

Italian *-ismo* /*-ista* and Ancient Greek *-ismós* /*-istḗs* formations.

Morphological processes and diachronic relationships

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I. Preliminaries, literature and corpus

It. *-ismo* /*-ista* and AGr. *-ismós* /*-istḗs* forms are highly productive. Collection of forms containing these affixes: It. 1570 *-ismo* forms and 1380 *-ista* forms, AGr. 860 *-ismós* forms and 530 *-istḗs* forms. Lt. *-ismus* forms are not productive - only 42 *-ismus* forms.

II. It. and AGr.: similarities and differences

Lexical bases:

- ✓ Nouns: It. *abolizionismo* ‘abolitionism’, *abolizionista* ‘abolitionist’ (*abolizione* ‘abolition’); AGr. *oiōnismós* ‘omen from the flight or cries of birds’, *oiōnistḗs* ‘one who foretells from the flight and cries of birds’ (*oiōnós* ‘bird’);
- ✓ Proper Names: It. *bonapartismo* ‘Bonapartism’, *bonapartista* ‘bonapartist’ (*Bonaparte*); AGr. *philippismós* ‘siding with Philip’ (*Phílippos* ‘Philip’), *lakōnistḗs*;
- ✓ Adjectives: It. *ambientalismo* ‘environmentalism’, *ambientalista* ‘environmentalist’ (*ambientale* ‘environmental’); AGr. *psellismós* ‘stammering’, *psellistḗs* ‘stammerer’ (*psellós* ‘stammering’);
- ✓ Adverbs: It. *pressappochismo* ‘superficiality’, *pressappochista* ‘careless, inaccurate, sloppy person’ (*pressappoco* ‘roughly, about’); AGr. *badismós* ‘walking, going’, *badistḗs* ‘goer’ (*bádēn* ‘step by step’);
- ✓ Compound words: It. *terzomondismo* ‘Third-worldism’, *terzomondista* ‘Third Worlder’ (*terzo mondo* ‘Third World’); AGr. *tetrapodismós* ‘a going on all fours’, *tetrapodistḗs* ‘one who goes on all fours’ (*tetrápous* ‘quadruped’);
- ✓ Idioms: It. *cerchiobottismo* ‘in journalism: attitude of expressing appreciation and criticism at the same time versus two contrasting positions’, *cerchiobottista* ‘someone showing *cerchiobottismo*’ (based on the idiom *dare un colpo al cerchio e uno alla botte* ‘to give a hit to the hoop and one to the barrel’); AGr. *skorakismós* ‘contumely’ (*es kórakas* ‘go and be hanged’, lit. [go] to the ravens’).

It. only:

- ✓ Numerals: *diciannovismo* ‘complex of phenomena characterizing the political phase immediately following the First World War’, *diciannovista* ‘participator in the Fascist Party from its beginning’ (*diciannove* ‘nineteen’, i.e. 1919, year of the foundation of the Fascist Party);
- ✓ Prepositions: *dietrismo* ‘tendency to sense hidden intrigues and manoeuvres everywhere’, *dietrista* ‘someone sensing hidden intrigues and manoeuvres everywhere’ (*dietro* ‘behind’);
- ✓ Whole phrases: *menefreghismo* ‘couldn’t-care-less attitude, so-what attitude’, *menefreghista* ‘person who could not care less’ (*me ne frego* ‘I don’t give a damn’);
- ✓ Abbreviations and acronyms (only for *-ista* formations): *aclista* ‘member of the ACLI’ (*ACLI* = *Associazioni cristiane lavoratori italiani* ‘Christian associations of Italian workers’), *ciellenista* ‘supporter of the CLN’ (*CLN* = *Comitato di liberazione nazionale* ‘National committee for the liberation of Italy’), *piduista* ‘member of the secret P2 Masonic lodge’ (*P2* = *Propaganda due* ‘Propaganda two’).

AGr.: two derivational processes, applied subsequently. Nouns such as *barbarismós*, *kunismós*, *exorkismós*, *eikonismós* and the corresponding *-istḗs* forms (*exorkistḗs* ‘exorcist’, *eikonistḗs* ‘registrar’) stand in a derivational relationship with *-ízō* verb forms: *barbarízō* ‘behave or speak like a barbarian’, *kunízō* ‘live like a Cynic’, *exorkízō* ‘administer an oath’, *eikonízō* ‘copy from a pattern’. The affixes *-ismós* and *-istḗs* are therefore to be interpreted as a combination of the verbal affix *-íz-* and the nominal affix *-mo/-tḗs-*. The two morpho-lexical processes, involving *-ízō* verbs and *-ismós* / *-istḗs* nouns, are both productive and related to each other.

III. A closer look at Old Italian

Research on texts from Dante Alighieri (13th century) to Galileo Galilei (first half of 17th century). No productive use of *-ismo* before the 16th century; couples of *-ismo* / *-ista* forms such as *ateismo* ‘atheism’ / *ateista* ‘atheist’ are not found previously. During the 13th-15th century, *-ismo* attested forms were related to Lt. or AGr. forms (exceptions: *incantesimo* ‘spell, enchantment’, 13th century; *ruffianesimo* ‘whore-mongering, bootlicking’, 14th century). As regards *-ista* forms, the 13th century already presents *Arnaldisti*, *Leonisti*, *Speronisti* denoting supporters, followers of religious, heretical movements (*Arnaldo da Brescia*, *Lione*, *Ugo Speroni*).

Our research on the texts yields these results:

- ✓ for *-ismo* forms, ca. 40 types;
- ✓ for *-ista* forms, ca. 90 types (both variable for inflection and orthography).

Forms attested in texts not found in Modern Italian dictionaries (16th century texts, excepting other indications): *Antimacchiavellismo* ‘anti-Machiavellianism’, *bardascismo* ‘male homosexual prostitution’, *epitetismi* ‘epithetisms’, *Iustinianismo* ‘Justinianism’, *Piratismo* ‘piratism’, *profanismo* ‘profanity’, *soldanesimo* (= *sultanismo* ‘Sultanism’), *stryonismi* (= *stregonesimi*, *stregonismi*) ‘wizardry’, *trigonismo* ‘trigonism’; *Arnaldiste*, *ipocratista* ‘Hippocratist’, *Leoniste*, *Speroniste* (13th century); *Maumettisti* ‘Mohammedans’ (15th century); *Achitofellisti* ‘wise counselors like Ahitophel’, *albertista* ‘follower of Albertus Magnus’, *albachista* ‘Albigense’, *barzellettista* ‘writer of a frottola’, *contista* ‘book-keeper’, *galileista* ‘Galilean’, *gesuitista* ‘Jesuit’, *Navarrista* ‘Navarrist’, *nobilista* ‘honoris cause’, *palacista* (*palazzista* ‘lawyer’), *papalista* ‘papist’, *paulianisti* ‘Paulianists’, *priorista* ‘book where the priors are listed’, *Problemista* ‘anonymous critic of Galilei and author of the problem *De lunarium montium altitudine*’, *regolisti* ‘persons obsessed with rule observation’, *sorbonista* ‘Sorbonist’, *spigolista* ‘puritan, sanctimonious person, bigot’, *teoremisti* ‘writers of a theorem’, *viglefisti* ‘Wyclifists, followers of John Wyclif’ (16th century).

OIt. couples of forms, e.g.: (*Antimacchiavellismo* / *macchiavellista* ‘Machiavellian’), *ateismo* / *ateista*, *Calvinismo* ‘Calvinism’ / *calvinista* ‘Calvinist’, *essorcismi* ‘exorcisms’ / *essorcista* ‘exorcist’, *Mahumetismo* ‘Mohammedanism’ / *mahumetisti*, *papismo* ‘papism’ / *papisti* ‘papists’. Some types show either *-ismo* or *-ista* affixes only (correlated with forms attested later) e.g.: *anabattisti* (*anabattismo* ‘Anabaptism’), *antagonista* (*antagonismo* ‘antagonism’), *averroista* (*averroismo* ‘Averroism’), *catechismo* ‘catechism’ (*catechista* ‘catechist’), *Cronichisti* (*cronachismo* ‘narration according to chronological order’), *ebraismo* ‘Judaism’ (*ebraista* ‘Judaist’); *evangelista* (*evangelismo* ‘evangelism’), *ipocratista* (*ippocratismo* ‘Hippocratism’), *umanista* (*umanesimo* ‘Humanism’), and so on.

A first attempt to classify:

A. *-ismo* forms

1. **ideology, field, conception:** *anatematismo* ‘anathematism’, *arianismo* ‘Arianism’, *iustinianismo* ‘Justinianism’, *luteranismo* ‘Lutheranism’;
2. **rhetorical device, linguistic peculiarity:** *barbarismo* ‘barbarism’, *epitetismo* ‘epithetism’, *paralogismo* ‘paralogism’;
3. **behavior, attitude:** *bardascismo*, *piratismo*, *puttanesimo* ‘behaviour like a whore’, *ruffianesimo*;

B. *-ista* forms

1. **follower, disciple (to A1.):** *albertista*, *albachista*, *maumettista*, *papista*, *paulianista*;
2. **professional, expert:** *abachista* ‘accountant’, *casista* ‘casuist’, *chimista* ‘chemist’, *computista* ‘book-keeper’, *conclavista* ‘conclavist’, *scritturista* ‘Scripturist’;
3. **author, painter etc.:** *barzellettista*, *cronichista*, *problemista*, *prologhista* ‘speaker of a prologue’, *salmista* ‘psalmist’;
4. **musician:** *citarista* ‘citharist’, *flautista* ‘flautist’, *organista* ‘organist’, *ribichista* ‘player of a rebec’;
5. **person characterized by behavior (to A3.):** *Achitofellista*, *regolista* ‘person obsessed with rule observation’, *spigolista*.

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