

Letters

To the Editor:

from PROFESSOR LUCIANO CANEPARI, Dipartimento di Italianistica e Filologia Romanza,
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I have read with very great interest the report by Ladefoged and Roach on the future of the International Phonetic Association. I completely agree about the necessity and usefulness of including the phonetic descriptions of languages and dialects, and also something like the old 'partie des élèves' in *Le Maître Phonétique*. I am convinced that they should be something regular and consistent, not just occasional and short, and besides they should also show intonation and assimilations, elisions, and of course 'weak forms', not only colloquial but even rapid-familiar ones, and for many languages. I also agree about book reviews and notes, but not about the inclusion of spectrograms to be decoded and too many acoustic data. I think that articulatory and auditory phonetics should have the widest space. (Professor Canepari's letter also contained detailed comments on the proposed revision of the Association's alphabet. These are to be found in his note 'The revision of the IPA' in this issue of the Journal — Ed.)

To the Educational Phonetics Editor:

from MR. GEORGE L. BAURLEY, Kleinring 44, Dessau 4500, D.D.R.

I am not convinced that this is the most appropriate forum, but the opening of a new chapter in the history of *JIPA* provides an auspicious occasion to raise a matter much in my mind. If I can provoke discussion, I will have achieved my aim.

It has been suggested that the phenomenon which made 'Livorno' *Leghorn* for the English, and 'München' *Munich* for the French would not nowadays be tolerated, being Linguistic Chauvinism. Possibly this particular form really has died out, but should we sit back smugly and assume that onomastic chauvinism is totally dead? Indeed, surveying the historical situation, is it perhaps reviving after a stage of thanatosis? The cut-and-dried rule that I received as a younger man was appealingly simple: a name imported from a different alphabet or writing system had to be transliterated for library purposes and transcribed for everyday use; a name from within the same system (usually assumed to be the Latin alphabet) was to be regarded as sacrosanct and left untouched. Beatific simplicity!

Today, it seems, we have a new problem. It is no longer sufficient to invoke the inviolability of names from within the same writing system, and it is by no means clear how reliable the other old rule-of-thumb is that when a foreign word is adopted, the pronunciation attempts to approach the original pronunciation as closely as is possible within the adoptive sound system.

Lest anyone should think that a modest molehill is being inflated into a full-scale mountain, let me point out that the problem is everybody's responsibility: the person,

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