

RESIA – A SLAVIC ENCLAVE IN ITALY CULTURE AND RELIGION IN 19TH CENTURY TEXTS

NADIA CLEMENTE

Abstract: The paper describes a Slavic enclave living in the Resia Valley in Italy. These people speak an ancient Slavic language, which still preserves interesting archaic features and other elements of interest even today. The condition of marginalization has allowed the development and a maintenance of unique culture of songs, dances, oral traditions and religious sentiment reflected in the lexicon, with significant Resian invocations addressed to God. The Resians did not write and did not leave written records of their language and culture. Their knowledge was transmitted orally from generation to generation until the nineteenth century, when some writings appeared, few at the hands of the Resians of religious content, but more at the hands of Slavic travellers and scholars. The notable figures among them were Izmail I. Sreznevskij, a Russian Slavist, and Jan N. Baudouin de Courtenay, a Polish native, who came to Resia in 1841 and 1873 and studied and investigated the language and the rituals, values, beliefs, religious habits and stories of Resians, as he was interested in outlining and describing a half-known population. The religious sentiment of Resians was manifested through invocations to God, the construction of churches and votive chapels, participation in solemn festivities and religious literature in the Resian language. In the first place it was priests who over the centuries influenced culture and Resian society with different outcomes, depending on their background and training; it is also thanks to their contribution that, in recent times, steps have been taken to recover part of the religious songs handed down and to experiment with new translations of the sacred scriptures into Resian. Today, on the religious holiday of Saint Mary of the Assumption, there are solemn rites and collective dance which brings to mind the cathartic power.

Keywords: Resia Valley, religious ethnic traditions, Resia in 19th century texts

Introduction¹

Resia is an alpine valley, wedged for about 20 kilometres between the Alps and the Julian Pre-Alps (Fig. 1, 2 and 3), at the extreme north-eastern border of Italy. It is located in the Friuli area, and it is surrounded by high mountains, up to 2587 meters of the mountain massif of Mount Canin (Fig. 4), that I. I. Sreznevskij (1878) describes as “[a]ll form a high bulwark, lowering in some places and rising in others” (p. 7). In the main valley the inhabitants are distributed in the five hamlets: San Giorgio/Bila, Gniva/Njiva, Oseacco/ Osoána and Stolvizza/Sòlbiza), connected to minor settlements and gravitating around what is considered the capital, Prato di Resia/Rávanza. In a small adjacent valley, Uccéa/Učjá is only inhabited in the summer. The geographic conformation of the valley, closed on all sides, with the only and first carriage access, consisting of a road built in 1838 (Sreznevskij, 1878), has determined and conditioned the life and historical events of the valley, but at the same time has favoured the maintenance of traditions, songs, dances and unique language, derived from ancient Slavic, which still preserves interesting archaic features and various other elements of interest even today. There are less than one thousand Resian currently residing in the valley, but many live in other places in Italy and abroad, emigrating for work.



Fig. 1

Resia Valley - Panorama from west to east – photographer Daniele Buttolo

¹ The author would like to thank two anonymous reviewers for their insightful comments and helpful suggestions.



Fig. 2

*Resia Valley – Panorama from east to west (winter)
– photographer Daniele Buttolo*



Fig. 3

*Resia Valley – Stream Resia – Panorama from east to west
– photographer Daniele Buttolo*

The history of this small valley has not been written because such a small area does not attract the attention of historians, even if it deserves a dedicated study, and the rare information that exists, is found scattered in various archives. The official history of the Resians begins with the arrival of the Slavs in Friuli, documented by Paulus Diaconus (2007 [787–789 AD]) in *Historia Langobardorum* [History of the Lombards]. In Book IV, 28, he recounts that ‘Cacano’, King of the Avars, together with troops of his Slavic allies, invaded the Lombard Duchy of Cividale (year 610 AD); in Books V, 23 and VI, 45 he tells us about the invasion of the Slavs, the struggles of the Lombards to repel them from the Duchy of Cividale and finally how peace was made with them (about 730 AD).



Fig. 4

*Mount Sart (left) and the Canin massif area reflected in the Resia stream at sunset
– photographer Sandro Pavan*

In 1084 or 1085 the whole territory of Resia (Härtel R., 1985) became part of the “Dotation des Grafen Kazelin [Endowment of Count Kazelin] (p. 38) in favour of the foundling Abbey of Moggio, consecrated them in 1119. In those old documents, analyzed by Härtel R, the territory of Resia is mentioned in the years 1136, 1149, 1184 and 1228, in submission to the Abbot of Moggio, emis-

sary of the Patriarch of Aquileia, who administered the religious, jurisdictional and administrative power over a vast territory, including also Friuli. From 1420, the whole Marca del Friuli was conquered by the Republic of Venice, which deprived the Patriarch of Aquileia of the temporal authority. And, reading Nazzi F. (2008) we know that “In June 1420 Moggio, Chiusa, Resia e Resiutta agreed among themselves to make peace with Venice” (p. 641).

Later historical events are documented in schoolbooks of Italian’s history, because Resia has always participated in events in Friuli and Italy until the proclamation of the Kingdom of Italy (1866) and of the Italian Republic (1946). During the First and Second World Wars the territory of the Resia valley, even if surrounded by high mountains, was directly involved in combative acts, for the first time.

Resia and the Resians remained secluded and unknown to the Slavic world until at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the first reports of the Resians began to circulate in the specialized Slavic magazines of the time. J. N. Baudouin de Courtenay (1876) quotes: “Before I: Izmail I. Sreznevskij and Stanko Vraz, two Slavic travellers wrote about Resia and the Resians, the Polish count Jan Potocki and the Czech priest A. Píšely, former chaplain in the Austrian army” (p. 367). They compiled lists of Resian words, transcribed their impressions and varied information on the life, habits and customs of this semi-unknown people; the illustrious Slavist then lists the various publications that appeared in specialized magazines. Jan Potocki left the manuscript, with information about Resia, in the Ossolinski Library in Lviv. Izmail I. Sreznevskij published reports, noted during his visit to Resia in 1841, in *Žurnal Ministerstva* [Ministry periodical] (1841), *Moskvitjanin* [Muscovite] (1844) and in the book *Фріульські Славяне* [The Slavs of Friuli] (1878). Stanko Vraz published his observations in *Danica Ilirska* in 1841. Other scholars, such as Jernej Kopitar, Josef Dobrovský, Pavel Jozef Šafarik and Ján Kollar, did not visit Resia and commented on what Jan Potocki, Stanko Vraz and Izmail I. Sreznevskij had written. The first in-depth analysis of the Rezian language and culture is due to the studies of Jan N. Baudouin de Courtenay, who arrived in Resia in 1873. After this first publication the Slav world and Slavists came to know the Resians and began to take an interest in them.

Religious sentiment reflected in the lexicon

An important element of Resian cultural and social life has been the profound religiosity that characterized it. Religious sentiment is demonstrated by the remarkable number of churches built over the centuries: one in each major hamlet, one in each minor hamlet, as well as a large number of votive chapels (*máana*, they represented the church), scattered in the mountain stables (Fig.

5), and of crosses (*križa*) placed along the paths, in memory of more or less propitious events. The religious sentiment of the Resians is found in the participation in religious festivals, which will be discussed in the next chapter.



Fig. 5

Votive chapel – Màana – photograper Antonio Longhino - "ta na Osriže" 1894.

The religiosity of Resians is also proven by the infinity of daily expressions and exclamations, addressed to God our Lord. The invocations punctuate every moment of the day and reveal the invocation of a consoling help to pain, sadness and daily fatigue experienced in an isolated and disagreeable environment. Exclamations are still used today by those who speak Resian, more frequently by the elderly, but they do not represent an archaic lexicon; young people, on the other hand, targeted by a secularized culture, for the most part do not feel the consoling message of religion, as it was once felt. Many of these invocations are also reported in Baudouin de Courtenay's *Materialien I* [Materials 1st] (1895), which includes conversations he had with Resians during his stays in Resia, between 1873 and 1893.



Fig. 6
Resian Dance in Ucce/Učja

In the following list we summarize some significant Resian invocations, addressed to God:

Hôspu' Buh ("Lord God"); **šBughön** ("With God", a figurative farewell: "May God go with you"); **Böha-jimë** ("The name of God", meaning "Go in the name of God"; in response to *šBughän*, "alms"); **Böžjë jimë** ("The name of God", adj.); **Buh warje** ("God protect [us]"); **Buh ne dej** ("May God forbid", "That it does not happen"); **Buh dej no lehko nuć** ("May God grant a gentle night"; "Good night!"); **Buh-lunej** [singular], **Buhalunite** (with the formal you, "Lei" in Italian, "Thanks", "May God reward you", "Thank you!"); **Buh dej** ("May God grant", "I pray", in response to "Thank you", "That you have", a wish for prosperity); **Buh žeghne** ("May God bless", e.g., this food, pronounced at the table); **Buh wan žeghnej** ("May God bless you"²); **Buh ta posvite** ("May God enlighten you"); **Lodato su Kriste** ("Christ be praised", a welcoming greeting), from Italian "sia lodato Gesù Cristo"³); **sempre-s-lodatu** ("Always be praised", from Italian "sempre sia lodato", response to the above); **Buh wan dejte**

² Documented also by Baudouin de Courtenay (1895, p. 70).

³ *ibidem*, p. 193.

dobrö (“May God grant you good [things]”⁴); *ći Buh bo nän dal šdravjě* (“If God will grant us health”⁵); *Buh dej furtüno* (“May God grant fortune”⁶); *Buh pranase ta-prat waša dušiza* (“May God bring to [suffrage of] the souls [of your deceased]”, instead of “Thank you for what is offered”, e.g. even a coffee); *Buh pomaghej* (“May God help”); *Buh roka* (hands clasped); *Buh vi*⁷ (“God only knows”, “Who knows!”), *Buh bo vědel*⁷ (“God will know”, “Who knows!”), *Bohow-din* (“Sunday”, God’s day); *Bohow duh* (“Divine Spirit”); *Buh ka mü*⁸ (“At least one has it”, “Thanks be to God who has granted him”, e.g., a little well-being”); *Buh ka ti si došow* (“At least you have arrived”, “Thanks be to God”, e.g., that you have saved); *prošě Böghü* (“Pray to God”, “Thanks be to God”, e.g., that you are safe); *šahwale Böghü* (“You thank God”, e.g., that you have escaped danger); *betabuh* (“Poor him!”), expression of commiseration, from *batan Buh, “God martyred”, the miserable compared to Jesus/God martyred); *od Bögħa* (“From God”, “God sent”; *boghobare* (“Trouble”, from *bogho-bare*, ask God”; *barat*, “To ask”, “Appeal to God!”), e. g., in case of reckless and dangerous action); *böghow* (“Divine”, adj.); *na to ime Bögawo*, (“In the name of God”, “God willing!”); *böholo* (“Rainbow”, from *böhow lok*, “Divine bow”); *Böghec* (“Christ child”, diminutive of *Buh*); *böghicow* (“Of Christ child’s”, adj.); *böhawa rožü* (“Flower of Jesus”, *Hepatica nobilis*, *Anemone epatica*); *böžjě* (“Godly”, adj.); *Böžiuw Šapüved* (“Commandment”, “Precept of God”).

So far, these are expressions of praise or supplication to God our Lord, but Resian language also preserves archaic terms such as *ěro*, *jěro* (“priest”). This appellation confirms that the ecclesiastical hierarchy had been known in the Valley, since the early centuries, thanks to them the name *járo* or *áro* has remained, which in the texts of the Paleoslavian Canon is “иѣрѣи, иѣрѣи” = “priest”. (Cejtlin, Večerki, & Blagovoj, 1994, p. 278) This term represents a veritable linguistic treasure, many centuries old. But who brought this term to Resia? Unfortunately, due to the lack of written documents, this question remains unanswered.

The expression *Majna Valikü Nuć* (Chinese, 2003, p. 51) means “Pentecost”, literally “Easter May” or “Great Night of May”. The baptism of the catechumens, in this case of the Christianized Slavs, was imparted both the night

⁴ *ibidem*, p. 231.

⁵ *ibidem*, p. 233.

⁶ *ibidem*, p. 236.

⁷ By verb ‘*vědet*’ ‘to know’, present: *vin, viš, vi, vimö, vitä, vîö*; past: *vědel, vědalä, vědalo, vedali*.

⁸ It is invocation that corresponds to Russian “слава Бору!” [God be praised].

before Easter, and the night before Pentecost and its record has remained in the name *Majnä Valikä Nuć*.

It is interesting to note that in the Resian lexicon there is a continuous reference to God, recalled and praised from the morning greeting to the evening farewell. For centuries the morning greeting has been *śukrüstě* (“Jesus Christ”) and that of the evening, *śBughän* (“With God”), but during the nineteenth century habits changed. Why? We can speculate that the ideals of the French Revolution, including anti-clericalism, also reached Resia and, slowly during the 19th century, radically changed the perception of religiosity in the Resians. In this regard we have two important examples.

I. I. Sreznevsky (1878), who visited Resia in 1841, wrote his impressions:

the Resians (all Roman-Catholic) are very religious. In addition to the main church of the Assumption, there are still four in each of the main villages. The influence of the priest is extremely strong. Everyone considers him to be his master (*naš ghospôd* ‘our master’), and his every word is law (p. 12).

At the bottom of this annotation, J. N. Baudouin de Courtenay who came in Resia for the first time in 1873, added⁹:

Currently the influence of the priest is much less, now they do not call him "My master" at all. The common name for all priests is *jéro* or *éro* (in some villages south of Resia *jéro*), and then they distinguish the parish priest from the chaplain, etc. (Sreznevsky, 1878, p. 12).

J. N. Baudouin de Courtenay (1876) comments:

And since, in order not to offend the religious sentiments of the people among whom I had to return again, I tried to carry on these religious customs, and, for example, in the case indicated, at least I took off my hat, the Resians 'the most liberal of people' looked at me with eyes that showed wonder why “un professore [a professor]”¹⁰ could be “so backward” as to follow practices that are suitable for at most, the old and women but not of a modern, cultured person (p. 288).

Many years, almost 180 have passed, since the attachment to religion began to decline among Resians, but their lexicon has maintained a reflection of religious sentiment.

⁹ Sreznevskij (1878, p. 2) points out that all the notes are by J. N. Baudouin de Courtenay.

¹⁰ In Italian.

Religious festivities

To express religiosity, the Resians developed, over the course of history, a series of rituals and solemn religious feasts were celebrated with collective songs and dances on the side-lines of great celebrations.

In Resia the most important festival is the *Šmarnamiša*, which occurs on the August holiday in honour of Saint Mary of the Assumption (celebrated on August 15), the Patroness of Resia. The term derives from **Sveta Marijna Miša* > *Šmarnamiša*. On that day all the Resians converge in Prato di Resia/*Rávanza*, where solemn religious rites take place, and a traditional large market is held. It is a day of celebration, which attracts emigrants who are not resident to the Valley, for work reasons or in other regions of Italy and in Europe (Baudouin de Courtenay, 1876, pp. 274-275).

Solemn celebrations are still held in every hamlet in honour of the patron saints. These are the feasts described by I. I. Sreznevskij (1878, pp. 12-13):

The 1st of May, *Majnek*, is the feast for the dedication of the Church of Saint Mary of Assumption. Once there were great parties, but now, at least in Prato, there are no dances, no music and no songs. Each town has the feast of the patron saint, in particular in *Oseacco / Osoane*, they celebrate San Vito and in San Giorgio/*Bila* they celebrate San Giorgio. On the occasion of the latter's feast, once the patron saint of all the Resians, the image of the saint was carried in procession in all the hamlets of the valley and in each one there was dancing, singing and drinking wine. The songs continued until evening, when the image was brought back to his church and all the celebrations ended at the stroke of midnight, with a prayer sung to the saint.

Even today, on the occasion of the feast of the patron saint, in each hamlet, takes place also a rite that dates back to very ancient times, the “change of the *Čamarár*”. He is elected annually from among the parishioners, to collect the donations necessary for the maintenance of the church; on this occasion the old *Čamarár* entrusts the task, symbolized by a silver box (Fig. 7), to the new person in charge. In the silver box is the tobacco that the Cameraro offers (a pinch) in exchange for money.

Priests have had a great influence on the social and cultural life of Resians, both positively and negatively. Recalling the visit to the valley in 1841, I. I. Sreznevskij (1878) writes:

The priests tried to dissuade the people from singing and they succeeded. The popular songs are almost all forgotten, and, in their place, they sing “Friulian arias”. The few that remain have strange melodies, of the kind of the ritual and wedding songs of the southern Russians (p.13).



Fig. 7

The silver box of Stolvizza/Solbiza's church.

At this news I. N. Baudouin de Courtenay, replied: “The priest now does not forbid the Resians from singing or dancing and even if he forbade it, no one would listen to him” (Sreznevskij, 1878, p. 14, footnote).

The habit of collective dance, still alive today in Resia, brings to mind the cathartic power of dance which suggests the image of ritual celebrations and the liberating effect it has on those who indulge in it. In ancient times (Fig. 6) and also nowadays, dances accompanied important and solemn occasions.

E. Adaiewsky ([1883] 2012)¹¹ describes the Resian dance and music: “While they dance, they never touch hands, it is a continuous cross step, while walking the women turn once or twice on themselves and then find themselves side by side” (p. 133). And on the subject of the musical rhythm, she notes:

To our great surprise, and in the most unexpected way, we found this peonio rhythm alive in the midst of this Slavic people for which it constitutes the constant musical metric norm. ... We can say that Resian music occupies, in the popular music of the Slavic peoples, the same independent and particular position of their language among the other Slavic dialects (p. 137).

First records of written Resian and the oral tradition

The Resian language and culture have been handed down only orally and the first writings in Resian, redacted for practical purposes, were compiled by priests in order to spread Christian teachings among young people and adults.

The first of the writings composed in Resian is the *Libri od luzi nebesche* [Book of heavenly light] or *Resian Catechism* written by priest Francesco Domenico Micelli (1797), handed down to us thanks to the interest of J. N. Baudouin de Courtenay who received it and published in 1875. It was supplemented by a vocabulary, with comments and notes in Russian in an appendix to the *Опыт фонетики резьянских говоров* [Phonetics essay of the Resian speaks] (1875). The text contains the “Christian doctrine” taught to children, the main prayers, the Commandments and Christian teachings. It is a first attempt at writing in Resian. Its predominant graphic system is Italian and straight from the first lines you can see the notable interference of the romance lexicon.

The second text written in Resian is *Christjanske Uzshilo* [Christian teaching]. It is a collection of twenty-four sermons on seven Sacraments, addressed to the faithful especially adults, and read during Sunday or festive services from 1845 to 1850. The original manuscript was donated to J. N. Baudouin de Courtenay and published by him in 1913 as “Resian monument”,

¹¹ E. Adaiewsky wrote a book in 1883 which was published posthumously in 2012.

accompanied by notes and insights in German. The illustrious Slavist Jan Baudouin de Courtenay acknowledges that *Christianske Uzhilo* reflects the pure Resian language, with “Italianisms and Slovenianisms certainly foreign to the current language” (Courtenay, 1875, p. 118). From a first reading we immediately grasp the linguistic competence, both morphological and lexical, we appreciate the neologisms and the ability to turn, or to put it better, to regenerate the concepts and principles of Christian teaching in the Resian language. Unlike the first text taken into consideration, a philological study of the greatest interest on the Resian language can be developed through the analysis of *Christjanske Uzhilo*. The author, or rather the authors, are Don Odorico Buttolo and Don Francesco Galizia (p. 113); furthermore, the text is not a translation from an Italian original, but an original work (p. 142).

Christjanske Uzhilo.

1

Uláhagne h' Uzhílu Christjanskimu.

Buh nas je creál, sa uójo da mi ha snáimo, amáimo, serviáimo 2
na ifsén svítu, anù da mi ha ushíuaimó sa nemér tu Paravíshe. na 25 Májja 1845.

Zhe vi víta tadéi, po kírí póti mamó dosézh ifsó? Sa dosézh 3
ifsó mamó dárshat te svéte míttelne, ki Buh nan je dal: to príde
rezhít, mamó dárshat to svéto Christjansko Dottríno, ki Iésus Chrí-
stus nan je dal skuóse gnehá svéto uzhílo.

Ma káku móre dárshat te Bóshje míttelne ití, ki jih ne sna? 4
Káku móre dárshat to svéto Christjansko Dottríno, ití ki je ne
umj, anù ki je ne intendá? Ia crédinan, da vi ushè od máleha
horè sta se jo náuzhili: ma pur ja se bojin, da muzh ih je, ki so
sábili kíro besído; muzh ih je, ki umijo Dottríno mákoi smútiemo;
muzh ih je, ki je ne intindájo; anù magári tákoi ne, ki dni cert
ne umijo níkar.

Sa uójo ifsohá ja zhion lítus hlabokó anù na tínkin uan od- 5
prít, anù spiegát Christjansko Dottríno, da po iséi póti vi moréita
jo intendát, anù jo dárshat skrágneno, anù itadéi snat Bóha, amát
Bóha, serviát Bóhu na ifsén svítu, anù ha ushíuat sa lemér tu
Paravíshe.

Ne stúita se zhúdit, ki ifsó uzhílo uan parjá dna nóva rizh; 6
pokai ki vi matá védet, da itáku dílajo tu usáki Paróchj, itáku

Analysing the seven sacraments, the priest exhorted the Resians to profess the teaching of the Christian faith, at times he harshly criticized them because they did not prove themselves sufficiently devoted. Through the reading of sermons, we can imagine the life of the Resians, their strengths and weaknesses; it turns out that in those years the Resians did not have a good knowledge of Catholic teachings and there were also those who ignored Christian duties. In the sequence of the Sacraments, the priest dwelt a lot on Confession, Marriage and the role of parents.

The publication of the *Christjanske Uzhilo* was a lucky event for the Resians, who would have thanked J. N. Baudouin de Courtenay if they could read that precious document today.

The Resians have also preserved an oral tradition that refers to the religious literature composed of stories (*praviza*), songs (*wiža*) and prayers (*rizjúne*). The central theme of this trend is salvation, to be achieved through continuous prayer, penance, fasting and suffering. One of the texts echoes the Legend of St. Alessio (Baudouin de Courtenay, 1895, pp. 114-123, 123-132) in Resian *San Dalešjo*, presumably from the Latin form “(Vita) Sancti Alexii”; it belongs to both Latin and Polish religious literature.

Another interesting passage is the legend of St. David, *Sveti Sinti Láudec*, from the diminutive *Davidec*. He is a fervent Christian capable, even if small, of rejecting the flattery of the Goliath-Demon and for this reason he is allowed, while still alive, to visit Hell. Among the damned, *Sveti Sinti Laudec* finds his parents and his two brothers and asks them the reason for the eternal punishment and, after hearing their confession, he takes them all to Heaven. In this story, eternal salvation is achieved through “Confession”.

The line of religious literature in Resian also includes songs, among which there are two interesting ones - *Běšě Mate ta pod križon* (“Stabat Mater”) and *Sodni din* (“the Judgment Day”); they are still sung today in the churches of Resia, on the occasion of solemn feasts.

These two texts, with others, have been collected in a booklet (*Libro dei Canti* [Book of the songs], edited by Parish of S. Maria Assunta, 1999) and were taken from Roberto Frisano’s degree thesis (a.a. 1995-1996). He told me:

The Resian religious songs, that we can document, were probably spread from the end of the eighteenth century. A small group is made up of Resian versions of psalms, the Latin *Dies irae* and the *Magnificat* (with melodies reminiscent of the Gregorian ones or the “patriarchine” versions used in Friuli). Another group consists of catechetical songs or devotional songs, which were probably invented by some priest, always between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

We transcribe¹² them below:

BĚŠĚ MATE TA POD KRIŽON – STABAT MATER

Sveta Mate vi sprusitě, tu-w našě sěrzě se šaprijtě plaje od Ježuš Kristuša.

1. Běšě Mate ta pod križon ta-w dulörjě rat na jöčě vidět Bōga ubišana.

2. Nji dušiza pa sa mimbra, karje tožna nu pa šmáltrana, skuša sablo šbozana.

3. Kako tožna nu punišna, na je stala Mati Sveta, Mate Sina Ježuša.

4. Ne se tožase nu pa mimbrase, döbra Mati, köj ša videt pene od Sina Bōžjaha.

5. Se udjōčěj wsake žwot, köj ša vidět Mate Boga ta-w ti vilikě spažiměn.

6. Pa sa smilne wsaka dūša, vidět Mate našaha Kristuša pätět maltre od Ježuša.

7. Ša wse hrihe od judjame pätěl Ježuš ta-w tormintah odkärvävět od hējžleh.

8. Vidět sviha dolč Sina, pomorjoč sam ta-na križo, dardo šadnjě spažēm.

9. Mate pručä wsěn dušizan, ša dubruto od teh sulšěn pa mi bomö udjōkaně.

10. Ša dubruto od Svete Mate, vi möj Buh sěrcě šavjite ša limer šis wame.

11. Ša ta žihněn Sin ka mwär, vibirijta wse te maltre, kar tuliko teškö an pätěl.

12. Ta-na križon smilně utožän waše šdiljane wse maltre, ša wso vito ša limer.

13. Stat šis wame Sveta Mate, stat šis wame ta-pod križon, ša no jtako vliko maltro.

14. Ko ma dušiza žwöt šapüste, šdělajtě ša rude danö to nēbēsko gloriyo.

THE MOTHER WAS UNDER THE CROSS – STABAT MATER

Holy Mother we pray you, in our heart here close the wounds of Jesus Christ.

1. The Mother was under the cross, in too much pain she cries to see God hanging.

¹² We transcribe them, with spelling adaptation by the editor.

-
2. His soul also groans, very sad and painful, pierced by the sword.
 3. How sad and dejected was the Holy Mother, the Mother of the Son Jesus.
 4. She was saddened and groaned, the good Mother, to see the pains of her Son Jesus.
 5. Every person is saddened, by seeing the Mother of God, in pangs.
 6. And every soul takes pity on seeing the Mother of our Christ endure the sufferings of Jesus.
 7. Because of all the sins of the people, Jesus suffered in torments due to the bleeding lashes.
 8. See your sweet Son, dying abandoned on the cross, to the last agony.
 9. Mother help all souls, for the goodness of those tears, we too will be weeping.
 10. By the goodness of the Holy Mother, to you my God we bind our heart forever to you.
 11. For the blessed Son who died, take all the sufferings which He endured so strongly.
 12. On the humbly contrite cross, all your sufferings shared, for all your life forever.
 13. To be with you Holy Mother, to be with you under the cross, for such a great suffering.
 14. When my soul leaves the body, let heavenly glory be given forever.

SODNJE DIN, TE DIN NA SODNJE

Sodnje din, te din na sodnje, gori svit anu vse reče, pravi David nu Sibila.

Smrt se čude nu natura, wsak wstane kar je ta ura, rispundet čes vse sve hrihe.

Koj tadj an ma rečet bušaz, ko pa to još jistes se skrije, takoj rišnik se odkrije.

Krej od strašne maestade, vi salvawate šis wašo gračijo, salvejti nas šis wašo dubruto.

Mili Ježuš spomanuwti se, je si hauža sve pasjune, vaše gračije, vaše pardune.

Ša nas iskat ste se strudel, š'teškin križon sti nas vikupel, wsaka stanta, na bo prašna.

Ćudikat čes vse ofeše, nahejte dolo te još vendete, pred tin dnje od te raziune.

Vi Marijo ste rišveselel, tu-w ladruna ste polednol, anu mle sti dal špirančo.

Slatko pas Buh šinkajt ten dušizan, ta sveta luč jin svite ša limer tuw paraviže. Itako to bode.

JUDGMENT DAY

Day of judgment, the day of judgment, the world and all things blaze, David and Sibyl tell us.

Death and nature are amazed, everyone will rise again when that hour comes to answer for all their sins.

What then can say poor, when even the righteous will hide, while the sinner will reveal himself.

Majestic terrible king, save yourselves with your grace, save us with your goodness.

Benign Jesus, I am guilty of my passions, remember your grace and your forgiveness.

You are exhausted seeking us, with the heavy cross you have redeemed us, all troubles will be in vain.

When you judge all the sins, omit the just vengeance, before the day of reckoning.

You rejoiced Mary, you looked towards the thieves, and you give me hope.

God give a sweet peace to those souls, a holy light luminate them forever in Paradise.

So be it.

Nowadays

We have read that priests with their strong influence have often discouraged the perpetuation of ancient customs. However, in the last 30 – 40 years they have encouraged the use of the Resian language in the liturgy and encouraged the translation of the Gospels into Resian. It was demanding and commendable work. To appreciate their value, we transcribe one of the passages that appeared in the Parish Bulletin of Resia *Pod Tjanynowo sinco* (“In the shadow of the Canin”, Summer 1981).

ŠMARNAMIŠA

Je se woğial Bogow santuari ta-w nebe anu ta-w santuaru je se po-kašala Arka wod šaveše.

Tadij ta-w nebe je se pokašal din privliki sanjál: na žana woblačáná taj sunze, šis luno tapod nogami, na ie mela tana glavi no karonó šis dwanist šwišdow. Na nusila anu na ie wojmekala ša puvit.

Tadij ta-w nebe dušil din drugi sanjal: na privlika dišmirína čarnjela šis sedan glavow anu desat rogow; ta-na glawan na ie mela sedan krajovski karonow.

Šis nji repon na tešala no tretnjo part wod wse šwišdow ki so bile ta-w nebe anu na je šmirkala dolu na jise swit.

Te brau wod te dišmirine se gal taprit to žano ki puwiala ša ji snest utručića, apena našinan. Žana powila dnoga sinića distinan kwažuwat vis čistu swit šis to móčno jawrawo palizo. Jise sinić an je bil napret wšet wod Boga, anu gan ta-prit njaga tron.

Žana bwižala ta-w to same mestu ka to ni wod nikogor, itu ki Buh je bil paraćal no streho.

Tadij ta-w nebe sa ćul din móćni glas ka pul: “Njan je se naredel salvanust, móćnust, krajuwska wod našaga Boga, anu njaga móćne kwazanje wod njaga Christuša.

Ta-w Librinu wod Apocalisse, 11,19; 12,1-6a. 10a-b (Traduzione di Maria Di Lenardo Barbarino)

Edited by Author in: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KTFFasz-tMc>

MASS OF SAINT MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION

The sanctuary of God opened in heaven and the Ark of the covenant appeared in the sanctuary. Then a great sign appeared in the sky, a woman dressed in the sun, with the moon under her feet, had a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and was crying out in labour pains.

Then another sign appeared in the sky, a huge red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns; on his head he had seven diadems.

It dragged a third of the stars that were in the sky with its tail and they fell to earth. That dragon beast stood before the woman giving birth to devour the newborn child. The woman gave birth to a male child destined to rule the whole world with the golden sceptre. The child was immediately taken by God and placed before his throne.

The woman fled to desert (since there is no term, described so: a solitary place that belongs to no one), where God had prepared a shelter for her.

Then a great voice was heard in heaven singing. Now salvation has been accomplished, the strength and the kingdom of our God, and an imperious order of his Christ.

(From the Book of Revelation, 11:19; 12.1-6; 12.10. Translation by Maria Di Lenardo Barbarino).

Conclusion

Throughout history, Resians have never been subjected to a noble feudal lord, who could have given them a particular cultural imprint. From the first settlement in the Valley – in the eighth century – until the end of the last war, they have had the priest, as the only authority of referral, recognized in the past as “Our Lord”. Following the influence of priests and their teachings, Resians have developed a culture, a tradition, a religious sentiment and a literature, which has come down to us.

The priests, over the centuries, were of different extraction and origins, related to their times. In 1242 “magistri uolrici de resia” (Härtel, 1985, p. 127) is witnessed and in 1339 we find “plebano Rayner”¹³ in the “ecclesie sancte Marie de Resia”. Both priests were of German origin. They were sent by the Patriarchate of Aquileia, the city where the court and the clergy including the Patriarch were of German extraction and nomination (Leicht, 1915). The election of the Patriarch had to have the approval of the Emperor an ally in Friulian territory; subsequently, the Pope of Rome expected and managed to claim the right of control over the his election and slowly, over the centuries, the clergy of Friuli.

Due to the particularity of their language, Resians still had the right to have a priest who knew Resian or a Slavic language. Jan Baudouin de Courtenay (1876) quotes don Andrea Coss of Gniva/*Njiva*. Around 1790, Don Giovanni Micelli of Gniva / *Njiva* and the vicar Antonio Brida of Stolvizza / *Solbiza* hosted Jan Potocki (p. 363). In 1841 Don Odorico Buttolo of Stolvizza / *Solbiza* hosted I. I. Sreznevskij (1878).

The clergy had a great influence on Resian culture, here we report again some observations of scholars, who arrived to Resia in the nineteenth century. Jan Baudouin de Courtenay (1876) notes:

As I had occasion to note, the main agents in part of Friulanization and in general of Romanization of the Slavs of northern Italy showed themselves to be Roman-Catholic priests... Resians pray in Resian, but they sing in the church and during the processions in Latin, certainly they don't even mean a word. ... As some assured me, the children are also taught the catechism in Resian (p. 295-296).

Sreznevskij (1878, p. 5) notes the words of Don Odorico Buttolo: “How-ever singing is not good – he observed: we must pray to God, not sing”.

After the experience of the first books written in Resian by priests, we have only one example of book-doctrine in Resian written by Don Giuseppe Kramaro (1927). Then priests in the next decades spoke only Italian but, fortunately,

¹³ Parish Bulletin of Resia “*Pod Tjanynowo sinco* [In the shadow of the Canin] – Summer 1981.

some were committed to support the recovery and enhancement of religious songs, and not only through the pages of the Parish Bulletin. Despite these ups and downs, Resians have preserved their own identity, language and culture in Resian that is both profane and religious, up to the present day; however, they face a risk to be overwhelmed by the preponderance of Italian culture and the current globalization process.

References

- Adaiewsky, E. (2012 [1883]). *Un voyage à Résia* [A trip to Resia], edited by F. Febo Guizzi. Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana.
- Baudouin de Courtenay, J. N. (1875a). *Опыт фонетики резьянских говоров* [Phonetic essay of the Resian dialects]. Warsaw: E. Vende & C, St. Peterburg: D. E. Kozhanchikov. Retrieved 7 November 2021, from <http://books.e-heritage.ru/book/10075815>
- Baudouin de Courtenay, J. N. (1875b). *Резьянский Катихизис, как приложение к “Опыту фонетики резьянских говоров”* [Resian Catechism as an Appendix to Phonetic essay of the Resian dialects]. Warsaw: E. Vende & C, St. Peterburg: D. E. Kozhanchikov. Retrieved 7 November 2021, from <http://books.e-heritage.ru/book/10075815>
- Baudouin de Courtenay, J. N. (1876). Резья и Резьяне [Resia and the Resians]. In *Славянский Сборникъ* [Slavic anthology]. Vol. 3 (pp. 223-370). St. Peterburg: Peterburgskago Otdela Slavjanskoho Komiteta. Retrieved 7 November 2021, from http://publ.lib.ru/ARCHIVES/_Raritetnye_knigi/Slavyanskij_sbornik_03_1876.pdf
- Baudouin de Courtenay, J. N. (1895). *Материалы для Южнославянской Дialectологии и этнографии I – Materialien zur südslavischen Dialektologie und Ethnographie I: Resianische Texte* [Materials for the South Slavic dialectology and ethnography I: Resian texts]. St. Petersburg: Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Retrieved 7 November 2021, from <http://books.e-heritage.ru/book/10075812>
- Baudouin de Courtenay, J. N. (1913). *Материалы для Южнославянской Дialectологии и этнографии III Materialien zur südslavischen Dialektologie und Ethnographie III: Resianisches Sprachdenkmal “Christjanske Uzhilo”* [Materials for the South Slavic dialectology and ethnography 3rd: Monument of the Resian language “Christian teaching”]. St. Petersburg: Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Retrieved 7 November 2021, from <https://www.dropbox.com/s/y7zx7mx94a0xb1d/BdC%2C%20Mat.%20III%2C%201913%20--%20Christjanske%20uzhilo.pdf?dl=0>
- Bollettino Patrocchiale (1981). *Pod Tjanynowo sinco*. [Parish Bulletin of Resia “In the shadow of the Canin”].
- Chinese, S. (2003). *Rošajanskë- Laškë Bysidnjäk, Repertorio lessicale italiano – resiano* [Italian-Resian lexical repertory]. Udine: by author S. Chinese.

-
- Clemente, N. (2020). *Introduction to the Resian Language*. Udine: by author N. Clemente.
- Frisano, R. (1995-1996). *Canti religiosi della comunità resiana. Tesi di laurea in Etnomusicologia* [Religious songs of the Resian community. Thesis in ethnomusicology]. Bologna: Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia.
- Härtel, R. (1985). *Die älteren Urkunden des Klosters Moggio*, [The oldest documents of the Abbey of Moggio]. Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Kramaro, J. (1927). *To kristjanske učilo po rozoanskeh ta s tega katekizma, kuaženega od tega sveta Očè papeža Pija X* [Christian teaching in Resian of Catechism ordered by the holy pope Pius X]. Gorica: Katoliška tiskarna.
- Leicht, P. S. (1915). *Le elezioni dei patriarchi aquileiesi in Memorie storiche forogiuliesi anno XI* [The elections of the patriarchs of Aquileia in Historical memories of Friuli-Venezia Giulia year XI]. Udine: Società storica friulana.
- Nazzi, F. (2008). *Storia religiosa della Slavia friulana dalle origini al 1920 – Ville e Vicariati Slavi – Resia* [Religious history of Friulian Slavia – Slavic villas and vicariates – Resia]. Udine: Proposta.
- Paolus Diaconus (2007 [787–789 AD]). *Historia Langobardorum*. Èulogos IntraText. Retrieved 7 November 2021, from <http://www.intratext.com/X/LAT0338.htm>
- Sreznevskij, I. I. (1878). *Фриульские Славяне* [The Slavs of Friuli]. St. Peterburg: Imperatorskoi Akademii Nauk.
- Cejtlin, R. M., Večerki, R., & Blagovoj, E. (1994). *Старославянский словарь (по рукописям X – XI веков)* [Old Slavic vocabulary (from the manuscripts of the centuries X – XI)]. Moscow: Russkiy yazyk.

Appendix. The Resian language

To complete this presentation of Resian culture, we give a brief mention to the language and in particular on the variants.

The Resian language reflects a rural society which, also due to its limited territory, has not had the same development as other major Slavic languages, it was not used in written form, with the exception of rare cases due to the commitment of priests for the dissemination of Christian doctrine. To date, there is no orthography of Resian that is shared by all; there are various reasons for this gap, one of them is the fact that Resians do not study their own language and literacy is taught in Italian. Italian orthography is not suitable for fully representing the Resian language due to the absence of some indispensable graphic symbols, moreover, this difficulty is also due to the scarcity of written documents which, if they had been more numerous and widespread, could have guided a participatory orthography. Finally, the absence of a shared orthography is also complicated by the presence of the variants.

Here we want to demonstrate the peculiarities of Resian, presenting the incidence of vowels in the language:

RESIAN'S VARIANTS				
	<i>Bilä/San Giorgio</i>	<i>Njiwa/Gniva</i>	<i>Osoánä/Oseacco</i>	<i>Sólbizä/Stolvizza</i>
dog	<i>pīs</i>	<i>pas</i>	<i>päs</i>	<i>pes</i>
village	<i>vīs</i>	<i>vas</i>	<i>väs</i>	<i>ves</i>
big	<i>vlik</i>	<i>vilék</i>	<i>valék</i>	<i>valók</i>
window	<i>woknō</i>	<i>uknō</i>	<i>oknō</i>	<i>oknō</i>
lunch	<i>wobēt</i>	<i>ubēd</i>	<i>obēt</i>	<i>obēt</i>
cloud	<i>woblak</i>	<i>öblak</i>	<i>öbläk</i>	<i>öbläk</i>
leg	<i>noga</i>	<i>nōgha</i>	<i>nōghä</i>	<i>nōa</i>
sir	<i>góspuť</i>	<i>ghóspot</i>	<i>ghóspuť</i>	<i>óspot</i>
rich	<i>bogat</i>	<i>boghat</i>	<i>boghät</i>	<i>boét</i>
mount	<i>gora</i>	<i>ghōra</i>	<i>ghōrä</i>	<i>ōra</i>
fire	<i>ogonj</i>	<i>oghònj</i>	<i>oghònj</i>	<i>oònj</i>
to go	<i>jīt</i>	<i>tet</i>	<i>tet</i>	<i>tôt</i>
went	<i>šel</i>	<i>šal</i>	<i>šow</i>	<i>šel</i>
ate	<i>ídel</i>	<i>ídal</i>	<i>íduw</i>	<i>jídel</i>
looked	<i>gledal</i>	<i>hledal</i>	<i>ghléduw</i>	<i>ledel</i>
egg	<i>jājzě</i>	<i>jajze</i>	<i>izě</i>	<i>jajzě</i>
tree	<i>jarböl</i>	<i>harbol</i>	<i>arbuw</i>	<i>arbol</i>
hole	<i>jáma</i>	<i>jeme</i>	<i>ámä</i>	<i>joma</i>
air	<i>jajēr</i>	<i>ajer</i>	<i>áär</i>	<i>ájär</i>
oil	<i>öjē</i>	<i>öjē</i>	<i>óē</i>	<i>öjē</i>

Baudouin has thoroughly analysed the variants of the Resian language and illustrated them in his *Опыт фонетики резьянских говоров* [Phonetic essay of the Resian dialects] (1875a, pp. 112-115), paragraphs from 284 to 289.

In this article the Resian invocations reflect the characteristics of the speech of Oseacco/*Osoana*, spoken by the author. Special symbols used in this article to transcribe Resian correspond to *Introduction to the Resian Language* (Clemente, 2020).

Graphic symbol	pronunciation	International phonetic alphabet
č	like ‘church’ in English	voiceless Postalveolar affricate č
ć		voiceless palatal occlusiv ć
ǰ	Like ‘just’ in English	voiced postalveolar affricate ǰ
ǰ	Similar to Scottish ‘jar’	voiced palatal occlusiv ǰ

Graphic symbol	pronunciation	International phonetic alphabet
gh	Like the Spanish 'trigo'	voiced velar fricative ɣ
nj	Similar to 'nuisance' in English	nasal palatal ɲ
š	Like 'shoe' in English	Voiceless postalveolar fricative ʃ
ś	like 'rose' in English	Voiceless postalveolar fricative ʂ
w	like 'witch' in English	voiced labio-velar approximant w
z		voiceless alveolar affricate ʈ
ž	like 'television' in English	Voiced postalveolar fricative ʐ
ä		cupped
For the following vowels reference is made to the explanations of Baudouin de Courtenay (1875a, pp. 5-6, § 13)		
ë		With the median opening between the positions of the oral cavity for e and that for o , but closer to the position for e than that for o with the opening of approximately German ö or French eu
ö	As the French eu	
ï	As the Russian ы	With the opening of the vowel i , obtained by approaching the back of the tongue and the palate, or by opening the Russian ы
ü	As the German 'über'	With the opening of the German ü or, more precisely, the French u