

# Alegher a tucc

Benvegnud a la mè presentazzion!

# Regional languages of Italy, their Wikis and Imo.wiki

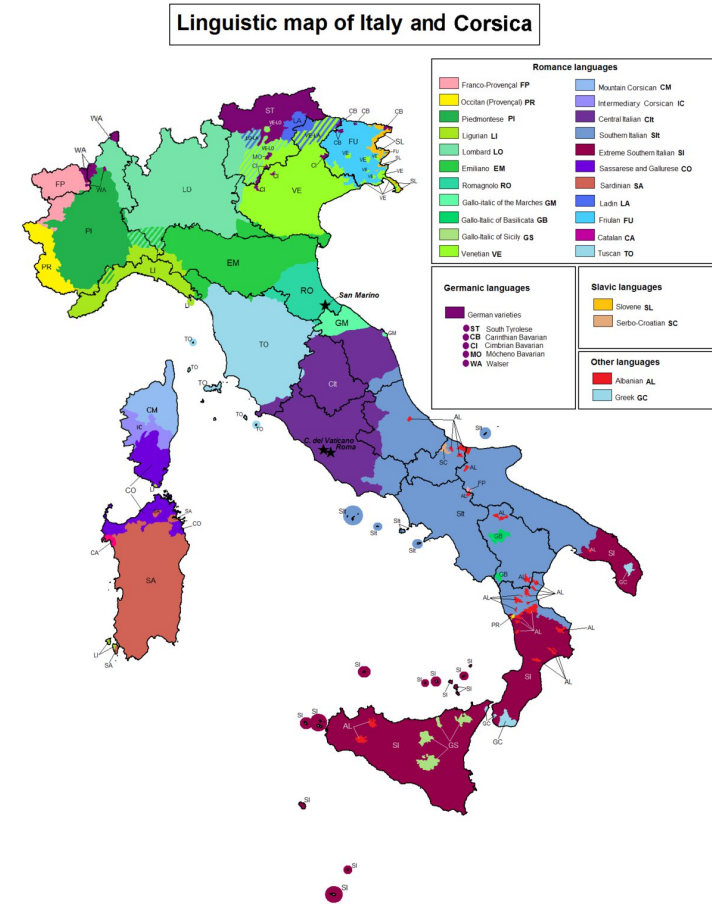
By Brian Sciretti

# Who I am

- User:Sciking
- On Wikipedia since december 2010
- On Imo.wiki since 2015
- Lmo.wiki sysop since 2016

# Languages of Italy

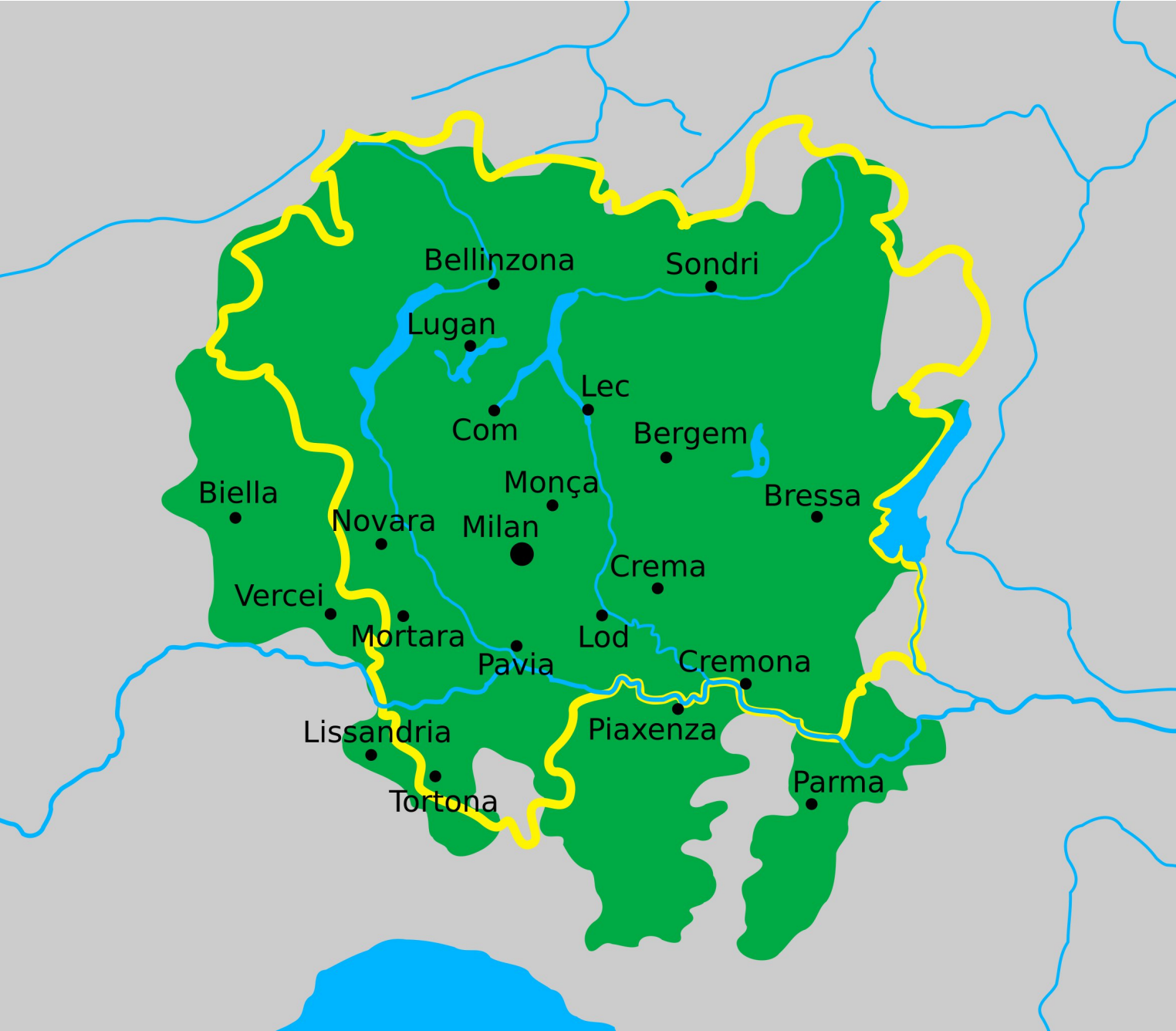
- More than 30 languages are spoken in Italy
- However, only 12 are recognised by the State
- Not a real criterion to recognise a language (F. Toso)
- Very different languages (Massa-Se niggallia lines runs through Italy)
- Italian: a social concept?



# The Lombard Language

- Spoken by circa 3 million individuals in Lombardy, Piedmont, Trentino, Ticino, Grigioni and some American communities
- More similar to French than to Italian
- A concept of the 1850s (before, Lombard was used for the Gallo-italic family as a whole)

# A Map...



# Lombard: a recognised language

Even thought not by the State...

- By the Regional Council of Lombardy
- By the ISO
- By UNESCO
- Some says de facto by Canton Ticino
- And even by the Italian Academia (with a catch)

# Dialect vs language

## Science:

- Dialect is a variety of a language
- A language is a set of dialects with a common grammar

## In Italy:

- Language is more of a “merit token” than a rigorous scientific concept
- Language is when someone says so
- Everything else is just a stinky dialect



# Basically...

The Italian Academia recognises Lombard dialects as an homogenous group at least since the 1850s

They just refuse to call it a language for social, political and traditional reasons.

In a way, “dialect” is a slur (as we’ll now see)

# Lombard is a contested language

- By the Italian academia
- By some politicians (for a lot of reasons)
- By the Italian school system
- In the past, by the Italian wiki community (but it was not their fault, entirely)
- By the speakers themselves!

That happens for basically every language of Italy, even those who are recognised.

# The regional Wikis in Italy

- A lot of projects
- With common challenges
- Not very supported by any language institution
- Some support from WMI (increasing)

# Common problems

- Language standardisation
- Percieved uselessness of Regional projects
- “An old language for old things”
- Not enough public recognition of projects
- Not enough users to keep projects running
- More stubs than major Wikipedias
- Gender imbalance
- Not enough language resources

# A response...

“local languages are perfectly capable of transmitting the most modern scientific knowledge in mathematics, physics, technology and so on”

Irina Bokova, former UNESCO director general

# There are good things...

- Creating a “language-aware” user base
- Keeping the language vital (or at least on life support)
- Helping to evolve the language and to standardise it
- “Normalising” regional languages and their serious use
- Giving people willing to learn the language a useful base

# The Lombard Wiki was a mess

- Created in 2005, it was run for years by a “Cisalpine” administration
- 100'000 articles... With bots!
- It risked closure for that reason
- Saved by a temporary administration
- Today one of the best regional Wikipedia in Italy

Directori	
<a href="#">Wikipedia:Archivi/Portal:Lumbaart/Directori</a>	<a href="#">Modell:Edita</a>
En sabeu la resposta?	Categories
<a href="#">Modell:Sgiugn pregunta de Català</a> <a href="#">Arxiu</a>	<a href="#">Wikipedia:Archivi/Portal:Lumbaart/Categories</a> <a href="#">Modell:Edita</a>
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# Lombard/estremeñu

## Common things:

1. A new intercase (2016/2022)
2. Ortographical changes
3. Lack of active editors
4. Lack of language consciousness

## Diferencias:

1. Number of articles
2. Support from local chapter
3. Old users



# Dialect policy

- Every Lombard dialect is accepted on Imo.wiki
- It can also be marked, but it's not mandatory
- The language is called “Lombard”, but there are “localistic” templates
- Nine approved ortographies:
- 2 polynomic, 2 semiphonetic, 5 locals
- Wiki is not a language standardisation entity

# A friendly Wiki

- 2016: collaboration with Galician Wikipedia
- 2017: German Speaking Community of Belgium editathon
- 2020: Covid editathons with it.wiki
- 2021: organizing 200Porta with it.wiki and ca.wiki
- 2022: Ladin-Lombard collaboration
- 2023: Gallo-italic month and Italian GLAM week

Also, we took part to the Ukrainian Culture Months

# Lmo.wiki and the press

The good, the novelty and the bad

# The good

Good articles were written about Imo.wiki:

- Cultura. Wikipedia in dialetto lombardo (e non solo) dà dignità alle lingue locali (Barbadillo)
- Wikipedia in dialetto, una community che conserva e alimenta le lingue locali (TechPrincess)
- Wikipedia festeggia 20 anni con un ricco calendario di eventi inaugurato dal contest fotografico Wiki Loves Monuments (ADC Group)

# The novelty

Those articles treats Imo.wiki as a novelty or an interesting thing.

- Feltri scatenato contro Paola Turci: "Ha chiesto a Twitter di cancellarmi"

“Vittorio Feltri, la cui lunga carriera è stata tratteggiata persino in una pagina Wikipedia scritta in dialetto lombardo.”

- "Addio Katherine", amica di Maccio Capatonda. Pagina Wikipedia in milanese per ricordarla

# The bad

- In 2016 Stefano Parisi was chosen by the centre-right coalition as a mayoral candidate for Milan
- I wrote an article about him and other candidades
- In 2018 he run for the presidency of Lazio
- Some journalists found the Lombard article
- Some treated it as a novelty (and I can't blame them)
- Some put their tinfoil hat and started talking about some wild conspiracy...

# Glottophobia 101

- Un'idea nata forse per blandire il popolo leghista, che aveva più di una perplessità sul suo profilo, a partire dalle origini romane (AGI - Mauro Bazzucchi)
- Le "perle" in vernacolo non finiscono qui, perché è possibile anche apprendere che dopo le comunali milanesi "l'ha provaa a lancia'ss in politega insemma al Silvio Berlusconi per Forza Italia" con alterni risultati, fino appunto all'investitura del centrodestra per il Lazio. Al momento del probabile refresh del profilo, Parisi avrà di fronte a sé due dilemmi: cancellare il profilo "lumbard" e farne uno in italiano o, coerentemente a quanto già fatto, volgerlo in laziale (Ibidem)

# Glottophobia 201

- manco Umberto Bossi aveva mai pensato di arrivare a tanto ai tempi migliori della Lega, quando era ancora Nord e dichiarava l'indipendenza della Padania da Roma ladrona (Il Sussidiario – Paolo Vites)
- Eh insomma, mica tutti vivono sotto la Madonnina. Seriamente, ma chi l'ha pensata questa cosa? Sembra uno scherzo, ma in realtà esiste una versione in dialetto milanese, come in altri dialetti, di Wikipedia, ma Parisi appare solo su quella in dialetto milanese, non su quella in italiano. Pare che sia stata messa su durante la campagna elettorale a sindaco di Milano, probabilmente con l'intenzione di acchiappare voti dai leghisti e dopo la sconfitta elettorale si è dimenticato di quello che aveva pubblicato. (ibidem)



# Lmo.wiki is useful for the whole ecosystem

Wikipedia in Lombard, and regional Wikis in general, is NOT an end in itself.

It actually helps the whole Wiki ecosystem and not only that.

Let's look at some examples

# Good articles and skilled editors

- We wrote some articles which ended to be translated on other Wikipedias
- Some of them were mundane (such historical figures or landmarks), some of them not (as an example: the Lombard independence movement and the Historical concept of Lombardy)
- Those editors usually works on other Wiki projects and helps them

# Even “in the wild”

Lombard Wikipedia has been used by some scholars to make studied. As an example:

- Emanuele Miola did some studies on the aspects of the language using Imo.wiki
- Athos Birra used Imo.wiki in his thesis about ticinese dialect on the web
- Edoardo Signorelli used Imo.wiki to make a revised parallel corpus
- I myself did a small university project :)

# Lmo.wiki and the language community

- There is not an official organ which regulates Lombard
- The CED in Switzerland has a de facto role in studying local Lombard dialects
- However, some language-savvy people worked on Lmo.wiki: Marco Tamburelli, a professor in Bangor, was one of our sysop
- Some of the Lmowiki\*edian community founded Academia Bonvesin de la Riva
- Sadly, a lot of local institutions don't know or like Lmo.wiki

**Grazzie/Gramarzé/Mersì**

A tucc per vesser vegnud