

The Gattilusio's heritage in the linguistic idiom of Lesvos

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ABSTRACT

The Genoese stayed in Lesvos for four generations as lords of the island and various Italian words were bequeathed to future generations. Some of them as a heritage are still today's in use in the vocabulary of the habitants. In this article an attempt is made to study the Italian words in the lesbian idiom¹ through their reference and their translation into Greek. The paper is accompanied by research where the speakers answer a questionnaire, in order to first determine if any of these words are easily recognizable as loans and secondly if their meaning in Greek it remains the same as that of the Italian language.

KEYWORDS: Lesvos, lesbian idiom, Italian words, Genoese, Gatelouze

I. THE GATTILUSIO IN THE ISLAND OF LESVOS

The Westerners managed to dominate the Aegean because of the limited role that the central Byzantine power played. Genoa organized a network of major trading posts throughout the east Aegean so as to serve its commercial objectives and to be able to successfully respond to the challenges of her adversary, Venice. The presence of the Genoese in Lesvos will last 107 years and will aim at the trade development in the northern Aegean. In 1355 the island of Lesvos was ceded by the emperor Ioannis V Palaiologos and was given to the Genoese and specifically under the administration of Gattilusio, as dowry for Maria Paleologos. The island was given to Francesco Gattilusio from Palaiologos, as a reward, because he assisted in the recovery of the Throne by usurper John Katakouzinos. The intercourses that followed further strengthened the Genoese position who controlled almost all the islands of the North Aegean with the Giustiniani situated in Chios and the Gattilusio in Lesvos². The Gatelouzi family gave four generations of rulers to Lesvos. General Francesco I, ruler of Lesvos (1355-84) and Maria Palaiologos together with their children Andronikos and Domenikos were killed in the earthquake of 1384, but their dominion continued with their third son Francis II. The Gatelouzi cooperated harmoniously with the locals and via their intercourses marriages managed not only to avoid conflict but also to cooperate in the face of Turkish danger.

The Italian language loans to the lesbian idiom : Naturally, the Italian language and specifically the Genoese dialect penetrated and enriched the idiom of Lesvos. Researches by Giannoullelis (1983) and Anagnostou (1903) have proved that "*But the testimonies from lesbian sources from older times are very limited, contrary to the testimonies from chronological or literary texts of other regions, such as Cyprus, Crete and Peloponnese*". According to Papanastasiou (2001), language borrowing is a phenomenon that always existed and will continue to exist in all languages, from the moment the speakers of one language, interact with speakers of another. In fact, these are cases of "external borrowing"³. Concerning the channel through which the lending is done there is a difference between popular from scholarly borrowing (Petrounias 1984: 59-61)⁴.

¹Lesvos or Lesbos is the largest island of the eastern Aegean sea

²The House of Gattilusio, Hellenized as Gatelouzoi (Γατελούζοι) or Katelouzoi, lords of Lesvos, Lemnos, Ainos Thrace, Samothrace, Thassos and Fokea

³The External loan is the phenomenon in which a language borrows words from a different, a "foreign" language. These cases are very common in all languages (Papanastasiou, 2001).

⁴ The borrowing (loan), concerns words in languages which the wider circle of the people use, in accordance with the spoken language and those who speak the language try to adapt it to its phonetics and morphology. The Loanwords (scholar) refers to words that enter the language from a portion of educated people who possess it and largely determine how it will appear in their own language.

The Northern dialect or northern idioms consist of a variant of the New Greek language used and heard from the north coast of Corinth bay to the northern borders of the Greek territory and in general, covers almost the whole of the northern Greek mainland and island area. According to Petrounias (1984: 123), a dialect can be considered "better" than others if used by the ruling class, by the educated, by the rich if it is useful in commerce or understood by a large number of speakers. We call the local variations of the New Greek language that differ from the Common language, an idiom, as Pantelidis (2001) mentions. In addition, the idiom is not difficult to understand. Of the Italian words that entered the lesbian idiom others became obsolete and forgotten whereas others, known to all Greece, or idiomatic, are kept to this day. According to Antoniou (2012) the term vocabulary means a genre subset of the dictionary distinguished into: general, which is used in daily life and specific dictionary, used in specialized fields. It can be divided into asset, which is the one the speaker actually uses and in passive which is what is held by a speaker but not used. Since the island was never deserted due to its size, its Greek character never changed, so the island's idiom was not significantly affected from any foreign language other than Italian during the period of the Frankish rule and the Turkish idiom during the Turkish occupation but only superficially (Chatzivassiliou, 1994: 166). Regarding Italian words in the lesbian idiom, as general remarks we find valid data in other similar cases, such as:

- According to Ellison and Miceli (2012) all the changes that have occurred since contact, become a reality when the languages are shared by speakers or when the speakers have contact with each other.
- Most language loans from Italy are of neutral gender (Makri:2013)
- Counter-loans⁵ are minimal
- Some Italian words have a common use after being adapted first in the lesbian idiom.

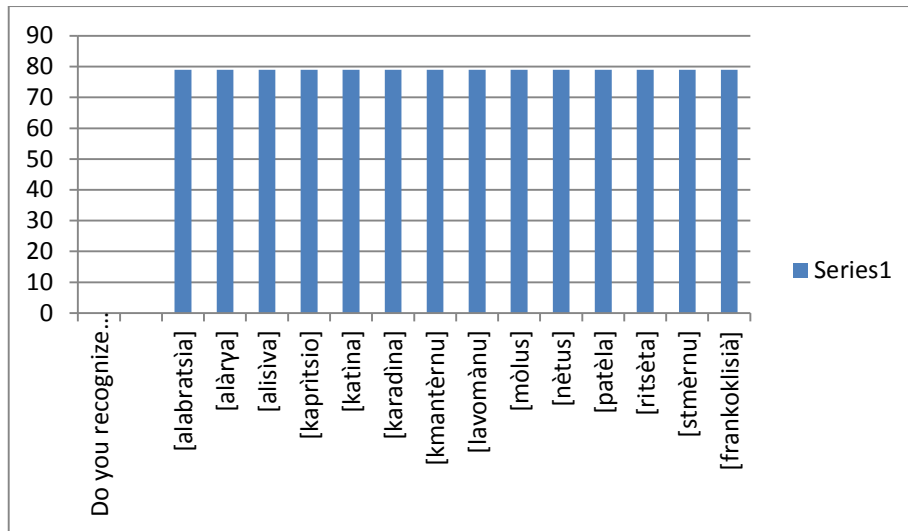
The Research: What follows, is a survey that aims to determine the extent of the use of Italian words in Lesbos nowadays. The lexicographical record of Italian loans in lesbian idiom as recorded in Chatzivassiliou's glossary (1994). In the Annex we can see the words rendered in Greek but enriched with the Italian words from which they came. 79 people participated in the research. The sampling method that was used was "targeted sampling". The participants in the study were 28 men and 51 women aged from 21 years up to 80 years old. In order to collect the information from the respondents, the questionnaire starts with the individual characteristics of each participant. In the second part of the questionnaire, the questions were asked using the Likert method. For transcribing the words of the lesbian idiom was used the IPhA⁶. The questionnaire is dominated by the two research-related questions. The first one is if the participants recognize the word and the second if the meaning of the word is the same for everyone and identical with the Italian meaning. In the second question, alternative answers are given in order to verify the correctness of the answer while there is also the possibility to a different interpretation which is recorded with the "Other" option. In order to ensure the external reliability of the measurement, the questionnaire was given again to 10 of the participants to complete (Tsopanoglou, 2000).

Question 1

Do you recognize the following words?

⁵Counter-loan is the term used to describe the words that according to Ralli (2007: 131) have Greek roots, but they were formed in a foreign language.

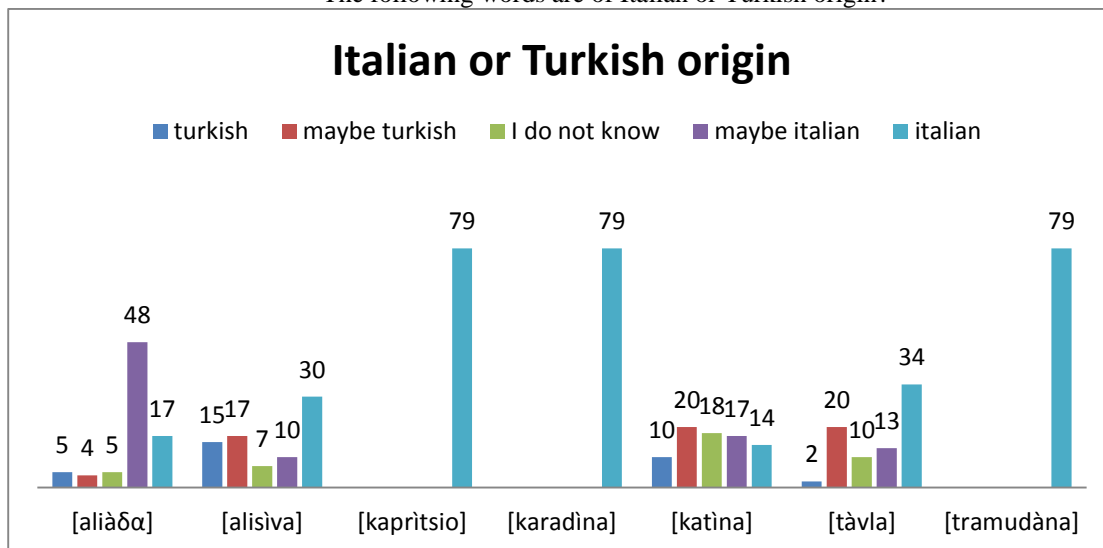
⁶The International Phonetic Alphabet



In total, all 79 participants answered that they recognize the words that are listed.

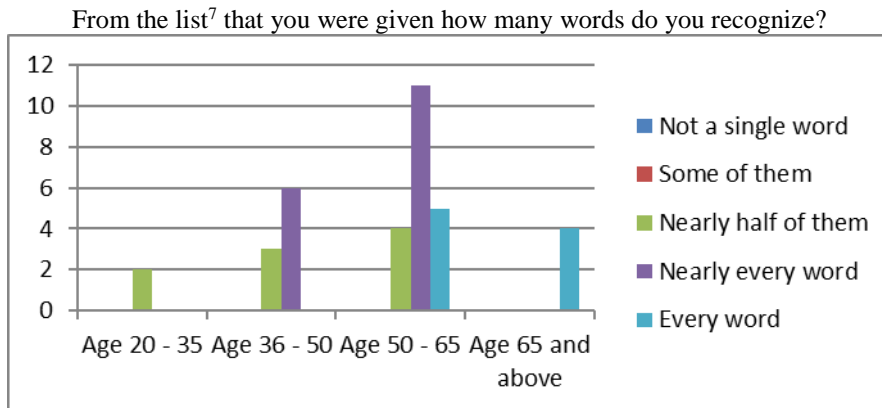
Question 2

The following words are of Italian or Turkish origin?



Only the words [kapritsio]-(capriccio-καπρίτσιο), [tramudàna]-(tramontana- τραμμουντάνα) and [karadina]-(quarantina-καραντίνα) were recognized as 100 percent (100%) of Italian origin.

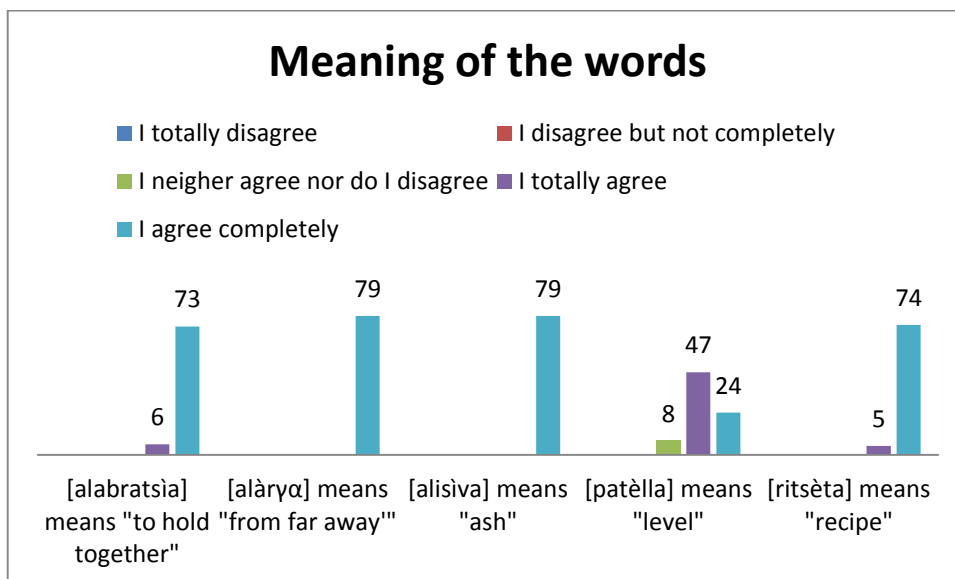
Question 3



From the answers given, there seems to be a connection between age and the understanding of the words that are dialectical. The 100 words were given in a list which was at the end of the questionnaire. In total, the participants over the age of sixty-five think they know the words whereas percentage decreases significantly as the years go down.

Question 4

The following words have the meaning

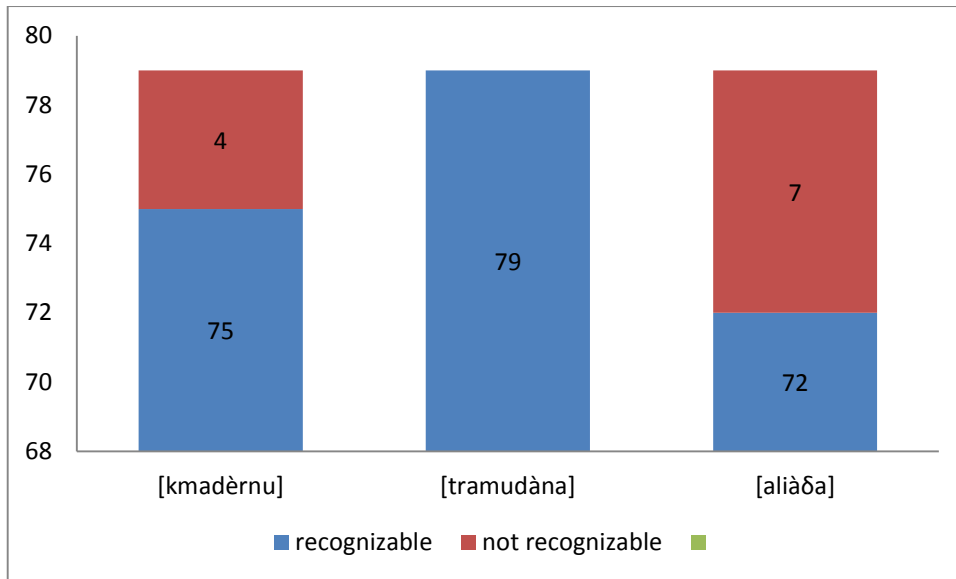


The vast majority of the participants know the meaning of these specific words.

Question 5

The meaning of the following words is

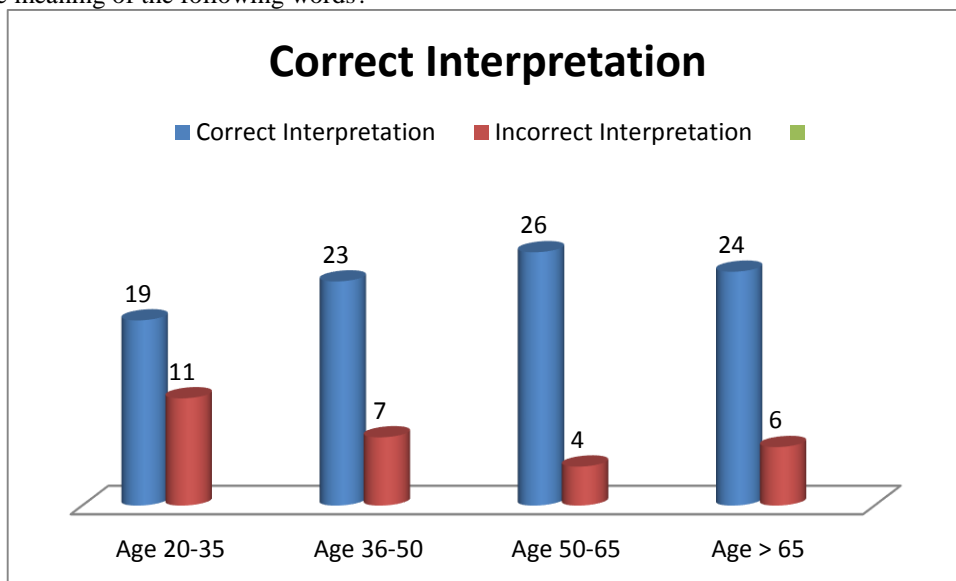
⁷ The words are in the attached annex



Three words are given to the participants and the answer was correct up to 100% for one of them and for the other two, 72 to 75 persons answered correctly.

Question 6

What is the meaning of the following words?



To the participants were given 30 words⁸from the list and asked to give their interpretation. As it appears from the results, the answers do not have large deviation with those of age over 50 years able to interpret the words more correctly, more specifically the age 50-65 had recognized 26 words and the age >65 has recognized 24 words.

It should not be overlooked that in the 50-65 age group there are 9 persons fluent in Italian due to their studies in Italy and four over 65 that taught latin as professors of high school.

II. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research was to identify the use of Italian words left as an heritage by the Genoese in the current vocabulary of the island of Lesvos.

Based on the previous research and the analysis of the results, the following conclusions can be drawn

- The participants who had studied in Italy recognized the Italian words in their entirety but, gave an interpretation which derived from their academic knowledge and not from the lesbian idiom.

⁸The words in bold at the apex

- The same thing happened to four of the participants, aged 65, who had knowledge of Latin.
- The words that seem most popular as [katina] and [tavlá] are interpreted into Turkish and not into Italian.
- The words that became prominent, due to widespread use in the media are recognizable to all age groups, for example the word [karadina], known to all because of Covid-19, as they were also explained several times by media.
- The words derived from the nautical vocabulary as [tramudàna] are also recognizable and are in absolute use by all age groups.

Although Italian was essentially the language of the ruler of Lesbos only for about a century it left its mark on the lesbian idiom and is commonly found even today showing the great cultural harmonization of the two countries. Practical implications based on the research results of this study are proposed, here in the final part, to further enhance of its significance.

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30. <https://www.etal-sa.gr/>

Annex

| Words of Italian origin in the lesbian idiom | |
|---|--------------------------|
| ιταλικές λέξεις στο λεσβιακό ιδίωμα | Origin/ προέλευση |
| αβέρτα(επίρρ.) | averto |
| αγαντάρου (προστ. αγάντα) | agguantare |
| αγιούτο | aiutare |
| άλα (φρ. άλα ούνα, άλα ντούε, άλα τρέ) | alla |
| αλακάπα | alla capa |
| αλαμπρατσία (=αλαμπρατσέτο, αγκαζέ) | a braccetto |
| αλαπάντα (=αποχωρητήριο) | alla banda |
| αλάργα (επίρρ.) | al largo |
| αλαργέβγου | allargarsi |
| αλέστα | allestare |
| αλιάδα | aglio - agliata |
| αλ' σίβα (αλισίβα) | lisciva |
| αντίκα | antico |
| απούντου (=ακριβώς) | appunto |
| αφόρτσα | a forza |
| βόλτα ζέρνου (=χρησιμοποιά, συνηθίζω, ζάρω) | volta+usare |
| καβίλια | caviglia |
| κάβους | cavo |
| καγίνα | cadena |
| καδίνα | cadena |
| καδένα | cadena |
| καζάρμα | casarma |
| καναβέτσα | canovaccio |
| κανέλα | cannella |
| καπάρου | caparra |
| καπέλου - καπέλους | cappello |
| καπότου (=πανωφόρι) | cappotto |
| καπρίτσιου | capriccio |

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| καπτέλ (= υφαντό ή κεντητό κάλυμμα της μικρής οριζόντιας προεξοχής του τοίχου πάνω από το τζάκι) | capitello |
| καραντίνα | quarantina |
| καρατέρνου | |
| κάργα (επιρρ.) | cargo |
| καργάρου | caricare |
| καρέγλα (καριγλί, καριγλέλ, καριγλούδα) | λατινική cathedra |
| κάρτου (κάρτο) | carta |
| κάρτσα (κάλτσα) | calza |
| κάσα | cassa |
| κασέλα | cassela |
| κασκαβάλ | caciocavallo |
| καστιγάρου (= τιμωρώ, σωφρονίζω) | castigare |
| κατίνα (=ράχη, νώτα) | catena |
| κατσέρνου (= διώχω) | cacciare |
| κμαντέρνου (κουμαντάρω) | comandare |
| κουμπάνια | compagnia |
| λαβουμάνου | lavomano |
| λουκάντα | locanda |
| λουσέρνα (= είδος λάμπας λαδιού) | lucerna |
| μαλαφράτζα (=αφροδίσιο νόσημα, κυρίως σύφιλη) | mal Francese |
| μανέστρα | minestra |
| μάνι μάνι (επιρρ.) | mani |
| μανιφατούρα | manifattura |
| μαρινάτους | marinato |
| μαστέλου | mastello |
| μόδα | moda |
| μόδους (= τρόπος) | modo |
| μόλους | molo |
| μουνέδα | monetta |
| μουντέρνου (=μουντάρω) | moderno |
| μουζικάντ'ς | musica |
| μπαγκέρνου (=πληρώνω) | pagare |
| μπαλέρνου (=αμπαλάρω) | imballare |
| μπαντουνάρου (=κουράζομαι, εγκαταλείπω) | abbandonare |
| μπαγούλου (μπαούλο) | baule |
| μπάσταρδους | bastardo |

| | |
|---|------------------------|
| μπγάδα (μπουγάδα) | bugada |
| μπουνάτσα | bonaccia |
| μπούνια | bugna |
| μπούσλας (μπούσουλας) | bussola |
| μπούστους | busto |
| νέτους | netto |
| νιτάρω (νετάρω) | nettare |
| νιτιρέσου (ν'τιρέσου, ιν'τιρέσου) | interesse |
| νταρνάνα | tartana |
| ντρέτους | diretto |
| παρασόλ | parasole |
| παρτίδα | partida |
| πατατούκα | patatuco |
| πατέλα (=μικρό οροπέδιο) | patella |
| πατινάδα | patinare |
| πούντα | punta |
| πρέζα (=μικρή ποσότητα) | prendere |
| προυσαπόκου (Αγιάσος) και προυσακόπου (Γέρα) (με παρετυμολογική επίδραση της λέξης κόπος) (=προκαταβολή, μπροστάντζα) | preso a poco |
| ρδνιάζου και ιρδνιάζου (πβ. ρδνιά και ιρδνιά (= κουμπάνια)/ορδινιάζω | Ordinare |
| ρέμπιλους | rebelo/ rebello |
| ριμπιλέβγου | rebellare |
| ριτσέτα | ricetta |
| σαλαμούρα | salamora |
| σιγουρέρνου | sicurare |
| σούμπιτους | subito |
| στιμέρνου (στιμάρω) | stimare |
| τάβλα | tavola |
| τάλια γκράντα | taglia grande |
| τραμουντάνα | tramontana |
| τραμουτζάνα (νταμιτζάνα) | damigiana |
| τράτα | trata |
| τρατέρνου | trattare |
| φόγκους (=φωτιά) | fuoco |
| φουντάνα(=βρύση, πηγή | fontana |
| φραγκοκλησιά | franco+εκκλησία |
| φραγκολιά | franco+ελιά |