ortona, Vasto and Agnone. The second problem relates to the lack of homogeneity in the representation of diphthongs by various scholars. The third problem is of a fully theoretical type.  

As far as it is possible to judge from the present-day synchronic situation, Phlegraean diphthongs seem to have parallels in the areas of Abruzzo and Apulia (in the latter, particularly in the province of Bari). In order for them to be of real value, however, these parallels require a preliminary consideration of general questions of dynamic analysis of vowels and diphthongizing processes, something that is often entirely ignored in currently available studies. For example, the area variation of vocalic chromatism in diphthongs is often described with emphasis on one specific fixed result for every instance of diphthong movement in each location, although for some places two or more possible outcomes are attested. The same approach can be seen in the diachronic treatment of these structures, where one particular result of the diphthongization process is frequently assumed to be typical of a specific historical period, and the developments are often considered in a unilinear manner. Now this instability undoubtedly complicates to some extent the description of the internal dynamics, as well as the understanding of diachronic dynamics and the area comparison. Conversely, the trajectories of some diphthongs are characterized by falling movements in which the final phase is a high segment of short length, articulated weakly, with an inherent tendency to monophthongization (this phenomenon can be often observed in the Phlegraean area; for the Apulian region see Valente). This entirely natural process, affecting all vowels, including those that are (more or less) stable, could render the comparison only moderately significant for the study of contact.  

Moreover, our point of reference can be limited to the use of the most frequently occurring variants, a procedure that is by no means tenuous, provided that its partial and provisional nature is taken into account and, most importantly, that the existence of a wide range of variants is borne in mind at all times.
The polymorphism of variants found in the Phlegraean area coincides significantly, if not entirely, with that attested in the Adriatic area. This is particularly evident in the behaviour of the mid-high vowels /e/ and /o/. The variants [ei], [ei], [ai], [a] from mid-high /e/ are characteristic of a number of locations on the Adriatic coast: [ei] in Palena (Abruzzo); [ei] in Lucera (Apulia); [ai] in Gessopalena, Opi, Pescaressoli (Abruzzo), in Alberobello, Canosa, Ruvo, Trani (Apulia) [a] (varieties found in Vasto and Teramo). The variants [ou], [au] from mid-high /o/ are equally well documented: [ou] in Barletta, Lucera, Martina Franca (Apulia) and also in Fara S Martino, Palmoli (Abruzzo); [au] in Alberobello, Andria, Ruvo (Apulia), Opi, Pescaressoli (Abruzzo). However, there also exist significant characteristic differences.

For the series of variants of the mid-high back vowels in the Phlegraean area, I have not managed to find forms of the type [oi], with backing and rounding of the main element of the diphthongs. Instead, I can document a range of diphthong trajectories that are found across the mid and mid-low front, central and back regions of the phonetic space, wider than that recorded for the Adriatic area. It is possible that more homogeneous methods of inquiry (a wider collection of material from spontaneous speech) and of phonetic representation would permit us to identify further corresponding variants. As far as it is possible to judge from the available material, the territories around Vasto and Teramo and that of the province of Bari seem to form an area in which corresponding variants are more limited in number.

A diphthong from /i/ with central quality in the phono-prosodic phase can be found in Apulia in Trani, while the result [ei] from /au/ is attested in Apulia in Ruvo, Palmoli and Tocco, [a] again in Ruvo and also in Bitonto and Castellana. For the last of these there is evidence that it is present also in the Abruzzo area, in Vasto, Agnone and Pescaressoli. In comparison with the Adriatic zone, in the Phlegraean area the range of parallels in the diphthongization of /i/ and /au/ is more restricted, and is limited to a few areas. Such phenomena are especially characteristic of the fishermen of Pozzuoli and Forio, who have both variants of /au/ cited here for the Adriatic area, while for /i/ the predominant type of diphthong is [ai].

As far as diphthongs are concerned, then, the realizations [Ai], [A'], [A] from /e/, found across the whole Phlegraean area, suggest closer parallels with the Vasto/Teramo area, while for the diphthongization of /i/ and /au/ it seems that closer parallels exist between Forio and Pozzuoli and the Apulian area.

3.2 Metaphonic palatalization of tense /a/
3.2.1 Double palatalization in the Phlegraean area
One characteristic of the Phlegraean area is that the process of metaphonic palatalization of /a/ is triggered by word-final -t (-f) and word-final -u (-w). This process is today fossilized in some morphological paradigms, more numerous in some areas than in others. It is very well preserved on the island of Procida and in Monte di Procida and, outside the Phlegraean area, in some parts of the area around Caserta, such as Casal di Principe. Morphologization affects fewer grammatical alternations in Ischia, and occurs irregularly and residually in some social groups in Pozzuoli (data from ADICA). In all these locations speakers are fully aware of the resulting morpho-

phonological structures, but the frequency of their occurrence in spontaneous speech varies considerably.

Within the Phlegraean area, on the island of Procida and in Monte di Procida, the metaphonic conditions of the process have proved to have extremely pervasive effects, as all possible morphological classes have been affected entirely and regularly.

Metaphony triggered by -t:
- all singular nouns and adjectives for which an underlying inflectional -u can be postulated (kerha 'cheese', rett' arm', jegko 'white', but kumbha 'godfather', sala 'salt', pana 'bread');
- masculine singular past participles (ndzureta 'married', kundjeta 'changed');
- adverbial forms (tenna (= tanna) 'then', kuenna (= kuanna) 'when').

Metaphony triggered by -f:
- all plural nouns and adjectives for which an inflectional -t can be postulated;
- masculine plural past participles;
- all verbal forms of the 2nd person singular in the present indicative (kenta 'you sing', sepa 'you know').

In these two localities morphologization brings about entirely regular alternations between nominal and adjectival roots in the masculine and feminine singular (kaiketa 'brother-in-law' vs. kaineta 'sister-in-law', jegka 'white' (masc.) vs. jegka 'white' (fem.), and plural /i kaineta 'brothers-in-law' vs. ro kaineta 'sisters-in-law', jegka 'white' (masc. pl.) vs. jegka 'white' (fem. pl.), as well as alternations in the forms of the present indicative (je kanta 'I sing', tu kenta 'you sing', issa kanta 'he sings' etc., je satt'ko 'I know', tu sepa 'you know', issa sepa 'he knows'). The names of the days of the week are also affected by this process: sepa 'Saturday' e merda 'Tuesday' (AIS 2, 314 and 2, 330). On the island of Ischia we detect a similar situation to that found on Procida and in Monte di Procida, but the range of nouns affected is more restricted (cf. the forms collected in Ischia: e mustarda 'moustaches', fainka 'side', where Procida has i mustarda and Jenka, respectively [from ALI I, 27 and I, 62], while verbal alternations are well preserved.

Analysis of the grammatical categories involved seems to offer an insight into the duration and complexity of the historical process, where activating factors from different periods may operate simultaneously. Regarding (pan-Romance) metaphony by word-final -t, on the whole better retained in various locations in the Phlegraean area, this has been triggered both by contexts where an original verbal inflection -t is can be postulated and by plural nominal inflections in -t. For metaphony by word-final -u, it seems obvious that nouns that belonged to the 2nd and 4th declensions in Latin provided an early basis from which the process could have been set in motion. Whether the phenomenon was already present in Latin or whether it began in Romance is a controversial question with no easy solution, a problem that is connected with the fate of Latin inflectional endings and, in particular, with the modifications of the stem-final vowel that preceded the desinence. The feature [thigh] of back unstressed segments in word-final position, which are the inflectional endings of the masculine singular, can still be clearly observed today across many southern
areas. In the territories under examination (as well as in Naples and most places of Campania), word-final elements have been reduced to [a], making the structural contexts which originally provided the conditions for metaphony somewhat opaque, but it is highly probable that a high vowel must have been present in the original context. The tendency for unstressed vowels in any position to be raised can still be observed in many of the varieties spoken on the islands. Moreover, the forms of the masculine definite article — singular *n*, plural *i* — that are characteristic of the varieties of Procida and Monte di Procida, testify to rooting and the persistence of high vowels in unstressed position in these dialects. Although it may be plausible to hypothesize that this situation originated at an early stage in the history of these varieties, it must be admitted that this may not be a unilinear process, whereby the height of the Latin word-final vowel is preserved, but a series of more complex diachronic developments.

The fact that this phenomenon is triggered by more than one context is demonstrated by the co-existence of metaphorized lexemes whose morphological conditions are from different periods. The strength of the Latin conditions may be seen in the regular occurrence of metaphony in forms that have undergone morphological restructuring, such as *mena* 'hand' and *eoa* 'needle'. These derive from Latin feminine lexemes of the 4th declension (then merged with nouns of the 2nd), whose continuators in Romance with the ending in -*u* (cf. *la mano*, *la asta*) were remodelled and assigned the feminine desinence -*a*. This is even more evident in another presumably metaphorical lexical type, characteristic of Procida, *a kep* 'the head'. Its original etymology, the 3rd-declension neuter noun *caput*, could have been remodelled as a noun of the 2nd or 4th declension, or more simply, as happened with the majority of neuter nouns, it could have developed in many Romance varieties via the syncretic nominative/accusative form *capu* (with loss of the final dental consonant; cf. It. *il capo* and dialect forms *u capu* [cf. AIS I, 93]). Furthermore, in a large part of the South this form occurs, with a metaplasm of gender, in the feminine (*a capo*), often also with formal adaptation of the desinence (*a capo*). The phenomenon has been explained in various ways, by the influence of the Greek term *kephalē* (DEI I, 7374) or by the formation of a feminine Latin type *ca:pu*: Whatever the explanation, this phenomenon must constitute an early development, given the extent of the area in which it is attested. It follows, then, that at least for some words the metaplasamic process must have occurred at a rather early point. The type *festa* 'brother' (which does not produce stem allomorphy in the plural *festa*) must be examined under similar chronological considerations. This form can be explained on the basis of a form *fratu*, which has a corresponding form in *sun* 'sister', or on the basis of a singular form *fa:ri*: In fact forms of this lexeme with word-final *-i* or *-u* are widespread across the South, which again leads to the possible conclusion that the activating factors may be somewhat older. Moreover, a consideration of metaphony triggered by word-final *-i* for the forms of masculine plural nouns leads to similar conclusions: as is well known, in the Italo-Romance area at an early stage the plural in *-i* formed the prototype to which nominal forms that had different inflections in Classical Latin were assigned. Furthermore the role played by the Romance or proto-Romance phases in the raising of vocalic elements in word-final position clearly appears when one considers the metaphorical forms of the gerund (also found around Caserta and Benevento: data from ADICA) and the adverbial forms *tena* 'then' and *kwesta* 'when', found on the island of Procida (data from ADICA).

It should also be noted that traces of spontaneous palatalization of non-metaphonic origin have been attested across the whole Phlegraean area, in different lexical categories (nouns, verbs, adjectives). Consider, for example, a forms such as *petra* 'padre', which Parascandola claims are early (occurring in *locations flogis*). Forms such as *eria* (Procida) and *jera* (Panza) 'air' show, on the other hand, the effect of non-metaphonic palatalization in the presence of a trill consonant (of an *r* cluster), a phonetic conditioning factor that can be found in other Romance-speaking areas, and constitutes an earlier tendency also found in the Latin of various times. Also due to non-metaphonic conditioning factors, presumably, are the lexemes *je:mia* (Ischia) and *jendro* (Procida), 'gland', which Rohlf considers, along with Ischian *permano* 'vine-leaf', to be a result of the metaphonizing effect of the high vowel of the syllable adjacent to that displaying palatalization. To account for these forms we can look to the instability of vowels preceded by *-i*, as in the Late Latin *Januarius* for *Januarius*, widespread across Romania. In these cases it could be that *-i*—derived from *g(i)-*, caused palatalization. Also of interest is the purely phonetic spontaneous tendency towards palatalization of */a/ in some dialect speakers whom I interviewed in Procida. Finally, toponomastics offers some relevant data with forms in which the palatalization of */a/ is clearly not metaphonic but due to a phonetic process: compare the form *Serre*, which, according to the older inhabitants of Ischia, is an earlier form than *Serrana*.

### 3.2.2 Implications of the palatalization of */a/ for the Adriatic–Tyrrhenian corridor

The fact that metaphony of */a/* is triggered by both *-i* and *-u* may be significant for the categorization of the Phlegraean area as well as for our understanding of the Adriatic–Tyrrhenian corridor. While metaphony of */a/* brought about by word-final *-i* is a fairly widespread phenomenon across Italy and the Romance-speaking area, metaphony of */a/* brought about by word-final *-u* is today restricted specifically to the Phlegraean area and to the area north of Naples (Giugliano, Casal di Principe). Sporadic relics of this phenomenon have been attested in Castro dei Volsci in toponyms (such as *Puzzu a Santo Tumes*). No less interesting is the fact that, on a scale of implication, the Phlegraean area and the area north of Naples can be placed on a higher level in terms of structural diffusion of metaphonic processes. These considerations raise some problems: How shall we account for the unique features that we find in the Phlegraean area today?

The evidence offered by the toponomastic relics of Castro dei Volsci could provide some basis for the hypothesis that the Phlegraean area, together with the area around Naples and Caserta, including Giugliano and Casal di Principe, was once part of a wider territory with double metaphony of */a/* triggered by *-i* and *-u*. On the other hand, it is all too obvious that this characteristic does not today constitute (or perhaps never has constituted) a distinctive feature of the Adriatic–Tyrrhenian corridor, although Salvioni cited examples of metaphonic palatalization in the Neapolitan
area as part of his observations. The palatalization of /a/ through metaphony by -i in verb forms is a phenomenon characteristic of Abruzzo,45 but not of Apulia.46 The whole Adriatic area, however, exhibits palatalization as an entirely phonetic process, limited to open syllables, sometimes affected by stress patterns (strong oxytonic stress), prosodic factors (a strong dynamic accent), or simply the influence of near segments (an adjacent nasal, either preceding or following /a/), produces palatalization in Moliseta.47

There are also no consistent traces of this phenomenon of double metaphony towards the west of Campania, in the direction of the Apennines. On the whole, Sanio shows palatalization of stressed /a/ in the following environments: gerundial forms, 1st sing., 1st and 3rd plur. forms of perfect of 1st conjugation verbs (cf. *truenna* ‘truvando’, *nuovej* ‘trovai’, *spesune* ‘sposammi’, *sparere* ‘spararono’), as well as in a few forms of ‘be’ and ‘have’.48 These are presumably non-metaphonic morpho-phonological processes, with parallels not only in the Phlegraean area49 but also in a broader territory in Central Italy.50 Interestingly, however, evidence of a palatalization with a hybrid shape has been gathered in Cerreto Sanità. Here the process appears in potentially metaphonic contexts, both of the -i and the -u type (like the masc. sing. past participles, the fem. plur. noun *mena* ‘hands’, the adverbs *kian* ‘slowly’, *asuya* ‘very’, *nuy* ‘never’), or in non-metaphonic contexts (like *kasa* ‘caso’ and *pama* ‘pame’).51

Although this evidence could further support the hypothesis that at some stages in the past the double metaphony from -i and -u had a broader geographical distribution, in itself it does not solve the questions about the origin of metathetic processes in the Phlegraean area. The high level of systemic regularity of the double metaphony in Procida and Monte di Procida could obviously be explained by local analogical developments, perhaps favoured and preserved by sociolinguistic factors like the strong cultural identity of the community and its inward-looking character (notwithstanding the traditional maritime economy). This hypothesis could also justify the difference with the island of Ischia, where the situation is more irregular and hybrid (in some respects it resembles that of Cerreto Sanità). Yet the picture presented so far does not ultimately account for how and why the double metaphony of /a/ took root in the Phlegraean area, or in particular for its indigenous or external causation.

4. Historical Data

Historical sources provide some interesting data that could contribute to our understanding of the linguistic situation outlined above. One must distinguish, at least partially, between the fortunes of the islands of Procida and Ischia and those of the mainland locations, such as Pozzuoli, Baia and Bacoli.

With regard to the islands, whatever may have been the social and demographic conditions of late antiquity and the Middle Ages, perhaps characterized by depopulation, which must periodically have affected a number of locations on the Tyrrenian coast owing to Muslim invasions, famine, plague and volcanic eruptions, the situation at the beginning of the sixteenth century is of maximum interest to the linguist. For the year 1511, 783 households (*fuochi*) are recorded for Ischia, Procida and Capri; the islands were thus declared *sterile* and were exempt from normal taxation.52 Particularly interesting are the fortunes of Procida in the years that followed. For most of the sixteenth century, plagues and Saracen raids caused the economy to remain predominantly within a modest agricultural horizon with few opportunities. Agriculture had for centuries been one of the principal activities of the island, as is demonstrated by the oldest inhabited settlements situated behind the Abbey of S Michele, the Benedictine monastery that owned the lands cultivated by peasant families who had taken to the highest points of the land to protect themselves from the numerous external dangers, as was the case in many urban settlements in Southern Italy during the Middle Ages. The unfavourable economic conditions kept the population stable for the whole century. In 1561, 460 households are recorded on the island, which has led the historian Di Taranto to hypothesize that the number of inhabitants fluctuated between 1700 and 2000; on the basis of the number of households documented for 1596, he estimates a total population of about 2300.53 These estimates correlate closely with the figure of 1500 people indicated by some sources for the mid-sixteenth century. At the start of the following century a trend of demographic growth begins to emerge, alongside a revival of traditional local activities such as fishing and maritime activity, part of a changed socio-economic and political situation in the Mediterranean. There is proof of the traditional character of these activities in historical sources, which indicate that in the fifteenth century crews from Procida (and other places on the Campanian coast) were aboard ships from Genoa and Amalfi.54 The demographic growth and economic prosperity of the island, where, between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, considerable naval bases were developed (second in the Kingdom of Naples only to Messina), would continue to increase, notwithstanding a few fluctuations until well into the eighteenth century. At the end of the seventeenth century the island is described in V. M. Corinelli's *bolario* as 'one of the richest in the Mediterranean',55 and a population of about 6000 inhabitants is indicated, a figure close to that attested in 1702, when the first available census of the parish counted 6786 inhabitants. Successive parish censuses show a constant growth in population until 1785, with a peak of more than 14,000 between 1785 and 1791, and between 20,000 and 21,000 until the mid-nineteenth century. The demographic growth that was presumably already in evidence at the halfway point of the eighteenth century56 could have been an internal phenomenon, related to the improved and prosperous economic conditions. However, there is direct evidence of the fact that the island was the destination of 'numerosi stranieri'. A 1664 document quoted by Di Taranto57 attests the continual need for priests on the island, on which was situated a large number of churches: 'per causa della moltitudine di gente, della quale si è piena detta isola et anco per li forestieri, che di continuo capitano in detta isola di festa e di giorno di lavoro in ogni hora'.

But how can this evidence be interpreted, and what value does it have for the linguist? Migratory influxes from the islands (or from the nearby mainland) towards Naples or other ports on the Tyrrenian or Adriatic coast are already documented in the sixteenth century.58 It was not only the periodic devastation so characteristic of the Phlegraean area (such as the terrible eruptions of Monte Etna and the emergence overnight of Monte Nuovo) that determined these migrations, but also
the search for seas richer in fish (substantial colonies from Procida and Ischia were spread out across the Mediterranean on the North African and French coasts, and even in North America) or for better economic conditions. The crucial point, of course, is the influx of foreigners to the islands or the Phlegraean coast.

For Procida we again have recorded data of some interest, as Di Taranto notes:

Procida, isola geografica, non è isola demografica. La mole dei traffici commerciali cui essa era interessata, infatti, comportava una elevata mobilità della sua popolazione. I forestieri che vi permanevano e ancor più i procidiani attirati dai luoghi d'approdo delle loro imbarcazioni non erano eccezioni. Ne infrequenti erano i matrimoni in cui uno soltanto dei coniugi era originario dell'isola. A ciò va aggiunta la vicinanza di Napoli, che agiva da attrazione. (p. 164)

Some analyses of the Libro dei Matrimoni, which can be found at the Abbey of S. Michele, at intervals during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as well as in the early part of the twentieth, confirm a percentage of constant exogamy peaking in certain periods. Also registered at times are a number of marriages in which neither party is from the island. For the period 1642–60, out of 226 marriages, 32 involved men from the following locations: Naples and outlying hamlets (catali) 15; Ischia 3; Baia 3; Gaeta 3; Messina 2; Genoa 3; Calabria 2; Salerno 1.59

The brides who were not native to the island came from Ischia and Naples. In this period exogamy must already have been a significant phenomenon: for the years 1653–69, out of 100 marriages, 22 Neapolitan spouses are recorded, plus 11 from Ischia, 2 Sicilian, 2 from Gaeta, 2 from Baia, 1 from Pozzuoli, 1 Sardinian and 1 from Lazio.60 In the first part of the eighteenth century the most common origin of one of the spouses was still Naples and its hamlets, or Ischia. But spouses from Calabria, Cilento, the Ligurian riviera, the Adriatic coast in Apulia and Abruzzo, the coast of northern Campania and Lazio, Sicily, and, in some cases, inland regions of Campania are still recorded. In the second half of the eighteenth century, we begin to see records of spouses from Malta and Pantelleria, and the number of spouses originating from the coast of Apulia rises.61 The tendency to marry someone who was not from Procida increases between 1800 and 1859, a period in which a significant number of marriages with people from Palermo is registered.62 Whether these people are Sicilians, or originally from Procida, or perhaps descendants of those who fled from Procida to Sicily following the events of the Neapolitan revolution in 1799, is difficult to say. It is interesting, nonetheless, that already in the second half of the eighteenth century, and to an even greater extent in the first half of the nineteenth, the number of those originating from the Adriatic coast or inland regions of Campania increases:

1750–99: 34 individuals in total, of which 20 are from the Adriatic coast;

1800–59: 65 individuals in total, of which 29 are from the Adriatic coast and the rest are from inland regions of Campania.

These figures must of course be handled with caution. As Di Taranto observes:

I non procidiani potrebbero essere immigrati temporaneamente sull'isola, magari soltanto in occasione delle nozze e, pertanto, contribuire, in seguito, al saldo migratorio negativo conducendo seco l’altro coniuge; oppure potrebbero essere immigrati da lunga data — o battezzati in altre parrocchie con genitori procidiani momentaneamente assenti dalla loro residenza — che rientrano, quindi, nelle quote di immigrazione, ai pari di coloro che giunti nell’isola vi si stabiliscono definitivamente. (p. 167)

Di Taranto, therefore, maintains that 'più che tornare utile per l'analisi della mobilità [...] [la frequenza dei matrimoni con forestieri] può essere collegata alle notizie in nostro possesso circa la estensione ed il tipo di rapporti commerciali intercorrenti tra Procida ed altre località' (p. 167).

On the other hand, significant Apulian immigration is registered in the Libro dei Matrimoni for the period 1873–1908: out of approximately 490 marriages, 83 are registered in which at least one of the spouses (and in some cases both) is of Apulian origin (compared with 50 from Gaeta and 27 Sicilians). Trani, Alberobello, Andria, Monopoli and especially Molfetta are the cities of origin most frequently recorded. The Apulian immigration of the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth is within living memory on Procida. I have personally interviewed some descendants of Apulian families, who told me about the origins of their grandparents and great-grandparents, about their trades and way of life, about their acceptance into the society of the island. They were almost all manual workers who came to work as sailors on the fishing boats of Procida, coming initially on a seasonal basis and then eventually establishing themselves on the island. It was the men in particular who emigrated, but in many cases the entire family moved with them, or they came with their fiancées and married on the island, setting up a family there. The volume of commercial traffic must have been significant,63 certainly higher than the usual levels, as one may deduce from the survey of marine life and fishing activity in the Tyrrhenian and the Adriatic, carried out for the Ministry in 1876 by Targioni Tozzetti, director of the Royal Zoological Museum in Florence. Furthermore, the fact that in some cases small ship owners also moved, with their fishing boats, seems to confirm that the island must have offered more promising economic opportunities than the ports of Apulia.

It is difficult to believe that this admittedly not irrelevant migratory influx at the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth could have constituted a situation of dialect contact responsible for some tangible linguistic effect on the island. The use of a lexeme such as guagnone 'boy' is recognized by many on Procida as typical of the speech of the grandchildren or great-grandchildren of the Apulian fishermen, but the community's knowledge of phenomena of this type is extremely limited.64 The descendants of the Apulian families whom I interviewed remember only a few different lexemes used by their grandparents; one particularly linguistically capable informant provided examples of pronouns such as mai 'me', tu 'you', used by his grandfather from Molfetta. In all these cases the person speaking demonstrated awareness of the differences between dialects, sometimes providing indirect evidence of the lack of linguistic integration of their relatives, even in the family. Even more interesting is the fact that these informants have shown through their own speech that no trace of hybridization has been preserved; their speech does not differ significantly from that of other individuals interviewed. If the phenomena with parallels on the Adriatic coast were to be attributed to linguistic contact (demographic movement), they would have to be from an earlier period. The phenomena of spontaneous diphthongization found among the fishermen of Pozzuoli and Forio d'Ischia,
structurally similar to those of the Apulian type, could instead lend plausibility to the hypothesis that the diapora of Apulian fishermen towards the Gulf of Pzzuoli and towards Ischia left more noticeable traces there than on Procida.

In fact, historical sources exist that prove that contact between the areas of the Phlegraean fields and Apulia dated back to ancient times and was still active in the mid-eighteenth century, because of other traditional fishing activities in the area, such as the cultivation of oysters and mussels. Even more interesting with respect to the linguistic situation outlined above is that other sources attest demographic movements of unknown extent already at the beginning of the fourteenth century and again in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, towards the Phlegraean islands from the inland regions of Campania (La Terra di Lavoro) and the coast of Abruzzo and Le Marche (Ascoli and even Romagna). In this case, the movement of a peasant population called back to cultivate the depopulated land by the D'Avvalos family, to whom the two islands had been conceded by Ferrante II of Aragon. This family were also Marquesses of Vasto and Pescara, and it is entirely possible, according to a common practice dating from medieval times, that there may have been movements of the peasant population from the fiefs of noble families. It is not clear if and how this immigration has any connection with the demographic growth found in some areas (see above for discussion of that on Procida) right at the end of the sixteenth century, or if it should instead already be considered in connection with the scarce population documented on the islands at the start of that century. Such information is not readily accessible, and though it is not without interest, it can offer the linguist only indirect clues. The evidence related to the movement of the peasant population favoured by the D'Avvalos family, and in particular the chronology and the area information contained within that evidence, corresponds surprisingly well with some of the results of the analysis that has been conducted. But it also acts as the starting point for further consideration, since the correspondence between linguistic characteristics and historical information is, for a variety of reasons, problematic.

5. Conclusions

Historical information can help assign greater plausibility to one of the scenarios that may be outlined purely on the basis of the examination of linguistic structures and processes: that of successive population movements from different locations, which, starting particularly in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and continuing in a fairly steady stream, came to add to a presumably pre-existing population. The areas of origin of the migratory movements confirm the relationship identified by linguistic means between the inland regions of Campania (in particular La Terra di Lavoro), the coastal areas of Abruzzo (and further north around Ancona and Romagna) and South-Central Apulia. On the other hand, the continuous migration between Naples and the Phlegraean area and the internal migrations within the Phlegraean area itself must also be taken into account.

Historical information, however, does not help in providing explanations for some of the problems that emerge from linguistic analysis: for example, that of the more subtle structural differences that are often disguised by the apparent resemblance of the phenomena in the two areas, and that of the parallels and differences between the Phlegraean and Adriatic areas and the area of Naples. In other words, such information cannot entirely lift the cloud that often obscures the reasons behind the similarities or differences between linguistic areas. Linguistic phenomena have their own complexity and independence from the admittedly important external factors, which means that even when one succeeds in demonstrating that contact is a historical reality, this cannot on its own constitute an explanation of the existence of a specific linguistic structure. In this case, too, there is still work to be done to interpret the (synchronic and diachronic) dynamic that characterizes it. One element or linguistic structure of variety A may enter into variety B, undergoing a series of changes that sometimes even render it unrecognizable; it may be restructured according to more or less marked principles, and so on. However, this does not, in my opinion, mean that the reasons for the origins and/or for the spread of a structure in an area are immediately or unilaterally to be identified as internal factors, relative to inherent properties of linguistic phenomena, or as general principles.

Lucien Febvre's proud claim — that history alone holds the key to the solutions glimpsed by the linguist, that it alone can confirm or reject the hypothesis of the latter — presupposes a factual conception of linguistics as much as of history. In this, the French scholar may have been supported by a viewpoint that has characterized linguistics for some time and that appears in the model of linguistic borrowing as a more or less mechanical introduction of lexemes or structures into a system B with a system A as its starting point. Each of these elements can be traced back directly to an agent outside the system, which is its carrier. This viewpoint has already faced difficulties when compared with the most sophisticated structural models think of the classical work of Uriel Weinreich, who, taking as his starting point an individual bilingual speaker intended as the locus of contact, demonstrated the complexity of internal features of linguistic structure that could result from it. But it is more open to criticism today, because of greater knowledge on the part of the linguist of the articulated dynamic of linguistic processes. Forms that are similar on the surface can be the result of different dynamics. Salvioni might perhaps have found parallels between the phenomena of the Adriatic area and those of the Tyrrhenian area to the north of Naples, but, when carefully observed, these may in the end melt away. Approach to linguistic areas in terms of processes makes linguistic parallels and direct explanations in historical terms highly problematic. And, of course, the basic problematic nature of the relationship between linguistic and historical data is heightened by a situation, like that of the Italian Centre-South presented here, in which population contact and contact between linguistic varieties has occurred several times and at various points over a long period. On the other hand, this approach in terms of process also shows how difficult the recourse to general principles may be.

Highlighting this problem should not lead us to conclude that the linguist should not look to historical sources or that the historian has nothing to learn from linguistic analysis. The tasks are different, but they can usefully overlap in order to facilitate independent verifications that allow scholars of both disciplines to return to their respective methodologies with a more multi-faceted approach. In this sense, the scepticism expressed by Febvre, with the observation that on the basis of the
sum of two series of different hypotheses one cannot draw any certain conclusions, itself betrays an essentially positivistic idea of historical and linguistic research. If our final aim is not absolute certainty, but the coherence of a scenario that helps us to understand better the complexity of historical situations (and I include within that linguistic situations), we should be satisfied.

Notes to Chapter 10

A more comprehensive version of this study will appear in the *Rivista italiana di dialettologia*.

Abbreviations

ADICA  Archivio dei dialetti campani [A corpus of spoken texts of the dialects of Campania], at the Department of Modern Philology, University of Naples Federico II


ALT  *Atlante Linguistico Italiano*, directed by Lorenzo Masobrio (Turin: Istituto dell’Atlante Linguistico, 1995-)

LEI  *Lexicon Itineraire Italiano*, directed by Max Pfister (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 1979-)


3. Salvoni addb: *Dei testi di Serra d’Ischia stampati nel Giambattista Basile mi danno maniere, manette, maneto e tono tanclo, altato alla gione*; and: altri esempi sono forniti da Giugliamano di Campania (era anca, anca - in calcio, chero, cacio; oltre a nerno venti, chélle calii, sotto nerti). Per Pomigliano (Napoli) lo stentore alternativo che l’a accentua si cambi spesso e voceforte in e larga. Ma l’esempio Carena invando, prova veramente poco (cfr. anche iuhetero gicoeado, e non è assolutamente probabile nommeno sans = sarà. Ma più notevole pura che il Vostro gonghe in bocca e terio e, durbo diavalo, a dei abitanti di Procida. *Tutte* examples evidenmente demonstrate clear differences in their phonological and morpho-phonological properties, a matter I return to in paragraph 3.1 and 3.2.


5. See Rahbek, *Arealeggistisk IX. Kampenien*.

6. Salvoni in fact added: *La loro presenza anche all’interno della sezione adriatica mostra poi, che se anche regge per questo lato quell’edificio, le conclusioni andrebbero estese alla regione meridionale intera; e taglierebbe le gambe in ogni modo a certe induzioni di carattere etnologico* (pp. 487-88).


8. In the Pilegriac area, the locations under consideration are Bacoli, Pozzuoli, Monte di Procida, Procida and 4 Barano, Serra Fontana, Forio and Panza on the island of Ischia.


13. The variability has been reported by V. Valente, p. 41.


15. V. Valente, p. 40.

16. Parallel also exists for the dynamics of the low-nid front vowel, although these offer us fewer insights. Owing to syllable differentiation, it is predominantly found in closed syllables. The tendency for lowering and diphthongization, with a charasmatic in that part follows the trajectories of the high vowel, is also found in the Adriatic area (see Rohls, §16; Gimarcari, pp. 21-22; V. Valente, p. 41).

17. See Rohls, §26; Gimarcari, pp. 21-22; V. Valente, p. 41.

18. The main types of these trajectories can be represented as EA, E, E.


21. According to Rohls, in Pozzuoli this diphthongization occurs only in open syllables, but the data from ADICA display the opposite phenomenon, which emerges in the spectrographic analysis conducted by one of my students in Naples, Giovanni Abele, for his thesis on Putonian diphthongs.


23. I use both notations here, because, as will be seen, the chronology of the word-final elements is not clear. However, for convenience, I shall hereafter use -1 and -u as notations for -1(-4) and -u(-4) respectively.


25. In Procida it occurs frequently; but to a lesser degree in Ischia and even less in Pozzuoli, at least during the interviews conducted for ADICA.

26. The data reported here are from AIS, ALI and ADICA.

27. And also in Casal di Principe: see ALI I, 24 and 17.


31. For the forms of the article the problem of the diachronic processes is different from that which arises in word-final elements; moreover, with the non-die away diphthongization some cases of the high vowels may not constitute a continuity of the Latin forms but may instead be the result of more complex developments in Romance which have had an obscuring effect.

32. ALI I, 8 records kapa in Buonopane, an example that corresponds to the data collected by ADICA in the same place. The form without palatalization has also been recorded in Bacoli, while Pozzuoli shows variation between the types kapa and kepa.

33. See Rohls, §154; LEI (forthcoming).
that in some of these cases the ceremony alone may have taken place on the island and the family unit may have then moved elsewhere, the movement cannot have been negligible.

65. Note, however, that gnacone is also a word documented in Old Neapolitan. It is a French loanword from the Angevin period: see Franco Fasciullo, *Italiano nutrizionale guaghione: 'ragazzo'*, in *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, 107 (1991), 398–410.

66. See Adolfo Targioni Tozzetti, *Relazioni sulla pesca a S. E. il Mioistro di Agricoltura, Industria e Commercio [= Atti della Società Italiana di Scienze Naturali, 15.5 (1872)]* (Genoa: Tipografia del R. Istituto Sordoni-Muti, 1872), pp. 47–48 and note, with data from classical antiquity, attesting flows of traffic between Baia, the Lucrin Lake and Lake Averno and cities in Puglia (perhaps Brindisi), for the purpose of seafood farming. He further notes (p. 65, n. 1) that in 1784 Ferdinando IV ordered that oyster farming, which had gone to ruin, should be revived on Lake Fusaro, providing ‘costoli di isanto, animali, apparecchi e pratiche de’ terrentini medesimi’.


68. The fuller version of this article discusses the latter point in more detail.