

Language and the Grand Tour: Linguistic Experiences of Travelling in Early Modern Europe. By Arturo Tosi. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020). p. xiv, 306. £85 (hb). 978-1-10876-636-6.

Arturo Tosi's new monograph is a worthy successor to *Language and Society in a changing Italy* (2000), for both publications investigate the relationship between the languages and the national societies of the early modern period through a transnational lens. As a linguist, Tosi contributes to the cultural history of the Grand Tour by analysing the construction of the standardization of modern languages' variations, which emerge from the educational travel undertaken by the European elite. While studying the linguistic diversity of European languages, this publication aims to demonstrate that social interactions were at the heart of the development of modern vernaculars.

The work spans from the late 16th century to the beginning of the 19th century and has been divided thematically into three parts: 'Attitudes and Aptitudes', 'Encounters and Exchanges' and 'Contrasts and Collisions'. Drawing almost exclusively on printed materials, Tosi decrypts language acquisition on the Grand Tour by linking the social experiences of travelling abroad with the teaching of languages both prior to and during the travels of the European elite. A general introduction presents the itineraries followed by travellers and reminds the readers that most pieces of advice literature, the *ars apodemica*, stressed the value of learning foreign languages.

Tosi has chosen to address this topic by considering a wide range of narratives produced by grand-tourists. One of the strengths of this book is the scope of the writings under scrutiny; Tosi examined not only ego-documents, but also the diverse language manuals advising travellers on the best programme for their foreign language education (p.216-17). For example, the author manages to link the content of travel guidebooks with that of conversation manuals of the time with great clarity, and he always compares theoretical texts with records of actual experiences of travel (p.146-50). In the 4th chapter of part II entitled "Language Acquisition and Learning Abroad", Tosi specifically tackles the question of the connections between verbal communication and human interactions *en route* to Italy (p.107). He also manages to unravel the multitude of stereotypes around national languages, and contemporary clichés about bad habits one can develop if learning a foreign language too young (p.62). Moreover, Tosi illustrates these contemporary attitudes towards otherness by including charts published in 17th and 18th-century travel manuals, which link the behaviours of the 'French, Spaniards, Italians

and Germans' with the way they speak and act in the public or the private sphere (p.30). The author also provides fascinating reproductions of translations, which were used to train travellers' written skills (p.237-39). In the 18th century, those translation exercises could be applied to the entirety of travel narratives, which were, sometimes, presented in two languages within a single volume (p.88-98). Tosi is able to demonstrate that the discrepancies found in translations of the same texts were influenced by the socio-political context of the Grand Tour (p.227-39). For example, while analysing the translation of Samuel Rogers' *Italy* (1830) from Italian into French, Tosi shows that the author "tended to be stressing politeness and good manners" (p.237) much more in the translated version and that "as the fashion for tourism evolved, so did the tendency of travellers to portray in a more naturalistic way the picturesque image of a distant country" (p.238).

What is particularly original about Tosi's contribution to the field is his examination of the impression one's language could bestow upon their speakers. For instance, he explains that the language would make travellers display a judgment on a specific nation by quoting John Chetwode Eustance's *A Classical Tour through Italy* (1830) on the hierarchy he describes between the Roman and Greek Languages (p.198-99). The author further illustrates his point by reproducing a series of drawings, which elucidate the meaning of Neapolitan gestures to emphasize the crucial role of non-verbal communication (p.161). In addition, Tosi sheds new light on an under-explored corner of his discipline: the study of dialects. He minutely deciphers the local variations of French and Italian (p.194) and connects them to the meeting of *ex tempore* teachers (p.150). This enables Tosi to balance his academic development with examples of informal learning with courtesan-teachers, thereby amusing his readers with bewildering sexual tales and impromptu lingo practices (p.157-59).

However, one might regret that the author sometimes strays away from his main topic to address general questions related to the Grand Tour, which would be familiar to most historians. For example, the inclusion of foreign words in travel narratives (p.231-35) or the orthographic variations found in Grand Tourists' writings (p.219) have already been thoroughly investigated by several scholars. Moreover, Tosi's last part on 'Women travellers and Gender issues' (p.240-60) appears at odds with the rest of the book, especially considering that the exploration of their narratives is limited to notorious figures who have already been the focus of monographs such as Hester Piozzi Thrale or Mary Wortley Montagu. Although recent years have seen a welcomed incorporation of women within the history of the Grand Tour, this reviewer found that separating their perspective from that of men undermined Tosi's objective

of producing an overarching work on the language of the Tour. What could also be surprising is the total absence of any distinction between travel literature and travel writing. There is a vast literature on this subject, which is listed in the bibliography of the monograph, but not engaged with in the text. Likewise, the author has mostly examined printed materials and well-established sources, which could disappoint those who are already well versed in the corpus. Nor does Tosi venture outside the well-trodden path of traditional itineraries; attention to less-studied bilingual areas such as the Duchies of Savoy or Lorraine would have enriched the work.

In conclusion, Tosi makes a valuable contribution to Cultural History by convincingly arguing that the Grand Tour and its writings were underpinned by ‘cultural curiosity and linguistic exuberance’. Although the specialists of the period will not discover new materials, they will certainly learn much about how the social context of travel shaped language acquisitions in the early-modern period. With this monograph, the author enhances the credentials of historical linguistics by painting a colourful picture of foreign languages, and their appeal for travellers, as developed over two centuries. By inscribing his work in many current historical trends such as gender history, transnational history and mobility studies with a multilingual approach, this thought-provoking work will surely pave the way for future research on this matter. The work is also balanced with entertaining anecdotes, which will seduce lay readers interested in the history of this period.