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Reflexes of the Habsburg empire multilingualism in some Triestine literary texts

In 1964 two contemporary Triestine writers, Lino Carpinteri and Mariano Faraguna, published a book of poems entitled *Serbidiòla*. The poems, full of nostalgia, speak about the past when the Habsburg town of Trieste was the most important Adriatic harbour and a significant Central European centre. The book was an absolute success since it was one of the first that showed how profoundly one of the largest and most powerful states in Europe's modern history had been, and still was, interwoven into collective memory, not only of Trieste's citizens, but also that of many people living in the territories surrounding the town and even in regions further away from Trieste, such as Dalmatia. Apart from numerous scenes evoking places and events connected to the history of the town during the last three decades of the Habsburg Empire and, consequently, its government in Trieste, another element worth mentioning is of linguistic nature. Poems written in the Triestine dialect attract the scholar's attention because of the number of borrowings, either formally integrated or not, that penetrated into the Triestine dialect from languages used in the town and elsewhere in the Empire as well. An analysis of the texts shows that German, Croatian, Hungarian and other loanwords belong to different semantic fields and that they perform important textual functions.

Key words: multilingualism; loanword; Triestine dialect.

1. Introduction

In the nineteenth century, the Habsburg Monarchy was geographically one of the largest European countries. In comparison to other European states, it was



rather peculiar because of its officially declared multiculturalism and multilingualism, which was particularly perceptible in the Austrian army, in which soldiers of different nationalities fought side by side. In order to overcome difficulties caused by the numerous ethnicities and languages, the Habsburgs invented the principle of the Habsburg compromise, which stimulated the coexistence of differences¹ rather than their assimilation (Bagger, according to Magris 1992: 54). As could be expected, the multicultural texture of the Habsburg world, which was characterized by the oxymoron “the unity of differences” (referring to national, territorial, linguistic, religious, and other types of differences), left much evidence in all spheres of human life, including language. It is therefore legitimate to expect remnants of multiculturalism and multilingualism in any culture (and in any language) that during its history was affected by the Habsburg Empire. In this sense, varieties of the Italian language² that are used in former Austro-Hungarian lands are no exception.

2. Sociolinguistic aspects

When studying contact between different linguistic components in one territory, we should consider this phenomenon, as Corrado Grassi (1991) observes, in terms of three variables: the historical moment in which the language is used, the geographical territory where the language is used and the domain in which the language is used. Therefore, when we take into consideration Italian within the Habsburg Monarchy, it should be remembered that, even though Italian was a language of culture in most non-Italian territories, used for instance even by Mozart, we are dealing with different types of Italian. In Trieste and its surroundings, Italian was an autochthonous language with horizontal and vertical

¹ Terms such as multiculturalism, multilingualism, coexistence of differences and similar are used to describe the Habsburgs' discourse (for “discourse” cf. Rindler Schjerve 2000: 10) policy after 1848 (a year of revolution in Europe) and in particular after 1867 (the second landmark in the history of the Empire). Although German was declared to be the official language across the empire, the power-holders decided to grant schooling in national languages which led to their introduction and use in public institutions. However, the Habsburgs continued to exercise their power in order to reproduce norms and values that were to guarantee their domination in that part of Europe. Cf. Rindler Schjerve (2000: 13, 15).

² We use the term Italian language as a cover term indicating a whole diasystem, one which embraces modern standard Italian (a synchronic perspective) or the Italian of literature and culture in a certain period of time (a diachronic perspective) and all its variants (diatopical, diastratical and diaphasical).



varieties. Consequently, after the Congress of Vienna in 1815, when the idea of the inseparability of nation and language became a reality, the conflict between Italian and German in Habsburg Italy³ became more evident (Grassi 1991).

As for the geographical variable, although we are speaking primarily of Trieste, we must take into consideration another Italian region governed by the Habsburgs, that of Trent, because the relationship between the German and Italian languages in these two regions was different. In Trent, the Italian language was the cultural patrimony of the middle and lower clergy and of middle and lower bourgeois class⁴ who were antagonistic towards the German language which symbolised power (Bourdieu 1991). In Trieste, on the other hand, Italian was an element of culture and cohesion in an originally heterogeneous community and, at the same time, a prerequisite to turn that community into a European one; moreover, numerous ethnical components were all submitted to the Italian⁵ majority, and antagonistic relations existed mainly between the local Italian and Slovene populations (Grassi 1991: 159), as Slovenes were numerous in the town and constituted an absolute majority in the surrounding countryside (Holjevac 1952: 96; Czeitschner 2003: 71).

When we come to a domain in which language is used, Italian, apart from being a language of culture, was a professional language as well. Together with Latin and German, Italian was used in testamentary documents in Vienna (Thirier 1976, according to Grassi 1991: 159) but more importantly; it was the language of the Austrian navy⁶ and mercantile marine.⁷

³ The same type of conflict occurred in many parts of the Habsburg Monarchy. It is necessary to draw the attention to a similar situation in Kvarner, a zone which after 1867 came under the jurisdiction of Hungary and where Italian and Hungarian, in addition to Croatian, were in concurrent use.

⁴ It is important to notice that Trent's middle and lower urban classes formed a liberal stratum well-disposed to socialist ideas that eventually gave birth to Italian irredentism aiming at the region's annexation to Italy (Grassi 1991: 159).

⁵ According to functional model proposed by Heinz Kloss but elaborated by John Trumper and, in particular for the Veneto region, by Žarko Muljačić and J.J. Montes Giraldo, the town of Trieste was characterized by macrodiglossia. There were at least three interrelated languages, German as high language, Triestine dialect (in fact an urban *koinè*) as a prestigious variant and the central term ("medium" language, ML) of that macro-diglossic model, and Slovene as low (dominated) language. For further information concerning macro-diglossia in Veneto cf. Muljačić (1993: 45-46) and (1996: 469-476).

⁶ There are many data that document the use of Italian in the Austrian navy. Here we point out only two: Christoph Ransmayer, *Die Schrecken des Eises und der Finsternis*, Frankfurt a/M,



The town of Trieste was under Habsburg rule for centuries⁸ and was in fact the centre of one of the oldest parts of the Monarchy. As a prosperous seaport in the Mediterranean region, Trieste was the fourth largest city of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (after Vienna, Budapest, and Prague) in the eighteenth century. By that time, the Triestine dialect had already lost its Friulan⁹ origin; moreover, with a continuous influx of German words, it was gradually becoming less and less *patoco*, i. e. pure (Doria 1978). Historical data (Holjevac 1952: 96) confirm that in the nineteenth century Trieste was a thriving multilingual town, with continuous migration and a constantly growing population pouring in from all parts of the Monarchy, where many institutions, such as *Lloyd Austriaco* and other mercantile companies, had their headquarters. As mentioned above, Italian was used for state purposes and in the navy. But thanks to the economic domination of Prussia, which encouraged all sorts of connections with

FischerTaschebuch Verlag, 1984; Michael Metzeltin, *La marina asburgica e le sue lingue. Guida ai dialetti veneti*, XII, Padova: CLEUP, 1990: 59-71.

⁷ In 1717 emperor Charles IV founded in Ostende the “Kaiserliche Ost- und Westindische Handelskompagnie”, i. e. a fleet of mercantile marine; almost immediately, branch offices were opened in many places, even in those rather distant. Two years later, Trieste and Rijeka were proclaimed free harbours (*porto franco*), while on 4 October 1726 two cutters, the “Kaiser Karl der Sechste” and the “Trieste”, entered Trieste’s harbour as military vessels. From that day onward, until 1918, a red-white-red flag was flown on every Austrian ship. In 1814 Austria occupied the Venice naval arsenal and organized the “Oesterreichisch-Venezianische Marine,” whose marine corps, artillery and coast guard were formed of ex-Venetian navy men, including Istrians, Dalmatians (cf. Milanović 1973). The official language became Italian (cf. *Istruzioni per li signori ufficiali di marina comandanti gli appostamenti marittimi nelli circondarj de' comandi divisionali di Zara, Venezia e Trieste*, scatola 320 *Austria - Marina*, Biblioteca Civica, Trieste) and the commanding languages were Italian and Croatian, since many ship captains came from many places on the eastern Adriatic. Those captains who aimed at moving up in the ranks had to know German as well. From 1848 onward all officers had to be native speakers of German, while the crew (*bassa forza*) continued to be made up of men from the eastern Adriatic (cf. Carpinteri and Faraguna, *Le Maldobrie*, Trieste: Cittadela, 1965, “sti patrioti, ‘sti piranesi, ‘sti istriani, ‘sti dalmati”).

⁸ The Italian territories ruled by the Habsburgs were those in north-eastern Italy. The town of Trieste came under their authority in 1382. In 1803 other territories, which we are not interested in on this occasion, were added: Bishoprics of Trent (i. e. Trento) and Brixen (i.e. Bressanone), Gorizia and Gradisca (i.e. inner Austria).

⁹ The growing economical importance of Trieste in the eighteenth century caused changes in the urban population: the old noble families of Trieste started to lose their power as a new urban class of merchants began to rise. This change had repercussions in language since the original Triestine dialect, known as Tergestino, which was of Friulan origin and a continuation of the autochthonous Romance language, was gradually overcome and finally replaced altogether by a Venetian variety (Doria 1978: 7).



the Habsburg Monarchy, German was the language of state administration and bureaucracy in general, as well as of trade. Many famous Triestine citizens, such as Mayor Domenico Rossetti (1774–1842) or historian Pietro Kandler (1804–1872), were hostile to German expansionism (Apih 1988) and thus very determined to eliminate all foreign words, especially German ones, from Triestine, but their attempts failed (Doria 1978: 93–96): Austrian (and German) economic expansion was far too strong for a handful of Triestine intellectuals. It is not an exaggeration if we say that in the *fin-de-siècle* period Triestine culture and literature were a reflex of not only Viennese culture and literature, but German culture in general. These facts document that for a long time Trieste was a meeting-point of languages and nations that coexisted there.

3. A literary text in Triestine

One of possible sources for studying the phenomena of multiculturalism and multilingualism in the Habsburg Empire can be found in most literary texts by two Triestine writers, Lino Carpinteri and Mariano Faraguna.¹⁰ On this occasion we will focus on their book of poems entitled *Serbidiòla*. The title of the book, i.e. the word *Serbidiòla* itself, indicates the pronunciation, while singing, of the

¹⁰ Lino Carpinteri (1924) and Mariano Faraguna (1924–2001) worked together, in pair, ever since 1945 when they started as journalists in Triestine newspaper “Il Piccolo”. Although their creative work in pair is very rich and varied (they wrote chronicles for the paper, wrote and directed stories for the radio, produced for the Triestine drama theatre, translated, etc.), they became famous thanks to their stories speaking about life in the eastern Adriatic under the Habsburgs. Namely, in 1965 Carpinteri and Faraguna published the first of their books of narratives entitled *Le Maldobrie*, and then followed *Prima della prima guerra* (1967), *L’Austria era un paese ordinato* (1969), *Noi delle vecchie province* (1971), *Povero nostro Franz* (1976) and *Viva l’A.* (1983). The books form a cycle known as *maldobrie* thanks to several elements, such as a structure of every story (a virtual meeting of two stereotyped interlocutors that evoke and tell stories about events and people situated in different places on the coast and islands of the eastern Adriatic), a very precise toponymy of events narrated and the language used in stories. As for the last component, the linguistic variant used in the stories is a *koiné*, that reflects either Triestine dialect or other Venetian variants in use in the eastern Adriatic urban centres of Pula, Rijeka, Zadar, etc., which all function as the basis, and which were “contaminated” with lexical borrowings from other languages (German, Croatian, Slovene, Hungarian, Latin) in contact. The word *maldobria*, found in the title of the first book is a result of putting together of one neo-Latin (presumably Italian) lexical element (*male, malo* ‘bad’) and one Slavic (presumably Croatian or Slovene lexical element (*dobar/dobra/dobro* or *dobber/dobra/dobro*, ‘good’) that was integrated into the autochthonous languages through of a series of formal processes at various linguistic levels.



first line of the Italian version of the Habsburg Empire's anthem: *Serbi Dio l'Austriaco Regno* ('God save the Austrian Empire'). The edition of *Serbidiòla* in question consists of two parts. Here we will analyze its first part,¹¹ which consists of 70 poems in the Triestine dialect. The poems refer with a humorous tone to the past of Habsburgian Trieste, which, according to Morris, could have been defined as a microcosm of the Empire (Morris 2001:118). At the same time, these short analyses of the Triestine soul in rhyme (Kezich 1990: 99), reveal which traditional values have been lost in the meantime and help the reader learn more about the former habits and practices of the town, about toponyms that have perished or changed, and about famous historical people or humble and anonymous citizens. All these issues, pointing back to a period in the past when the multiethnic Trieste was the major Central European port, seem to bring back memories about the same period in other urban centres of the eastern Adriatic, all of which found their model in the town of Trieste and were dominated by it.

4. The language of the poems

The analysis of the language of the poems shows that it reproduces traits of several Triestine variants. However, when morphological and syntactic elements are observed, a dominant variant is the one that Doria (1978 :104–107) defines as half-way between Triestine *patoco* (or pure) and Triestine *negrón* (a vernacular characterized by overstressed dialectal characteristics), largely spoken during the late 19th and early 20th century.¹² According to Doria (1978: 107), it is primarily in the choice of lexemes where a *negrón* variant is most perceptible and a

¹¹ In the first edition of *Serbidiòla*, published in 1964, the part in prose and entitled *Il viaggio dell'imperatore* ('The Emperor's Journey') was missing. It is present in the 2nd edition and it consists of 9 short compositions that summon up the Emperor's journey in train that eventually ended at Cormons, i. e. the last stop before the frontier with Italy. Those lines of reminiscence offer the possibility to recollect many situations in which the imperial anthem was sung.

¹² Even though space is limited, here are some traits that characterize the mentioned variants of Triestine dialect. Phonetic characteristics of *negrón* include still forms with [ts] and not with [tS] *zeste* (54) = *ceste*, 'baskets'; /u/ instead of /o/: *fussi* (91) = *fosse* (subjunctive, 2nd and 3rd pr. sg. of 'to be'); the passage of -er in -ar in voiceless syllable *sioparo* (60) = *sciopero*, 'strike'; a loss of the initial vowel, as in *rivava* = *arivava*, 'I was coming', *morose* (54) = *amorose*, 'sweethearts', *pena* (55) = *appena*, 'hardly'. As for some lexical elements that characterize *negrón*, we can cite the following: *rente* (88), 'behind'; *tola* (91) = *tavola*, 'table'; *buso* (89) = *prigione*, 'prison'; *bibita* (86) = *vino*, 'vine'.



lexical analysis of the poems presents us with a number of rigorously dialectal forms and numerous foreign lexical elements, borrowed from several languages. The use of these loanwords, either formally integrated or not, within poems in the Triestine dialect (i. e. language receiver), exemplify quite successfully what multilingualism of the Habsburg Monarchy really meant.

When we study the process of linguistic borrowing, we must always take into consideration its various aspects as well as all the factors that have caused it. In line with this, all borrowed lexical elements found in our poems in the Triestine dialect can be classified according to several parameters. Following one of them, i.e. the origin of the loanwords, there are two neatly distinguished groups. In one group there are elements coming from languages used by the nations of the Habsburg Monarchy, that is, German, Croatian, Slovenian or Hungarian, as language givers. To these, Latin, even though it was not a national language, should be added to the same group as well, mainly because it enjoyed widespread use, being a language of religion and jurisdiction¹³ on the territory of the whole Empire. In contrast with this group is another one which includes loanwords from languages such as English, French, Arabic,¹⁴ etc. which we will not be dealing with here. Another possible means of classification is according to the function that each loanword performs within the text under consideration, which in this case is poetic. Languages forming the first group, whose elements are in the centre of our interest, could be approached in regard to their position towards the language receiver, i. e. the Triestine dialect, and thus analyzed as high or low language (Muljačić 1996).

4.1. *German elements*

The most numerous elements are those borrowed from the Austrian variant of the German language. This is congruous to two crucial moments during the cen-

¹³ The long-lasting practice of the Croatian Parliament to use Latin during its sessions was due to a common desire of its members to avoid the use of German or Hungarian, since their mother tongue, Croatian, was forbidden (Frangeš 1987).

¹⁴ Since the presentation of these elements is beyond the scope of this paper, we shall only quote some of them in order to illustrate the variety of loanwords in the analyzed poems. English elements: *brum* (75, 95) and *brun* (67) < *brougham*, *ganga* (50) < *gang*, *revolver* (16, 29); French elements: *bombon* (31, 75) < *bonbon*, 'candy', *decolté* (84) < *décolleté*, 'neckline'; Islamic elements: *rahat lokum* (75) < *rahat lokum* and *halva* (75), sorts of sweets, *fez* (75), a sort of cap decoration, etc.



ennial presence of the Habsburg dynasty in Trieste and its surroundings, i.e. proclamation of Trieste as a free harbour and its establishment as a stage where German economical growth was to be tested. In the introductory part of this paper we also pointed to the role of the Imperial army in the spreading of the German language. In accordance with all this, loanwords from the Austrian variant of German present in the poems of *Serbidiola* confirm that cultural and linguistic contacts happened in certain easily predicted areas, so that we can speak of the following elements:

4.1.1. elements concerning the Imperial family, including toponymy (*Got bescizze*, 58;¹⁵ *Spanische Schule*, 61; *Kronprinz*, 74; *Kaiser*, 93; *Kaiserschule*, 50);

4.1.2. elements concerning the every-day life (*Baedecker*, 61; *carantan*, 22, 47; *cucer*, 67; *fliche*, 18,26,30, 71, 76, 80; *gomasse*, 14, 33; *Oberschule*, 40; *sbizza*, 52; *scheo*, 14, 46, 48, 55, 79, 83, 91, 93; *scandal*, 91; *sine*, 35, 71, 73; *slinga*, 73; *slucar*, 73, *smirn*, 80);

4.1.3. elements concerning the military environment, which can be furthermore subdivided into (a) those related to discipline and hierarchy (*Abtät*, 51; *Ober dei ulani*, 16; *An-zwai*, 59), and (b) those indicating objects and military life (*patrone*, 51, 60; *trupa*, 60; *Platzkomando*, 62);

4.1.4. elements linked to wit, behaviour, feelings, ideology (*viz*, 42, 79; *Schöne Stadt*, 51; *darse marot*, 62; *esser sopa*, 55; *chez*, 75).

More than a century ago Hugo Schuchardt observed that most contacts occurred in Austrian barracks where the language of communication was *Armeedeutsh* (Gusmani 1993: 259) even for those who were not German speakers. Within the Habsburg Monarchy, all men doing military service were compelled to acquire some basic knowledge in order to understand and to be understood. Apart from loanwords typical of military jargon, the poems also include those that are linked to various situations in everyday communication, which also gave rise to language contact. These were construction yards (*smirn* < *Schmiere*, f., 'grease', cf. Doria 1987: 639; *sine* > *Schiene*, f., 'rails', cf. Doria 1987: 631; *slinga* < *Schlinge*, f., 'noose', cf. Doria 1987: 638; *sbizza* < *Spitze*, f., 'spoke of a wheel', cf. Doria 1987: 668) and markets and trade oriented environments (*ca-*

¹⁵ The numbers following the examples written in italics, and quoted for the first time, refer to the number of the page in the book.



rantan, originally an ethnic relative to Carantana or Carinzia; in the text it indicates a coin, cf. Doria 1987: 130; *flica*¹⁶ < *Flichen*, m; *scheo* < *Scheidemünze*¹⁷), since such social contexts were meeting points for people of different origins and languages who gathered for work. The rest of loans, indicating professions (*cucer* < *Kutscher*, ‘coachman’, cf. Doria 1987: 188), objects (*gommasse*, f < *Gamasche*, f. ‘knee-stock’, cf. Doria 1987: 166, 259), *Baedecker*, cf. n. 20), phenomena (*scandal*) or elements of character and mentality (*viz*¹⁸ < *Witz*, m., ‘joke’), affirm the overwhelming strength of Austrian influence that in time extended notably. For the reason mentioned above, and despite the fact that the Austrian influence was strongly backed up by German (i.e. Prussian) politics and economic power (especially after 1870), we consider the term “Habsburg linguistic element” to be more appropriate when indicating linguistic borrowings from the German diasystem during the Habsburgs’ reign and domination instead of a common and simple term, i.e. the German element.

Unfortunately, on this occasion we must neglect several interesting issues concerning the process of borrowing itself (either from German or from other languages), such as the analysis of formal adaptations at all levels, i. e. at the phonological¹⁹ and thus also at the orthographical level: *sine* [sine], f. pl. < *Schiene* [Sine], f. sg.; *cucer* [ku’tSer] < *Kutcher* [ku’tSer], m; *viz* [vits] < *Witz* [wits]; *Abtāt* [ab’tat] < *Habt Acht* [habt’aht]/ etc., or at the morpho-syntactic level: *slucar* [slukar] < *sluc*, n. < *Schluck*, + ar(e), the verbal morpheme in Triestine, although neither the German verb *schlucken* should not be excluded as possible starting form; etc. Another important detail that we can only mention concerns the typology of the Habsburg borrowings from the formal point of

¹⁶ German word *Flicker*, meaning ‘patch’ spread out and gained a new meaning, ‘coin’, thanks to the fact that during the Risorgimento Wars, Austria used to substitute metal coins with paper of low quality that in a short time would reduce to tatters. The change in meaning is an example of the semantic shift. Cf. Doria (1987: 239).

¹⁷ The word *Scheidemünze*, was a part of the usual inscription written on the reverse of the Austrian coin meaning “fractional money”. The part “schei” used to be read separately and with Italian pronunciation, i.e. [skei] vs. [Sai]. Cf. Doria (1987: 585).

¹⁸ Although this word was borrowed from German, *Witz*, this is the only loan that would not belong strictly to the group of the Habsburg loanwords, since, according to Doria (1987: 789) it entered into Triestine dialect after 1920. However, it is possible that it was known even before that period.

¹⁹ In order to illustrate phonological adaptations that are reflected in the Habsburg borrowings, and that we cannot discuss on this occasion, let us observe only one example. German diphthong /ai/ is sometimes integrated as /a/ and sometimes remains /ai/ in the receiving system, as it is in *An-Zwai* < *Ein - Zwei*.



view, since there are both single words and syntagms as well (e.g. *An-Zwai* < *Ein – Zwei* or *Got besizze* < *Gott besitze*). Further, apart from the elements formally adapted to the receiving language, there are also some non-integrated elements (*Schöne Stadtd*, *Spanische Schule*, *Baedecker*) and these speak to the importance that written canals (inscriptions, manifests, book titles,²⁰ etc.) had in spreading elements of high language.

A particularly interesting issue that requires detailed analysis concerns those Habsburg words, either formally integrated or not, that were, as Gusmani would say, ACCLIMATIZED (Gusmani 1983), or, according to the theory of Rudolf Filipović (1986) submitted to the secondary adaptation at the semantic level. Regardless of the adopted terminology, the point is that such elements underwent semantic changes gaining new meanings or becoming productive in the target language.

The German adverb *ober* underwent a semantic shift in the Triestine dialect (and in other Veneto dialects in contact with Austrian varieties of German) so that it is used also as a noun, meaning ‘chief’, ‘superior’, as the syntagm *Ober dei ulani*²¹ shows, and hence ‘the chief of ulans’.

Another element that should be mentioned is the form *Abtät*. It corresponds to two German words, forming one of the most frequent army orders *Habt Acht!* meaning ‘Halt!’ The loanword was adapted at all levels, phonetic, morpho-syntactic and semantic, since, according to the text, it doesn’t only evoke the well-known order or doesn’t denote the expected behaviour, but actualizes textual functions. Namely, the examples show that its illocutionary force was so well known²² that its usage became common even in other environments, much different from military environments, such as a guarantee for maximum disci-

²⁰ One of the examples to confirm this is the word *Baedecker*, commonly used to indicate any travellers’ guidebook, since Karl Baedeker’s publishing company set the standard for the authoritative editions of that type.

²¹ The word *ulano*, noun of masc. gend., indicates a particular type of soldiers in the 14th century Polish army armed with a lance and sword. Later this type of soldiers spread into other European armies, in Prussian (in the 18th century) and in Austro-Hungarian as well, where it existed until the World War I. Cf. Battaglia (2002: 511).

²² The same command adapted as *Aptak!* exists in many substandard varieties of Croatian, either in those spoken in northern Croatia (in Zagreb, for instance), or in southern dialects (in Split and its surroundings).



pline and order in any situation. Similarly, the use of the exclamation *chez!*²³ an insult, whose domain of usage was therefore restrictive, could, apart from expressing an insult, also signal just an intention to insult and thus became typical of a wider range of informal communicative situations.

Perhaps the best manifestations of a complexity of language borrowing process are some peculiar structures, phrasal verbs made up of one borrowed and one autochthonous element. The syntagm *darse marot* consists of the native word *darse*, 'pretend' and of the loanword *marot* < *marode*, 'ailing', 'exhausted', and the meaning associated with it is 'to pretend to be ailing/exhausted' (Doria 1987: 362). The expression *esser sope*, -a is formed of the native verb *esser*, 'to be' and of the German element *sope*, -a < *Suppe*, f., 'soup'. The loanword *sopa* underwent the process of loanshift and acquired a new meaning, i. e. "a piece of bread soaked with soup" (Doria 1987: 362). However, the same structure in combination with the native verb gave birth to a completely new meaning, so that *esser sopa* means 'dullness, boredom' or 'a dull/ boring show':

(1) *Che Wagner copa de tanto che el xe sopa.* (55).

4.2. Slovene and Croatian elements

Those who are well acquainted with the history of southern Slavic languages, know that sometimes it is quite difficult to separate contributions of Slovene and Croatian languages, as distinct language givers, to the Triestine dialect. It is due to the fact that the line, along which Croatian and Slovene come into contact, starts in the same area where contacts between Slovenian and Triestine²⁴ occurred. There are therefore many loanwords in the Triestine dialect (and consequently in other Veneto dialects spoken on the eastern Adriatic) that, on the basis of their prosodic characteristics or of their form (particularly in nominative-case nouns), can be either of Slovene or of Croatian origin. But, as we are analyzing and discussing poems written in the Triestine dialect that speak of Tri-

²³ According to Doria (1987: 145), the word, or rather expression, *chez!*, is the adaptation of German exclamation *Geh zum Teufel!*, 'go to the Devil!'. This exemplifies the lack of a voiced/ unvoiced distinction in word-initial Austrian consonants, which can be observed also in the loanword *sope* < *Suppe*, cf. below.

²⁴ The general phenomenon concerning contacts between different Croatian variants and the Triestine dialect (and its variants), throughout most of the eastern Adriatic coast and its islands, often is referred to as *Croatian-Romance symbiosis* (Šimunović 2009: 19).



este, it is very likely that the Slovene influence was stronger and thus dominant, since the Slovene presence in the town of Trieste (Čermelj 1974; Ara and Margis 1987) was continuous and as long as the German one, although of a different quality and nature. In the second half of the nineteenth²⁵ century and at the beginning of the twentieth century, Slovenes constituted the majority in agricultural zones around Trieste (Skubic 1997) and the second ethnic group (after Veneto-Italian group) in the town (Apih 1988).²⁶ In accordance with these historical and social facts, the Slovene borrowings (and a few of them, as said before, can be Croatian as well) present in our poems reflect an extra-linguistic reality, i. e. domestic and rural environment typical of Trieste's peripheral territories. Since we are dealing with only eight elements²⁷, we shall quote them in alphabetical order: *baba* (35, 36, 46, 54, 73, 78), *cisti* (60); *cluca* (50, 73), *gripizza* (61), *juza* (25), *nazai* (61), *osmizza* (66), *putizza* (57).

The elements *baba* ('old woman', cf. Doria 1987: 44), *cisti* (< *čisti*, agg. pl. 'clean', cf. Doria 1987: 155-56)), *cluca* (< *kljuka* 'door-handle', cf. Doria 1987: 160) are words of either Slovene or Croatian language (cf. Anić 1998; Bajec 2000) and as Croatian loanwords are present in all Veneto dialects spoken on the eastern Adriatic. The lexeme *baba* is well known in all Veneto idioms spoken on the Eastern Adriatic (cf. Doria 1987: 44; Miotto 1991: 14; Rosamani 1990: 51), and its function in the poems is not only to indicate a referent, a female of older age, but to express irony towards a person of that type. The metaphorical meaning is perceptible in the loanword *cisti*, which means 'penniless' (and not 'clean' as its denotative meaning would suggest), corresponding to the same meaning present in some vernaculars of the Croatian Kajkavian dialect group as well as in Croatian variants spoken on the eastern Adriatic where the

²⁵ According to Apih (1988: 15) at the beginning of the nineteenth century the greater Trieste area was characterized by suburban Slavism and urban Italianism.

²⁶ According to the first census in Austria in 1846, when a primary criterion of ethnicity was language, Slovenes made up 31.5 percent of the population of Trieste, as opposed to the 54.72 percent of the population who were Italians (Holjevac 1952: 96).

²⁷ The word *auti* (95), 'cars' seems to be problematic, as it is obvious that the noun *auti* can't be treated as an element of the Habsburg period since it denotes an object typical of the time that followed the Habsburg era. In addition, it can be treated only partly as a reflex of either Slovene or Croatian language. That is, although the plural form *auti*, (*vs. auto*, sg.) could point to the influence of these two languages, which have the same forms for this lexical item, the plural form *auti* could also be treated as a regular form of the Triestin dialect, because the word *auto* is not treated as an abbreviated form (of the full form *automobile*) and thus irregular, whose plural remains unaltered in the plural in standard Italian (i. e. *auto*, pl.), but changes its ending to *-i* as any other noun of masculine gender (Doria 1987: 42).



same adjective (*čisti*) is used with the same metaphorical meaning. Since this meaning is absent in the standard Slovene (Bajec 2000), the word *cisti* is a loanword of Croatian origin. On the other hand the word *kljuka* can have several meanings in Slovene and in Croatian. In our text only one meaning is verified, that of door handle, present in all Slovene variants and in only some Croatian Kajkavian dialects.

Four loanwords, i. e. *gripizza*, n. (< *kripica* < *kripa*, a malfunctioning device, but in Triestine stands for a sort of rustic carriage, cf. Doria 1987: 282), *nazai*, adv. (< *nazaj*²⁸, ‘back, backwards’), *osmizza*, n. (< *osmica* ‘eight’²⁹), *putizza*, n. (< *putica*, sort of rustic cake, Doria (1987: 500)), are all undoubtedly of Slovene origin. As one can see, the three nouns cited here refer to elements typical of rural communities. This reflects the fact that Slovene lived mostly in villages around Trieste, such as *Opicina* (or *Opčina* in Slovene) that is frequently mentioned. In the text, the adverb *nazai*, ‘backwards’, is found in a poem that speaks about *Lipizza* (i. e. *Lipica*), a well-known farm for thoroughbred horses which many Triestine citizens used to visit.

The last element, *juza* < *Juca*, hypocoristic of *Jovana* or *Marijuca* (Doria 1987: 317), originally a hypocoristic, underwent semantic shift so that its meaning was broadened, indicating any young Slovene woman living in the town’s surroundings (as opposed to the term *baba*, which always indicates an old woman). It is useful to quote several lines from the poem *Acqua Passata* to see the difference in meaning between the two loanwords *baba* and *juza*:

(2) *tre juze e una rufiana/ tute col vaso in man./ In tute le contrade, che ciacole in fontana:/ in piazza cufolade le babe de Cavana.*³⁰ (25).

The nouns cited so far were adapted to Triestine (language receiver) at the orthographic level, as double –zz–, for [ts], if preceded and followed by one

²⁸ The same form exists in Croatian Kajkavian dialects.

²⁹ The term *osmizza* ‘eight’, refers in fact to an annual period of eight days during which the owner of a cellar was permitted to pour out wine for selling (Doria 1987: 417).

³⁰ ‘Three young women and one procuress/ all with a pot in hand./ In all streets, chatting by the fountain: /in the square, there were crouched old women from Cavana street.’



vowel, and single $-z^{31}$ -, for [ts] as well, if preceded or followed by two vowels, show it well.

The survey of Slovene and Croatian elements should be completed by quoting certain toponyms and antroponyms which declare the presence of these languages and ethnic component in Trieste (and in the Monarchy as well). As for the first category, these are (apart from the above-cited, *Lipizza* and *Opicina*) *Divacia* (54), *Banjaluka* (50), *Klana* (23), *Sarajevo* (50) and *Brioni* (62), whereas among anthroponymic elements found in the poems, a name, or rather a nick-name *Ucio*, 26 (< *učo* < *učitelj*, ‘teacher’³²) is important.

4.3. Other elements – Hungarian, Latin, Istroroumanian

It was already said that poems by Faraguna and Carpinteri are a fairly credible representation of a multilingual world of the Habsburg Empire that existed in Trieste and in the territories for which it served as an important centre. Accordingly, the linguistic picture of that area is not completed if borrowings from other languages used in that zone, whose speakers were citizens of the same monarchy as well, are missing. First to be quoted, therefore, are two Hungarian loanwords that form a nominal syntagm, *ussari magiari* (59). As can be seen, in order to determine a word indicating a historical military formation typical of the Hungarian state (*ussaro*³³, *-i*), a Hungarian loanword *magiaro* (< *magyar*), instead of the Italian equivalent *ungherese*, ‘Hungarian’, is used, and its presence stresses social and political impact left by Hungarians in the Quarnero town of Rijeka³⁴ and places around it.

An element that reflects the presence of yet another ethnicity in the Triestine community is the word *carburo* (19), an adaptation of the Istroroumanian *car-*

³¹ Since we are dealing with the written text, it is difficult to say in what way *-z-* in *nazai* would be pronounced. However, we heard one of the writers, M. Faraguna, pronouncing it as voiced fricative, [z].

³² On the basis of the text it is not clear whether the person named *Ucio* was really a teacher or was only given that nickname for some reason.

³³ The word *ussaro* (< *hussár*) exists in standard Italian, too (Battaglia 2002: 595).

³⁴ According to the treaty, Rijeka was a military port of the Hungarian part of the Empire so that the incoming ships had to wave the Hungarian flag.



búr,³⁵ “coal”. In the Triestine dialect members of this ethnic community, situated on the southwestern slopes of the mountain *Učka* (*Monte Maggiore* in Italian), were referred to as *cici*, which corresponds to the Croatian term *Ćići* or *Čiči*, and were known as coal-sellers not only in the entire Istrian peninsula but also in Trieste and its surroundings.

In this section we should quote also several Latin loans.³⁶ The position of Latin as a high language (Muljačić 1996) in the Habsburg Empire is partly confirmed by the titles in Latin of three poems in the book, i. e. *Tempora mutantur* (13), ‘times are changed’, *Resurrexit* (57), ‘rose again’, and *Viribus Unitis* (62). These three examples stand for three different roles of Latin: as a language of science and education, a language of religion and, as the last syntagm shows, a language used to overcome national differences in the Empire. *Viribus Unitis*, i.e. ‘united men’, was a Latin name of one of the largest ships in the Royal Navy, used also as a testing site. Apart from these, another four Latin examples are all associated with religion and Catholicism: *Requiemeterna*, 32 (< *requiem aeterna*, ‘eternal rest’); *Requiem*, 52; *Gloria*, 55 and *Agnusdei*, 57 (‘divine lamb’). As can be seen, all Latin examples are orthographically authentic forms, which indicates that Latin was used as a high language. However, unlike German, Latin elements penetrated into the receiving language mainly through institutionalized written canals, thanks to learned people. In addition, the prevalence of church-related elements confirms that the influx of Latin words into the Triestine dialect (low language), as into all other Italian idioms (Giovanardi 1994) was continuous over the centuries, so that they became ACCLIMATIZED with minimal (and sometimes without any) formal adaptation. Moreover, the long-lasting contact provided the opportunity for Latin elements to become functional in various communicative situations, gaining new connotative meanings, as the word *Requiemeterna* shows. Although the word usually indicates a prayer for the dead, its use in the poem declares that it stands for any element of religious ritual at the moment of burial:

³⁵ There is also another Istroromanian form to indicate coal and that is *carbun*. It is typical of the village Šušnjeveca, whereas the form *carbur*, in which the phenomenon of rotation of Latin -n- (< *carbo*, -*onis*), is typical of a village Žejane (Kovačec 1998: 315).

³⁶ Claudio Giovanardi (1994) studied Italo-Latin bilingualism during the Middle Ages and the Renaissance and observed that contacts between Latin and various Italian varieties had been realized via different topics and in different texts. The relationship between those two languages was always fluid and concerned mostly diaphasic and diastratical aspects.



- (3) *Xe morti invelenai/ senza un Requiemeterna in canton de Croasada / dō fachini de porto*³⁷ (32).

5. Concluding remarks

The poems, or rather, chronicle in verses that have been analysed for this purpose prove that literary texts can also document the language situation in one territory. The analysis confirmed that the town of Trieste (as well as the lands that revolved around it) was a crossroads of many cultures and languages. Here we have presented several types of evidence that prove this claim. Apart from onomastic elements, of either Triestine (and Italian) origin, or of German and Slovene or Croatian (Slavic) origin, the best evidence of migrations and language mixing in Trieste (and in the Monarchy) are lexical borrowings from languages that are different from Triestine (and Italian, in general). We have presented examples of lexical borrowings belonging to six languages, and on the basis of their number, form, and meaning it is obvious that their status as language-givers varied.

The fact that the number of German elements, or as we defined them, Habsburg examples, was highest confirms that in the Triestine-speaking area, the Austrian variety of the German language was a high language. This is proved by the fact that a certain number of these examples occurred in their original form, since they entered via written channels. As for their meaning, we isolated four semantic areas in which Austrian/ German culture and civilization showed dominance; these were, in addition to the imperial family and army, the vast domain of everyday life and that of feelings and behaviour. Although the function of most of these elements is to evoke or denote objects, phenomena and people, some words and expressions, which became acclimatized in the receiving language, perform pragmatic functions indicating discipline, order, bad manners, etc.

Based on the forms of the Latin borrowings, it is obvious that Latin was also a high language in the Habsburg Empire. According to their meanings, one can see that Latin was used mainly for issues of religion and for topics related to

³⁷ 'There died poisoned/ without any eternal rest at the corner of Crosada street/ two carriers in the harbour.'



high culture, and this restricted area in which it was actively used is confirmed by a small number of Latin borrowings.

The full integration of all Slovene and Croatian borrowings confirm that these languages were low languages in the Habsburg Empire. In general, they refer to social relations, food, habits, and peculiarities of the environment, which was rather poor, mostly rural and suburban, so that contacts with these ethnic (and language) groups were limited. Nevertheless, it is obvious that some of these forms, apart from denoting, were entrusted with the capacity to express irony or metaphorical meaning, and this proves firm and long-lasting coexistence of the Italian and Slavic components, perceived also in the presence of onomastic elements in the poems.

One Hungarian and one Istrorumanian example are worthy of our attention even though these two ethnicities and their languages were only marginally present in Trieste. They, by conveying a sense of *colour locale* to the verses, contribute to the vivacity of the analysed poems in the Triestine dialect; at the same time, they remind us that the language communities cited here were responsible for the multilingual and multiethnic world of the Habsburg Monarchy.

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**ODRAZI VIŠEJEZIČNOSTI HABSBUŠKOG CARSTVA
U NEKIM TRŠČANSKIM KNJIŽEVNIM TEKSTOVIMA**

Grad Trst bio je najvažnija habsburška luka i jedan od četiri najveća grada Austro-Ugarskoga carstva. Sve do 1918. godine ta se značajka odražavala u izrazito višenacionalnom sastavu stanovništva grada i okolice, a time dakako i u tršćanskom dijalektu. Godine 1964. dvojica suvremenih tršćanskih pisaca, Lino Carpinteri i Mariano Faraguna, objavili su zbirku pjesama na tršćanskom dijalektu koje s nostalgijom govore o životu u gradu prije prvoga svjetskog rata. Ti su sastavci u stihu poslužili kao osobit izvor podataka za proučavanje spomenute višejezičnosti koja se zrcali u mnogobrojnim posuđenicama preuzetim iz jezika s kojima je autohtoni tršćanski dijalekt tijekom vremena dolazio u dodir. Analiza uočenih posuđenica pokazuje da one pripadaju različitim semantičkim poljima, ovisno o području u kojemu se snaga jezika davatelja posebno očitovala. Osim toga, premda je riječ o pjesničkim ostvarenjima, zabilježene posuđenice vrše važne tekstualne funkcije.

Ključne riječi: višejezičnost, posuđenice, tršćanski dijalekt.