

## BOOK REVIEWS

'Terminologia Geografica Araba in Sicilia', published in *Annali Sezione Linguistica III*, Istituto Orientale di Napoli, di G.P. Pellegrini.  
*Contributo allo Studio Dell'Elemento Arabo Nei Dialetti Siciliani*, di G.B. Pellegrini. Istituto di Filologia Romanza - N. 2.

The first of these two books is the latest, and one of the most thorough, surveys of geographical terminology occurring in Sicilian place-names. As the author explains in a footnote, it is based on an investigation of Sicilian place-names of Arabic origin or place-names transmitted from mediaeval Arabic sources. He began to work on it in the academic year 1957-58 when he was in Palermo. This comparative study largely etymological is of great interest not only to the student of the Sicilian language and toponomy, but also to the student of Maltese history and toponomy. Professor Pellegrini found my article 'A brief Survey of Maltese Place-Names' in my book *Papers in Maltese Linguistics* (1961) useful for additional reference illustrating the diffusion of place-names of Arabic origin in Sicily. I need hardly say that for similar reasons his survey throws light also on Maltese place-names. The history of Malta and Sicily very often covers common ground. No wonder therefore that some of the Arabic place-names occurring in Sicily occur also in Malta.

I am giving in their alphabetical order a list of such Sicilian place-names and Arabic words occurring in place-names side by side with their Maltese correspondences. Maltese place-names are given in brackets in bold type to distinguish them from words which occur in the language but, as far as I know, do not form part of Maltese toponomy. Incidentally, a good number of these words occurs also in his second publication *Contributo allo Studio dell'Elemento Arabo nei Dialetti Siciliani*.

A:- Sic. *aggiummātu*, detto di 'terreno riposato' / M. *gmiem*; Sic. *ārzanu* 'abete' / M. *arżnu*; B:- Sic. *bbalata*, *bbalatēdda* / M. *blata* (**Blat il-Qamar**, **Balta ta' Żwejqa**); C (*k*):- Sic. *cacīcia* 'pianta spontanea, molto comune' / M. *haxixa*; Sic. *cāfaru* 'vuoto' / M. *hofra* (**Hofret ir-Rizz**); Sic. *cala* 'seno di mare', 'piccolo porto' / M. *qala* (**Il-Qala**; **Qala ta' Ghabid**); Sic. *cala* 'castello, fortezza' / M. *qalġha* (**Il-Qlejġha**); Sic. *calēca* 'spezie di susine piccole' / M. *hawħa*; Sic. *cama*, *camia*, *cami*, *hama* 'melma di palude, fetore di terra fangosa' / M. *hama*; Sic. *carara* (*di focu*), *barrara* 'aria calda e soffocante, afa' / M. *ħrara*; Sic. *caruana*, *carvana* 'ricino' / M. surname **Caruana**; Sic. *cāssaru* 'strada principale, corso (che in origine faceva capo al castello)' / M. surname **Cassar**; Sic. *catūsu* 'condotto di acque,

fosso da scola, docciaione' / M. katusa; Sic. *ciànnaca*, *ciànnacu* 'grande fenditura nei monti o in enormi massi' / M. *handaq* (**Tal-Handaq; Handaq Ir-Rummen**); Sic. *cubba* 'specie di volta o cupoletta per coperchio alle sorgenti d'acqua' / M. *mqabba* (**Mqabba**); Sic. *cúddia* 'avanzo di antico con vulcanico' / M. place-name *Gudja* [**Malta and Gozo**]; D:- Sic. *dàbbisu* 'panacea' / M. *debbus*; Sic. *ddammúsu* 'volta, soffittio; stanza a pian terreno con tetto a volta' / M. *demus*; Sic. *dàgala* 'terra declive alla sponda del fiume' / M. *dahla* (**Dahlet Qorrot; Dahlet ix-Xilep**); Sic. *dà'èri* 'tratti di parete calcarea in cui sono uno o piu ordini di grotte che servono tuttora o hanno servio ... come abitazioni umane' / M. *dejr* (**Djar or Dejr; Djar or Dejr il-Bulef; Djari'z-Zàra**); Sic. *ddisa* 'pianta di monte spontanea, le cui foglie servono ai villici di stropia, e i gambi a molti altri usi ... ampelodesmo' / M. *disa*; Sic. *duccara* 'fico selvatico, caprifico' / M. *dukara*; Sic. (*d*)*durbu* 'platano', 'olmo' (?) / M. *dolf* (**Ta' Dolf; Ghar Dolf** [**Gozo**]); F:- Sic. *favara* 'sorgente d'acqua' / M. *fawwara*; G (*dz*):- Sic. *gèbbia*, *ggbbiùni* 'raccolta d'acqua artificiale, cisterna, vivaia, vasca murata' / M. *giebja*, *gibjun*; Sic. *gi(a)bil-* 'montagna' / M. *gebèl* (**Gebel + ta' Bieb Ir-Ruwa; Āntar; Ghara; Ghazàra; Lin; Majjim**); Sic. *giaca*, *ciaca* 'ciottolo' / M. *çaghka*; Sic. *giarra* vaso d'acqua', 'giara' / M. *ğarra*; Sic. *gisira* 'isola', 'isola fluviale' / M. *gžira* (**Il-Gzejjer**); M:- Sic. *macalubba*, -u 'salsa' o 'vulcanetto di fango' / M. *maqluba* (**Il-Maqluba**); Sic. *magurùca*, *macarùca* 'terre infecunde' / M. *maħruqa*; Sic. *ma(g)asènu*, *malazžèni*, *maizžè* 'magazzino' / M. *maħžen*; Sic. *manca* 'fossa per la macerazione della canapa o cotone' / M. *menqa* (**Il-Menqa** [**Gozol**]); Sic. *màrcatu* 'parco delle pecore con la capanna dei pastori, luogo sta il gregge con gli accessori' / M. *marqad*; Sic. *marginu* 'pantano, palude, acquitrino; luogo basso dove l'acque si va a fermare e stagna e nell'estate per lo piu si asciuga' / M. *marğ*; Sic. *marsa* 'porto, rada ancoraggio' / M. *marsa* (**Il-Marsa; Marsalforn; Marsamxett; Marsaskala; Marsaxlokk**); Sic. *mintina* 'acqua fetida che scorre nelle miniere di zolfo', 'sorgente di acqua minerale puzzolente' / M. *mintna*; N:- Sic. *naca* 'posto poco profondo nel fiume, buca nel letto del fiume, gorgo ove l'acqua ristagna' / M. *nieqa* (cradle); R:- Sic. *rràb(b)atu* 'sobborgo, borgo' / M. *rabat* (**Ir-Rabat** [**Malta and Gozol**]); Sic. *raffu* 'ciglione, pezzo di roccia, scoglio dirupato' / M. *raff*; Sic. *ras* 'capo, promontorio' / M. *ras* (**Ras + il-Knejjes; Il-Qolla; Ir-Raheb; Il-Bajjada** [**Gozol**]); S:- Sic. *saià* 'gora, canale artificiale murato per l'irrigazione' / M. *sieqja* (**Is-Saqwi** [**Gozol**]); Sic. *semià* 'noria, macchina o bindolo introdotto dagli Arabi' / M. *sienja*; Sic. *sesi* 'costruzioni sepolcrali antichissime a Pantelleria; massi di lava disposti a cupola formano una camera centrale da cui si irraggiano nove corridoi' / M. *sies*; Sc (*š*):-

Sic. *scebba*, scerba 'pianta che bruciata serve a fare il vetro, a sgrassare i panni e a fabbricare il sapone ... soda salicornia, salsola' / M. xurbegg (pinula crithmoides L.); Sic. *sciaddu* 'le sponde di un fiume' / M. xatt (Ix-Xatt; Ix-Xatt I-Ahmar [Gozol]); Sic. *sciaca*, *sciacca*, *ciacca* 'strettissima valle di frattura', 'fenditura' / M. xaqq (Wied Xakka); Sic. *scirba* 'rupe, scoscendimento, dirupi' / M. herba (Tal-Herba); Sic. *ssciara* 'lava o corrente di lava', 'campo di arena', 'terra incolta ove crescono piante selvatiche', 'siepe, riparo di pruni' / M. xaghra (Xaghra ta' Sbetta; Xaghra ta' Raghat; Xaghret Imdewwiet; Xaghret Mewwija; Ix-Xaghra [Gozol]); T-Sic. *tàiu* 'fango, terreno fangoso, loto, creta' / M. tajn; Sic. *ticchièna* 'sedile a pie dei muri', 'piccolo muro fatto a sedile che sporge in fuori e per lo più accanto le porte' / M. dikkièna (Dukkejna); W- Sic. *uadi* 'fiume' / M. wied (Wied+Intita; il-Gonna; Qirda; Liemu; il-Mafru; Musa; in-Nablija; Qannotta; Qasrun; ir-Raghar; Riri; ir-Rum; Sardin; it-Tigieg; Xakka; Xkora; - [in Gozo] Wied+Bljun; Hanzira; San Blas; ta' Marsalforn; tal-Qlejjgha; Infern; il-Ghasri; il-Mielah; il-Mans); Z- Sic. *zabbara* 'pianta a foglie cauline, dentate' / M. sabbara (Ta' Sabbarat); Sic. *zàgara*, *zàara* 'fiore d'arancio e spesso di altra pianta' / M. zahra; Sic. *zzarba*, *zzarbu* 'siepe, spineto, recinto' / M. Żarb (surname).

In the second part of his article, Pellegrini gives a list of Arabic words relating to the toponymy of the island some of which have survived in existing Sicilian place-names. I am now giving a comparative list of such words marked Sic. for such as occur in Sicilian place-names and M. for corresponding M. words, some of which occur in Maltese place-names given in brackets and others in the spoken language only.

A/ GH:- Sic. 'ayn, pl. 'uyūn, 'ayūn 'fonte, sorgente' / M. ghajn; Sic. 'ayn al-ḥadīd 'fonte di ferro' / M. Ghajn Hadid; Sic. 'ayn at-tuffāḥa = fontem pomerii / M. Ghaja Tuffieha (Ghajn+Andrija; Ćirami; Dwieli; Ghabdul; Gheliem Alla; Hadid; Hamiem; Hejba; Imgelgel; L'Istas; Ġiefra; Klieb; Kollija; Millel; Pieru; Rasul; Rixem; Rihana; Sfurija; Sielem; Tarnija; Tili; Żetuna; - [in Gozo] Ghajn+il-Kbira; is-Sellum; il-Lukin; Hammier; Abdul; Hosna). Sic. *ayn selem* = fonte della salute / M. Ghajn Sielem; Sic. 'aqaba, pl. 'iqāb 'salita' / M. ghaqba; A- Sic. *abyad*, f. *baiḍ*, 'bianco' / M. abjad, bajda (Bajjada; Ras il-Bajjada [Gozol]); Sic. *arḍ*, pl. *arāḍin*, *aradūn* 'terra, territorio, campo terreno, regione' / M. art; Sic. *andar* 'aia' / M. andar (Andar il-Blat); B- Sic. *bāb*, pl. *abwāb*, *bībān* 'porta, passo' / M. bieb (Bieb I-Gharroqin); Sic. *balad*, pl. *bilād* 'paese, apprezzamento' / M. belt (Il-Belt); Sic. *balāṭ* / M. blat (Blat il-Qamar, Blata ta' Żwejqā); Sic. *bīr bi'ār*, *ābār*, *abiār* 'pozzo, sistema' / M. bir (Bir+Buhagar; Ghebejjer; Ġa-

bar, o Bur Ġabrun; Il-Meru; Jaħleb); Sic. *būqāl* 'boccale' / M. buqar; Sic. *buṛġ* / M. borġ (Tal-Borġ); D:- Sic. *daħla* 'cala' / M. daħla (Daħlet Qorrot; Daħlet ix-Xilep); Sic. *dāliya*, pl. *dawālin* 'vigneto' e 'noria' / M. dielja pl. dwieli (Għajj Dwieli); Sic. *dār*, pl. *dūr*, *diyār*, *diyārāt*, *diyara* 'casa, abitazione, tenda' / M. dar; Sic. *daraġ(a)*, *darġa*, pl. *daraġāt*, *daraġ*, *adrāġ* 'scala, via a gradini' / M. taraġ (San Pawl tat-Tarġa; Tarġet Ġakob); Sic. *dayr*, pl. *adyār*, *adyira* 'chostro, monastero' / M. dejt (Djar or Dejr Il-Briet); Sic. *danab*, pl. *aḍnāb* / M. denb; Sic. *dayl* 'orlo' / M. dejl; F:- Sic. *fawwāra* / M. (Il-Fawwara); Sic. *funduq*, pl. *fanādiq* 'fondaco' / M. fondoq; Sic. *furn*, pl. *afrām* 'forno' / M. forn (Marsalforn); G:- Sic. *ġabal*, pl. *ġibāl*, *āġbāl* 'monte' / M. ġebel ([in Gozo] Ġebel + Bin Ġorġ; Ġebħa tal-Ġeneral); Sic. *ġafr* 'cavità' / M. ġafar (Triq Ġafar in Sliema); Sic. *ġinān*, pl. *di ġanna* 'vigna' / M. ġnien (Ġnien + Kor, Dors; Fleres; Hira; Kain; Qattus; ta' Rapa; Xibla; – Ġnien is-Sultan [Gozo]); Sic. *ġurf* 'scarpata, sponda, scoglio' / M. ġarf; Sic. *ġaḍīr*, pl. *ġudur*, *ġudrān* 'stagno, palude', 'ruscello' / M. ġadir (Font Ġadir); Sic. *ġār*, pl. *ġīrān*, *agwār* 'caverna, grotta' / M. ġhar (Ġhar + Barka; ta' Bettiewes; Biet; Bu-tomna; Dalman; Ġhaqar; Ġheliem; tal-Ġhazzenin; Hanzir; Hasan; Kitep; Lapsi; Marija; Qasrun; is-Sefa; is-Sepħa; Sqalli; Ima); H:- Sic. *ħaġar*, pl. *ħiġār*, *aħġār*, *biġāra* 'pietra' / M. haġar (Haġar Qim; Il-Haġġarija o Haġrija il sito sotto le fortificazioni del castello del Rabat nel Gozo prima d'essere stato repulito nel 1671, per la quantita di sassi di cui era ingombrata. A.E. Caruana [Diz.]); Sic. *ħaġ-ġan* 'pietoso' / M. haġġarija; Sic. *ħā it*, pl. *ħīṭān*, *biyāt* 'muro, parete' / M. ħajt; Sic. *ħamma* 'fonte calda', *ħammām* 'bagno' / M. Il-ħamimiet (Gozo); Sic. *ħanūt* 'bottega, cantina' / M. ħanut; Sic. *ħāra*, pl. *ħārāt* 'quartiere, vicolo' / M. ħāra (ħara tal-Prolli); Sic. *ħārat aš-šaḡāliba* 'quartiere degli Schiavoni' / M. Ta' Skorba; Sic. *ħaud*, *ħūd*, pl. *aħwād*, *ħiyād*, *ħīdān* 'bacino, truogolo, stagno' / M. ħawt; Sic. *ħuḡra*, pl. *ħuḡar* 'fossa, buca' / M. ħofra (ħofret ir-Rizz); Sic. *ħurāqa da ħaraqa* 'bruciare' / M. ħurrieq; Sic. *ħaḡāf* 'pomice' / M. ħaffiefa; Sic. *ħandaq* / M. Handaq ir-Rummien; Sic. *ħarāġ* 'tributo fondiario' / M. ħaraġ; Sic. *ħums* 'quinta parte' / M. ħames; I:- Sic. *isbiṭāl* 'ospedale' / M. sp̄tar; K:- Sic. *kanīsiya* 'chiesa' / M. knisja (Ras il-Knejjes); *kudya* / M. Gudja; L:- Sic. *lawza* 'mandorlo' / M. lewza; M:- Sic. *mallāħa* 'salina' / M. Il-Melliħa; Sic. *manāqa* / M. menqa (Il-Menqa [Gozo]); Sic. *maħħala*, pl. *maħħil* 'tappa, sosta, mandra' / M. merħla; Sic. *minšār*, pl. *manāšir* 'sega' / M. munxar (Il-Munxar [Gozo]); Sic. *miṭħana*, pl. *maṭāħin* 'mulino' / M. miṭħna; Sic. *mudd*, pl. *amdād*, *midād* 'misura per aridi' / M. modd; N:- Sic. *naħla* 'dattier, palmier' / M. naħla (bee) (In-Naħlija); Q:- Sic. *qabr*, pl. *qabūr*, 'sepolcro, sepoltura' / M. qabar (Qabar il-Ġharib; Il-Qabjar [Gozo]); Sic. *qanṭara*, pl. *qanāṭir* 'ponte' / M. Il-Kantra (Gozo); Sic. *qaṣab(a)* 'canneto' e 'cittadella' / M. qaṣab (Ta' Kusbejja

[Gozo]); Sic. *qaṣr*, pl. *quṣūr* / M. Cassar (surname); Sic. *qattā'* 'tagliatore' / M. qattiegh; Sic. *qulla* 'sommità, colle, torre', / M. qolla; Sic. *qurṭil* 'promontorio' / M. Il-Qortin (Qortin tan-Nadur [Gozol]); R:- Sic. *rab'*, pl. *rubū'*, *ribā'*, *arbā'*, *arbū'* 'quartiere; podere' / M. raba'; Sic. *rabaq* / Ir-Rabat (Malta and Gozo); Sic. *raḥl*, pl. *riḥāl* 'sosta, casale' / M. raħal; Sic. *raml*, pl. *rimāl* 'sabbia' / M. ramel (Ir-Ramla; Ramla ta' Goslien; Ramla ta' Marozzu [Gozol]); Sic. *rās*, *rā's*, pl. *rūs* 'capo' / M. ras; (Ras il-Qolla; Ras ir-R aheb) *rās al-qulay* 'a=caput coleya / M. Il-Qlejja; *rās šalanda* = caput selende / Xlendi (Gozo); S:- Sic. *sāqiya* / M. saqqajja (Is-Saqqajja); Sic. *sa'tar* / M. saghtar; Sic. *sūq* 'mercato' / M. suq; T:- Sic. *ṭarf* 'punta, capo' / M. tarf (L-Imtarfa); Sic. *ṭariq*, pl. *ṭuruq*, *ṭuruqāt* 'strada, via' / M. triq; Sic. *ṭin*, pl. *atyān* 'fango' / M. tajn; W:- Sic. *wādī*, *wād*, pl. *awdiya*, *wudyān*, *widyān* 'valle', 'fume, corso d'acqua' / M. wied; Sic. *walaġa* o *wuġa* 'pianura vicino al fiume' / M. wilġa (Wilġa ta' Seffuda); Sic. *waṭṭ* o *wuṭṭ* 'depressione' / M. wita; Z:- Sic. *zabbūġ* 'olivo selvatico' / M. žebbuġ (Haż-Žebbuġ; Iz-Žebbuġ [Gozol]); Sic. *zabīb* 'zibibbo' / M. žbib; Sic. *zuqāq*, pl. *aziqqa* 'vicolo, strada' / M. sqaq (Sqaq+id-Dmejna; Gāgu; Gānu; il-Kubrit; il-Mejxu; Pilatu; Tribona).

*Garca* (dialect of Pantalleria) has the same meaning as Maltese 'ghalqa'. (una chiusa; un campo riparato, circondato da muri: Diz. A.E. Caruana). Pellegrini derives *garca* from Ar. ḥalqa 'circle of persons', 'ring of metal' (Hava). Cp. also Ar. عِلْقَة pl. عِلَق 'enclos, jardin entouré d'un mur'. With *sa'ia* in the sense of 'sieve' (hedge) Cp. M. sejjieh (ħajt tas-sejjieh) سِيَاخ Travaux de construction en boue (Kaz.); a building of clay of any kind (Laane).

One of the curious M. place-names is Il-Pwales near St. Paul. Cp. Sic. Ar. marsā al-bawālis 'porto di Ulisse' (?) Why not Porto di San Paolo? Cp. the place name in W. Palestine حَفِيرِ النَّبِيِّ بُولْس. The excavations of the prophet Paul. The name of springs dug in the valley of Khūrbet en Neby Būlus (E.H. Palmer, M.A., *The Survey of Western Palestine*, 1881). The Maltese and Sic. Ar. forms Pwales and *bawālis* might possibly be plural forms. Maltese place-name Pwales occurs in the vicinity of St. Paul's Bay (San Pawl il-Baħar). If this explanation holds for M. Pwales, the initial sound P of Pwales can be explained as a comparatively more recent change suggested by the initial sound of the name of St. Paul which has given its name to San Pawl il-Baħar.

One of the unexplained Maltese place-names is Ta' Xbiex lying between Msida and Gżira facing the sea, now Marina Yacht. Our Ta' Xbiex might well stand for 'Xbiek' plural of 'xibka' which occurs in several Sicilian place-names.

The frequent use of Sic. Ar. *raḥl* in several place-names such as *raḥl*

ṣāfi = M. Hal Saft; *rahl al-farrūg* = M. Hal Farruġ shows that the origin of M. prefix before the names of villages in Malta derives from Ar. *rahl*.

Under Sic. *rràb(a)atu*, the author gives the M. form *Rabato* 'italianizzazione del tipo Rabat (Morocco)'. But the only form used in the spoken language is *Rabat*.

The second book which the author published after his work on Sicilian place-names, includes quite a large number of Sic. words of Ar. origin. Like his previous publication this is a scholarly work which explains the etymology of a large number of Sic. words some of which occur in Maltese as well, naturally not as loanwords but as part of the Semitic component of Maltese, such words being *caruana* (M. surname Caruana); *duana* (M. dwana); *gabbella* (M. qbiela); *flusi* (M. flus); *gesia* (M. ġiża); *giufà* (M. ġifa); *cubbaita* (M. qubbajt), etc.

One of the author's most interesting explanations is that for *ragazzu* (It. ragazzo) which he had originally explained in *Studi Linguistici Italiani*, vol. 1, fasc. 2. pp. 162-173. According to Pellegrini this word, the etymology of which is marked unknown in *Dizionario Etimologico Italiano*, is derived from Ar. رَقَّاص 'Courrier qui porte les lettres, poste, ou qui conduit les voyageurs, messenger'. Also 'compagnon maçon' (Dozy). According to Pellegrini this word reached Sicily as the result of contact 'tra le republiche marinare ed il Maghreb; anche in carte genovesi antiche si nota infatti la voce *ragixiis* associata ai *bastaxiis* ed ai *caravariis*'. This is a very plausible explanation which deserves to hold its ground as long as no better explanation is proposed. Under *galibbu* (on p. 52) M. galeb should be 'qaleb'.

Both books are scholarly additions to the comparative study of Sicilian and incidentally Maltese toponymy and linguistics.

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*Vocabolario Siciliano a cura di Giorgio Piccitto*, published by the Centro di Studi Filologici e Linguistici Siciliani.

This is the first fascicule (pp. xv-80) covering part of letter A up to *agnusdei* which Professor Giorgio Piccitto has undertaken to publish for the benefit of students of the Sicilian language. The dictionary which will consist of three volumes of about one thousand pages each is going to be based on the following criteria (a) all the important lexical material contained in previous dictionaries (b) lexical material contained in manuscript dictionaries (c) lexical material provided by authors who since the seventeenth century have been writing in Sicilian and (d) lexical material directly collected from the people as a result of linguistic enquiries and investigations. The specimen fascicule justifies the high aim that Professor Piccitto has set himself in the compilation of his *Vocabolario*. It will be a masterpiece of Sicilian lexical compilation of wide linguistic interest. Wherever necessary the compiler indicates the authority and also the area where the word in question or particular meaning occurs.

It is an essential reference work for the comparative study of the romance element in Maltese.

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