

Tra Zurigo, Bellinzona, Milano e Pisa: dialettologia italiana in Svizzera nella prima metà del Novecento (con una lettera di C. Merlo a J. Jud)

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes the network of scholars co-operating in collective endeavours in Italian dialectology in Switzerland during the first half of the 20th century. Attention is paid to the varying institutional settings in which such networks were embedded. While briefly mentioning scholars active at other Swiss universities (e.g. Fribourg, an important research centre addressed in §1) or outside academia, the main focus is on Zurich, mainly due to J. Jud's «most polite hegemony» (as A. Varvaro once insightfully put it). The main collective enterprises mentioned in §§2-3 are the AIS (Sprach- und Sachatlas Italiens und der Südschweiz), the recording campaigns organized in 1913 and 1929 by the University of Zurich, and the VSI (Vocabolario dei dialetti della Svizzera italiana). Focusing on the VSI implies considering scholars working in Italian universities in that period, viz. C. Salvioni and C. Merlo. In particular, §§4-5 reconstruct the progressive shift of the VSI from an international to a Swiss national endeavour, pointing out previously unpublished documents that illustrate the so far little-known transitional phase during which the main scientific point of reference moved from Merlo to Jud.