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## ON THE ORIGINS OF MODERN GREEK IN SOUTHERN ITALY

### Abstract

In Southern Italy two Greek-speaking “islands” still survive, whose origins (from ancient Hellenism of Graecia Magna or from Byzantine Greek?) originated a long, heated debate in Italy. Aim of this work is to understand both scientific and ideological reasons for the debate which arose in Italy and to bring some new evidences supporting the ancient origins of Italian Greek.

1. In Southern Italy two Greek-speaking “islands” still survive: one in Southern Apulia (*grico*-Greek), the other in Southern Calabria (*bovese*-Greek).

It is to be noted that they are not the only Italian linguistic areas in which a non-Italian dialect is spoken. For instance, in Southern Italy there are some Croatian and many Albanian linguistic islands and their origins are certainly medieval (due to movements for reasons of trade relations, because of the Turkish invasion of the Balkan Peninsula, etc.). As a consequence, also the Greek-speaking islands could have similar origins and actually their conditions do not differ from those of the Croatian and Albanian islands. There are only a few, generally elderly, speakers and these languages have a limited sociolinguistic status in relation not only to Italian, but also to the Italian dialects surrounding these islands. However these are present conditions. In the past the circumstances were very different.

With the exception of just a few words, neither the Croatian nor Albanian dialects seem have transferred anything to the neighbouring Italian dialects as regards, for example, phonology, morphology or syntax. The influence of Greek, although nowadays cancelled, has been very important through the centuries and in an “underground” way continues to take place also in the present. In other words, the Croatian and Albanian islands give the impression that they are encapsulated in a very extraneous environment, but it is impossible to understand the development of Romance in the extreme South of Italy without taking the age-old influence of Greek into account.

2. From G. Rohlfs on, the literature regarding the influence of Greek on Southern Italian Romance is unlimited. Here, I shall restrict myself to three points:

- The Italian dialects of southernmost Italy have received from Greek a very large number of words, often in relation to domains which are usually impervious to loan-words, e.g. the terminology of family relationships (cp. Southern Calabria [pap'pu / pap'pua] ‘grandfather’ < Greek παππούς, [sim'pɛssaru / sum'pɛssaru] ‘son’s / daughter’s father-in-law’ < Greek συμπέθερος) or the terminology relevant to the human body (cp. Southern Calabrian [mi'linga / mi'ninga] ‘temple’ < Greek. μιλίγγι).

- The same dialects show a large number of linguistic calques which are modelled on Greek; for instance: «La question très banale qui sert à vous demander votre âge, dans les langues romanes est exprimée par le verbe ‘avoir’, p.ex. en français *quel âge as-tu ?* [...]»

Dans les langues balkaniques cette question se fait avec le verbe 'être', p.ex. en grec πόσων χρόνων εἶσαι, en roumain *de câți ani ești ?*, en albanais *sa vjeç je ?*. Et c'est justement de la même façon qu'on s'exprime dans l'extrême Sud de l'Italie, p. ex. en Calabre *di quant'anni si ?*, en Terre d'Otrante *di quant'anni sinti ?*, c'est-à-dire 'de combien d'années es-tu ?'» (Rohlf's [1990], 345).

- In the same dialects we can observe the so called *impopolarità dell'infinito* (unpopularity of the infinitive), so that, in accordance with Greek but not Italian (and generally Romance) patterns, we find a construction with a conjugated verb instead of the infinitive. For instance we have [ 'ɔʝju (ku) 'bbau] (Southern Apulia) / ['v ɔ ʝju ma / mu 'vau] (Southern Calabria), word for word 'I want that I go', that is 'I want to go'. Cp. (likewise) Greek θέλω να πάω but (in a different way) Italian *voglio andare* or French *je veux aller*, with the infinitive.

As regards these three points, much more exhaustive examples are offered especially by the works of G. Rohlf's. I shall note here that Greek influence does not limit itself to the Romance dialects which surround the Greek-speaking islands but shows up at a great distance from them. E.g., the construction of the type θέλω να πάω is found in a range of at least 50 kms from the Greek-speaking villages in Apulia, reaches a distance of about 120-150 kms, as the crow flies, from the Greek-speaking villages in Calabria (cp. Catanzaro *vòggju ma dòrmu* 'I want to sleep', word for word 'I want that I sleep'; Rohlf's [1990], 329) and appears across the sea, in Sicily, at least in its northeastern corner (cp. Milazzo *si spòggja mi si kúrka* '(s)he's stripping to go to bed', word for word '(s)he's strips that (s)he goes to bed'; Rohlf's 1974, 105). This is in an area where nowadays there are no longer any Greek-speaking peoples.

Although set at zero at the present time, the influence of Greek on Italian dialects

- a) has been considerable;
- b) reaches a great distance from the current Greek-speaking islands.

This means:

- a) the sociolinguistic relation between Greek and Romance has changed: if it is to the advantage of Romance now, before it was to the advantage of Greek;
- b) it is a realistic hypothesis that Greek was spoken in a much wider area than the present one.

As far as the last point is concerned, the case for a previously more widespread use of Greek in Southern Italy is supported also by extra-linguistic evidence. There are various reports of pastoral visits and accounts of travellers, etc. Since the discovery of this type of information fundamentally depends on chance, other documents could very well come to light. There are two examples, which are not found in Rohlf's 1933, or in Rohlf's 1974, because they have become known to the scholars only in more recent years.

- Not long after the middle of the twelfth century, the Jewish-Spanish traveller Benjamin ben Yonah, on a journey to Palestine, passed through Taranto in Apulia and expressly defined its inhabitants as Greek (Colafermina 1975, 99).

- In the mid-sixteenth century, a Swiss traveller, Iodocus Meggen, who was on his way back from Palestine, landed in Calabria and noticed that from Crotona downwards «Calabriae maritimam oram multi Graeci inhabitant, sua lingua degenere utentes» (cp. Mosino 1977, 207 f.). This information is interesting because it reveals to us that during the sixteenth century Greek-speaking peoples still lived on the coast of Calabria, whereas from

the nineteenth century to today Greek survives only in the impassable valleys of Aspromonte (= Gk. Ασπρόβουνο).

To sum up, the present Greek-speaking communities of Southern Italy are, let us say, the tip of the iceberg, i.e. the last, fading evidence of a vigorous linguistic exchange between Greek and Romance, which has lasted many centuries.

So, we have reached the core of the problem. For how many centuries?

3. If we consider that:

- the extent of medieval Hellenophony (which we can reconstruct on the basis of linguistic and extralinguistic evidence) significantly agrees with the extent of the Byzantine rule in Southern Italy;

- the extent of the Byzantine rule in Southern Italy significantly agrees with Graecia Magna;

the question arises: does modern Greek in Southern Italy come from Byzantine Greek or does it come from Greek spoken in Graecia Magna?

I think that in Greece this is a false problem. But in Italy the point of view for a long time was completely different (and partially this is still so).

To understand the reason for this, let us begin with the German scholar G. Rohlfs, who first not in an absolute way but in his energy and in his knowledge of the circumstances brought up the problem: cp. at least *Griechen und Romanen in Unteritalien* (1924) and its Italian translation (actually, a new work) *Scavi linguistici nella Magna Grecia* (1933 = 1974).

Unlike the contemporary Italian scholars (and, as a general rule, unlike all the contemporary scholars), G. Rohlfs knew very well the linguistic state of Southern Italy. He had travelled all over this region in order to collect the linguistic materials for the *Atlante Italo-Svizzero* (= AIS) and so he had understood the extensive influence of Greek on the Romance dialects in extreme Southern Italy.

It is worthwhile noting that the German scholar makes his proposal (that is, present Italian Greek comes from ancient Greek spoken in Graecia Magna) very cautiously, step by step. The present scarce sociolinguistic weight of Italian Greek is not able to justify the large presence of Greek patterns in the Italian Romance of the extreme South. This presence can only be justified by a wide extent of medieval Hellenophony, which we can reconstruct on the grounds of various extra-linguistic evidence too. Medieval Hellenophony widely coincides with the ancient Hellenism of Graecia Magna. Therefore it is plausible to link modern and medieval Italian Greek to the ancient version.

However, despite his caution, Rohlfs' proposal exploded in Italy like a bomb. Italian scholars do not only refuse to accept it, often very severely, but also go as far as to consider the German scholar somewhat obsessed, if not even crazy. For instance, in his review of *Griechen und Romanen*, C. Battisti writes: «non so vincere l'impressione che l'Autore nella valutazione di questo materiale sia stato portato a conclusioni che oltrepassano gli estremi d'una logica deduzione» (Battisti 1927, 3), that is: «I can not get over my impression that, in assessing this material [i.e., the material which had been collected for the AIS], the Author has drawn conclusions which are well beyond the limits of a logical deduction».

Where does this strong dissent originate from?

Let us consider the special historical period. The Twenties and the Thirties are a period of heated Italian (and not only Italian) nationalism: Italy has just won the First World War, which is also, from an Italian viewpoint, the last war of independence (an example: C.

Battisti had been born as an Austro-Hungarian subject before becoming an Italian citizen). To sum up, there is no room for anything that is not part of the Italian spirit or –in other words and from a different chronological point of view- the Latin spirit.

And here is the *punctum dolens*.

In order to strengthen his proposal, G. Rohlfs is forced to deny that the Latins brought their language into Southernmost Italy. As a consequence, the present Romance dialects of this area can not directly derive from Latin but from a Romance medieval colonization (that is a move of Romance people) which the Normans would have supported after their conquest in the eleventh century of Southern Italy and Sicily. However, during the Twenties and the Thirties (that is to say, immediately after the process of Italian unification), this is exactly what Italian scholars could not accept. From their viewpoint, the Latinization of Southern Italy is absolutely undeniable. As a consequence, present Italian Greek must be of Byzantine origin.

It is evident that the reasons for the controversy between G. Rohlfs and the Italian scholars are chiefly ideological. Nevertheless, it could continue after the particular historical time in which it had arisen (and thus conditioned the attitude of the Italian scholars) for various concomitant reasons.

First of all, we can say that the debate clearly suggests a complete scientific indifference to the problems of the bilingualism. This circumstance is not fortuitous since before World War Two there was no methodological means of studying bilingualism (Uriel Weinreich's *Languages in contact* was published in 1953), which did not even have the right of scientific, as it were, citizenship.

In the second place, apart from their ideological attitude, the first of Rohlfs' opponents (C. Battisti but also G. Alessio, A. Pagliaro, V. Pisani...) were eminent scholars, whose opinions could not be ignored in Italy.

Finally, we have to note:

- to Rohlfs' advantage there was the fact that, in comparison with other dialects of Southern Italy, the Romance dialects of the extreme South actually seem to be more recent, at least as regards the lexicon. In other words, they give the impression (to tell the truth, not exactly a correct one: cp. for instance Fanciullo 1996, 93 ff.) that they do not directly originate from Latin but they have formed in a more recent period (Norman Kingdom, eleventh – thirteenth centuries);

- to the advantage of the Italian scholars there is the fact that we have no Greek documents (inscriptions etc.) which can bridge the gap between the second or at the late third century A.D. and the time when the Byzantines arrived (536 A.D.) – but on this point see below.

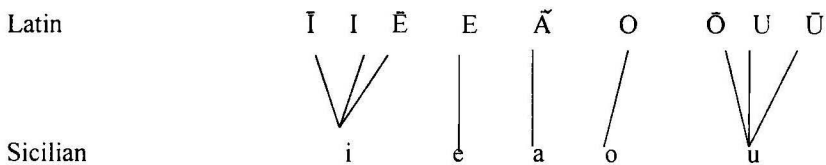
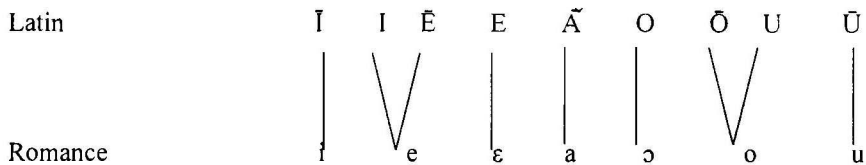
4. The results of World War Two certainly contributed to appease Italian nationalism, but without having an immediate effect on the controversy. The historical moment had changed, but scholars did not and their pupils (an example: O. Parlangei, Pisani's pupil) followed the path of their masters. A turning point only occurred from the Sixties and the Seventies on; but in the meantime the controversy had caused a feeling, as it were, of repletion, so that the interest in Italian Greek and in its problems was "out".

So, it was with some heresy that during a conference in Palermo in 1983, I resorted to Greek in order to explain a completely Romance fact, that is the *siciliano* ("Sicilian") vowel system, which characterizes the dialects of the whole of Sicily, most of Calabria and Southern Apulia, i.e., the dialects of extreme Southern Italy (Fanciullo 1984; see also Fanciullo 1996, pp. 11-22 and 39 f).

I have here to be concise.

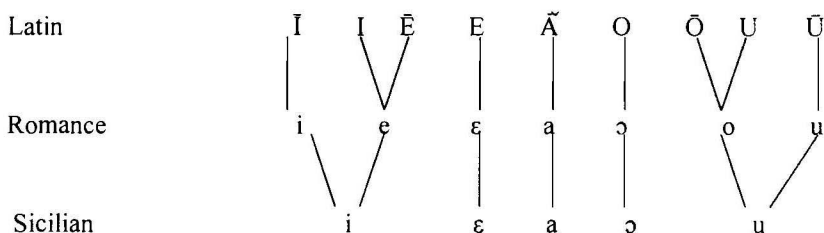
Four chief stressed vowel systems have originated from the Latin system: 1) the "Sardinian" system (which is typical of most of Sardinia); 2) the "Rumanian" system (typical of Rumanian language and its dialects); 3) the "Sicilian" system; 4) the "Common" (or "Romance") system, which remains almost pure in Italian and constitutes the starting point for the vowel systems of most Italian dialects and of the other Romance languages.

Let us omit the Sardinian and Rumanian systems, whose development cannot actually be reduced to the Common one, and let us compare the latter with the Sicilian one:



(in the Sicilian system /e/ < E and /o/ < O are usually mid low vowels: [ε] and [ɔ]).

It is clear that we can pass from the Common to the Sicilian system simply assuming that, in the latter, common /e/ (< I, Ē) and /o/ (< Ō, U) vowels have merged with /i/ (< Ī) and /u/ (< Ū) respectively:



Of course, we still have to explain the Sicilian merging of /e/ in /i/ and of /o/ in /u/; and it is exactly at this point that an intervention of Greek in its Byzantine phase is possible.

Let us consider some examples.

It.-Rom. [kan'dela] (cp. it. *candéla*) 'candle', with [e], originates from lat. CANDĒLA, from which we have also Greek κανδήλα 'oil lamp', with [i] in Byzantine and modern pronunciation ([kan'dila]). From Greek αποθήκη 'storehouse' we have Byz. and mod. Greek [apo'θici], with [i], but also Lat. APOTHĒCA, with Ē, whence It.-Rom. [po'teka] (cp. it. *bottéga* 'shop'), with [e]. If we consider lat. CRUSTA 'scab; crust', we can see that it gives rise either to It.-Rom. ['krosta], with [o] (cp. It. *crósta*), or ancient and modern Greek κρούστα, with [u]. In the same way, from Lat. FURNUS 'oven' we have both It.-Rom. ['fornu], with [o] (cp. It. *fórno*), and ancient / modern Greek φούρνος, with [u]. That is, in homoetymological words (which the bilingual speaker can easily recognize like those), Sicilian mid high vowels clearly correspond to Byzantine and Greek high vowels.

On the contrary, the other vowels ([i, 'e, 'a, 'o, 'u]) do not show any disparity in homoetymological words since they correspond to each other without problems:

λ[í]νον ~ l[í]nu 'flax; linen'

χ[é]ρσοϛ ~ j[é]rsu 'uncultivated'

κρεμ[á]στρα 'clothes hook' ~ kam[á]stra 'chimney chain'

π[ó]ρτα ~ p[ó]rta 'door'

κλειθ[ú]ρα 'gorge' ~ kjis[ú]ra 'cultivated enclosure'.

Let us imagine the bilingual speaker who in Byzantine Italy spoke both Romance and Greek. If we consider that:

- a) in both languages the homoetymological words were (and still are) not isolated but in large quantities;
  - b) both languages had (and still have) a set of homoetymological suffixes where the correspondences of stressed vowels are perfectly analogous to those we find in the words;
  - c) supported by the homoetymological words and suffixes, the correspondence of vowel systems was perfect except for [e] and [o] vowels, which are present in Romance but are not in Greek;
  - d) in any case, in a set of homoetymological words and suffixes, stressed Romance [e] and [o] clearly correspond(ed) to stressed Greek [i] and [u];
- it will not seem odd that Byzantine pressure triggered and step by step generalized the Romance shift [é] → [i] and [ó] → [u].

It goes without saying that I can produce no irrefutable evidence for affirming that the Sicilian vowel system has actually developed in accordance with this suggestion. My suggestion is precisely a suggestion. Nevertheless, an English scholar who works in Italy, J. Trumper, has recently repropounded this very idea (Trumper 1997, 361) but forgetting to quote my name. This is maybe an indication that my suggestion is well-grounded.

5. At this point, someone could say: well, let us concede that the Sicilian vowel system originates from a Byzantine pressure. But, if this is really the case, it does not tell us anything about Greek and Romance in the previous, i.e. pre-Byzantine, period.

However, things are not so schematic.

If well-grounded, my explanation regarding the Sicilian vowel system involves a high degree of bilingualism over a very wide area. In fact, the present area of where Sicilian vowel system dialects are spoken is about 35.000 kms.<sup>2</sup> wide, that is more than a tenth of the whole of Italy. Let us grant that this area was initially of a smaller scale and that the spread of this vowel system increased as a consequence of exclusively Romance dynamics

in the (post)medieval period (but all the clues seem to indicate the opposite). Even so, it would be too large an area to be Hellenized on Byzantine grounds only.

Regarding this, it is true that we are familiar with East-West movements of people in Byzantine times (cp. Parlangeli 1953, 141 f.). However, as far as we know, they are rare and unfit for a real Hellenization of Southern Italy. What we are aware of are only a few thousands of people (often slaves who did not speak Greek but other languages, Slavonic etc.), whose moves from the East are not concentrated in a definite moment but scattered throughout the sixth and eleventh centuries. On the other hand, the fact that our information is scarce reflects what we know about the potential of Byzantine shipping. This point has been emphasized by Vera von Falkenhausen (1982, 85). In accordance with the Byzantinist, a move of, say, 15.000 people from East to West in the tenth century would have required a fleet of at least 100 ships and a crossing without losses. It would have been a very complicated and expensive operation which was certainly not worthwhile. Besides, 15.000 people might seem a large number for the time, but effectively it would correspond to less than 0.5 inhabitants per square kilometre. This is in a land which, in the Middle Ages, was far from empty but, in spite of wars and disasters, among the Mediterranean's most densely populated regions.

If we consider the facts impartially, a break in Italian Hellenism between the Graecia Magna and Byzantine ages is difficult to justify. Of course, this does not mean that since there was Greek, Latin had not reached Southern Italy. We can not agree any more with such a strict (*either Greek or Latin*) antithesis for two reasons. From a general point of view, we can not transfer to ancient Europe the same peculiarities of modern Europe, like the correspondence *cuius regio eius lingua* (which nowadays seems to us somehow a natural circumstance but is only modern historical product). From a more contingent viewpoint, the Sicilian vowel system seems to be a certain indication of an extensive Greek-Romance symbiosis, which does not seem justified merely by Byzantine events. If a drastic change did take place in Byzantine Southern Italy, it was a religious and cultural one (that is, Southern Italy oriented itself in conformity with the *Weltanschauung* of Byzantium). However, a drastic change from a linguistic point of view looks rather improbable and, moreover, is refuted by recent epigraphic discoveries.

It is true that such discoveries are rare and regard Sicily much more than Calabria or Southern Apulia (and, what is more, they are published in reviews which are not easily available). Nevertheless, differently from the first of Rohlf's opponents we can no longer say that Strabo had the last word on the fortune of Graecia Magna Greek:

Νυνὶ δὲ πλὴν Τάραντος καὶ Φηγίου καὶ Νεαπόλεως  
ἐκβεβαρβωῶσθαι συμβέβηκεν ἅπαντα

(6,1,2).

Since «νυνί» alludes to Strabo's time (first century B.C. / first century A.D.)—this was the reasoning of Rohlf's opponents—, this would mean that 5 centuries later, when the Byzantines arrived in Italy, the linguistic legacy of Graecia Magna had completely disappeared. However Strabo's testimony does not regard *stricto sensu* the linguistic state as well as the political one (cp. Hatzidakis [1982], 443 f.; Tsopanakis, e.g. 1984). Moreover, with Strabo's testimony we are in the presence of a literary topos. As a matter of fact, three centuries before Strabo, Aristoxenos (fragm. 124 Wehrli) complained about the

decline of Posidonia (Paestum) using the same verb and in the same form («ἐκβεβαρβωροῦσθαι») which Strabo would have used three centuries later. The *tournure syntactique* also seems to be the same: «συνέβη [...] ἐκβεβαρβωροῦσθαι» Aristoxenos ~ «ἐκβεβαρβωροῦσθαι συμβέβηκεν» Strabo.

In any case, such assertions have to be considered with some scepticism. We receive a confirmation of this from the Byzantine historiographer N. Grigoràs (first half of the fourteenth century), who wrote about the Hellenism of Southern Italy: «καὶ οὐδὲν ἔτι ἶχνος ἐλλέλειπται μὴ ὅτι γε μούσης Ἑλληνικῆς ἀλλ' οὐδὲ διαλέκτου κοινῆς» (cp. Gigante [1982], 153). It should be noted that N. Grigoràs wrote these words in the same period in which the Italian poet Francesco Petrarca advised a pupil of his to go to learn Greek not in Constantinople (because of the dangers of the journey) but in Calabria (cp. Rohlfs 1974, 17 f.). However, from the point of view of the language if not of poetry, Grigoràs' assertion is false even 650 years later.

6. As far as pre-Byzantine texts of Italian source are concerned, I shall mention here only two *specimina* from Consani 1997.

A) part of a text on a cross-shaped lead lamina; origin: neighbourhood of Syracuse; dating: fifth / sixth century A.D.:

Κ(ύρι)ε Κ(ύρι)ε βοή // †θ[foramen]η // σον τοῦ δού(λου) // σον τῆ(ς) δ(ού)λις //  
 Κ(ύρι)ε βοό(θη)σον // Ἀγίαν Ανα //τας, // ἄν βο(ή) // (θη)σον Κ(ύρι)ε Κ(ύρι)ε //  
 α(ῖ)τῆς ὦ θεός τῆ(ς) δού(λις) // † ὦ θεός τῆ(ς) δού(λις) σον Λ † α(ῖ)τός τ(ῆ)ς //  
 δού(λις) // βοή(θησον) παρ α(ῖ)τ // ἄς Κ(ύρι)ε δού // λου σον // ἵγιος Κ(ύρι)ε  
 βοή(θησον) ὦ θεός // τῆ(ς) δού(λις) σον // Ἀμέγ

(Consani 1997, 225);

B) passage of a *phylakterion*; origin: Mòdica (Sicily); dating: fifth century A.D.:

† Πρὸς ε(ῖ)καρ // (πί)α(ν), χουρίον (καὶ) κλα // ρίον [...]

(ib. 226).

Let us omit the interpretation problems and consider phonetic changes such as η > ι (τῆ(ς), δούλις; text A), υ > σ in α(ῖ)τῆς (text A) and ε(ῖ)καρ(πί)α(ν) (text B), -ν > σ in the same ε(ῖ)καρ(πί)α(ν). Let us especially consider Doric phonetic peculiarities such as α(ῖ)τῆς instead of αἰτῆς and κλαρίον instead of (\*)κληρίον (< κληρος).

Although the texts are of exclusively Sicilian origin (it would be more interesting if we also had something like this as regards Calabria and Apulia too), they are Greek documents whose dating immediately precedes the arrival of the Byzantines. Moreover, as C. Consani points out, here we can see at work the interaction between the Doric legacy and adaptation to the patterns of κοινή, whose results are still perceptible especially in present *bovese*-Greek (see below).



The latter circumstance has a special importance since still recently the already quoted J. Trumper among the «counterarguments» to the ancient origins of Italian Greek has cited:

«• a preponderance of Gk diminutives, e.g., -ίον as in σκῶψ > σκωπίον > [sk(r)u'pɪu] 'scops owl';

• vowel outcomes typical of modern Gk peripheral dialects: υ > ου (τολύπη > τουλούπα > [tu'lupa] 'boundle');

• lexical items indicating a Middle Gk / Byzantine source: e.g., C[lassical] Gk σειστυγίς > Byzantine σεισίκωλον > [si'sikula], ['sekula], [seku'leḡða] 'wagtail'»

(Trumper 1997, 355 f.).

In this way Trumper has again put into circulation a point of view which, in Italy, O. Parlangèli (1953, 109) had expressed long before and G. Rohlfs (1972, 4 f.) had already censured (maybe J. Trumper was not acquainted with this), that is: if present Italian Greek had ancient origins, it would not show the same evolution as Common Greek does but it would preserve a more archaic phase.

Explicitly or implicitly, this point of view is based on two assumptions:

- there would be a considerable distinction between ancient and Byzantine Greek;
- the pre-Byzantine political isolation of Italy from the Greek-speaking East would have prevented Italian Greek from evolving congruously with Eastern Greek. Therefore, if ancient, the former would exhibit a pre-Byzantine *facies*.

Both assumptions are incorrect.

As far as the first is concerned, it is well known that the main linguistic phenomena of Byzantine Greek are in many cases generalization at all levels of phenomena which were already present at some level in ancient Greek. For instance, generalized throughout (or nearly throughout) the Byzantine world, the outcome η > [i] is already present not only, as is well known, in Beotian from the most ancient texts but also, at the end of the fifth century B.C., in Athens, where it appears in some texts which seem to be exercises of school-children (that is, in non-standardized texts; cp. Lazzeroni 1999, 140 f.). By the way, I myself must make a specification: when I say that the Sicilian vowel system originates from Byzantine pressure, I make use of a brachylogy instead of «pressure of the Greek vowel system as it completely manifests itself in the Byzantine period».

With regard to the second assumption, the *excerpta* of texts we have seen before clearly show that the relations between Eastern and Western (Italian) Greek never stopped in an irrevocable way during the first half millennium of our era. Let us observe, in text B, especially the hypocorisms (with -ίον termination, which, according to Trumper, would have to be an indication of Byzantine transmission) χουρίον, certainly instead of a χωρίον, and κλαρίον: both preceding the arrival of the Byzantines and the latter joining the Doric legacy and adaptation to the κοινή patterns. On the other hand, before the Byzantines and in relation with Greece, Italy could not be seen as an isolated area, so to say an area beyond the Pillars of Hercules.

(I would like to add that in no way are Italian Greek «vowel outcomes typical of modern Gk peripheral dialects» understandable as a «counterargument» to the ancient origins of Italian Greek. Do «peripheral dialects» such as, for example, Cretan or Cappadocian presuppose a later origin only because of their being peripheral?).

7. Now that on both Ionian shores there is agreement about the ancient origins of Italian Greek (on the Italian side, at least as far as I am concerned!), is our task over?

I do not think so.

Here, I will not dwell on the importance of studying both *grico* and *bovese* in themselves (a topic which certainly attracts the attention of any linguist interested in bilingualism). However, from my point of view, the fact that we can finally leave aside the false problem regarding the origins of the Greek which is still spoken in Italy, this fact opens to us two millennia of linguistic exchange, whose history still needs to be clarified in its innumerable details.

Let me conclude with a couple of examples.

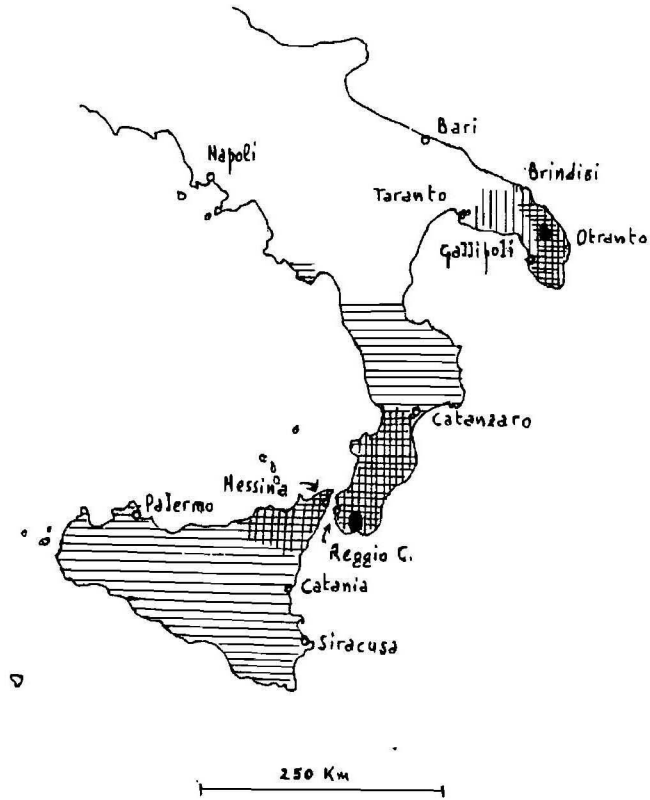
First example. In the eleventh century, in Oppido (Southern Calabria) a Μουλέ (a Muslim, to judge from his name; < Ar. m a w l ā 'lord') stresses his acquired Greek origin by affirming that he is «'έγγων του Λαχανᾶ κατὰ τεῖς γεινεκός μου» (Guillou 1972, diploma 23, line 1; obviously Λαχανᾶς is a Greek name, 'greengrocer'). This is sufficient to show us the complicated social stratification of Byzantine Italy and, as a consequence, the importance of analyzing it from a sociolinguistic viewpoint.

Second example. Collecting the Doric materials of present Italian Greek, A. Karanastasis (1984, xxiii ff.) assembles 23 lexical items, of which only one is exclusive to Apulia Greek, one is of both Apulia Greek and Calabria Greek and 21 are exclusive to Calabria Greek. Perhaps this is fortuitous; and perhaps it is an indication of events which are different and need an explanation. The right way to consider the question is being sensitive to differences, not to level everything on the same line. So, on the basis of observations which I can not here enlarge on at length, elsewhere (Fanciullo 1996, 147 ff.) I have formulated the hypothesis that whereas *bovese* (Calabria Greek) is directly connected to the Greek of Graecia Magna (an indication of this can be precisely the large number of Doric items *bovese* preserves), *grico* (Apulia Greek) could originate from a Hellenization of Southern Apulia during the (late) Roman Empire. This was at the moment when the Messapians, leaving their by then provincial language, came to lie on the border between Greek East and Latin West.

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● present Greek-speaking areas

|||| Romance area where the Dédu va nóu pattern is  
in use

==== Romance area with "Sicilian" vowel system