Analysis of *A Dictionary of the Kalispel or Flat-head Indian Language*
(Giorda, S.J.: St. Ignatius Print, 1877-9)

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Part I - Origin of the Dictionary

In the late 1870s, the Jesuit missionaries to the Kalispel (*qlispéli*) and Flathead (*séliš*) people living in and around western Montana, northern Idaho, and eastern Washington published an extraordinary dictionary that remains a linguistic treasure for speakers of that language and others interested in it.[1] The dictionary comprises two volumes: a 644-page "Kalispel-English" volume and a 456-page "English-Kalispel" volume. It also includes a 36-page appendix to the Kalispel-English volume, which conjugates verbs, discusses the grammatical function of reduplication (*i.e.*, doubling sounds) within words, and describes certain suffixes not covered in an earlier Jesuit grammar of the language (discussed below).

The dictionary often is called "the Catholic Fathers' Dictionary" by contemporary Kalispel (Ka) and Flathead (Fl) speakers. It is an appropriate appellation. While authorship of the *Dictionary* generally has been ascribed to Giorda, it almost certainly reflects the work of several priests who gathered material over three decades in the mid to late 1800s, including at least Fathers Joseph Giorda, Joseph Bandini, Gregary Mengarini, Joseph Guidi, and Leopold van Gorp.[2] The exact authorship remains somewhat of a mystery, but an analysis the Jesuit Oregon Province Archives materials held at Gonzaga University (Spokane, Washington) helps to sort some aspects of that collective authorship.

The Jesuit Archives contains no manuscript that corresponds exactly or substantially with the published *Dictionary*. Instead, the closest manuscript is dated 1871, apparently in Giorda's hand. The Indian-English part of that 1871 manuscript appears to be based largely on an 1866 copy of a dictionary manuscript by Mengarini. There also is an early manuscript in the archives ascribed to Bandini.[3] There are no dictionary manuscript materials in the archives (or otherwise extant) ascribed to Joseph Guidi or Leopold van Gorp. The degree of their participation in the published *Dictionary* therefore remains obscure. There are a few other short manuscripts of lexical material on which the *Dictionary* might have been based partially; however, that is unclear. Importantly, the published *Dictionary* contains a great amount of material not in any known or extant earlier manuscript.

The page following the *Dictionary*'s title page credits only Giorda with authorship: "Entered, according to act of Congress, in the year 1879, By REV. J. GIORDA, S.J., In the office of the Librarian of Congress, at Washington." The preface of the *Dictionary* gives credit to Mengarini, one of the principal collaborators: "The author owes much to the manuscript dictionary of Rev. G. Mengarini, who, first among all the Jesuit Missionaries, possessed himself of the genius of this language, and beside speaking it with the perfection of a native Indian, reduced it to the rules of a grammar." Mengarini came to western Montana in 1841, and he helped to establish a mission among the Flathead (not the Kalispel). He studied Flathead from 1841 to about 1850, when the St. Mary's mission closed. His work resulted in a grammar

published in 1861 called *A Selish or Flat-head Grammar*[4], a manuscript of an Indian-English dictionary (mentioned above), and other religious materials.

The manuscript of Mengarini's dictionary is referred to as: "Dictionary of the Selish or Flat-head language. Part I - Indian-English. Gregory Mengarini, S.J." It is dated October 1866, and indicates that it is "a transcription of Mengarini's original work." The title parallels that of Mengarini's 1861 grammar. Both refer to "Selish or Flat-head," not Kalispel. The title of the published dictionary suggests something about its authors: they shifted the title from Flathead to Kalispel and Flathead. The title of Mengarini's dictionary manuscript suggests an English-Indian volume may have existed or was intended, but none is extant and or referred to in the Jesuit Oregon Province Archives materials. However, the British Columbia Archives, Victoria, possesses a manuscript penned over a three-week period in 1866 by "Louis de Mariseque," which may eventually prove to be based on a Mengarini English-Indian text. Mengarini's Indian-English dictionary manuscript consists of 480 pages, with the page size about 3 by 5 inches, and about 12 entries per page. That equals about 5,760 entries. It uses the same spelling conventions as Mengarini's 1861 grammar, which differ only slightly from those of the published dictionary. For instance, for voiceless *l* [IPA ɬ] Mengarini uses the symbol **l̂**, where the published dictionary uses **ł** (and sometimes l). Mengarini's dictionary manuscript and the published dictionary share most spelling conventions, such as using *g(u)* for the velar and uvular fricatives x^w x̣ x̣^{w} (IPA x^w χ χ^w), and *z* for the alveolar affricate **c** (IPA ts).

Giorda first came to the St. Ignatius mission in Montana in 1867. He was a polyglot apparently gifted with special linguistic ability.[5] The Jesuit Oregon Province Archives contains a manuscript ascribed to him dated 1871. That manuscript has two parts, one Indian-English and the other English-Indian.[6] The Indian-English part is about 230 pages, written on both sides. The page size is about 7½ inches by 12 inches, with about 30 entries per page. That equals about 13,800 entries. The English-Indian part is 72 pages, with about 30 entries per page conservatively, which equals about 4,320 entries. Comparing Mengarini's 1868 Indian-English manuscript to Giorda's 1871 Indian-English manuscript indicates that Giorda's manuscript (i) incorporated most if not all of the material of Mengarini's 1868 manuscript, and (ii) reorganized and revised the material from Mengarini's 1868 manuscript and expanded it greatly. In terms of rough, raw numbers, the overall entries in Giorda's 1871 manuscript more than doubled. In turn, the published *Dictionary* further expanded and reorganized Giorda's 1871 manuscript significantly.

In sum, the exact authorship of the published *Dictionary* remains a mystery. It is fairly clear that Mengarini ultimately provided much raw material for the published dictionary. But Mengarini's contribution should not be overemphasized, given an actual review of Mengarini's 1868 manuscript vis-à-vis Giorda's 1871 manuscript and the published *Dictionary*. Priests after Mengarini reorganized and greatly expanded Mengarini's material for the Indian-English volume, and they also wrote the **entire** English-Indian volume. The difference in the authors' respective contributions probably reflects the practical (social, political, and economic) realities of the various fathers' 'field work' on the language in the 1800s. Mengarini's manuscript reflects material gathered during a few years in the 1840s, when he was occupied with establishing a struggling mission that ultimately failed. Mengarini apparently began work on the dictionary only in mid 1840s, and the mission closed in 1850. In contrast, the later priests'

contributions reflect over twenty years of gathering, compiling, and editing materials--with the benefit of Mengarini's labor--from about 1854 (when the mission was moved to St. Ignatius, MT) through the mid 1870s before publication of the *Dictionary*. Conditions for gathering linguistic material at St. Ignatius Mission from the mid 1850s to the mid 1870s almost certainly were much more favorable than at St. Mary's Mission in the mid 1840s. Giorda deserves to be recognized as the primary author (or compiler and editor) of the published *Dictionary*.

Printing of the *Dictionary* required three years to complete, on a hand-operated press in "The Shops"at St. Ignatius Mission. Jesuit Father Alexander Diomedi had directed its purchase and transport from St. Louis in 1875, ordered its specialized type and trained Indian boys as his typesetters. Work on the *Dictionary* began immediately after the press' first product, *Narratives from the Holy Scripture*, a 154-page book written in Kalispel. At least 66 imprints can be attributed to the St. Ignatius Press, of which the *Dictionary* is easily the most significant. Because of its cost so far from supply sources, paper was usually inferior in grade, and often scraps of all kinds were used as end sheets and covers. Over time the need for printed materials in Kalispel declined, so the press was relocated to Spokane in 1899 to serve the growing needs of Gonzaga College. It was unceremoniously replaced and scrapped in 1908.

Part II - Using the Indian-English Volume of the Dictionary.

The published *Dictionary's* Indian-English volume probably contains over 800 main entries. The entries are capitalized and organized alphabetically according to the initial letter of what the authors perceived as the "root" of the word. That organization under roots reflects an important insight into the structure of Ka/Fl words. As is typical for Interior Salishan languages, Ka/Fl have a large number of affixes--mostly suffixes--attached to the primary root of a word. The root typically is consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) for roots that tend to retain stress (*e.g.*, kʷúpn 'I pushed it' from underlying /kʷúp-n-t-en), or consonant-consonant (CC) for roots that tend to give up stress (*e.g.*, ckʷntén 'I dragged it' from underlying /cukʷ-n-t-én). Other root shapes also occur, such as CC(V)C, C(V)CC, and C(V)C(V)C.

Dictionary entry (page 259)	Modern orthography
KALT,—[*root of,*] Ies-kaltúsem, kaltúsen, kaltúsent, (8) I bring him or it on the top os [sic] of a hill. All this verb [sic] refer to the top of a hill of mountain, litterally [sic] or metaphorically. T-Jesu Klí kaltúsis łu eiméus.' Jesus Christ carried his Cross to the top of the hill.	qlt [The root is /qel; -t is an aspectual suffix.] y'esqltúsn, qltúsn, qltúsnt t yesuklí qltúsis ł u ʔey'méw's

Sometimes the authors misjudged the root of a word. Under the root "kołin" are dozens of words that refer in some way to a 'door,' such as "Es-kołinchehèp, The door is open, [of lodge]." Actually, that perceived root is a combination of two prefixes k'ʷł- plus n-, which cooccur with the lexical suffix =ép, to mean a 'door.' Those three affixes are attached to numerous different roots to form words involving a door, gate, or other opening. The word

above is **k’ᵂɫnč’hép**, analyzable as k’ᵂɫ-n/č’h=ép (around-at/expose=door).

The *Dictionary* only briefly discusses the pronunciation of the language, after the preface of the English-Indian volume. The *Dictionary* writes the language with the following 17 letters: a, ch, e, g, h, i, k, l, ɫ, m, n, o, p, s, t, u, z. The *Dictionary* also combines certain letters to represent single sounds, such as *sh* for š, *tl* or *tɫ* for λ’, *ku* for kᵂ or k’ᵂ, *ko* for qᵂ or q’ᵂ, *gu* for x̣ᵂ, and *go* for x̣ᵂ. In fact, Ka/Fl has 47 distinctive sounds (or phonemes). The *Dictionary’s* spelling system fails to mark the contrast between many distinctive sounds. Plain stops are merged with glottalized stops (e.g., p and p’, t and t’, etc.). Plain resonants are merged with their laryngealized counterparts (m and m’, n and n’, etc.).[7] Front plain l and laryngealized l’ are merged, as is plain retracted ḷ and laryngealized retracted ḷ’; so, *l* can stand for *four* different lateral resonant phonemes l l’ḷ ḷ’. The *Dictionary* generally lacks a glottal stop (ʔ), although it sometimes attempts to capture that sound by writing a double vowel. The *Dictionary* also writes many vowels that are not true (phonemic) vowels, but instead reflect very brief transitional or excrescent sounds (often misperceived as vowels by the non-native or untrained ear). The *Dictionary* also uses vowels to write both vowels and their respective counterpart semivowels: *a* for ʕ and ʕ’, *i* for y and y’, *o* for ʕᵂ ʕ’ᵂ, and *u* for w and w’ (with some overlap or confusion of *o* and *u* and their respective semivowels). The phonemic vowel *i* also is written *ey* following uvular sounds (qᵂ q’ᵂ x̣ᵂ). *u* and *o* are used to represent both phonemic u or o, mark rounding of consonants, and reflect w w’ ʕᵂ ʕ’ᵂ. The *Dictionary’s* marking of stress quite often is mistaken or misleading. The *Dictionary* may omit stress, or mark a word for stress as primary or secondary; *e.g.*, á versus à. In fact, each predicative word has one primary stress.

The table below generally shows the correspondence between the *Dictionary’s* symbols and modern orthography. In sum, the *Dictionary* uses the same letters to represent different and contrasting sounds; and it writes sounds that are not there, and it fails to write sounds that are. There are numerous inconsistencies, however, so practically every word needs to be checked with a native speaker.

Dictionary letter(s)		*Sound(s) generally represented*
a		**a ʕ ʕ’**
chines-aimti	‘I am getting mad’	čn’ esʕímti
es-páa	‘it is burned up’	ʔesp’áʕ’
esiá	‘all’	ʔesyáʕ’
ch		**č č’**
chelsh	‘hand’	čélš
chchlegu	‘muskrat’	čč’l’éxᵂ
lchlèchet	‘a violent person’	lč’léč’t
e		**e i**
lèmlemtsh	‘thank you’	lémlmtš
kapé	‘coffee’	kapí
ei		**i**
chnes-chnemkeini	‘I am growing blind’	čn’ esčnmqíni

g	x̣
gest 'good'	x̣ést
es-géiu 'unripe'	ʔesx̣íw'
gu	**xʷ**
chchlegu 'muskrat'	čč'l'éxʷ
iguiùgt 'saddening'	ixʷyúxʷt
go	**x̣ʷ**
nógonog 'wife'	nóx̣ʷnx̣ʷ
guaguáat 'quick in working'	x̣ʷax̣ʷáʕt [industrious]
ug	**uxʷ**
kułchelùg 'it becomes dark'	k'ʷłč'lúxʷ

h	h
chin-héulsh 'I yawn'	čn héwlš

i	i y y'
chin-ítsh 'I sleep'	čn ʔítš
i-mii 'clearly marked'	i míy
iemiemt 'puzzling'	yém'ym't
siei 'mat'	sy'éy'

k	k q q'
kapé 'coffee'	kapí
kgamín 'horn'	qx̣mín
chkáltkan 'the top of a hill'	čqáltqn
i-náka 'rotten'	i náq'
ku	**kʷ k'ʷ**
i-kuíl 'red'	i kʷíl
kuínsh 'how many'	k'ʷín'š
ko	**qʷ q'ʷ kʷ k'ʷ**
koest 'deep snow'	qʷést
i-koái 'black'	i q'ʷáy
kolkoliche 'red woodpecker'	kʷlkʷlíčeʔ
i-koìn 'blue, green'	i qʷín
chin-koeím 'I bit something'	čn k'ʷʔém
smékot 'snow'	smék'ʷt
es-kołkoús 'face bitten'	ʔesk'ʷłk'ʷʔús

l	l l' ḷ ḷ'
luk 'wood'	lúk'ʷ
skuíl 'porcupine'	sk'ʷíl'
shàlshelt 'annoying, tiresome'	šáḷšḷt
zálzilt 'sharp pain by soreness'	c'álc'ḷt
ololkolt 'marten'	oḷ'ółq'ʷlt

ł łénłent	'refrains from talking'		**ɬ** ɬénɬnt	
m mus szom	'four' 'bone'		**m m'** mús sc'óm'	
n i-nas nkokosmèchinshin	'wet' 'dog'		**n n'** i nás nqʷq'ʷsm'íčn'šn'	
o oóst ioiot nloóp łomen onègu es-kaom somebody'	'lost' 'strong' 'he fell in a hole' 'spoon' 'it is the truth' 'it was broken by		**o ʕʷ ʕ'ʷ (u w w')** ʕʷóst yoyóʕʷt nlʕ'ʷóp ɬú?mn unéxʷ ?esq'w'úm	
p pagpágt i-pin	'intelligent, clever' 'crowded'		**p p'** pxpáx̣t i p'ín'	
s selish sispel spètłem **sh** shàlshelt shesutem	'Flathead Indian' 'seven' 'bitterroot' 'annoying, tiresome' 'a little girl'		**s** séliš sísp'l' sp'éƛ'm **š** šál̦ș̌l̦t šéšu?tm'	
t i-tin mtos **t** kutkuitlp stetlùkue **tl** tliée, tlie **tł** chkutłíp kae-kotłsh	'it is tense' 'kidney' 'flea' 'pitchwood' 'canoe of bark' 'handle came off' 'we ran'		**t t'** i tín [taut] mt'ós **ƛ (an allophone of ƛ')** kʷƛkʷíƛ'p sƛƛ'úk'ʷe? **ƛ'** ƛ'yé? **ƛ'** čkʷƛ'íp qe? q'ʷúƛ'š	

u			u w w' (ʕʷ ʕ'ʷ)
zuút	'manners'		cúwt
líut	'dirty'		líwt
pàupot	'irreverent'		p'áw'p'uʔt
niáuiols	'forbearing'		nyáʕʷyols
es-luaus	'he is let down, dropped down, inside'		ʔeslʕ'ʷáw's

z			c c'
zìtgu	'house, cabin'		cítxʷ
zil	'five'		cíl
zelzìl	'woods, a forest'		c'lc'íl
es-zapk	'it is pasted, glued'		ʔesc'ápq'

			ʔ
(1) The dictionary does not write glottal stop:			
uússe	'egg'		ʔuʔúseʔ
memét	'teasing'		meʔméʔt
(2) Sometimes glottal stop is reflected by a double vowel:			
Es'cheepmì	'it become soft'		ʔesčeʔpmí
siiłen	'meal'		sʔíɬn
spuús	'heart'		spʔús
smoòt	'smoke'		smʔót

The *Dictionary's* imprecise writing does not permit a non-native reader to pronounce a word accurately. For instance, 'elk fawn' is written **kaich** for actual **q'ʔíč'**, 'lake' is written **chiłkalìi** for actual **čɬq'líʔ**, 'much, many' is written **goeìt** for actual **xʷʔít**, and 'six' is written **takan** for actual **t'áq'n**. A non-native speaker cannot 'divine' from the spelling what the actual pronunciation might be. Despite that imprecision, literate native speakers today can interpret the *Dictionary's* writing system to recover and rewrite much early material in modern orthography, to make it more readily accessible to modern learners.

For a description of the pronunciation of the sounds written with the modern spelling see the section called "Pronunciation Key for Kalispel (nqlispélišcn)."

Notes

1. Kalispel refers to *nqlispélišcn* and Flathead refers to *nsélišcn*. They are mutually intelligible dialects of the same language, which includes Spokane, Upper and Lower Pend d'Oreille (or collectively, Kalispel), and Flathead. (A dialect of Kalispel near Chewelah, Washington may have diverged some from Upper and Lower Pend d'Oreille.) Upper Pend d'Oreille aboriginal territory included the area around Flathead Lake in western Montana; most Upper Pend d'Oreille now live on the Flathead Indian Reservation in Montana. Lower Pend d'Oreille aboriginal territory included Lake Pend Oreille in northern Idaho; most Lower Pend d'Oreille now live on the Kalispel Reservation at Usk, Washington. Flathead aboriginal territory included the Bitterroot Mountains; today, most Flathead live on the Flathead Indian Reservation. There has been a fair degree of intermarriage and settlement across dialects, obscuring differences among them.

2. Schoenberg (1960:29).

3. Bandini's manuscript is about 95 pages, with pages about 3 inches by 5 inches, and about 16 entries per page. That equals about 1,500 entries. There is no title and no date, but it appears fairly certain that it predated the published dictionary.

4. New York: Cramoisy Press, 1861. Many citations retain its Latinate form: *Grammatica Linguæ Selicæ*, auctore, P. Gregorio, Soc. Jesu., Neo-Eboraci, 1861

5. Carriker, *et al.* (1976:14) described Giorda: "A man who seemed to have little trouble with languages, Giorda was fluent in the principal European languages as well as all dialects of the following Indian languages: Blackfeet, Nez Perce, Flathead, Yakima, Kootenai, Gros Ventre, and Kalispel."

6. Carriker, *et al.* (1976:36) refer to the 1871 manuscript as follows: "Dictionary: Unititled Dictionary. Part I is Kalispel-English, part II is English-Kalispel. By Joseph Giorda, S.J. Dated 1871. Part II is written on dark blue paper."

7. A resonant is a consonant made with relatively little obstruction of the oral or nasal passage; Ka/Fl resonants include nasals, laterals, and glides: m m' n n' l l' ļ ļ' y y' w w' ʕ ʕ' ʕʷ ʕ'ʷ.

References

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