



# AIS, reloaded

## Dialectology and digital humanities: fieldwork 100 years later

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### 1. General objective

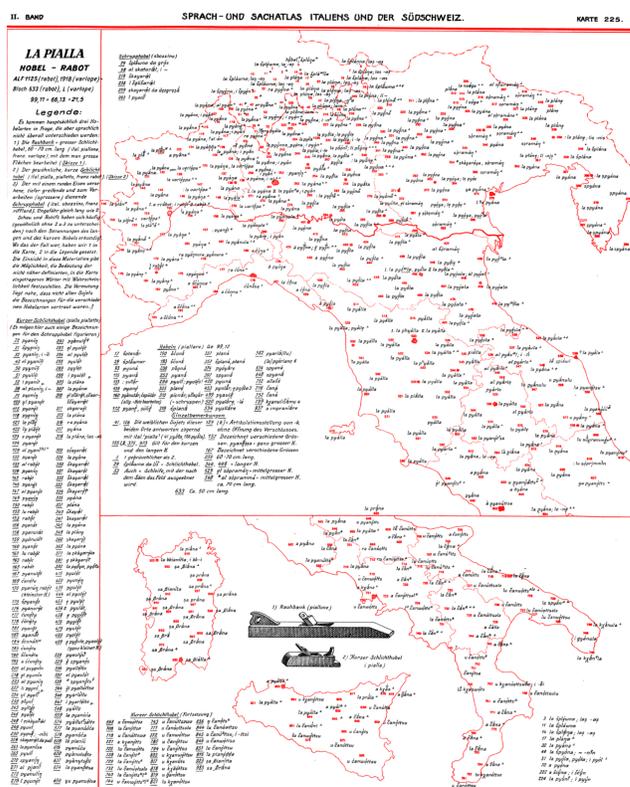
The main goal of the project 'AIS, reloaded' is to remake a part of the *Sprach- und Sachatlas Italiens und der Südschweiz* (AIS) by using new technologies. The general linguistic objective of the programme is to compare the material contained in the 'AIS' – which provides a fine picture of Italo-Romance and Rhaeto-Romance vernaculars as spoken between 1919 and 1928 – with data on present-day dialects collected in the same locations.



### 4. Lines of linguistic research

During the project we develop new lines of research on four main topics based on the data collected during the survey:

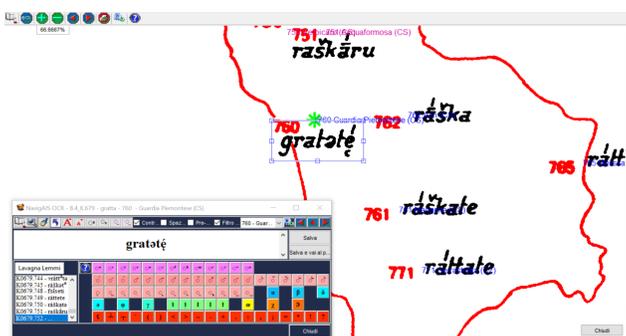
- the syntax of subject pronouns and interrogative systems;
- the acoustic of palatal obstruents;
- the make-up of verbal paradigms;
- the rate of the lexical decay.



### 3. Digitalization

This hundred-year old dialectal atlas is totally hand-made, published in 8 volumes and printed between 1928 and 1940 in a really big format – 41 x 53,7 cm, 1:250.00. All the 1705 maps of the 1920s AIS have already been digitally acquired and made available on the internet through the **NavigAis** project sponsored by the *Istituto di Scienze e Tecnologie della Cognizione* belonging to the Italian *Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche* (CNR). However, by digitalizing maps as images, there are problems under three main respects: usability; scalability and interoperability.

In order to build a querable database, we digitalize the 50% of the original AIS transcriptions by means of a **customized OCR software** (developed by Graziano Tisato at ISTC-CNR in Padua) and successively map them into IPA (the International Phonetical Alphabet) fonts.



### 2. Fieldwork and Technology

Firstly, we aim to carry out new fieldwork on 36 data points in Southern Switzerland (18 for Romansh and 18 for Lombard) corresponding to the original points of the inquiry of the AIS. In each locality we use the same questionnaire of 1920s (about 1800 questions), which lasts around 12 hours. Differently from the past, we use innovative technologies to record, film and store the linguistic data. The collection of the data is made by a specific interface and microphone in order to get high-quality records, which will further allow specific linguistic analyses such as phonetic investigation. A video of the entire interview provides ethnological documentations about the language and culture of each community.

Once collected, the data are transcribed in IPA.

Transcriptions, recordings (both audio and video), and other materials (pictures, annotations, stories, etc.) will be stored in an open access database hosted by the UZH-Phonogrammarchiv.

**Future prospective**  
In conclusion, the aim of this project is twofold: collecting new data in the same localities of the 1920s AIS and digitalizing the AIS maps. The convergence of all these data will provide the creation of a free, querable online database in which data collected in the 1920s will be immediately comparable with the data collected in the last two years. This database will allow to investigate phonetic, morphologic and syntactic data and it will set the stage for further investigations on linguistic topics.

#### Consultants and Collaborators

<b>Research team</b>	Michele Loporcaro, PI
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<b>Linguistic consultants</b>	Franco Lurà (CDE Bellinzona)
	Bruno Moretti (University of Bern)
	Matthias Grünert (University of Freiburg)
<b>Technical support</b>	Graziano Tisato (ISTC-CNR Padua) for the OCR system
	UZH video laboratory for recording and video files
	UZH Phonogram Archives (PAZ) for recording and audio files

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#### AIS, reloaded: Facts and Figures

Duration	2016-2018
Datapoints	36
Collected items	70.000 (approx.)
Digitalized maps	840
Hours of registration	400 (approx.)

### References

1. AIS = Jaberg K. / Jud J., *Sprach- und Sachatlas Italiens und der Südschweiz*, 8 voll. Zofingen, Ringier & Co., 1928-1940.
2. AIS, reloaded = <http://www.rose.uzh.ch/de/forschung/AIS-reloaded.html> (accessed on 22.11.2018).
3. NavigAIS = <http://www3.pd.istc.cnr.it/navigais-web/> (accessed on 22.11.2018)