

LEXICOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENTS IN ALBANIAN RESIDENCE OF SOUTH ITALY (ARBËRESHE), AS PART OF THE ALBANIAN LEXICOGRAPHY

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Abstract- The study of Albanian lexicography is closely connected with lexicographic developments in and out of the Albanian borders, where there are Albanians and Albanian residences. The Albanian residents of south Italy (arbëreshët) represent one of the largest communities of Albanians who left their motherland centuries ago. Although the time of their settlement on the coasts of south Italy refers to centuries, still they have not forgotten their mother tongue. Yet, we can now notice multidiscipline studies to collect, protect and develop their language as a continuation and fulfillment of linguistic progress at home. During these two last centuries, an enormous burst of studies is seen in the field of lexicography. As a result of a considerable linguistic, dialectic and lexicographic research and processing, almost the whole lexical treasure of talk in south Italy has been collected and treated. All these developments in the centre of which is the study of south Italy Albanian residents' language, make up a part of the entire studies in the field of Albanian language.

Key words- lexicography, Albanian residents of south Italy (arbëreshët), developments, linguistic, dictionary, studies.

Albanian lexicography dates back in the XVII century with the dictionary of Frang Bardhi "Dictonarium latino-epiroticum" in 1635. Even though the Albanians are among the oldest people in their settlements, the development of lexicography and other linguistic disciplines takes place very lately. This has been as a result of a cruel and desperate history of the Albanian past.

Albanian lexicographic developments are classified into two important periods: The first period begins with the publishing of Frang Bardhi's dictionary and ends in the middle of the XX century, whereas the second period begins in the middle of the XX century and continues until nowadays. Both periods make up unbreakable links of a unique history, but differ so much amongst them both in the field of theory upon which they are based and the field of practice which they have applied.

The first period of Albanian lexicography is closely connected with the history and the fate of Albanian people. For centuries on end, the Albanians have gone through massive and repeated exodus, mainly in the neighbour countries such as Italy and Greece.

So, in building up or compiling the history of Albanian lexicography, the linguistic developments of Albanians in these settlements have had an inevitable role.

It is important to state out that a special value in the second period of Albanian lexicography stays in the research work made at the University of Calabria in the field of Arberesh lexicography.

Referring to a work of Professor, Doctor Francesco Altimari¹, based upon the incomparable didactic &

scientific work initiated by the unforgettable professor. Francesco Solano who practically founded the department in 1975, an important Albanolog centre is created at the University of Calabria. Along with it, there is also a center of scientific documents for the numerous groups of Albanian residents of South Italy who represent almost two third of the whole population of Arbëresh Minority that live in Italy today.

In three provinces of Calabria, that's to say in the province of Kozenca, Katanxari and Kutroni there are nowadays 33 out of 50 Albanian speaking communities of Italy. Only in the province of Kozenca there is half of Arbëresh communities that are still alive as for as linguistic view is conserved.

This strong link with Arberesh settlements, which historically characterises even the other Albanologic department at the University of Palermo as well as the outstanding of these departments among the other Italian ones, geographically isolated from the Arberesh - speaking context, represents one of the features that clearly explains the directions that Albanian science took in these two research & study centres.

In the new historical conditions these two departments continue the educating activity initiated in the previous centuries by two religious colleges and important cultural centres, represented by the "Corsini" Arberesh college, later "Corsini-S. Adriano" in Calabria Benedetto and the Arberesh Seminar of Palermo in Sicilia.

But, both university centres in Kozenca & Palermo, simultaneously involved in the cultural and academic world, national and international, of Albanian residents of south Italy, have the possibility to link

¹ F.Altimari. The research work developed in the University of Calabria in the field of Arberesh Lexicography. Directions and results "Albanian Lexicography, Inheritance and prospective", Tirane, 2005. pp33.

this activity with the development of the linguistic science and those modern literary ones, focusing on the academic orientation within the same subject "Albanian Language and Literature". This orientation appears in the linguistic and dialectological field, as well as in the field of the science of literature in a historic & geographic prospective, critical and philological².

Paying attention to the scientific activity developed by the department in the last decades, it can be said that it was directed into two fields: a) the literary field, with the collection of manuscripts as well as in the improvement & analyses of texts; b) the linguistic field, with the collection of dialectological evidence in terrain. Based on the above reasons, dialectology and philology were the privileged fields of research work, by university professors, researches, scientific cooperators and the students of the department.

Because of the absence of new research dealers, at the beginning, for nearly 15 years the department had its own staff; only one professor and one lecturer. The cooperation among students has been decisive to fulfill the aims and for terrain research.

In our university, but partly even else where it was separated from the common "bed" of "Albanian Language and Literature, in some specific branches like "Albanian Language", "Albanian Literature", "Arberesh Dialects of South Italy" and "Albanian Philology".

During the first period (1975- 1990) are included theses with linguistic character, except mainly in any general description of Arberesh dialects, but within monographers with materials from spoken literature and dialectological material. Of course it was necessary that these descriptions, which were the first ones made for these communities, should include as much material as possible (ethnographic, literal, linguistic etc.) to keep the historic memory and living signs of Arberesh spiritual and material culture alive which was based under the inevitable pressure of Modernism and assimilating model of Italian society. Since the 90's and after the opening of Arberesh Dialect courses (1980) the researches of the department began to focus mostly in systematically collecting of dialectic lexicon based on one side in texts that were "reorganised" on the philology aspect and on concluded manuscripts found out in Italian magazines of the XIX century. On the other hand, as far as the methodological research of students, that began to collect the general lexicon and specific lexicon based on questionnaires used to make atlases for example ALE (Atlas Linguarum Europae), ALI (Atlante Linguistico Italiano), ALA (Albanian Linguistic Atlas). For ALE two questionnaires have been used. ALE₁ and ALE₂ that include respectively 546 and 846 question. For ALI there is an integral

² F.Altimari. During the last decade in the university Italian world there was a more functional division in the reformation of didactic directions of wider discipline groups like earlier Albanology.

version with 7659 questions and a reduced version adapted with 1646 questions. Eqrem Çabej³'s questionnaire has been used for ALA (Albanian Linguistic Atlas) with 2579 questions.

In most cases the questionnaires have been translated in Arberesh dialect and the answers have been taken from the interviewed people with the questions presented in the mother language. Fiorella de Rosa, already famous in the world of Albanologic studies, with the well-known philology competence, has worked with the transcription of old texts. She worked with the thesis under the topic "Testi Arbëresh della parlata di Falconara Albanese nella rivista 'La Calabria' 1888-1902". (Arberesh texts in the dialect of Fallkunara extracted from the magazine "La Calabria"1888-1902).

With the collection of dialectic lexicon in the community of Saint Benedette has worked Daniella Cavallo with her thesis "Un' indagine sul lessico della parlata arberesh di San Benedetto Ullano". (Research upon the lexicon of spoken language of Benedette) Daniella made use of two questionnaires ALE and ALI adapted respectively ALE1 1546 questions, ALE2 2300 questions and ALI with 1646 questions.

In this thesis, asserted in 1989-1990, the computer was firstly used to arrange (systemize) the general lexicon of Arberesh speech (idiom) putting together the results of the lexical material collected through the questionnaires.

Gabrielina Baruto has also been concerned with the description of Sant Benedetto speech (idiom) in another theses "La parlata Arberesh di San Benedetto Ullano," (The speech of Saint Benedette) in the same year.

Even the theses of diplomas have been concentrated upon the lexicon. For example: Filomena Raimondo with "Il lessico della parlata Arberesh di Acquaforsa attraverso i questionnaires del progetto ALE" (The lexicon of Arberesh Speech in Formosa through the questionnaires of ALE project; Silvia Tocci with "Uno studio morfologico e lessicale sulla parlata arberesh speech in Vaccarizo) which includes 2470 file cards through the questionnaires ALE1, and ALE2. Both theses were asserted during the academic year 1991-1992.

Concerning ALE project, Rosina Rio has worked with the Arberesh lexicon under the thesis "Uno studio lessicale e morfologico sulla parlata Albanese di Lungero" (A study upon lexical and morphological study of Ungra speech" asserted during the academic year 1992-1993).

³ For Eqrem Çabej's questionnaire the department has only one printed copy on disposal, because the work which was being printed in Grottaferrata, was not able to be published as a result of the transfer of the typewriter during The Second World War.

Vittoria Emilia Varcasia is based on ALE1 and ALE2 questionnaires in her thesis "Uno studio morfologico e lessicale sulla parlata Arberesh di Frascineto (Lessico raccolto attraverso i questionari ALE) so "A morphological and Lexical study upon the Arberesh speech of Frascineto", lexicon gathered through the ALE questionnaires, asserted during the academic year 1994-1995.

Whereas Tomnaso Sposato is based on ALA questionnaire in 1940, compiled and half published by Egerem Çabej in 1940 which includes 2579 questions with his diploma thesis "Un' indagine sull' evoluzione del repertorio lessicale di parlanti Arberesh di spezzano Albanese" (A study upon the lexical development of Arberesh speakers of Spexanda) realized through a survey with 30 informers (14 old ones and 16 young), asserted during the academic year 1995-1996. Maria Antonia Miracco has been concerned with some special words, such as those extracted from inscriptions on walls, on stone, on marble or on Fresco, during the academic year 1995-1996 with her thesis "Epigrafi Albanesi nelle cumunita Arberesh della Sila Greca"(Albanian Epigraphs in Arberesh communities of Sila Greca.) She has studied 58 Epigraphs all in all, 13 in Italian, 39 in the Albanian dialect and the rest in Latin or Greek.

Vicenzo Perrellis has worked with the arberesh dialectic lexicon during the academic year 1996-1997. In his thesis "Uno studio morfologico e lessicale sulla parlata arbëresh di San Marino di Finita" (A morphological and lexical study upon the Arberesh speech of Saint Martin he has used to questionnaires ALE1 and ALE2.

Anna Gaudio has worked during the same year with her thesis "Lo studio morfologico e lessicale sulla parlata Arberesh di Firmo." (A morphological and lexical study upon the arberesh speech of Firmo)

A detailed description of the lexicon of Arberesh speech in Saint Martin according to ALE, and ALE2 questionnaire is found in Lucrezia Liguori's thesis "Uno studio morfologico e lessicale sulla parlata arbereshe di San Demetrio Corne" (A morphological and lexical study upon the Arberesh speech of Saint Demetrio) asserted during the academic year 1997-1998. Interesting lexical material is found in Giulia Adduci's thesis "Testi di letteratura orale della cumunita arberesh di Frascineto", (Oral literature texts in the Arberesh community of Frascineto). This thesis was asserted during the academic year 1998-2000.

A description of the lexical treasure of Civita is found in a prepared task by Maria Pittelli "Il lessico della partata arbëresh di Civita attraverso i questionari dell'ALE e dell'ALI (The lexicon of Arberesh speech of Civita through ALE and ALI questionnaires) during the academic year 2000-2001.

The existence of a post university doctorate in Albanology had a great importance in developing the linguistic research and especially the lexical one in

Albanian speaking communities of South Italy during 1991-1998, due to a deal with the Institute of Albanian Language and Literature of the University of Palermo directed by professor Antonio Guzzeta, who brought eleven young students (Arberesh, Albanian and Italian) to assert their doctorate thesis choosing topics from the field of Albanian language and literature. Among them only three have a special interest for the Arberesh, dialectology in a lexicographic prospective: the scientific dissertation of Vito Matranga "Lessico agro-pastorale della parlata di piana degli Albanesi. (The agricultural - pastoral lexicon of the Arberesh speech of Hore) which represents a methodological wide spread model, or we can say paradigmatic, with a description of the special dialectic lexicon (Arberesh) during 1995-1996.

There is also Antonietta Compagna's work "La parlata Albanese di Acquaformosa" (The Arberesh speech of Formosa), which brings the results of a wide and deep survey, performed by the author outdoors, through an integral questionnaire ALI and the valuable work of Filomena Raimonds "La parlata arberesh di Lungro" (The arberesh speech of Ungra) asserted during the academic year 1996-1997.

These three doctorate theses, together with the other theses that were compiled in the eight-year period of this doctorate, added to 90 diploma theses that were asserted in the department during almost 30 years of action can be considered an important start to create a real linguistic archive based upon the Arberesh of Calabria.

The theses with linguistic character have been directed into two research fields: the mere dialectological field with general and specific descriptions of the phonologic, morphologic, syntactic, and lexical type as well as sociolinguistic, so as to verify directly the spreading and vitality of Arberesh language in the different territorial realities. Arberesh language was previously affected (in XVI-XX century) by different roman dialects and in the second half of the XX century by Italian language. Whereas the literary theses, in most cases were directed by the rediscovery of the literary tradition during the XIX and XX century and rediscovery of the so-called "little" authors, as well as the preparation through philological publishes of the main manuscripts; or published works of the most outstanding figures of the Arberesh literature

At the same time, it was taken into consideration the great importance of some text tools in lexicography: for example concordances which were ignored completely in Albanology until recently, especially through their update electronic version in some fields of human sciences such as linguistics, text linguistic, philology and literary critic.

Having a decisive support, technological or formative, from the Data Processing Linguistic Centre, firstly with the immediate cooperation of the centre chief Dr. Francesco Lusi, who has actively

taken part in the proceedings of this conference , a wide program of electronic concordances began since 1990 with BETA program (Electronic Library of Arberesh Texts) which took into consideration all works of Old Arberesh literature up to Renaissance: Recently efforts have been concentrated mostly on Jeronim De Rada's works, by celebrations in honour of this outstanding figure of our national culture on his 100th death anniversary.

By gathering the literary lexicon which was collected through electronic concordances and the gathering of dialectic lexicon that was partly collected from old texts and corpus concordances, and, as far as the new dialectic material is concerned which was collected by terrain research, an important result was accomplished in this wide, complex research program, within ARBER project, which aims to collect all spoken and written testimony of Arberesh memory and inheritance. Thus, were laid the foundations of the Arberesh Lexicographic Archive which came out as a convergence of the author's lexicon, gathered after processing the texts with concordances, and the lexicon of Arberesh speech.

CONCLUSIONS

Lexicographic developments that took place in Italy in the second half of the XX century and the beginning of the XXI century, mainly in Albano logic departments, represent important studies, which lead to the processing of a wider and more systematic lexical repertoire of Arberesh dialect in Italy. The

values of such repertoire are never-ending. Among these developments the only entire-Arberesh dictionary, occupies a special place, the Arberesh dictionary of the well known researcher Emanuele Giordano. When this dictionary was published, it represented an important and valuable contribution for the Arberesh community in Italy. But today, it results to be insufficient to the needs of Arberesh society, advanced and more vivid from the linguistic point of view after passing the law of literary and linguistic requests of Arberesh world, and after the development that took the Albano logic science in Italy in the last decades of the XX century.

Thus, nowadays, different Albano logic centres give a great contribution to the further development of Arberesh lexicography, with update and scientific methods.

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¹Emanuele Giordano, "Dictionary of the Arberesh of Italy" Edizioni Paoline Bari, 1963. Some years ago a more update version of this dictionary, with an Italian - Arberesh appendix, was published. Refer to Emanuele Giordano's, "Dictionary of the Arberesh of Italy", Edictrice II Coscile Castrivillari 2000, pp746.

