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**"LA PIÙ GRAN GIOIA È SEMPRE ALL'ALTRA RIVA"*¹
ON THE ALBANIAN MIGRATION IN ITALY (XIV-XVIII
CENTURIES)**

*"...And thus they were settled in a part of Italy,
remained homeless those who have had one of the
most ancient homelands in the world ..."*²

Ismail Kadare

*"...la gente non lascia case, botteghe, terre, bestiame,
affetti se non quando vi è costretta da condizioni di
esistenza divenute insopportabili, e dalla speranza di
migliore sistemazione altrove"*³

Segio Anselmi

1.— In the seventies of the past century, Pier Paolo Pasolini considered the Albanian phenomenon "*an anthropologic miracle*", as he openly confessed the surprise he was caught by while listening his interlocutor, the priest and the Albanian Albanologist Zef (Giuseppe) Faraco. For the great Italian writer the reasons of the centennial survival of an aloglot ethnic-linguistic community that has preserved the language, traditions, historic remembrance, are scientifically unexplainable. However, but the great number of reasons and complexity requires definitions and concepts borrowed from the dogmatic theology.

It is as clear as crystal that the Pasolini's surprise no matter how much intellectually attractive it might be, does not allow us to

* This presentation is part of the discourse segment.

¹ Gabriele D'Annunzio, *Alcyone*, "Bocca di Serchio", v. 224, Fratelli Treves Editori, Milano, 1903, p. 144.

² Ismail Kadare, "Autobiografia e popullit në vargje", in *Vepra Letrare*, XII, 16, p. 147.

³ Sergio Anselmi, "Aspetti economici dell'emigrazione Balcanica nell'Italia centro-orientale del Quattrocento", in *Società e Storia*, anno II, n. 4, 1979, Milano, p. 1.

understand what happened with the Arbëresh people. The studies made in *the last two or three decades by the academic staff from the Department of Albanological studies of the University of Calabria and the University of Palermo* indeed prove that the Arbëresh phenomenon has not been characterized by mysterious metaphysic intrusions. On the contrary, *based on the attentive examination of long-term existence of Arbëresh in Italy*, we can say for sure that this phenomenon is a genuine merit of a population that has made great efforts for six centuries to have an undisputed place in the process of the development, inculcation and strengthening of the proper cultural identity, as to attract the interest and the attention of the European scholars.

I would like to discuss about this phenomenon by pointing out some historiography problems that are related both to the phases and the modalities of Arbëresh migration during the XIV-XVIII centuries and to the historic circumstances that favored the social integration of the Arbëresh, but not their cultural assimilation. This paper is extracted by a writing first published on the occasion of the international conference *L'Albania nell'Archivio di Propaganda Fide* organized from Ardian Ndreca in 2017⁴ and is part of a long monograph that will soon be published.

2.– The migration of Arbëresh towards Italy occurred at different stages and was characterized by different historic events in the Balkan Peninsula, before, during and after the Ottoman occupation. The information we have today is incomplete because of space and time limitations and the insufficiency of recorded data. Therefore, the chronological borders of this migration phenomenon, its real dimensions and modalities of its occurrence are very difficult to be determined.⁵

The historians of today agree on the fact that the migration process of the population of the Balkans to Western Europe, and especially the

⁴ See Matteo Mandalà, “Gli archivi ecclesiali e la memoria storico-culturale degli Arbëreshe. Un bilancio di tre decenni di ricerche” in Ardian Ndreca (a cura di), *L'Albania nell'Archivio di Propaganda Fide, Atti del Convegno Internazionale*, Città del Vaticano 26-27 ottobre 2015, Urbaniana University Press, Roma, 2017, p. 213-252.

⁵ Are still actual the framing of this phenomenon and the directions of research proposed by Peter Bartl: see Peter Bartl, “Fasi e modi dell’immigrazione albanese in Italia” in *Rivista di storia del Mezzogiorno*, 15, Lecce, 1979, p. 199-212.

migration of the second half of the XIV century to Southern Italy involved the Greek, the Slavic and the Albanian population because they were closely affected by the consequences and turmoil that subsequently followed and characterized the fall of the Byzantine Empire.⁶ There is no doubt that in parallel with the objective reasons that are connected with the concrete historic developments (social disorders caused by the frequent military campaigns and the abuses of the local chieftains, from the epidemics, famines and natural disasters), there are the so called "subjective" reasons (as the gradual change of society from sedentary to half-sedentary and nomadic), which influenced philosophy embraced by the populations that chose to be displaced and established beyond the Adriatic.⁷

The archive records that we have reveal the first phase of displacements from the highlands towards lowlands and seashores, and the second phase during which the genuine exodus happened. The latter was not encouraged by the casual circumstances, but a consequence of "emigration policies" that many European countries undertook at the end of the XIV century when Europe was struck by the plague epidemic which lasted least up to the eve of the modern time. The socioeconomic consequences of the new geographic discoveries due to the new trade routes opened and the lack of labor force in agriculture (as in the case of Sicily and generally the Southern Italy), as in the merchant trade (the case of Venice), these countries favored between the "colonized" populations or those which had contact through spreading the myth *felix Italia*, so of that paradigm that characterizes the migration phenomenon of all times.⁸

⁶ For an analytical view on the social dissolution during the late Middle Age in the Balkans, see Pietro Dalena – Alessandro Di Muro, "Dalle origini al Medioevo" in *La Calabria albanese. Storia, cultura, economia*, a cura di Fulvio Mazza, Rubbettino Editore, Soveria Mannelli, 2013, p. 25-61. With special methodological avail is the study of Pëllumb Xhufi, "Emigracioni shqiptar në Mesjetë: një vështrim tipologjik", in *Edhe 100! Studime në nderim të prof. Francesco Altamarit me rastin e 60-vjetorit të lindjes*, Albpaper, Tiranë, 2015, p. 687-714.

⁷ See Alain Ducellier, "Le raisons d'un départ: un monde désorienté" in Alain Ducellier - Bernard Doumerc - Brühilde Imhaus - Jean de Miceli, *Les chemins de l'exile. Bouversements de l'Est européen et migrations vers l'Ouest à la fin du Moyen Âge*, Armand Colin Éditeur, Paris, 1992, p. 7-89.

⁸ On this important historiographic paradigm is focused the volume prepared by Sergio Anselmi *Italia felix. Migrazioni slave e albanesi in Occidente. Romagna, Marche, Abruzzi, secoli XIV-XVI*, Quaderni di "Proposte e Ricerche", 3, Ed. di Ostra Vetere, Ancona, 1988.

For Brühnhilde Imhaus, the French researcher and co-authored with Alain Ducellier a study on the characteristics of migration towards Western Europe at the end of the Middle Age,⁹ this myth should be considered one of the “hidden” impetus of the many displacements of the Balkan populations for a better life, first invading the gates of the big coastal cities and then passing beyond the Adriatic.¹⁰ After seeing that the western model had blossomed with colonial forms along the coast, and especially at the big trade and harbor centers, a solution for their economic and social insecurity, the poor population of the Balkan hinterland flowed towards the seashores. The chance being offered from the other side of the Adriatic could nourish the myth of hope voyage. Nevertheless, invasion of populations towards the harbors waiting to pass the Adriatic during wouldn’t have occurred in the last quarter of the XIV century, there is no doubt that the road of sea represented one of the possibilities, in parallel let’s say of terrestrial ones who seemed easier, cheaper and safer.

3. – There were three were the directions of the massive displacement of Albanians: (1) towards North Dalmatian city-ports and from where they could continue towards the northern corners of the Balkans to Venice, they otherwise could land in the Marche shores through Italian merchant ships, (2) towards Greece, destination Peloponnese, therefore Morèa, or the coastal cities and the Aegean islands—in the opposite direction with Italy,¹¹ (3) waterborne transport

⁹ See Brühnhilde Imhaus, “Vers l’Italie des communes et des princes”, in *Les chemins de l’exile*, cit., p. 7-89.

¹⁰ On the situation of the Albanian coastal cities in the late Middle Age see Luan Malltezi, *Qytetet e bregdetit shqiptar gjatë sundimit venedikas (1392-1478: aspekte të jetës së tyre*, Instituti i Historisë - Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, Tiranë, 1988. Pëllumb Xhufi, “Vështrim mbi popullsinë e qyteteve bregdetare shqiptare në shek. XII-XV”, in *Studime për epokën e Skënderbeut*, vëll. I, Instituti i Historisë - Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, Tiranë, 1989, p. 22-31. See Oliver Jens Schmitt, *Arbëria venedike (1392-1479)*, in *Albanian by Ardan Klosi, Fjala*, Tiranë, 2014.

¹¹ On the displacement of Albanians in Greece see Denis A. Zakythinos, *Le Despotat grec de Morée*. Tome premier: *Histoire politique*, Société d’Édition “Les Belles Lettres” 95, Boulevard Raspail, Paris, 1932. Antoine Bon, *La Morée franque. Recherches historiques, topographiques et archéologiques sur la principauté d’Achaïe (1205-1430)*, fascicule 213 de la *Bibliothèque des Écoles françaises d’Athènes et de Rome*, Éditions E. sur de Boccard, Paris, 1969. Titos F. Jochalas, “Über die einwanderung der Albaner in Griechenland (Eine zusammenfassende Betrachtung) “ in *Peter Bartl und andere (Redaktion): Dissertationes Albanicae. In honorem Josephi Valentini et Ernesti Koliqi septuagenariorum (= Beiträge zur Kenntnis Südosteuropas und des Nahen Orients)*. Band 13. Trofenik, 1971, p. 80-106. Pëllumb

remained, shorter and bringing them to the other side of the Adriatic, in the central and southern areas of Italy. These three roads were asynchronously taken during the different historic moments. Neither their intensity, nor their destination was the same; because there were different reasons that urged Albanians to migrate (there were sporadic free individual choices of migration or for a massive forced departure under certain circumstances).

In the first case, we have a consistent migration of the population from the second half of the XIV century to the beginning of the XVI century, because of the prestige and the economic superiority of the Venetian Republic.¹² So, the migrants from the Balkan countries, especially the Albanians, proved that they preferred the central and northern Italian regions to other regions of Italy. However, this preference diminished by the second half of the XV, when those areas became overcrowded with villages and inhabitants, and the local economy no longer needed labour forces from outside. Venice ceased to be the only destination of the migrants at the end of the XIV century.

Xhufi, "Albania graeca in the XIV-XV centuries. A survey on the Albanian Colonisation in Greece in the Late Middle Age", *Studia Albanica*, Nr. 1-2(XXVIII), Tiranë, 1991, p. 72-109 reprint in Albanian with the title "Albania Graeca": The dimensions and the consequences of the Albanian migrations in Greece in the XIV century" in Pëllumb Xhufi, *Dilemat e Arbërit. Studime mbi Shqipërinë mesjetare*, Pegi, Tiranë, 2006, p. 327-368. Shkëlzen Raça, *Shtegtimet dhe ngulimet e shqiptarëve në Greqi (shek. XIII-XVI)*, Instituti Albanologjik, Prishtinë, 2004. Bernard Doumerc, "Un peuple en errance : les clans albanais dans l'empire colonial" in *Des sociétés en mouvement. Migrations et mobilité au Moyen Âge*, Société des historiens médiévistes de l'Enseignement supérieur public, Éditions de la Sorbonne, Paris, 2010, p. 147-158.

¹² See Alain Ducellier, "Les Albanais à Venise aux XVI^e et XV^e siècles", in *Travaux et Mémoires du Centre de recherche d'histoire et civilisation byzantines 2*, Paris, 1967, p. 405-420 reprint in *L'Albanie entre Byzance et Venise*, Variorum Reprints, London, 1987, nr. VIII. Freddy Thiriet, "Sur les communautés grecques et albanaises à Venise", in Mans Georg Beck, Manoussos Manoussacas & Angelo Pertusi (a cura di), *Venezia centro di mediazione tra Oriente e Occidente (sec. XV-XVI). Aspetti e problemi*. Leo S. Olschki, Civiltà Veneziana Studi 32, Firenze, 1977, 217-231. Brühilde Imhaus, "Aspetti della colonia albanese di Venezia alla fine del Medio-Evo" in *Miscellanea Agostino Pertusi*, Tomo III, Rivista di Studi Bizantini e Slavi, Pàtron Editore, Bologna, 1983, p. 180. Brühilde Imhaus, *Le minoranze orientali a Venezia, 1300-1510*, il Veltro Editrice, Roma, 1997; Silvia Moretti, "Une communauté étrangère dans la Venise des XV^e et XVI^e siècles : le cas des Albanais" in Jacques Bottin, Donatella Calabi, (a cura di), *Les Étrangers dans la ville: Minorités et espace urbain du bas Moyen Âge à l'époque moderne*, Editions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme Paris, Paris, 1999, p. 183-194. Lucia Nadin *Migrazioni e integrazione: il caso degli albanesi a Venezia, 1479-1552*, Bulzoni, Roma, 2008; Lucia Nadin, *Albania ritrovata. Recupero di presenze albanesi nella cultura e nell'arte del Cinquecento veneto*, Onufri, Tiranë, 2012.

Other areas and coastal cities located further south,¹³ especially in the Marche seashores, continuously attracted migrant families. The recorded data show Albanian migrants arrival in “Romagna malatestiana” (Cesena, Rimini, Forlì¹⁴) and along the Marche seashore (Pesaro, Fano, Senigallia, Jesi, Ancona, Porto Recanati, Loreto, Porto Civitanova, Porto San Giorgio¹⁵), but also further south, albeit smaller in number, as in Bari, Brindisi, Lecce. Today, we can hardly speak about the exact number of emigrants, but a study carried out by the Brühilde Imhaus shows that between XIV and XV century more than one hundred Marche villages definitively were more or less populated by Albanians who were involved in agriculture.¹⁶ Some branches of this migration wave extended in the inland cities, towards the north e.g., Cesena, and towards south, also.

4.– This phenomenon embraced the “le Marche” region, “once a prosperous region, le Marche has now impoverished,”¹⁷ that differently from the other northern Italy regions, experienced enormous demographic problems, because of the villages’ massive depopulation.

The research and the studies carried out by Sergio Anselmi confirm this general framework. In addition, the archival records he discovered and published help us to understand the reasons of the extension and deep penetration of the Albanian emigrants in the Marche’s rural economy.¹⁸

¹³ Serious doubts evokes the raised hypotheses by Luigi Pugnetti on the Albanians’ presence in the cities of Bosco Tosca and Pievetta in Piacenza province: see Luigi Pugnetti, “Gli albanesi nel Piacentino” in *Bollettino Storico Piacentino*, Vol. 47, 1952, p. 29-33. On this issue was organized a conference entitled: *Arberesh [sic], comunità albanesi in Italia. Storia e ipotesi di un insediamento nella provincia di Piacenza e nel nostro comune: le frazioni di Pievetta e Bosco Tosca*, organized in Castel San Giovanni on 25 May 1984. Reasonable reservations has expressed the late Carmen Artocchini, “Sul presunto insediamento albanese a Bosco Tosca e Pievetta in provincia di Piacenza”, Estr. dall’*Archivio Storico per le Province Parmensi*, quarta serie, vol. XLII, anno 1990 Parma, Tipografie Riunite Donati, Parma, 1991, p. 151-159.

¹⁴ See Viviana Bonazzoli – Oreste Delucca, “Slavi e albanesi nella Romagna malatestiana: primi esiti di ricerche d’archivio a Cesena, Rimini, Forlì” in *Italia felix*, quoted, p. 213-231.

¹⁵ See Sergio Anselmi, “Slavi e albanesi nell’Italia centro-orientale” in *Italia felix*, quoted, p. 11-32.

¹⁶ See Brühilde Imhaus, “Vers l’Italie des communes et des princes”, in *Les chemins de l’exile*, quoted, p. 225-294.

¹⁷ “une province opulente ruinée”: *ibid.*

¹⁸ See Sergio Anselmi, “Insediamenti, agricoltura, proprietà nel Ducato roveresco: la catastazione del 1489-1490” in *Quaderni storici* “Grani, Prezzi, Mercato”, nr. 28, Ancona,

Although in more limited dimensions than the Slavs, Albanians' presence in the Marche dates in the XIV century, as e.g., in Fermo,¹⁹ Ancona,²⁰ Jesi,²¹ Recanati²² etc.²³ Anselmi says that the sudden increase in number of the Albanian emigrants from 1436 to 1437 faced the opposition of the local population and urged the open hostile stands against them. The new Albanian migrants were often considered as infection site and contagious disease,²⁴ or violent and stupid people²⁵

gennaio-aprile, 1975, p. 37-86; Sergio Anselmi, "Schiavoni e albanesi nell'agricoltura marchigiana, in *Le Marche e l'Adriatico orientale: economia, società, cultura, dal XIII secolo al primo Ottocento*, Ancona, 1978, p. 3-26.

¹⁹ See Joyce Lussu, "Gli Albanesi nel Fermano attorno alla metà del '400" in *Le Marche e l'Adriatico orientale*, quoted, p. 85-92.

²⁰ See Mario Natalucci, "Insediamenti di colonie e di gruppi dalmati, slavi e albanesi nel territorio di Ancona (secoli XV-XVI)" in *Le Marche e l'Adriatico orientale*, quoted, p. 93-132. Alain Ducellier, "L'établissement des albanais dans la région d'Ancône. Aspects sociaux, économiques et culturels (vers 1400 - vers 1450)", in *Mercati, mercanti, denaro nelle Marche (sec. XIV-XIX)*. Atti e memorie della Deputazione di Storia patria per le Marche, 87, Urbino, 1982, p. 73-114.

²¹ See Giovanni Annibaldi, "Albanesi e schiavoni a Jesi e contado tra Quattrocento e Cinquecento" in *Italia felix*, quoted, p. 133-153.

²² See Marco Moroni, "Schiavoni, morlacchi e albanesi a Recanati nelle fonti catastali del XVI secolo" in *Italia felix*, quoted, p. 154-168.

²³ See Mario Sensi, "Fraternite di Slavi nelle Marche, secolo XV" in "Atti e Memorie della Deputazione di storia patria per le Marche", 82 (1977), p. 53-84, reprint in *Italia felix*, quoted, p. 192-212. Romualdo Sassi, "Immigrati dell'altra sponda adriatica e Fabriano del Secolo XV" in *Rendiconti dell'Accademia Marchigiana di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti - Istituto Culturale Europeo*, XVII (1941-1949), p. 65-85.

²⁴ See Monaldo Leopardi, *Annali di Recanati, Loreto e Portorecanati*, a cura di Franco Foschi, Centro nazionale di studi leopardiani, stampa, Sanseverino Marche Grafica & stampa, Recanati, 1993, p. 114, 147, 164, 177, 226, 231: 1) August 9, 1437: "molti albanesi si erano diffusi nel nostro contado, e si presero delle providenze sul loro conto". 2) January 18, 1451: "Si trattò di adattare qualche misura contro gli Albanesi, attesa la loro malignità, e fii risoluto che venissero tutti descritti, e avessero un mese di tempo a prendere impiego o servizio. Alle spirare del mese sloggiassero tutti dal nostro territorio, eccettuati i maestri d'arte e li battuali (?) o famuli del cittadini e degli altri abitatori". 3) January 17, 1456: "Per evitare possibilmente il flagello della Peste, si decretò che non potessero riceversi li Schiavoni e Albanesi e si espellessero quelli venuti da natale in poi. Le recenti vittorie delli Turchi in Levante rendivano forse più frequente la emigrazione di quelli infelici". 4) June 2, 1460: "Peste manifestata di nuovo; disposizioni contro gli Schiavoni ed Albanesi ai quali si attribuiva la frequenza de' contagi. La Peste fu più micidiale del solito". 5) March 24, 1478 "Agli Schiavoni ed Albanesi fu proibito d'immischiarsi in alcune funzioni nelle fraternità dei cittadini". 6) June 6, 1479 "Essendovi nuovi sospetti di Peste, si adattarono varie misure e venne decretato che in caso di contagio la Fraternità degli Albanesi vistarebbe e spellirebbe gli Albanesi, quella delli Schiavoni gli Schiavoni, e l'una e l'altra gli Italiani". Di grande interesse e di grande attualità il seguente bando del Consiglio Comunale di Recanati che riproponiamo secondo l'edizione pubblicata da Ludwig von Thallóczy: "Die X VII Januarii 1479. Consilio M. d. f. Antianorum

and received a different treatment from the Slavs who were considered more suitable for agricultural works.²⁶

viginti quatuor et ducentorura de populo, comunis et hominum civitatis Racaneti more solito congregato in quo fuit propositum quid placebat dicto consilio providere super infrascriptis propositis. Tertio si placet dicto consilio facere aliquam provisionem pro evitacione morbi. [...] Super quibus Marinus Nicoli Dei nomine invocato dixit ... super facto morbi evitandi fiat bannum quod nemo audeat receptare aliquem sclavum neque Albanum qui istuc concessisset a festo nativitatís citra pena X librarum receptanti et venienti X tractarum funis et quolibet possit predicto amisare (?) et ... quartam partem dictarum X librarum; et si qui reperirentur venisse ... dicta civitate. Conclusio ottentiva: ... pro evitando morbi: fiat bannum quod quicumque receptaret aliquem venientem de terra morbosus mereret penam X librarum tam receptans quam receptatus et ultra dictam penam receptatus habeat de facto quatuor tractos funis et qui amisaret contra fontes, habeat medietatem dicte pene et quilibet sclavus seu Albanus qui venisset istuc a Kalendis Juniis citra, debeat dis... orasse civitatem sub dicta pena. Die II junii Consilio etc. Secundo de provisione fienda contra pestem. Ser Leopardus dei nomine invocato...supra provisione pestis dixit quod per d[ominos] p[riores] eligatur et constitutur locus extra civitatem ad quem omnes sclavi et Albani morbo infecti in civitate Recanati deferantur et constituentur ibi custodes et curatores qui debeant perscrutari diligenter per civitatem et infectos referre dominis prioribus sub aliqua pena. Jacobus Janini super provisione pestis dixit quod primo inveniatur locus et quod hospitale sancte Lucie extra portam maris esset istuc ydoneus et quod illuc deferantur sclavi et albani infecti et ibi curentur. Ser Antonius Politi dixit ut supra dixerat Jacobus, sed de hoc habeatur colloquium cum d^o episcopo. Gaspar Jacobi dixit super provisione pestis quod hospitale sancte Lucie de quo supra dictum est non est locus aliquo modo ydoneus cum ibi per singulos dies et horas conversatur prope accessum ad sanctam Mariam de Varano quapropter queratur pro alio loco. Petrus Jeronimi dixit super facto pestis prout supra dixit Ser Antonius Politi hoc addito remittuntur custodes ad portas prout erant prius et deputentur eis salarium expensis comitatinis. Petrus Thome dixit ut supra dixit Petrus Jeronimi hoc addito quod recludantur alique dictarum portarum. Ser Johannes Francisci de infectis dixit ut supra dixerunt alii hoc addito quod de cetero non dimittantur intrare in civitatem albani neque sclavi. Reformatum fuit et conclusum Constitutur locus pro infectis videlicet hospitale sancte Lucie ut supra dictum est in quo deputentur curatores infirmorum quibus sit cura diligenter curare infirmos et constitutur aromatarius a quo accipiantur necessaria pro dictis infirmis sumptibus comitatinis et omnes Albani et sclavi infecti illuc deducantur. Item remittantur custodes ad portas prout erant prius cum salario sibi persolvendo de pecuniis comunis extrahendis de mundinis proximis et hoc pro tempus duorum mensium": Ludwig von Thallóczy, "Zwei Urkunden aus Nordalbanien", in *Archiv für slavische Philologie*, 21. Band, Weidemannsche Buchhandlung, Berlin, 1899, p. 84-85.

²⁵ Like I remember the albanians arrived in Ancona on 1458: "Quoniam Albanenses viri sanguinei sunt et malignantis nature omnes, a quibus tamquam a furiosis gladiis aufugendum est": Vinkentij Makušev, *Monumenta historica Slavorum meridionalium I*, Typis Districtu scholastici Varsaviensis, Varsaviæ, 1874, p. 204. "of course among these poor emigrants mostly flourished the outlaw activities, stealing, deceiving, quarrels, prostitution and murder, influencing in the creation of the "bad" Albanian image. Sometime, the "Albanian" call was eqaul to an insult": Pëllumb Xhufi, *Árbërit e Jonit: Vlora, Delvina e Janina në shek. XV – XVII*, Second publishing completed, Shtëpia botuese Onufri, Tiranë, 2017, p. 1190.

²⁶ Here what Anselmi says: "A Recanati – dice Monaldo Leopardi nei suoi *Annali* – in una sola volta ne sbarcano 300 "ed appestati". A questa prima ondata, forse connessa anche all'arrivo dei turchi ai confini tra Macedonia e Albania, ne seguono altre. La diffidenza verso i

Many documentary records report about the difficulties of the Albanian families with integration in an economy that desperately needed labor force. Although Anselmi himself noticed that “among the Albanians there was someone who succeed in getting an *ubi consistam* and go beyond the minimum of the standard of living,”²⁷ we remain far from the complete urbanization in contrary with Abruzzo²⁸ and Puglia, the southern regions, which this scholar considered more hospitable due to their “more logical geographic” position.²⁹ However, the Marche

nuovi immigrati è notevole e durerà a lungo, ma alla fine, sia pure dalla base della piramide sociale, anche gli albanesi riescono ad inserirsi nelle più varie forme. Probabilmente sono malvisti dagli stessi schiavoni, non solo perché immettono sul mercato nuova forza lavoro, ma anche perché la popolazione, infastidita da alcune loro imprese, può confondere tra le due etnie Leopardi, che registra minuziosamente le testimonianze del tempo, trascriverà: albanesi “gens ad necem” laddove gli schiavoni – prosegue – e giovarono molto alla coltivazione delle nostre campagne [...] prima quasi incolte. I giudizi sugli albanesi sono duri anche altrove: ad Ascoli Piceno, dove la presenza ne è accertata nel 1457, appaiono “rozzi” ed entrano nella milizia; a Sirolo (1460) si fanno ordinanze contro di loro, scoraggiandone in ogni modo l’insediamento; a Jesi, ove sono presenti nel 1468-1470 saranno espulsi dieci anni dopo; ad Ancona, umana, Sirolo, Camerano, Poggio, Massignano, essendo “la nazione Albanesca [...] molto prompta a mal fare et a offendere nel sangue umano”, gli anziani ordinano agli albanesi che non abbiano beni da 100 ducati in su, di non portare armi ed impongono una tassa personale di un carlino a testa al mese, esclusi i possidenti; ancora ad Ancona, verso la fine del secolo, vengono messe taglie su alcuni albanesi in fuga, già residenti a Camerata e Castelferretti, accusati di (omicidio e altri delitti. L’impressione è che questi balcanici abbiano stentato molto più degli altri ad ambientarsi e a far accettare la loro presenza, anche perché l’afflusso di numerosi lombardi e altri forestieri nelle terre marchigiane pone problemi nuovi, connessi alla grande mobilità sociale del secondo Quattrocento: è evidente siano i più deboli a pagare le durezza della situazione”: Sergio Anselmi, “Schiavoni e albanesi”, quoted, p. 12-13.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

²⁸ “Furono loro concesse quelle, ed altre ville, perché venissero ripopolate, come avvenne”: Anton Ludovico Antinori, *Raccolta di memorie storiche delle tre Provincie degli Abruzzi in cui si parla delle origini, e de' nomi de' primi abitatori di esse; delle fondazioni delle distrutte, e delle esistenti città, terre, castelli, chiese, monasterj, badie con li documenti del jus di nominare, che hanno in esse, così il principe, che il privato: con la descrizione delle principali strade, laghi, e fiumi, e di tutti gli uomini, per lettere, per armi, e per sanità rinomati*, t. III, Napoli, Giuseppe Campo, 1782, p. 477. “La caratteristica delle nuove ville è forse da ricondurre all’elemento straniero, che fortemente le caratterizza, ed al controllo che lo stato esercita su di esso sia pure attraverso il solo strumento fiscale”: Alessandra Bulgarelli Lukacs, “Economia rurale e popolamento del territorio nell’Abruzzo tra ‘500 e ‘600”, in *Abruzzo e Molise. Ambienti e civiltà nella storia del territorio*, a cura di Massimo Costantini e Costantino Felice, in Cheiron, a. X (1993), nn. 19-20, p. 160.

²⁹ Sergio Anselmi, “Schiavoni e albanesi”, quoted., p. 12-13. Anselmi, always thinking that the number of the Albanians was much smaller than those of the Slavs, waiting for the new research data that may shed light on this phenomenon, precises that “siamo ancora in una fase arretrata della ricerca, che potrebbe essere corretta – nelle sue indicazioni iniziali – da ulteriori spogli dei rogiti notarili. Per il solo 1469 uno della dozzina e forse più notai allora

shores were a natural destination for the population from the Balkans, and the the constant migration flux across the centuries proved the continuous need of those areas for labor force.³⁰ From this point of view and according to Brühilde Imhaus, it is not excludable that the Ancona merchants might have advised the Albanians to settle in the depopulated villages, in Marche, and to work the uncultivated lands, because only those merchants could recognize the situation of both the villages and Marche coastal cities from where they took the maritime road for trade purposes with Albania and Greece.³¹ Official records of the time reveal a sporadic presence of Albanian families and individuals not only in the coastal cities of these regions, e.g., Ancona, Sirolo, Pesaro, Fano, but also in the inland areas of Italy's Center and North, such in Foligno, Parma, Cesena, Gubbio in the first half of the XV. There could be met handicraftsmen, peasants, merchants and soldiers are shown the prostitutes, thieves and ordinary hoodlums.³² In many cases, Brühilde Imhaus reports based on tribunal records of more or less serious criminal acts, which from the second half of the XV century inflicted a “peur de l'étranger” that made up the bases of prejudices that still exist today. Later, the “peur de l'étranger” turned

contemporaneamente roganti ad Ancona, stipula 30 atti, nei quali almeno una delle parti è albanese, e 54 in cui almeno una è schiavona. Diciotto concernono transazioni e contratti relativi ad acquisti di terre, cottimi, soccide, lavorecci, bonifiche: 14 con schiavoni, 4 con albanesi. Anche tra i secondi non mancano proprietari che vendono una parte delle loro terre, come certo Cola Albanese, “habitor Ancone”, che cede per 40 ducati a Francesco da Camerano “medietatem terre vineate, campi ve, cannettate”, che subito dopo, con altro atto, prende in affitto per un anno alle solite condizioni di lavoreccio. È probabile che questo albanese venda una parte della terra acquisita precedentemente con un contratto di pastinato nel quadro di una sua ben definita strategia di piccolo proprietario, coltivatore diretto e colono in fase di crescita economica e sociale”.

³⁰ In the XV century, Albanians and Slavs worked to turn into cultivated land the hills on Marche: see Paolo De Simonis, “L'anno dei mezzadri: da esperienza toscana a legge nazionale fra istituzioni, memoria e futuro debiti” in *Le Marche nella mezzadria Un grande futuro dietro le spalle* a cura di Francesco Adornato e Annalisa Cegna, Quodlibet, Macerata, 2013, p. 109.

³¹ See Brühilde Imhaus, “Vers l'Italie des communes et des princes”, in *Les chemins de l'exile*, quoted, p. 239.

³² “Leur disponibilité ne fait que croître au XV^e siècle, quand guerres seigneuriales et conquête turque ruinent si bien le pays qu'il y reste peu de prébendes. C'est alors que, au-delà de la Dalmatie, les clercs latins d'Albanie refluent jusqu'à Venise et dans les villes des Marches, Ancône, Pesaro, Fano, où se constituent d'importantes colonies d'Albanais émigrés”: Alain Ducellier, *Réflexions sur le monde Orthodoxe* in *Les frontières religieuses en Europe du XV^e au XVII^e siècle: actes du XXXI^e colloque international d'études humanistes, études réunies par Robert Sauzet, Librairie Philosophique J. Vrin. Paris, 1992, p. 325.*

into a "social peur", which has been since then considered excluding and marginalizing attitude.³³

5.– The migratory flux of the migrants groups from the Balkans (mainly Slavs and Albanians³⁴) did not stop at the feet of Apennine's ridge, but extended beyond the natural border, towards Umbria, Toscana and Lazio regions, where the population was experiencing the social-demographic changes, because there was a great need for labor forces. After a first welcome phase for the migrants, that unfortunately has been not recorded as much as it should, continues a period of open hostility from the local population that fell prey to the prejudices and fear of the foreigner. There were many verdicts issued in Umbria for banning the migrants, especially the Albanian ones. For those who had been settled in Foligno, the city council, in the occasion of the plague epidemic of 1467, decided

"che veruno albanese che fusse venuto da due mesi in la città aut contado di Foligno si debia levare e partire da dicta città et contado de Foligno hogie alla pena de dieci tracti de corda et ultra alla pena de dece tracti de fune; et che non sia persona alcuna... che ardisca né presuma allocare casa alcuna a dicti talli albanesi advent."³⁵

³³ See Brühilde Imhaus, "Vers l'Italie des communes et des princes", in *Les chemins de l'exile*, quoted, p. 276 *et passim*, especially the paragraph "Peur de l'étranger, peur sociale".

³⁴ We agree with the opinion of Niccolò Fattori on the common characteristics between the Slavic and Albanian migration, with regard to the causes, and to the dynamics through which were fulfilled: "La prima grande ondata migratoria, quella degli Schiavoni delle zone costiere della Dalmazia, può essere iscritta nel più ampio contesto dell'instabilità politica dei Balcani e del loro impoverimento. Una fase lievemente successiva è quella dell'immigrazione albanese, iniziata all'inizio del XV secolo. Anche in questo caso si incrociano elementi politici e cause profonde di natura economica. Le somiglianze tra l'emigrazione albanese e quella degli Schiavoni si estendono anche al tipo di migranti, per lo più lavoratori agricoli e piccoli artigiani (i ruoli paga della sagrestia di Fano per gli anni dal 1432 al 1439 nominano diversi Schiavoni e Albanesi, impiegati come cuochi ed inservienti), ma occasionalmente anche in ruoli di rilievo, come il capitano Grasso de Albania, responsabile di 43 lance (circa 120 soldati a cavallo) nell'esercito di Pandolfo Malatesta. Considerate le somiglianze e la prossimità cronologica dei due fenomeni, è possibile parlare di una singola lunga ondata migratoria dai Balcani verso l'Italia": Niccolò Fattori, "Comunità e integrazione nelle diaspore greche (secoli XV-XVI). Tre casi marchigiani" in *Studi pesaresi. Rivista della Società pesarese di studi storici*, nr. 4 (2016), il lavoro editoriale, Ancona, 2016, p. 89.

³⁵ Mario Sensi, "Fraternite di Slavi nelle Marche, secolo XV" in *Italia felix*, quoted, p. 204, nota 6. Anna Esposito emphasizes that "questo bando d'espulsione per gli albanesi di recente insediamento indica dunque che non tutti quelli presenti nel territorio folignate erano espulsi, e che l'insediamento albanese era già da tempo una realtà consolidata": Anna Esposito, "Il contributo dell'emigrazione slava e albanese al popolamento dei territori umbro-laziali tra

Always in Foligno, on 1497 it was taken the decision to register all the Albanians living in the city aiming for them to pay a per capita tax for “security reasons”: if the Albanians wanted to stay in Foligno, every man aged between 14 and 70 years had to pay 15 solde per month, every woman aged between 12 and 60 years had to pay 5 solde per month, while “the children girls aged between 3 and 12 years and the boys aged 14 years old” had to pay 2 solde and half per month; otherwise the Albanian families had to “leave the territory within four days.”³⁶ With the same decision were previewed other coercive measures: the Albanians couldn’t bring to Foligno “any wood, vineyard, or working tool”³⁷, no kind of fruit without being proved whether “it was taken from people of our city or the suburbs, or had been given by their proprietor.”³⁸ Such a measure was taken to prohibit the entrance of stolen stocks in the city. In addition, the Albanians couldn’t carry weapons “swords or other arms while going to work”, except when going out of the region. This measure was related with the bad name Albanians and the Slavs had taken as violent people. Even in Assisi, where the Albanians’ presence has been proved since the ‘70s of the XV century, are proclaimed decisions *contra Albanenses*, with measures that restricted the free movement out of the city walls (*extramœnia*) for those who have lived for a long time in the city, and was previewed the eviction for all those who have settled there in the last months. These decisions were taken had mainly because of the fear of spreading plague by the foreigners, especially from the Slavs and Albanians.³⁹ Also, in Amelia couldn’t “lack the prejudices on the populations coming from the other side of the Adriatic, e.g., in the case of the plague epidemic of July 1473 when the city authorities decided to immediately evict (*infra trium horarum spatium*) all the Epirotes and Albanians that had settled in Amelia with their families during the three days that preceded the plague, fearing that this disease was brought by

Quattrocento e Cinquecento” in *La popolazione italiana del Quattrocento e Cinquecento* (a cura di) Guido Alfani, Angela Carbone, Beatrice del Bo, Riccardo Rao, Forum editrice, Udine 2016, p. 162.

³⁶ Anna Esposito, “Il contributo dell’emigrazione slava e albanese”, quoted, p. 162.

³⁷ “veruna generazione di legname, vite o seramenti”.

³⁸ “non provassero per persone de nostra città et contado haverle comparate o non ch’el patrone l’havesse donate”, *ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 163.

them, *sub pena ut decies eculei ictibus torqueretur*, a penalty that was applied also to those *qui eos alios reciperet*. So, even in this case the eviction was previewed only for the newcomers, not for them who had been settled in the city for a long time.”⁴⁰

In Perugia, the archive records attest to “displacement of not only individuals but also of families and entire groups made up of families”⁴¹ of Slavs and Albanians. Many of them worked as soldiers at the service of the commune; others were praised as tailors, meanwhile from the first years of the XV century, many emigrants worked “as cooks, servants, bell-ringers and couriers.”⁴² However, there were many of those who were involved in “violent episodes (rebellions, burglary, robbery, murder); many of them regularly lived in the city, or in the surroundings, where they are the cause of social disorders”; the rest of the immigrants, unable become part of the high social class, are forced to “deal with the most despised and dangerous jobs.”⁴³ The archival records have diminished from the first years of the XVI century, till their full disappearance in the following decades. This means that the assimilation process was done leaving in the Perugia's society only some anthroponomical traces that evoke the historic memory of this Balkanic migration.

6. – Based on some recently discovered documents, Anna Esposito⁴⁴ makes a very similar description of the situation of Albanians in Rome

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, p. 164.

⁴¹ Luigi Rambotti, “Gli archivi perugini e la presenza di slavi e albanesi a Perugia nel XV secolo” in *Fonti archivistiche e ricerca demografica: Atti del convegno internazionale*, Ministero per i Beni Culturali e Ambientali, Trieste, 23-26 aprile 1990, Pubblicazioni degli Archivi di Stato. 37, Roma, 1996, p. 802.

⁴² *Ibid*, p. 804.

⁴³ “Ecco quindi che sono documentati slavi e albanesi come servi, birri e braccianti; molte donne esercitano la prostituzione mentre abbondano ladri, sicari, ricettatori e lenoni. Tutte le situazioni richiamate hanno in comune il ricorso frequente alla violenza nelle sue varie forme: aggressioni, percosse, omicidi, stupri e ingiurie, reati ai quali il potere risponde molto fermamente, sia nell’istruzione del processo che nel comminare le pene. In molte sentenze è evidenziata la diversità di trattamento riservato ad un cittadino perugino o ad un balcanico condannati per un medesimo reato”: *ibid*, p. 803.

⁴⁴ Anna Esposito, *Un'altra Roma. Minoranze nazionali e comunità ebraiche tra medioevo e rinascimento*, Il Calamo, Roma, 1995; Anna Esposito, “Popolazione e immigrazione a Corneto alla fine del Medioevo” in Luca Gufi, Alfio Cortonesi, Anna Esposito, Letizia Pani Ermini (a cura di), *Corneto medievale: territorio, società, economia e istituzioni religiose*, Atti del convegno di studio, Tarquinia 24-25 novembre 2007, Tipografia Lamberti, Tarquinia, p. 85-97 (= “Bollettino della Società tarquinense d’arte e storia”, supplemento al n. 36); Anna Esposito,

and Lazio, regions where until today it was wrongly thought that the presence of the migrants from the Balkans, including also the Slavs and the Greeks “had remained in the second plan, if not unrecognizable.”⁴⁵ Based on the data brought by Muzio Polidori (1609-1683)⁴⁶ on which was latter based Luigi Dasti, the population of Corneto was increased in 1484 by many Albanian families that arrived there. Although fewer in number, groups of Albanians appear on the fiscal records of Montalto di Castro, Civitavecchia and Viterbo’s centers. Indeed, as for northern territory of Lazio and Tuscia, the archival research of the scholar Esposito pre-displaces them a decade earlier from the first records: the first decision of eviction taken in Viterbo dates in December 24, 1474 and impinges “the unjust behaviors and violations of the newcomers like the Corsicans, the Slavs and Albanians.”⁴⁷ The documents’ fragmentation prevents us from discovering the social stratification of these migrants. Although the data we have do not provide sufficient information about the professions and the status of these social groups, we do not fully agree with the opinion according to which we have to do only with “unqualified people, and in the best of cases somehow connected to military environments”,⁴⁸ because this

“Gli Albanesi a Roma e nell’area Laziale tra ‘400 e ‘500: prime indagini” in *Uomini Paesaggi Storie. Studi di Storia Medievale per Giovanni Cherubini*, a cura di Duccio Balestracci, Andrea Barlucchi, Franco Franceschi, Paolo Nanni, Gabriella Piccinni, Andrea Zorzi, Salvietti & barabuffi Editori, Siena, 2012, p. 533. Reprinted with the same title in *Nuove frontiere per la Storia di genere* (Vol. 1-3), a cura di Laura Guidi - Maria Rosaria Pelizzari, Salerno, 2013, p. 157-164, and also in *Cittadinanza e mestieri. Radicamento urbano e integrazione nelle città bassomedievali* (secc. XIII-XVI), (a cura di), Beatrice Del Bo, Viella, Roma, 2014, p. 283-298. Anna Esposito, “Le *nationes* difficili. Albanesi e corsi a Roma nel primo XVI secolo e le loro chiese nazionali” in *Chiese e nationes a Roma. Dalla Scandinavia ai Balcani: secoli XV-XVIII*, a cura di Antal Molnár - Giovanni Pizzorusso - Matteo Sanfilippo, Istituto Balassi Accademia d’Ungheria in Roma, Viella, Roma, 2017, p. 161-174.

⁴⁵ Indeed the research undertaken on “sulla documentazione di Roma, di Viterbo, di Corneto-Tarquini e di altre località della Maremma laziale relativa alla seconda metà del ‘400 e ai primi decenni del ‘500 ha permesso di mettere in luce interessanti caratteristiche di questa minoranza, che – almeno per Roma – riesce a distinguersi come gruppo in possesso di una precisa identità ‘nazionale’: *ibid*, p. 533.

⁴⁶ “fu accresciuto il numero degli abitanti di Corneto a cagione di molte famiglie Albanesi, quivi venute a domicilio per sottrarsi al governo turco”: Muzio Polidori, *Croniche di Corneto* edizione a cura di Anna Rita Moschetti, Società tarquiniense di arte e storia, Tarquinia, 1977, quoted from Luigi Dasti, *Notizie storiche archeologiche di Tarquinia e Corneto*, Tipografia dell’Opinione Roma, 1878, p. 253.

⁴⁷ Anna Esposito, “Il contributo dell’emigrazione slava e albanese”, quoted, p. 165.

⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 166.

would go in the opposite way of both the above-mentioned assertions of Polidori, and the long dynamics that during the following years defined the gradual demographic growth of some urban areas of this territory, among which was also Corneto-Tarquinia. Albanians certainly "were distinguished by a bad fame", and this is confirmed from "tribunal verdicts that see them as protagonists and who had mainly to do with reconciliations after wrangles or with injuries etc."⁴⁹ Also, the Albanians in Rome are object of eviction, as in the case of the Bull proclaimed by the Pope Sixtus IV on December 5, 1475,⁵⁰ putting the relative indifference on which were welcomed the migrants in the city during the second half of the XV century at an end. "*The change in treatment*" says Esposito, "*might be the different social status of the groups of the Albanian migrants: the first, without a truly social benefit, were summoned in some marginal professional categories; while the second, who arrived between the end of the XIV century and the first decades of the XV century "reached prestigious levels" what allowed them to have a different position in the civil society.*"⁵¹ In both cases, the complete assimilation that in the end would erase their traces of memory and presence was partially avoided.

Archival records report not a very different the situation in Maremma of Siena,⁵² that had become arrival point for the migratory fluxes from the other side of the Adriatic. The few data we have at our disposal, report the presence of Albanians also in these areas of central Italy. We know almost nothing about the extension in time and space in space of this phenomenon and especially the influence to the economy and society of Siena. Although the anthroponomical traces help us to define the nationality of the displaced populations,⁵³ do not inform us

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 167. The Bull is published in A. Theiner, *Codex diplomaticus dominii temporalis S. Sedis*, 111, Roma 1862, p. 484-486, nr. CCCCX.

⁵¹ Among these levels there was also "quello di connestabile e di caporale al soldo del Pontefice (oltre a stradioti, *armigeri*, *squadierii*, *lanciarri* e generici soldati); dall'altra l'istituzione all'inizio del Cinquecento di una confraternita denominata 'Santa Maria degli Albanesi', che gestiva un omonimo ospedale nel rione Monti, rione marginale e ancora poco popolato, in cui non a caso venne a risiedere una buona parte degli albanesi di Roma": *ibid.*

⁵² See Maria A. Ginatempo, "Le presenze straniere nel dominio senese del Quattrocento" in *Bullettino senese di storia patria*, XCIII, 1986, p. 392-415.

⁵³ See Maria A. Ginatempo, "Per la storia demografica del territorio senese nel Quattrocento: problemi di fonti e di metodo" in *Archivio storico italiano*, n. 522, CXLII, IV, 1984, p. 511-587.

about their social status, nor about the level of the Albanian groupings' integration and toleration, that continued to be displaced within the Italian territory.

7.– Just arriving in the new country, with the illusion that could improve the living conditions, the Albanian migrants were employed in agriculture with the danger to return in the state of serfdom, by accepting to live under such conditions that Imhaus calls “intolérables”. They resisted for many years in this situation, and their example was followed by other unfortunates that continuously arrived in the same villages. These were coming from the Northern Albania cities and the inner highland area such as Tivar, Durrës, Ulqin, Lezha, Mati, Mirdita, Drisht and Kruja. Others were coming from Kotorr and from Ragusa. The main reason that forced them to migrate was the hope for better living conditions, and the idea of gaining the status of free men. When even this hope vanished, the migrated Albanians in central Italy were subdued to the complete assimilation within a relatively short time. The number of the migrated Albanians beyond the Adriatic was sensitively grown during the XV century, by reaching the peak between 1450 and 1470 to gradually decreasing during the following decades.⁵⁴ Meantime, other destinations were opened to Albanians who were ready to undertake the path of migration. Quickly assimilated, the migrated Albanians in Italy didn't leave a trace of their presence, except in the notary registers, or in the tribunal acts at the end of the XIV century and the beginning of XV century, the same documents that prove their employment relationship, also the legal violations more or less grave, on which they were charged.⁵⁵

8.– The migratory phenomenon between the end of the XIII century and the first half of the XV century towards Sicily and other southern regions of Italy, where labour forces were needed more than ever, and a part of a fertile lands had remained uncultivated was similar with the Marche experience, although in more limited dimensions.⁵⁶ The migration towards the southern part of the Mediterranean, from both the other side of the Adriatic and the Tyrrhenian one, were favored

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 258.

⁵⁵ *Ibid*, p. 225 et passim.

⁵⁶ See Henri Bresc, “Pour une histoire des Albanaï en Sicile XIV-XV siècles”, in *Archivio Storico Siciliano*, LXVIII, 1972, p. 527-538.

from the Anjou interest and especially from the efforts to make the Balkan harbors merchant nodes. The Sicilian ships travelling across the Mediterranean, during the return were often loaded with slaves who were sold at the Island's market. Among those coming from the southeastern Europe, Henri Bresc distinguished some slaves for sure coming from the Albanian territories that were sold between 1310 and 1359.⁵⁷ They were not captured solders, but "entire families for sale. Here we can mention an Albanian family made up of a 30 years old father, a 20 years old mother and their son aged 5 yers old who were sold for 10 onces on 1328."⁵⁸ Another group of Albanians turned into slaves was sold in Termini between 1400 and 1439.⁵⁹ Compared with the great number of Greek slaves, Albanians were fewer, but their presence proves the existence of a maritime road that in the turn of XIV-XV centuries directly connected Sicily with the eastern shores of the Adriatic.⁶⁰

In addition to Sicily, the migratory flux of the end of XIII century was also headed towards the Puglia shores. Without leaving archival data, some Albanians undertook the migration road to escape from the oppression of the local feudal lords.

"Dès les années 1270, des Albanais fuient en Pouille après le séisme de Durazzo et, un siècle plus tard, c'est plutôt que d'être "*traités en esclaves*" par leur prince, Charles Thopia, que des émigrés de la région de Durazzo préférèrent "aller en Pouille en mendiants."⁶¹

⁵⁷ See Henri Bresc, *Un monde Méditerranéen. Économie et société en Sicilie (1330-1450)*, Tome I, Accademia delle Scienze e Arti di Palermo, Palermo, 1986, p. 443.

⁵⁸ "familles entières jetés sur le marché, comme ces 3 albanais, le père âgé de 30 ans, la mère de 20 e le fils de 5, vendus solidairement pour 10 onces en 1328": *Ibid*, p. 444-445.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, p. 447 and p. 459.

⁶⁰ The traffic of the Albanian slaves was not a phenomenon limited only in Sicily. Except those that are time after time mentioned, a special interest present Genoa's archive data. In Lanterna city the Albanian slaves put in action a strategy to raise their social level, strategy that deserves to be studied for better discover the "myth" of Scanderbeg's image: see Laura Balleto, "Schiavi albanesi a Genova nel XV secolo" in *The Medieval Albanians*, National Hellenic Research Foundation, Institute for Byzantine Studies, International Symposium 5, Athens, 1998, p. 325-348.

⁶¹ Alain Ducellier, "Le raisons d'un départ: un monde désorienté" in *Les chemins de l'exile*, quoted, p. 87. Alain Ducellier, *La Façade maritime de l'Albanie au moyen âge. Durazzo et Valona du XI^e au XV^e siècle*, Institute for Balkan Studies, 177, Thessaloniki, 1982, p. 292 and p. 525. See Alain Ducellier, "Les Albanais en Italie centrale à la fin du Moyen Age: de l'émigration à l'intégration", in *L'Ethnographie* (1989), N°106, p. 75-85. Alain Ducellier, "L'insertion professionnelle et civique des immigrés dans les villes d'Italie au Moyen Âge:

The lack of archival records does not allow us to precisely construct the social character of this migration, but the few data we have help us to prove the existence of a third road of migration towards the South of Italy before the death of Scanderbeg.

9.— The data collected by Henri Besc from the notary acts found at the State Archive in Palermo are of great importance because they report the other face of the Albanian emigrants: that of free men who landed in Sicily to seek their destiny. Between 1396 and 1429 “a dozen of families”, mainly from Durrës, or as Henri Besc says, from the areas around Durrës, were settled in the suburbs of Palermo, especially in “Albergheria” agriculture neighborhood, where the notary Antonino Bruno who registered the respective acts worked.⁶² All these were declared Catholics: indeed they frequented San Nicola *de Novo o dei Latini* church. It was about small family nucleus who left their homeland for economic reasons, but there were also “slaves captured from unscrupulous captains”⁶³ and “soldiers” who had survived the bloody battles ended in with the siege of Durrës and Shkodra in 1386, of Kruja on 1415 and of Vlora on 1417 by the Ottomans.⁶⁴ Differently from their fellow countrymen who arrived in the island as slaves, those who went there as free men, according to Besc, were welcomed and were quickly integrated into the Sicilian society. This is proved by the mixed marriages, while the fact that they were living in the city proves their welcoming as “citizens”. Thanks to this citizen status (or perhaps by *habitatores*), similar with that granted to their fellow countrymen in

l'exemple des Albanais” in Denis Menjot - Jean-Luc Pinol (a cura di), *Les immigrants et la ville. Insertion, intégration, discrimination (XIIe-XXe siècle)*, Paris [u.a.], 1996, p. 63-81. Alain Ducellier, “Albanais dans les Balkans et en Italie à la fin du Moyen Âge: courants migratoires et connivences socio-culturelles” (1994) in “Simonetta Cavaciocchi (a cura di), *Le migrazioni in Europa secc. XIII - XVIII*. Atti della “venticinquesima settimana di studi” 3 - 8 maggio 1993, Pubblicazioni. Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica F. Datini, Prato 2 / 25, Firenze, 1994, p. 233-269. Alain Ducellier, “Marché du travail, esclavage et travailleurs immigrés dans le nord-est de l'Italie (fin du XIVe siècle - milieu du XVe siècle)” in Michel Balard (a cura di), *Etat et colonisation au Moyen Âge et à la Renaissance*. Actes du colloque international, Reims, 2-4 avril 1987, Lyon 1989, p. 217-249. Ducellier Alain, “Spostamenti individuali e di massa dall'Europa orientale verso l'Italia alla fine del Medioevo: il caso dei popoli balcanici” in *Spazi, tempi, misure e percorsi nell'Europa del Basso Medioevo*, Atti dei convegni del Centro Italiano di Studi sul Basso Medioevo - Accademia Tudertina, XXXII, CISAM Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, (Todi, 8-11 ottobre 1995), Spoleto, 1996, p. 371-400.

⁶² Henri Besc, “Pour une histoire”, quoted, p. 529-532.

⁶³ “esclaves razzies par des capitaines peu scrupuleux”, *ibid*, p. 532.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, p. 532.

Venice, they could preserve “as strong feeling of origin and of distinguished characteristics”, what comes clearly out from the archival records that do not confuse them “neither with the Greeks, nor with with the Slav neighbors.”⁶⁵

The continuity of the Albanian migration towards the South of Italy is recorded until the first half of the XV century. From the first half of the XV century onwards, we do not have data anymore. This is not because the Albanians’ presence has not been archived, but because no exhaustive research have been made as for the central and northern regions. Regarding the economic and military framework in the Balkan, it's difficult to think that the migratory flux between the XIII and XIV century was suddenly interrupted, exactly at the time when the economic crises had deepen in Albania and the danger of the Ottoman invasion was concrete more than ever. From this point-of-view the lack of the sources might be justified by the nature of the migrants who perhaps didn't have the opportunity to settle in the developed cities or rural centers. What happened with the real Diaspora of the second half of the XV and XVIII century, a period when the Albanian communities were settled in the six regions of Southern Italy shaping for five centuries a long and complicated process of identity formation has become a source of surprise and admiration.

10.– As it is already known, the first waves of the massive migration towards the Southern Italy occurred during and after the age dominated by Scanderbeg (1405-1468), the Albanian leader who opposed the Ottoman invasion with weapons for a quarter of century. The modalities of this massive migration of which the Albanian refugees who from the end of the XV to second half of the XVI century found shelter in the Italian shores were the protagonists— can be merely reconstructed based on the knowledge we currently have. The documentation that we have is extremely incomplete, and unfortunately the studies from the Arbëresh do not represent a sensitive contribution.

There is no doubt that as the Ottoman hordes broke through in Albania and generally in the Balkans, a part of the inhabitants of this side of Adriatic would rather migrate than subjugating themselves to the invaders.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, p. 532.

The massive exodus of Albanians during the Scanderbeg age marks the establishment or better the re-establishment of a considerable number of settlements in some Italian regions, especially in Calabria and in Sicily—all dated in the last quarter of the XV century. This big migration wave has been exaggeratedly and *distortedly* described by the Albanian historiography of the XVIII-XIX century to make it part of an ideological and mythical vision by calling it “Diaspora” or voluntary “migration” in the name of religion and freedom, a temporary escape until right time comes to retake the weapons and to set the land of their ancestors free. Indeed, as we will see below, the protagonists of this epochal migration belonged to the lower social class. From one hand, they truly forced to leave because of the war. On the other hand, they had nothing to lose because of their miserable living conditions. It could not be excluded that they might have been attracted by *felix Italia*, an attractable myth that for centuries had attracted their compatriots and will continue to attract other migrants even in the following decades. This could be confirmed by the fact that after the great exodus, the migratory flux never stopped completely, but fluctuated. Thus, from the beginning of the XVI century and until the first half of the XVIII century,⁶⁶ new migratory groups would abandon the Adriatic shores to find shelter in Italy.

The regions of Albanian Diaspora have never changed, but there is no doubt that the migrants were also spread in areas that are not included among those that are traditionally recognized. It is clear that the arrival in the south of Italy was an urgent necessity caused by the war in the Balkans rather than a conscious choice. If we keep in mind some time limits; the *period after* the troops of the sultan Mehmet II (1466) defeated Albanian in Greece, or the year of the death of Scanderbeg's (1468), and the *period before* the fall of Shkodra in the hands of the Turks (1479), the phase of the most intensive migratory flux could be dated in this decade. This period marks oldest establishment of some Arbëresh settlements (as e.g. Shën Mitër Korona in Calabria on 1471 and Palazzo Adriano in Sicily on 1482, as reported

⁶⁶ The foundation of two villages Pianiano, in the vicinity of Rome, and Villa Badessa in Abruzzo belong to the XVIII century and are considered as the last wave of the Arbëresh migration in Italy: see Italo Sarro, *L'insediamento albanese di Pianiano* (Nuova edizione), Graficreo, Viterbo, 2013.

in the official acts. Some Arbëresh scholars of the XVIII century confirm that the dates of official acts on founding of settlements do not correspond with the beginnings of exodus. However, these dates are useful, because they help us to define a useful relative chronology.

11.– For sure the road that Arbëresh took must have been the maritime road, the same road taken by their compatriots which lead them to Ragusa, Venice and in Marche. The latter embarked in merchant ships sailing from the Albanian shores to the big harbors from where the spread in the Italian cities. The Arbëresh who settled in Southern Italy during the end of the XV century, took another path. Some of them might have embarked the merchant ships to sail across the Otranto channel, towards the Salento shores. The others might have sailed across that channel with their boats, landing wherever the sea took them giving life to the scenes described by the Pope Paul II in a letter sent to the Duke of Burgundy, Philippe:

“Some of the Albanians were run through with the sword, the others had enslaved. The cities that for us have faced the Turkish fury are still in their hands. The people living that side of the Adriatic are petrified. You can see only fear, death and slavery everywhere. It’s miserable to listen to this sobbing. It makes you cry when seeing the poor families landing from the fugitives ships anchored in the Italian harbors sitting on the shingles, raising the hands to the sky and praying in an incomprehensible language.”⁶⁷

⁶⁷ “Audivit omnis populus Pastoris vocem, sed non exaudivit. Ecce nunc, fili charissime, *Schandarbeus fortis Christi athleta*, qui magnæ parti Albanix imperitans, annos supra xx pro fide nostra pugnavit, magnis Turcorum oppressus copiis superatus est prælio, Dominatu omni exutus, et ad litora nostra inermis, nudusque est impulsus. Albanenses vero ipsi, quos ille in prælio commilitones habere solitus est, partim cæsi gladio sunt, partim in miseram servitutem abducti. Oppida, quæ antehac pro nobis Turcorum iustinuerunt impetus, inditionem eorum venerunt. Vicinæ gentes, quæ Adriaticum mare attingunt, propinquo metu exterritæ tremunt. Ubique pavor, ubique luctus, ubique mors, et captivitas ante oculos sunt. Audire miserum est, quanta omnium rerum sit conturbatio, lachrymabile inspicere navigia fugientium, ad Italos portus appelli familias quoque egentes, et nudas, pulsas sedibus suis, passim sedere per littora, manusque in cælum tendentes, lamentationibus cuncta implere. Circundant eos mala, quorum non est numerus. Ipse vero Turcorum Dux victor, fuperbus, immanis, maioribus, quam antea munitus copiis, ad vendicanda proxima queque præcipitat”: Jacopo *Ammannati* Papiensis, *Epistolæ & Commendatarii*, apud Alexandrum Minutianum, Impressum Mediolani, 1506 die XXVIII Martii, *Milano 1506, “Duci Pro Pontefice Paulo”, p. 102v. See Pii Secundi Pontificis Max., Commentarii Rerum Memorabilium quæ Temporibus suis contigerunt [...]*, quibus hac editione accedunt Jacobi Piccolomini Cardinalis Papiensis [...], Prostat Francofurti Officina Avbriana, 1614, p. 588-590. Pius II letter has been partially quoted by Pietro Pompilio Rodotà,

The chaotic development of the migratory flux towards the South could be explained by the lack of documentation – either archival or narrative- which in the case of migration towards the north is not missing. The protagonists of this exodus have not been individuals or particular families. This is proved by the later events, especially on the data on the social organization of the new settlements of the Arbëresh. Entire communities were displaced, which differently from the later Arbëresh historiography mystifications speaking on fairytale fortunes, had neither livelihood means nor economic support. Their social composition proves that they belonged to the low social class. They were mostly farmers and shepherds, people coming from a nomadic situation which around the end of the XV was changed into an endemic one, similar to what urged Albanians to be continuously displaced towards Greece. Also for them, the war, the Ottoman conquest and Scanderbeg's death paved the way to a migratory process, previously existing within the Albanian feudal society which made the migration only possible choice.

12.– This short description which is legitimized by the data followed the exodus, is not proved by the time documents. This is why it is difficult to define the origins of the migrants, their social status and the factors that according the occasion, helped or obstructed their integration to the Italian social and economic activities and later made possible the foundation of new settlements that could be found across the Southern Italy. Onomastics, toponomastic and dialectological data, together with the anthropological and religious ones inform about origins of the Arbëresh laying in the south areas of today Albania, but it should not be forgotten, as Zef Valentini emphasizes,⁶⁸ that groups of migrants coming from the north of the Balkans exited among the

Dell'origine, progresso e stato presente del Rito greco in Italia, vol. III, Roma, MDCCLXIII, 1986, p. 30, note, (a) (the translation in Italian by Giuseppe Faraco, "Gli Albanesi d'Italia", in Ulderico Bernardi (a cura di), *Le mille culture. Comunità locali e partecipazione politica*, Coines Edizioni, Roma, 1976, p. 196).

⁶⁸ See Giuseppe Valentini, "Sviluppi Onomastici-Toponomastici Tribali delle Comunità Albanesi in Sicilia", Estratto del *Bollettino del Centro di Studi Filologici e linguistici Siciliani*, vol. 11, Palermo, 1955 reprinted in *Albanesi in Sicilia*, a cura di Matteo Mandalà, Albanica 16, Mirror, Palermo, 2004, p. 39-56.

Arbëresh, provable by some surnames (as e.g. Riolo and Clementi), and some linguistic characteristics, typical of Gheg Albanian.⁶⁹

No matter how much chaotic the migrations phases and the ways the Albanians settled in Italy during the second half of the XV century might have been, their integration in the southern provinces might be first explained by the economic and social difficulties that the latter faced during that period. Captured from a general crises (strong demographic contraction, decrease of the agricultural output, abandonment of arable land and medieval rural centers, volatile taxes, deficiencies in planning the agricultural management), many Italian southern regions entered a deep restructuring process of the economic and production activity, marking long epoch of internal colonization and repopulation process in the rural areas during the XV-XVII centuries which entirely changed the society and economy of Southern Italy.⁷⁰ The fact that the groups of the Albanian migrants made their contribution to this sensitive colonization process, confirms the deep crisis that characterized the society and the economy of southern Italy from the middle of XIV century to the end of the XV century, as well as the efforts to repopulate the abandoned rural centers and to change them in producing ones.

13.– In Sicily⁷¹ it is estimated that nearly a dozen of new settlements established before 1550, some of which were Albanian colonies,⁷² and

⁶⁹ On the case of the anthroponymy and its use for its historiographic reconstruction we would stop in the following paragraphs. As to linguistic convergences among some Arbëresh elements and the Gheg spoken dialects, we are content to mark that those confirm the antiquity of the Albanian migratory processes within the Balkans as the formation of the dialectal realms that followed the dissolution of the Albanian speaking unit that once was far more homogenous than this we know today. Thus, these convergences, instead to be considered as "anomaly", may help us to differently reconcept the diachronic approach towards the birth and diffusion of both macro-realms Gheg and Tosk issues. On this question see Eqrem Çabej, "Ngulimet shqiptare në Itali dhe gjuha e tyre" in *Në botën e arbëreshëve të Italisë*, third publishing completed under the attention of Matteo Mandalà, Excipere 30, Botime Çabej, Tiranë, 2017, p. 39.

⁷⁰ Christiane Klapisch-Zuber et John Day, "Villages désertés en Italie. Esquisse", in *Villages désertés et histoire économique XI-XVIII siècles*, S.E.V.F.E.N., Paris, 1965, p. 454.

⁷¹ On the colonisations in Sicily and their demographic, economic and social effects, see Giuseppe Salvioli, "Le colonizzazioni in Sicilia nei secoli XVI e XVII", in *Vierteljahrsschrift für sozial und wirtschafsgeschichte*, n. 1, 1903, p. 70-78; Carlo A. Garufi, *Patti agrari e comuni feudali di nuova fondazione in Sicilia. Dallo scorcio del secolo XI agli albori del Settecento*, estratto da *Archivio Storico Siciliano*, serie III, vol. II, Palermo, 1947, p. 7; Domenico Ligresti, "Sul tema delle colonizzazioni in Sicilia nell'età moderna. Una perizia del

from the thirty six new registered centers, “four communities existed from the end of the XV century”. They were Palazzo Adriano, Piana degli Albanesi, Mezzoiuso, Biancavilla⁷³. Acceptable, it is therefore the opinion of Ferdinando Maurici according to whom “fu, quello delle colonie albanesi, il primo episodio di quella ricolonizzazione dei feudi destinata a cambiare il volto della Sicilia fra XV e XVIII secolo”⁷⁴.

“The same situation was also found in Calabria which “weakened by the wars between Aragon and Anjou houses, during the last quarter of the XV century [...] was showing clear signs of civil and economic decadence.”⁷⁵ A positive turn was marked only after the integration into the social and economic Calabrian structure of big labor forces from Albania.⁷⁶ A special importance in this process had also the Arbëresh settlements in Puglia that were excluded from “the fiscal obligation for

Seicento sulla costruzione di Leonforte”, in *Archivio storico per la Sicilia Orientale*, LXX, fasc. II-III, Palermo, 1971; Domenico Ligresti, “Le città nuove di Sicilia”, in *Studi Storici*, Fondazione Istituto Gramsci, anno 21, n. 2, 1980, p. 409-414; Domenico Ligresti, “Sviluppo demografico di un paese siciliano di nuova fondazione: Leonforte (1612-1700)”, in *Incontri meridionali*, n. 2-3, 1980; Marcello Renda, “I nuovi insediamenti nel '600 siciliano. Genesi e sviluppo di un Comune (cattolica Eraclea)”, in *Archivio storico per la Sicilia Orientale*, Palermo, 1976; Maria Giuffrè (a cura di), *Città nuove di Sicilia. XV-XIX secolo. 1. Problemi, metodologia, prospettiva della ricerca storica. La Sicilia Occidentale*, Vittorietti editore, Palermo, 1979. Maria Giuffrè (a cura di), *Città nuove di Sicilia XV-XIX secolo. 2. Per una storia dell'architettura e degli insediamenti urbani nell'area occidentale*, Vittorietti editore, Palermo, 1981. Maurizio Vesco, “Fondare una città nella Sicilia di età moderna: dinamiche territoriali e tecniche operative” in *Mediterranea - ricerche storiche*, Anno X – Agosto, nr. 28, 2013, p. 275-294.

⁷² Maurice Aymard - Henri Bresc, “Problemi di storia dell'insediamento nella Sicilia medievale e moderna (1100-1800)”, in *Quaderni storici*, n. 24, 1973, p. 967.

⁷³ Domenico Ligresti, “I rapporti tra feudatari e comunità nella Sicilia moderna: Mezzoiuso”, in *V Centenario della Stipula dei Capitoli (3 dicembre 1501- 3 dicembre 2001)*, Atti del Convegno, a cura di Pietro Di Marco, Comune di Mezzoiuso, Mezzoiuso, 2002, p. 35.

⁷⁴ Ferdinando Maurici, *L'insediamento medievale nel territorio della Provincia di Palermo: inventario preliminare degli abitati attestati dalle fonti d'archivio (secoli XI-XVI)*, Regione Siciliana - Assessorato beni culturali e ambientali e della pubblica istruzione, Palermo, 1998, p. 53. This concept is still further emphasized from Maurici: “Dopo alcuni tentativi di ripopolamento, destinati con qualche eccezione al fallimento, soltanto alla fine del Quattrocento l'arrivo di profughi albanesi permetterà l'impianto delle prime terre nuove”: *ibid*, p. 56.

⁷⁵ Pietro De Leo, “Condizioni economico-sociali degli albanesi in Calabria tra XV e XVI secolo”, in *Miscellanea di studi storici*, Università degli Studi della Calabria, Brenner, Cosenza, 1981, p. 124.

⁷⁶ See the paradigmatic study of Italo Sarro, “Migrazioni albanesi”, in *Hylli i Dritës. E përkohshme kulturele-letrare*, vjetri 25, nr. 1-2, Shkodër, 2015, p. 7-42, especially p. 20-33.

ten years by Neapolitan authorities", ⁷⁷ which in the areas around Taranto formed the so-called *Albania Tarantina* (or *Salentina*), a kind of homogenous territorial entity distinguished by language, customs and religious cult, ⁷⁸ as those that were established elsewhere in Italy. There are many traces that Albanians left in the parish registers of Galatina during the XVI century that were studied and published by Vincenzo Liguori, and today allow us to speak about an *Albania Salentina*. Also, of a great importance was also the concentration of new rural centers in the suburbs of Basilicata, who from the mids of the XV century suffered a demographic shrink. The registration Albanian families in 17 centers in Vulture, and as much as in Potenza's region, and 23 in Senise's territory from 1509 to 1510. ⁷⁹ Albanians were displaced also in the areas between the southern part of Molise and northern Capitanata that were affected from the massive abandonment of the agricultural lands because of the continuous earthquakes and plague epidemics: as is evidenced by padre Tria, ⁸⁰ who in his monumental work describes the repopulation of Larino's dioceses, and after mentioning the Campomarino, Portocannone, Chieuti, Santa Croce, Ururi, Sant'Elena, Colle di Lauro villages, does not speaks for

⁷⁷ "esenzione fiscale della durata decennale accordata dalle autorità napoletane": Emidio Tomai-Pitınca, "Note su una comunità greco albanese di Taranto del XV secolo" in *Bollettino della Badia Greca di Grottaferrata*, Ser. NS. vol. 33 (1979), Roma, 1979 p. 57-74; Emidio Tomai-Pitınca, "Comunità albanesi nel Tarentino sec. XVI (Premessa per un discorso di natura ecclesiale)", in *Bollettino della Badia Greca di Grottaferrata*, Ser. NS, vol. 39 (1985), Roma, 1985 p. 217-232.

⁷⁸ See Emidio Tomai-Pitınca, *Istituzioni ecclesiastiche dell'Albania Tarantina*, Università degli Studi di Lecce, *Saggi e ricerche* 16, Congedo editore, Galatina, 1984, p. 12-13.

⁷⁹ For a general framework see Antonella Pellettieri, "Gli albanesi e la regione del Vulture (I rapporti tra Albania e Meridione d'Italia; Gli insediamenti albanesi in Basilicata. Il caso della regione del Vulture)" in Filena Patroni Griffi, Antonella Pellettieri, Valeria Verrastro, *Minoranze etniche nel Melfese: ebrei, greci, albanesi tra medioevo ed età moderna*, Franco Angeli, 2002. Francesco Luigi Pietrafesa, *Rionero: note storiche e documenti*, prefazione del prof. Antonio Cestaro Laurenziana, Napoli, 1982. Francesco Luigi Pietrafesa, *Per la storia di Ripacandida e del suo Casale Ginestra nel secolo XVII: i feudatari, gli apprezzati*, Laurenziana, Napoli, 1988.

⁸⁰ See Giovanni Andrea Tria, *Memorie storiche civili ed ecclesiastiche della città e diocesi di Larino, metropoli degli antichi Frentani*, per Gio: Zempel presso Monte Giordano, in Roma, MDCCCLXIV (citato secondo l'edizione Cosmo Iannone Editore, Isernia, 1989), p. 411 *et passim*.

other villages abandoned long time ago that meanwhile were repopulated by new colons coming from Albania.⁸¹

14.– Another accepted data from the today historiography relates to the strong tendency of the Albanian colons of Calabria and Sicily to be often displaced, who like their countrymen settled in other Southern areas, were moving from a village to another giving life to the internal migratory processes – both organized and sporadic – that today it's not easy to be followed and precisely reconstructed. This characteristic, that from one hand has been totally underestimated and ignored and from the other hand has been distorted and mystified from the “traditional” Arbëresh historiography, not only characterized the history of the new settlements at the end of the XV in Italy, but also proved a different trend of the events who preceded the genuine urban settlements.

In this point Daniele Gambarara has no doubts:

“La costituzione di comunità albanesi in senso proprio non è avvenuta d'un colpo, con uno spostamento netto e definitivo, alle date tradizionali delle immigrazioni quattro-cinquecentesche, ma è il risultato di un lungo e tormentato processo, che comprende passaggi senza stanziamento attraverso centri diversi, rapido insorgere e rapido deperire di agglomerati provvisori, l'assorbimento in comunità italiane di stanziamenti albanesi minori, fusione sul suolo italiano tra albanesi di diversa provenienza e tra albanesi e italiani, spostamenti ancora da un centro albanese a un altro. Solo tra la fine del '500 e gli inizi del '600

⁸¹ A great historic value have the studies of the late Cesare Colafemmina: see Cesare Colafemmina, “Slavi e albanesi a Lucera nei secoli XV-XVI” in *Miscellanea di Storia Lucerina*, vol. I, Atti del I e II Convegno di studi storici, Centro regionale servizi culturali educativi, Lucera, 1987. Cesare Colafemmina, “Albanesi e slavi a San Severo nei secoli XV-XVI” in *Atti del 9° Convegno nazionale sulla Preistoria, Protostoria, Storia della Daunia*, San Severo 18-20 dicembre 1987, San Severo, 1988. Cesare Colafemmina, “Albanesi a San Giovanni Rotondo nel XV secolo” in *Atti del 13° Convegno nazionale sulla Preistoria, Protostoria, Storia della Daunia*, San Severo 22-24 novembre 1991, I, Archeoclub d'Italia, Sede di San Severo, Foggia, 1993. Cesare Colafemmina, “Albanesi e Slavi in Capitanata nei secoli XV-XVI” in *Nicolaus. Studi storici*. Rivista del Centro Studi Nicolaiani della Comunità dei Padri Domenicani della Pontificia Basilica di S. Nicola, anno V, fasc. 1, Bari, 1996. Cesare Colafemmina, “Nuovi documenti sugli albanesi e gli slavi in Capitanata nei secoli XV e XVI” in *Atti del 14° Convegno nazionale sulla Preistoria, Protostoria, Storia della Daunia*, San Severo 27-28 novembre 1993, Archeoclub d'Italia, Sede di San Severo, Foggia, 1996. Cesare Colafemmina, “Albanesi a San Giovanni Rotondo nei secoli XV e XVI” in *Slavi e albanesi in Puglia nel XV e XVI secolo*, prefazione di Pasquale Cordasco, Messaggi edizioni, Cassano delle Murge, 2013.

cominciamo ad avere un certo numero di centri che costituiscono veramente ‘comunità’ albanesi, col loro rito, le loro feste, i loro costumi, la loro lingua, e la situazione comunque resta fluida ancora a lungo”.⁸²

This approach, sustained today by homogenous archival data in the territorial framework and sustainable in *diachronic ones*, offers another point-of-view to the historic interpretation of the special phenomenon of the Albanian and generally Balkan migration, but also explains the dark points of the proposed reconstruction from the Arbëresh historiography, the main and the obsessive responsible of “the noble origin”. It's not the case to come back on the issue of the so-called “*koronej*” that has been elsewhere treated.⁸³ Here we are content to mention the objective role developed by the mercenaries coming from the Albanian lands during the integration process of the Arbëresh emigrants in the feudal system, a role that does not coincides with the created image by the Arbëresh historiography which tried to “invent” an aristocratic caste that today at the best of the cases makes you smile, while in the worst of the cases hides the conscientious aim to manipulate the historic truth. The works of the Spanish scholar José M. Floristán⁸⁴ have shed light on this page of history of the Albanian migration in Italy, by giving the key to better understand this phenomenon. Between the end of the XV century and the first half of the XVI century the migratory movements were encouraged by the local authorities who aimed to stop the depopulation of some rural areas. The adding of the work hands was positively seen by the authorities, although often raised serious conflicts with the local population⁸⁵ and was characterized from the endemic inclination of the

⁸² Daniele Gambarara, “Parlare albanese nell’Italia unita” in *I dialetti italo-albanesi. Studi linguistici e storico-culturali sulle comunità arbëreshe*, (a cura di Francesco Altissimi e Leonardo M. Savoia, *Presentazione di Tullio De Mauro*), Bulzoni editore, Roma, 1994, p. 35.

⁸³ See Matteo Mandalà, “Mundus vult decipi”: *mitet e historiografisë arbëreshe*, op. cit., p. 189-283; Italo Sarro, *Le migrazioni albanesi in Italia (secc. XV-XVIII): fonti e analisi*, Besa editrice, Lecce, 2019 (off-print).

⁸⁴ José M. Floristán, “Sociedad, economía y religión en las comunidades griega y albanesa de Nápoles y Sicilia”, in *Erytheia. Revista de Estudios Bizantinos y Neogriegos* 37, 2016, p. 132-133.

⁸⁵ See further Matteo Di Lena, “Incontri e Scontri tra Arbreshe e Italiani nel Molise” in Antonino Guzzetta (a cura di), *Etnia albanese e minoranze linguistiche in Italia*, Atti dei IX Congresso Internazionale di Studi Albanesi - Palermo, 25-28 Novembre 1981, Istituto di Lingua e Letteratura Albanese - Università di Palermo, Palermo, 1982, p. 107-121.

Balkan populations to not be established in a permanent settlement. In this framework, make also part the measures taken by Ferdinand II when on 1507 ratified the permission to Lazzaro Matthes, captain of a mercenary stratiots troops at the service of the Spain crown, “permission that was granted by Berlingerio Carafa from the San Chirico Nuovo house”. Matthes distributed to the sons his feudal possessions, meanwhile for himself took other rewards by the king for the job done in organizing the migratory flux in the regions of Puglia and Basilicata. He has had as duty to militarily control the emigrants that should stayed within the city walls where they were assigned and to not continuously displaced.

Matthes' examples was not the only, because indeed, at that time were many mercenary chiefs which by the end of their military career decided to invest the revenues by buying concessions for building new settlements and then using them for agricultural activities. Floristán in the furrow of the published documents by Martínez Ferrando⁸⁶, mentioned the brothers Alfonso and Ferrando Castriota-Vranai, Teodoro Bischietto, Girolamo de Francisco, Salvador Rotta, Marco Antonio de Sanseverino, Giorgio Basta, Demetrio Capuzzimati, Dionisio Critopulo, Constantine Musaqis, Giorgio Sofiano and Miguel Ralis. To these we can add a predecessor, the Albanian captain Cesare Masi, on which we shall speak below, who by the end of the XV century had the merit to repopulate the village of Biancavilla in Sicili⁸⁷. Very meaningful is the case of the second repopulation, on September 1521, of the village Contessa Entellina in Sicily through by “recruiting” the Albanian colons from the island of Andros⁸⁸. It should not be

⁸⁶ See Martínez J. E. Ferrando, *Privilegios otorgados por el emperador Carlos V en el reino de Nápoles*, CSIC-Instituto Jerónimo de Zurita, Barcelona, 1943.

⁸⁷ Giovanni Sangiorgio Mazza, *Storia di Aderò*, dalla tipografia di La Magna, Catania, 1820, p. 21-22.

⁸⁸ “8 settembre, X ind. 1521 – Sagali Curbi senior, Antoninus Lopes, Dimitri Serveja, Petrus Lopis, Ioannes Curbi, Michael Musacchi, Nicolaus Gerginus, Teodorus Nicolosi, Ioannes Petta, Petrus Musacchi, Sagali Curbi junior, Georgius Lopis, Angelus Petta junior, Nicolaus Lala, Petrus Lopis minor, Georgius Lopis, Thomas Manali, Dimitri Curbi, Ioannes Custagliorsi, Greci (sic) venientes ab Insula Andriae, partim orientis, presentes coram nobis ... Antoninus et consortes, Greci orientales fugientes a dicta Insula, a manibus e servitute Mororum, quibus erant subditi, non volentes sufferre eorum dominium, navigaverunt Siciliam versus...; quod etiam praetendebant accedere ad habitandum casale Comitisse...»: Giuseppe Schirò, *Canti tradizionali ed altri saggi delle colonie albanesi di Sicilia*, Napoli, 1923 (r.a. Piana degli Albanesi – Palermo 1988), p. XIII.

forgotten either “the Albanian chieftain Gjon Gazuoli who brought in Puglia nearly 60 Slavic families which were established in the village Castelluccio degli Schiavi, in the region of Capitanata”⁸⁹. If we keep in mind the wide dimensions of this phenomenon, we might say that we have to do with a true profession purpose to attract new colons in the abandoned areas of southern Italy, what explains as has put in evidence Floristán, the fast growth of the comers from the Balkan in Naples' Kingdom and “el esfuerzo que las autoridades españolas hicieron para asentarla y un ascenso social rápido de algunas familias de emigrados, cuyos miembros recibieron nombramientos como capitanes de guerra, feudatarios, beneficiarios de rentas y exenciones, etc.”⁹⁰

A similar phenomenon was also verified in Istria during the XVII century. More or less big Albanians groups were encouraged to abandon the areas around the big coastal cities (Shkodra, Tivar, Ulqin, also Vlora) to be displaced North of Dalmatia thanks to some “intermediaries” that interfered near the Venetian authorities, which having interest to colonize the depopulated areas, so much economically weak. The figures of these intermediaries result to be very complex. In many cases, as for example in that of “Luca Duimo”, it was about people exercising regularly that profession and like this secured a stable revenues source. In other cases, was about for only the chieftains of the Albanian tribes, which physiognomy as we would see below, comes into life thanks to the historic reconstruction of the Arbëresh communities of the Southern Italy, characterizing for centuries their structure and social organization⁹¹. It's not the case that sometimes these chieftains took under control by themselves the new settlement by doing public services putting them at higher social levels as sometimes in the later chronicles are mentioned as noble entered in the rows of the military aristocracy.

⁸⁹ Momčilo Spremić, “Gli slavi tra le due sponde adriatiche” in *Annali dell'Istituto Italiano per gli studi storici*, n. 6, 1973, p. 100; see Cesare Colafemmina, “Nuovi documenti”, quoted, p. 78.

⁹⁰ José M. Floristán, “Sociedad, economía y religión” quoted, p. 134.

⁹¹ On the presence of Albanians in Istria and its social implications see Matteo Mandalà, “Gli Albanesi in Istria (sec. XV-XVIII)” in Ardian Ndreca, *Symbiosis on the shores of the Adriatic Sea: encounters and dialogues among cultures*, *Atti della Conferenza internazionale tenutasi a Zara il 3-5 ottobre 2019, Shëjzat-Le Pleiadi, nuova serie*, (off print).

The phenomenon of social uplift of these persons which between the humanism age to that of Italian renaissance attracted the attention of the Italian artists and intellectuals⁹² but didn't touch the famous Albanian mercenaries – the so-called “stratiots” – which more or less at the same period filled the lines of the Italian armies, from the North to the South of the Apennine peninsula. In a recent voluminous study, Francesco Storti has reconstructed the Albanian mercenaries' presence recruited in the light infantry of Naples during the XV century.⁹³ Much desired for their bravery, since 1461⁹⁴ when Scanderbeg landed in Italy to help Ferdinand I, “the Albanian soldiers filled the lines of the royal units as mercenary soldiers. From that moment, Southern Italy, thanks to geographic nearness and old relations between the two countries, became privileged arrival point of these Balkan warriors⁹⁵. During the following decades their number grew and from the end of the '70ies of the XV century “the Albanian mercenary soldiers number equalized the number of the local recruits which almost belong to the king's possessions”⁹⁶. In the furrow of Storti conclusions, is worthy to be

⁹² See the study of Giuseppe Vidossi, “La più antica testimonianza dell'albanese 'mjekrë' barba”, in *Saggi e scritti di folklore*, Prefazione a cura di Paolo Toschi, Torino, Bottega d'Erasmio, 1960, p. 270-281.

⁹³ See Francesco Storti, *Fanteria e cavalleria leggera nel Regno di Napoli (XV secolo)*, Archivio storico per le province napoletane, Società napoletana di Storia patria, Napoli, 2015; especially to be seen the paragraph “Regnicoli, albanesi, tedeschi e turchi”, p. 12-20.

⁹⁴ The Albanians who went in aid of Ferdinand I since in November of 1460: see Constantin Marinescu, “Alphonse V, roi d'Aragon et de Naples, et l'Albanie de Scanderbeg”, in *Mélanges de l'Ecole Roumaine en France*, I, Paris, 1923; Gennaro Maria Monti, “La spedizione in Puglia di Giorgio Castriota Scanderbeg e i feudi pugliesi suoi della vedova e del figlio”, in *Iapigia, organo della real deputazione di storia patria per le Puglie*, nuova serie, anno X, 1939, fasc. 3, p. 130; Francisc Pall, “I rapporti italo-albanesi intorno alla metà del secolo XV. (Documenti inediti con introduzione e note storico-critiche)” in *Archivio Storico per le Province Napoletane*, III s., 4, vol. LXXXIII, 1965, p. 148-150; Is worthy to bring here from Storti the description that the ambassador A. da Trezzo and the military leader Roberto Sanseverino to the Stratiots, Albanian knights who arrived in Naples on 1460 to help Ferdinand I: “Essi hanno li loro cavalli che sono tutti grandi corraitori, et tali che con quella facilità vano ad corere longe da casa XXX et XL miglia, che li soldati italiani andassero X o XII”: Francesco Storti, *Fanteria e cavalleria leggera*, quoted, p. 22-23. Scanderbeg himself, as its known, arrived in August 1461: see Giovanni Gioviano Pontano, *De bello Neapolitano et De sermone*, a cura di Pietro Summonte, Neapoli ex officina Sigismundi Mayr artificis diligentissimi, mense Maio M.D.VIII.

⁹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 15.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 16.

mentioned the fact that these Albanians were assigned in sensitive areas from the "military" point-of-view, therefore in the same areas where were raised urban centers on which were established - more or less temporary inhabitants – the genuine economic emigrants⁹⁷, viz the greatest mass of the labor force, employed as farmers, shepherds and craftsmen. Nevertheless, both the first and the second would occur the same destiny, therefore to be fully assimilated (Storti speaks about "integration")⁹⁸, it should be distinguished not only in the methodological plane by the other part of settlements raised in the South of Italy, where they founded stable communities, homogenous from the cultural and historical point-of-view and the most durable. This especially serves if we keep in mind that on the same assimilation occurred the stratiots and the so-called *cappelletti* who participated in

⁹⁷ Some payment documents of 1468 speak about established troops in "contado di Mareri" in Abruzzo, where lived Albanian emigrants (see Lorenzo Giustiniani, *Dizionario geografico-ragionato del Regno di Napoli*, Tomo V, Napoli, 1802, p. 362-363). The stratiots, that often for military reasons were dispersed in different areas (Barletta, Matera, Atella, Melfi, Spinazzola, Molfetta, Brindisi, Taranto, Lecce, and in other Otranto's cities), were melt with the local forces. According to Storti wasn't about only tactical-organic assimilation: "I cavalleggeri balcanici di presidio a Rutigliano vengono definiti infatti "albanesi Stradioti de monte Santangelo" e il loro capo, Michele Albanese, porta il titolo, tutto italiano, di "messer"! Questi combattenti dovevano dunque essersi stabiliti anch'essi nel Regno (assieme ai fanti connazionali trasferitivisi, come si è visto, a partire dalla fine degli anni '60), al seguito di Giovanni, figlio dello Scanderbeg, e pertanto formavano ormai una milizia locale. Regnicoli perciò, o quanto meno residenti o naturalizzati tali, dovevano essere i cavalleggeri spediti in Terra d'Otranto per far fronte all'improvviso sbarco dei veneziani a Gallipoli, avvenuto il 17 maggio del 1484, dal momento che risultavano operativi dopo appena dieci giorni dall'attacco portato alla città pugliese: e doveva trattarsi, peraltro, di truppe di esperienza, se un distaccamento di questi soldati (200 cavalleggeri), alla guida di Marino Brancaccio, nobile napoletano e veterano della cavalleria demaniale, in giugno infliggeva a Ugento una dura sconfitta alle milizie della Serenissima»: Francesco Storti, *Fanteria e cavalleria leggera*, quoted, p. 32.

⁹⁸ Here what Storti writes: "Tra l'ottavo e il nono decennio del secolo, d'altronde, per la maggior parte dei combattenti albanesi militanti nel Regno l'integrazione in esso è ormai un fatto compiuto e sarebbe un errore, probabilmente, scorrendo i documenti superstiti, separare l'elemento balcanico da quello locale per valutare il peso delle due componenti etniche. Infatti, per quanto rappresentino forse la prima generazione trapiantata in Italia (quella che darà vita, in ogni caso, a decine di insediamenti in tutto il Mezzogiorno), come giudicare stranieri i "Giorgio de la Porcina (Apricena) albanese; Giorgio de Nocera (Lucera) albanese, Marino de Lanciano albanese" che figurano, al fianco dei "Tomase da Napoli, Cola Vecchio de Napoli, Giacomo d'Aversa, Rizo da Capua" (e degli stessi "Pietro albanese di Scutari; Giorgio di Antibari albanese"), nei registri di pagamento delle truppe lasciate a presidio delle terre occupate al tempo della guerra di Toscana?": *ibidem*.

Venice's wars against the Ottomans⁹⁹ in Friuli, to be more precise in Gorizia's surroundings.¹⁰⁰ Indeed, will not remain a single onomastics trace from other Albanian soldiers and emigrants nor in the papers of mercenary payments, either in the different notary contracts, differently from the major part and less famous of the emigrants which succeed to establish a community.

The longs and hard process of urbanization that during the XV-XVIII centuries would include different regions of southern Italy where the Arbëresh were settled, also presents these features that should be kept in mind. In any case it should be stressed that in this phenomenon development also influenced other factors. To rebuild the inner migratory dynamics and especially for not falling in those mistakes of anthropologic or historic-social mistakes that fill the pages of the Arbëresh history, it should be rightly incorporated the stressed inclination to continuously displace that characterized the Balkan emigrants, especially the Albanians and the Slavs, starting from the admission of the true causes who generated and nourished it: from one side the latent culture nomadic in its essence and the archaic social organization of Albanians that, as we will see in the following lines,

⁹⁹ Michael E. Mallett, *L'organizzazione militare di Venezia nel '400*, Jouvence, Roma, 1989, p. 63-65 and p. 107, note. 9; Eugenio Barbarich, "Gli stradiotti nell'arte militare veneziana", in *Rivista di Cavalleria*", vol. XII, 1904, p. 52 and ongoing.

¹⁰⁰ The Turkish plundering incursions in Friuli forced Venice to sent military troops far from the possessions she had in the Balkans, what brought as consequence the weakening of her strongholds in the Albanian shores, especially of Shkodra, where meantime has become object of the Ottoman expansionist goals. About the fightings in Friuli see Elisabetta Scarton, "Sulle tracce dei Turchi in Friuli. Frammenti di un'inquisitio per sciaccallaggio nell'estate del 1478", in *"Ingenita curiositas". Studi sull'Italia medievale per Giovanni Vitolo*, a cura di B. Figliuolo, R. Di Meglio, A. Ambrosio, Laveglia, Salerno 2018, tomo I, p. 179-191 (see p. 188). It should be kept in mind that the involvement of the Albanian troops – the so-called *cappelletti* – will continue until the first half of the XVII century with their participation in the battles developed on 1622 in the shores of Isonzo between the cities of Gorizia, Lucinico, Gradisca, Bruma. See Faustino Moisesso, *Historia della ultima guerra nel Friuli di Faustino Moisesso con le figure del paese dove si ha guerreggiato et una tavola de nomi di alcune persone spetialmente in essa guerra intervenute et loro attioni, et avvenimenti*, libri due, vol. II, appresso Barezzo Barezzi, In Venetia, 1623, p. 47-48. See Giuseppe Trebbi, *Il Friuli dal 1420 al 1797. La storia politica e sociale*, Udine, Casamassima, 1998, p. 56 and 266. Giuseppe Trebbi, "Venezia, Gorizia e i Turchi. Un discorso inedito sulla difesa della Patria del Friuli (1473-1474)", in *Da Ottone III a Massimiliano I. Gorizia e i conti di Gorizia nel Medioevo*, a cura di Silvano Cavazza, Mariano del Friuli (Gorizia), Edizioni della Laguna, 2004, p. 375-396. See Liliana Ferrari - Donata Degrassi - Paolo Iancis (a cura di) *Storia di Lucinico*, Poligrafiche San Marco, Cormons, 2011, p. 176-177.

would cause continuous displacements before reaching the conclusive urbanization of the emigrants; from the other side, the hard financial conditions that the emigrants insisted to not accept, and finally, the distrust and the hostility that the local population manifested towards "the foreigners". In the following paragraph we shall describe as much as the archival records permit, the troublesome road that the Arbëresh followed, which after landing in the Adriatic shores, were spread in different regions where we still find traces of their passing, or in the most fortunate of cases, their settlement.

15.– Indeed the settlement of Arbëresh communities as we know them today didn't happened at once, with a sharp and conclusive displacement during the waves of XV-XVI centuries, but was an outcome of a long and troublesome process, that included often passages from one village to another, the occasional raise and fall of temporary agglomerates, the assimilation from the Italian local communities of the small Arbëresh settlements, the melting between the coming Albanians from different regions, as among Albanians and Italians, displacement of entire families from one Arbëresh village to another etc. Only in the turn of the XVI-XVII centuries we began to have some settlements that truly constitute Arbëresh communities, with rites, celebrations, customs, language, but anyhow the situation remained unstable for a long time.

In Calabria this inclination for mobility, that by all odds was owed to the efforts to avoid fiscal controls, is proved in some documents of the first half of the XIV century of "Regia Camera Sommara" where are mentioned *burned straw granaries and abandoned cabins* just before the royal officials would arrive to make the registration¹⁰¹. The internal mobility would continue for a long time, as is also attested in the work of Girolamo Marafioti, published in Naples on 1595:

"Non tengono case fabbricate, ma tugurij, e capanne di tavole. Sogliono tenere dentro i loro tugurij alcune profonde fosse, dentro le quali ascondono bovi, porci, vitelli, e ogni altra cosa. Eglino mai abitano in paese piano, ma solo dentro le montagne, e boschi, e nò fabbricano case, acciò nò stiano soggetti a Baroni, Duchi, Principi, o altri Signori. E se per sorte nel territorio dove abitano il Signore volesse

¹⁰¹ See Domenico Cassiano, *Strigàri. Genesi e sviluppo di una comunità calabro arbreshe*, Marco editore, Cosenza, 2004, p. 17.

alquanto lor maltrattare, eglino donano fuoco alli tugurij, e vanno ad abitare nel territorio d'altro Signore"¹⁰².

The tax evasion was not the only cause of displacements from one village to another, because was also influencing the search of more suitable place to be settled, search that before being concluded with the choosing of a definitive place, was passing through more or less a temporary phase of collation.

In Calabria "the attraction towards the lowland areas securing bigger agricultural production and better living conditions"¹⁰³, encouraged a group of Albanian families to be displaced from Vaccarizzo towards the village of San Cosmo, where during the first decade of the XVI century begun "to build the first houses "with lime and sand" or mud-brick huts"¹⁰⁴. These displacements in true were finished some decades ago and had to do with groups of emigrants settled in the surroundings of Badia di San Demetrio. Prior to be definitively settle where today is raised Shën Mitër Korona, apparently the Arbëresh who founded it were settled there before in a temporary settlement called Magarotti or Filla neighborhood, to then move towards a new center called Sancto Dimitrio. According to Innocenzo Mazziotti "in the beginning the migrants' settlements were mobile and were consisting from umbrellaed field camps moving according the community's necessities"¹⁰⁵. Starting

¹⁰² Girolamo Marafioti, *Croniche et antichità di Calabria*. Conforme all'ordine de' testi greco, & latino, raccolte da' più famosi scrittori antichi, & moderni, ove regolarmente sono poste le città, castelli, ville, monti, fiumi, fonti, & altri luoghi degni di sapersi di quella provincia... in Padova: ad istanza de gl'Vniti, 1601, p. 273-274. La prima edizione dell'opera di Marafioti era apparsa nel 1595 a Napoli col seguente titolo: Opera del R. F. Fra Girolamo Marafioti di Polistina dell'Ordine de' Min. Off. Delle croniche, et antichità di Calabria, secondo le città, habitationi, luoghi, monti, fiumi, e fonti di quella, con l'histoire di tutti gli huomini illustri Calabresi, quali in diuerse scienze, e arti fiorirno, col Catalogo de gli Beati, e Santi..., In Napoli, Nella Stamperia dello Stigliola a Porta Regale, 1595.

¹⁰³ "l'attrattiva, offerta dal territorio in buona parte pianeggiante e che, quindi si prestava ad una coltivazione più redditizia, meno faticosa e che sembrava contenere tutte le premesse di un miglioramento, almeno a medio termine, delle condizioni di vita": Domenico Cassiano, *Strigàri*, quoted, p. 13.

¹⁰⁴ "a costruire le prime rudimentali abitazioni "de calce e de arena" o, più verosimilmente, i primi "pagliara", impastati con frascume e terra rossa: *ibid*, p. 14.

¹⁰⁵ Innocenzo Mazziotti, *Immigrazioni albanesi in Calabria nel XV secolo e la colonia di San Demetrio Corone (1471-1815)*, Amministrazione Comunale di San Demetrio Corone, Edizioni il Coscile, Castrovillari, 2004, p. 91. See dhe Vincenzo Giura, "La vita economica degli albanesi in Calabria nei secoli XV-XVIII" in *Gli albanesi in Calabria. Secoli XV-XVIII*, a cura di Claudio Rotelli, Edizioni Orizzonti Meridionali, Cosenza, 1990, p. 74 et *passim*.

from the nomadic nature of these groups it's possible that in the villages of San Cosmo (in Arbëresh *Strigari*), Vaccarizzo, and San Giorgio (in Arbëresh *Mbuzati*), that are situated "at the edge of Sant'Adriano fief"¹⁰⁶, might be raised after the establishment of the Arbëresh, when small groups were detached from the initial nucleus and gave life to a new process of internal colonization. Thus was founded Santa Sofia, established in the fiefs of Bisignano's bishops: "The first lands granted to the Arbëresh were those given by the Bishop Francesco Piccolomini d'Aragona (1498-1530), as comes out from a notary summary of 1586; it lacks the precise date of the act, that should belong to the period between 1515-1520"¹⁰⁷.

Always in Calabria, but in the areas of Catanzaro, we have data for migrants' displacement from the initial settlements. Thus, the villages Arenoso and Casalnuovo since 1550 to the first half of XVII occurred sensitive population fall because of the many families displacement seeking more attractive economic settlements¹⁰⁸.

16.- Arbëresh's presence in Puglia cities as Manduria¹⁰⁹, Lecce¹¹⁰, Brindisi¹¹¹, Galatina¹¹² and Taranto¹¹³ is documented by many acts

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid*, p. 92.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, p. 93.

¹⁰⁸ See Francesco Maiorana, Caraffa di Catanzaro. Lineamenti storici di un Paese Albanese, Lamezia Terme, 1992, p. 42-53

¹⁰⁹ See Michele Greco, "Immigrazione di albanesi e levantini in Manduria desunta dal *Librone Magno*" in *Rinascenza salentina. Organo della Real Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Puglie*, R. Tipografia Editrice Salentina, anno VIII (n.s.), 1940, Lecce, p. 329-343. See Michele Greco, "Un nucleo di albanesi e levantini in Manduria nel secolo XV e XVI" in *Rivista d'Albania*. Centro studi per l'Albania, anno IV, Fasc. 2, Roma, 1943, p. 90-108. See Benedetto Fontana, *Le famiglie di Manduria dal XV secolo al 1930. Capostipiti - provenienza - Uomini illustri*, Saggio introduttivo di Gianni Jacovelli Prefazione e note bibliografiche di Elio Dimitri, Centro servizi educativi e culturali, Manduria, 2005.

¹¹⁰ See Salvatore Panareo, "Albanesi nel Salento e Albanesi al servizio del Regno di Napoli" in *Rinascenza salentina. Organo della Real Deputazione di Storia Patria per le Puglie*, R. Tipografia Editrice Salentina, anno VII (n.s.), 1939, Lecce, p. 209-220. See Gino Giovanni Chirizzi, "Albanesi e corfioti immigrati a Lecce nei secoli (XV-XVII)" in *Annuario del liceo ginnasio statale Giuseppe Palmieri*, 1995-1996, Lecce, 1996, p. 171-189.

¹¹¹ Andrea della Monaca, *Memoria storica dell'antichissima, e fedelissima città di Brindisi*, Appresso Pietro Micheli, Lecce, 1674, p. 559. According to Della Monaca "Tururano fin'à giorni nostri fù abitato d'Albanesi, che vivevano con rito greco, ma al presente sono gl'habitatori tutti italiani, vivendo col rito Latino": *ibid*, p. 341.

¹¹² See Giancarlo Vallone, "Il laboratorio dell'accoglienza. Albanesi a Galatina (sec. XV-XVII)" in *Tra letteratura e storia*. Studi in onore di Rosario Jurlaro, a cura di Mario Spedicato, Edizioni Panico, Galatina, 2008, p. 65-76. See Umberto Congedo, "I Castriota Scanderbergh [sic!] Duchi di Galatina (1485-1561)" in *Rivista Storica Salentina* fondata e diretta da Pietro

belonging to the first years of the XVI century, but at the end of that century no trace of them remained¹¹⁴. The reasons of this sudden “disappearance” from the local records may be searched as in the assimilation of this isolated group of migrants, or in the new policies of the inner colonization that the local lords undertook. Indeed, is not to be excluded that in this affairs may have influenced the concessions promoted to the migrants if they accepted to be settled out of the city walls before turning into potential colons. From this point-of-view, are meaningful the internal colonization that included Puglia's province villages especially in the areas of Taranto. Many Arbëresh “had renew some abandoned villages, while in the other villages they co-lived with the Italians and Italo-Greeks”¹¹⁵. The village of Faggiano in Taranto's province “on 1470 was re-peopled from the locals and from the Arbëresh”¹¹⁶: the latter, in the records are called “roving” (vagabondi), and the urbanization changed indeed the social status and definitively they became the new colons. The example of the Faggiano village's colons could have been later followed from many other Arbëresh spread in Salento province. During the XVI many anthroponomy traces of Albanians are seen in the parishes registers studied by Vincenzo Liguori¹¹⁷: are the same archival traces that make possible the historic profile reconstruction of the so-called *Albania Salentina*. The first evidences of their slow change from nomadic groups in sedentary population belong to the years 1507-1509, where were granted the privileges “to populate some villages with Albanian people”¹¹⁸. These settlements were followed with fluctuations, from further stabilization

Palumbo, annata prima (1903-1904), Ristampa fotomeccanica, Mario Congedo Editore, Lecce, 1903, p. 152-183.

¹¹³ See Pietro Dalena, “Insediamenti albanesi nel territorio di Taranto (Secc. XV-XVI): realtà storica e mito storiografico” in *Miscellanea di studi storici*, vol. VIII (1989), Dipartimento di Storia dell'Università della Calabria, Rubbettino Editore, Soveria Mannelli, 1989, p. 35-105.

¹¹⁴ F. A. Primaldo Coco, *Casali albanesi nel Tarentino: studio storico critico. Con documenti inediti*, Scuola tipografica Italo-orientale “S. Nilo”, Grottaferrata, 1921, p. 17-21.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 21.

¹¹⁶ Fr. A. Primaldo Coco, *Faggiano: primo casale albanese del Tarentino*, Stabilimento Tipografico Pappacena, Taranto, 1928, p. 35.

¹¹⁷ See Vincenzo Liguori, “Famiglie e parentele nei registri parrocchiali galatinesi del Cinquecento” in *Bollettino storico di Terra d'Otranto*, n. 7, Congedo, Galatina, 1997, p. 63-118.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid*, p. 23.

processes encouraged by the local lords themselves. Meaningful is the case recorded on 1514, when Geronima De Montibus, occupying the place of the dead husband in feud's administration, transferred all the Albanians situated in Fragagnano in the nearby village of Monteparano. [...] So, from 1509 till 1530 were populated all the Arbëresh villages of Tarento"¹¹⁹. The same happened with the village "called San Marzano full of inhabited caves, on which we have data since 1281. On 1463 this village resulted deserted but something happened that caused the population of this small rocky settlement: the Albanian migrants arrived", whose presence "in this depopulation situation was seen with good eye not only by the sovereigns but also from the local lords themselves, which in that case could populate the devastated villages and at least partially compensate the loss of the population"¹²⁰. This process was often accompanied with political agreements that attracted the Balkan people, because offered to them a safe shelter and encouraged to definitively settle in a sustainable settlement.

17.- In the same way can be reconstructed the first phase of settlements in Sicily. The founders of Piana degli Albanesi village, according to a legend published by Zef Skiroi¹²¹, after roaming for a long time, settled an encampment in the mount Pizzuta's slopes, hoping that could secure the necessary permissions from the authority who possessed those lands, in a way that could choose a more suitable place to build the village. In a "temporary settlement, called the Greeks' village, formed by umbrellaed, cabins and similar abodes"¹²², were settled the first inhabitants of an old Saracen center called Manzil Yûsuf, later Italianized with the name of Mezzoiuso. According to the old historic data, were the Arbëresh from Piana those who in 1501, together with "other newcomers from different places, peopled Mezzoiuso"¹²³, by settling in the neighborhood called Albergheria, that

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Antonella Pellettieri, "Borghi nuovi e centri scomparsi fra Terra d'Otranto e Terra di Bari" estratto da *Puglia tra grotte e borghi*. Atti del II Convegno internazionale sulla civiltà rupestre, a cura di Enrico Menestò, Centro italiano di Studi sull'Alto medioevo, Spoleto, 2005, p. 51.

¹²¹ Giuseppe Schirò, *Canti tradizionali ed altri saggi delle colonie albanesi di Sicilia*, Napoli, 1923 (r. a. Piana-Palermo, 1986), p. LXXIX.

¹²² Ibid, p. XLVI.

¹²³ See Ignazio Gattuso, *Opere*, vol. I-III, a cura di Matteo Mandalà, Pietro Di Marco, Giuseppe Di Miceli, Rubbettino editore, Soveria Mannelli, 2004.

still today exists in Mezzoiuso¹²⁴. The Arbëresh that populated Biancavilla, after just landing – according to the legend – in Messina, would have been headed towards Catania under the leadership of “the noble” Cesare Masi, which “nevertheless couldn't stand seeing his people roaming up and down in total misery, settled them under some straw mows in Adernò's territory and near the path called Callicari”¹²⁵. “The column of Callicari's territory – adds Placido Bucolo – after established by the verbal permission of the Count Gian Tommaso Moncada and with the obligation to cultivate the land and to pay a contribution, started to build some colons' houses”¹²⁶. During the XVI century, some families from Mezzoiuso, as soon as they got the news that the Count Gravina wanted to populate the abandoned center of San Michele di Ganzaria, “pledged to bring in there thirty families and to build some temporary cabins, by not having possible to immediately build homes, which they promised that would be build within a year”. More or less at the same period and for the same reasons is founded the village of Sant'Angelo Muxaro, that today is totally Sicilianized as San Michele di Ganzaria, while at the end of the XVII century, precisely on 1691, some tens of families of Piana degli Albanesi origin found the village of Santa Cristina Gela¹²⁷.

18.– The same phenomenon also happened in Basilicata, nonetheless the contradictory and mythical Arbëresh historic interpretations on privileges nature and other commodities recognized to the Arbëresh colons in the time of the so-called “koronej”¹²⁸. The presence of the Albanian migrants registered in the oldest registers of the Basilicata record “Tesorieri e Percettori”, is sporadic during the years 1475 and 1479, but more often is on 1498. The centers are increased during the XVI century, when “some migrants decided to be settled in Anglona's parish, while others are settled in San Severinos' fiefs”, founding or

¹²⁴ Ignazio Gattuso, “Manzil Yûsuf”, in *Opere*, quoted, vol. I, p. 221.

¹²⁵ Giovanni Sangiorgio Mazza, *Storia di Adernò*, dalla tipografia di La Magna, Catania, 1820, p. 21-22.

¹²⁶ Placido Bucolo, *Storia di Biancavilla*, Grafiche “Gutenberg”, Adrano, 1953, p. 40.

¹²⁷ Giuseppe Schirò, *Canti tradizionali*, quoted, p. CXXXI-CXXXIII.

¹²⁸ On the “koronejve” question see Matteo Mandalà, *Mundus vult decipi: mitet e historiografisë arbëreshe*, “Naimi” Shtëpi botuese dhe studio letrare, Tiranë, 2016, p. 189-296. Useful are the archival trackings that recently has made Italo Sarro: see Italo Sarro, “La questione dei Coronei” in Francesco Altamari, Gëzim Gurga, Shaban Sinani (a cura di), *Matteo Mandalà dhe albanologjia sot - Në 60-vjetorin e lindjes*, Fast Print, Tiranë, 2018, p. 461-484.

populating many villages as, "as Maschito, Barile, Ripacandida, on which then is detached the today village of Ginestra"¹²⁹. According the archival data examined by Carlo Palestina, it was the central administration who interrupted Albanians' custom to live "a nomadic life" and forced them to be established in "dwellings with walls. Inclined to nomadic life, usually the migrants were sheltered in cabins or in caves", but this made it difficult their register, so calculating the precise taxes. Indeed, the most often displacement that were verified in Vulture do not change much from those happening in other regions of Italy, also the reasons are more or less similar¹³⁰. The fiscal registers analyzed by Palestina document two indisputable facts: first, the traces of the special Slavic families and Albanian ones in many rural centers in Vulture were not less temporary rather those forcing the migrants shelter in cabins and caves waiting for a definitive collation. Their disappearance from the villages of Accadia, Ariano¹³¹, Atella, Bella, Bisazza, Castello Franco, Castello del Barone, Castelgrande, Cedogna, Forenza, Gesualdo, Lavello, Melfi, Mirabello, Montemilone, Muro Lucano, Palazzo San Gervaso, Pescopagano, Porcarino, Rapolla, Rapone, Ripacandida, Rochetta, Ruvo del Monte, San Fele, Spinazzola, Vallata, Venosa, that are not seen as founded and populated by Albanians, is explained only with the often displacement from one locality to another aiming to find that definitive collation that is on the bases of the second cause: as "labor force" to be used in the abandoned fiefs, for these colons more suitable was to be assembled around the rural centers, that today we keep as found by Albanians, but only after securing the same "feudal" privileges that were granted to their fellows in other Italian regions.

Rightfully Antonella Pellettieri affirms commenting the opinion of Giuliana Vitale¹³²:

¹²⁹ Carlo Palestina, *Fuochi albanesi nella provincia di Potenza nel secolo XVI*, Provincia di Potenza, Potenza, 2004, p. 8-9.

¹³⁰ Francesco Luigi Pietrafesa, *Le immigrazioni albanesi nella regione del Vulture*, Rionero, Radici, 1991.

¹³¹ Tommaso Vitale, *Storia della regia città di Ariano e sua diocesi*, Nella Stamperia Salomoni, Roma 1794, p. 408.

¹³² Giuliana Vitale, "Aspetti della vita economica di Melfi ed Atella alla fine del XV secolo", in *Atti dell'Accademia Pontaniana*, XVII (1967-68), p. 57-83.

“a Melfi Giovanni Caracciolo accolse ben 900 profughi tra greci e albanesi cercando di rimediare alla scarsità di popolazione: risulta chiaro che tra i profughi e il feudatario si instaurò una reciprocità di interessi. Nei documenti molto spesso compaiono nomi di origine albanese fra gli artigiani ed i braccianti che lavorano per il duca. Nella zona del Vulture fu determinante la presenza dei profughi che andarono a dissodare le terre deserte ed ormai completamente sterili provocando un aumento della produzione del vino, dell'olio ma anche di altre piante fruttifere. Fu proprio in quegli anni che gli albanesi si insediarono più stabilmente a Barile, a Maschito, a Ginestra, a Melfi, a Atella e a Rionero [...] Le primitive abitazioni dei profughi erano, dunque, modeste e provvisorie: gli stessi nomi dei quartieri dove essi si insediarono ne sono la prova. Abitavano in “pagliari e grotte” quasi sempre ubicati in borghi alla periferia del centro abitato. A Melfi c'era il quartiere dei “Chiucchieri” così denominato dal capostipite di quel clan che si era insediato nella cittadina di origine normanna; a Barile il quartiere era nominato “Scuteriani” e gli abitanti abitavano in grotte scavate nei colli, in seguito ad una seconda migrazione ci fu un nuovo borgo detto “pagliari” abitato dai profughi provenienti dalla città albanese di Maina”¹³³.

The social dynamics since the initial decline in the creation of the communities ethnically and socially compact were enforced from economic factors and not of “insecurity” reasons, that no matter how hard could have been, wouldn't concerned more a feudal state who didn't hesitated to make use of violence to secure the public order. Royal administration's concern was to assemble the spread migrants through sustainable rural centers, except the fiscal motives, was especially motivated from the positive effects that would have brought the internal colonization policies through reintroducing the production cycle of the abandoned fiefs.

19.—The same has been the development of the situation in Potenza's province and in Senise territory, that between the 1509-1511 register Albanians' presence in nearly forty rural centers, which today are not

¹³³ Antonella Pellettieri, “...quod casale fiat ibidem vel villa: i borghi di nuova fondazione in Basilicata” estratto, *Città e vita cittadina nei paesi dell'area mediterranea. Secoli XI-XV*, Atti del convegno internazionale in onore di Salvatore Tramontana (Adrano-Bronte-Catania-Palermo 18-22 novembre 2003), a cura di Biagio Saitta, p. 168.

believed as found by Albanians. These investments would have attracted other migrants, that in the beginning were established in Melfi, then because of disagreements with the city authorities, decided to be transferred more on the inside and to fully dedicate to agriculture and farming. Another meaningful evidence is the transfer on 1774 in Brindisi di Montagna of the Albanians that principally were temporarily established in Abruzzo, where existed other villages with Arbëresh since the half of the XVI century¹³⁴. Antonella Pellettieri has absolutely right when affirms that the difficulty "to calculate the precise number of the Albanians that had landed in the shores of the southern Italy" was principally based on two reasons: "often the refugees displaced from one center to another: these internal migrations [...] were important because it was about of hundreds of people being displaced. The second reason has to do with the fiscal facilities" and with the social dynamics provoked also among the local population¹³⁵.

The continuous displacements, that some time carried the hope to find more suitable places and other times were caused by the disapproval to submit the local feudal authorities, gave life to the contacts among different groups of Albanians, thus creating a mixture that perhaps is the true cause of the many coincidences that are proved by the today research. The same surnames that are found in many Arbëresh communities more or less distant among them, and often overpass their regional borders, support this hypotheses and encourages us to imagine a scenario when the family nuclei decided to be

¹³⁴ See Angiola De Matteis, *L'Aquila e il contado. Demografia e fiscalità (secoli XV-XVIII)*, Napoli, Giannini, 1973; Sandro Galantini, "Gli insediamenti di Albanesi e Schiavoni nell'Abruzzo Ulteriore: Cologna, Teramo e Silvi", in *Abruzzo oggi*, a. XI [1988], n. 8, p. 17-19; Adelmo Marino, "Le popolazioni alloglotte nella regione abruzzese e il caso di Villa Bozza, Schiavi d'Abruzzo e Villa Badessa", in *L'Abruzzo e la Repubblica di Ragusa tra il XIII e il XVII secolo*, Atti del convegno di studi storici dell'associazione archeologica frentana (Ortona, 25-26 luglio 1987), a cura di Nicola Iubatti e Nicola Serafini, Ortona, Associazione archeologica frentana, 1989, vol. I, p. 49-74. Sandro Galantini, "Gli Albanesi e Schiavoni che popolarono siti dell'Abruzzo", in *L'Abruzzo e la Repubblica di Ragusa tra il XIII e il XVII secolo*, quoted, vol. II, p. 33-35. Sandro Galantini, "Gli insediamenti slavoalbanesi in Abruzzo. Alcune note ed indicazioni bibliografiche", in *Abruzzo. Rivista dell'Istituto di studi abruzzesi*, anno XLI (2003), p. 367-399. Francesco Mastroberti, "Le colonie albanesi nel Regno di Napoli tra storia e storiografia", in *Annali della Facoltà di Giurisprudenza di Taranto*, a I (2008), n. 2, p. 241-251.

¹³⁵ Antonella Pellettieri, "...quod casale fiat ibidem vel villa: i borghi di nuova fondazione in Basilicata", quoted, p. 169.

transferred elsewhere and knew very well the paths of “Diaspora's Diaspora”, but also knew very well the places where they fellow countrymen lived. It cannot be explained otherwise the displacements from one region to another as those that are undertaken by the many migrants who during the XV century compound Gizzeria's Arbëresh community, on which Francesco Altimari, based on the archival data, has put in evidence many onomastics co-sequences with the Sicilian villages of Piana, Palazzo, Mezzoiuso¹³⁶. The data that we have, speaks for a very close relations of economic and cultural solidarity between the Arbëresh spread in geographically homogenous areas thanks to an awareness and efficacious net of economic support and reciprocal cooperation.

20.– As for the Arbëresh settled in Sicily, a special importance are the archival data published by Henri Bresc, on which was based Francesco Giunta to reach some convincing conclusions: since the end of the XV century (between 1489-1498) “Hora's Arbëresh of the Palazzo Adriano and Mezzoiuso's Bishop possessed a good part of the wheat trade of Palermo province, were deeply involved in the trade of pack animals, of livestock and of cheese. Second, they acted in group, with a solidarity allowing them to precisely calculate the agricultural efficiency¹³⁷“. Between the two Arbëresh communities of Piana and of Mezzoiuso existed frequent trade exchanges, what is also confirmed from the archival research done by Ignazio Gattuso, also often many heads of family result with double domicile in both communities prior that the Mezzoiuso's Arbëresh signed the acts (the chapters) of the settlement in 1501¹³⁸. Moreover, except the fact that the onomastics similarities prove “the connections existing between the inhabitants of both villages, thanks to the common origin”¹³⁹, it cannot be left aside the onomastics collaborations of the XVI century that the parishes registers of the villages Palazzo Adriano, Piana degli Albanesi and

¹³⁶ See Altimari Francesco, “Tracce onomastiche albanesi nella comunità calabrese di Gizzeria”, in *Cinque secoli di cultura albanese in Sicilia. Giornate di studio offerte a Antonino Guzzetta*, Atti del XXVIII Congresso Internazionale di Studi Albanesi, a cura di Matteo Mandalà, Palermo, 2003, p. 49-56.

¹³⁷ Francesco Giunta, “Albanesi in Sicilia”, in *Albanesi in Sicilia* a cura di Matteo Mandalà, Albanica 16, Mirror, Palermo, 2004, p. 15.

¹³⁸ See Giuseppe La Mantia, *I capitoli delle colonie Greco-Albanesi di Sicilia dei secoli XV e XVI*, Stabilimento Tipografico Giannitrapani, Palermo, 1904, p. 43-50.

¹³⁹ Ignazio Gattuso, “Manzil Ysûf”, in *Opere*, quoted, vol. I, p. 221.

Contessa Entellina contain, what confirms the hypotheses that between the Arbëresh of these communities existed relations that chronologically preceded their displacement to Sicily.

Some narrative sources speak about relations between the Arbëresh of Piana from one side and those of Brontes and of Biancavilla to the other side. These two last villages were found in the slopes of Etna volcano and in the same period when in the western side of the island was established and repopulated Palazzo Adriano and Piana degli Albanesi. The chapters of Biancavilla's foundation was signed on 25 January 1488, few times after the foundation of Palazzo Adriano (1482) and at the same time with that of Piana (30 August 1488)¹⁴⁰. Moreover, according the evidence of Placido Buccolos¹⁴¹, the relations between the three Arbëresh groups were very dense during the first decades of their settlements. Would have been the priests of Piana and of Palazzo Adriano those who kept alive for some time the Byzantine rite in Biancavilla, prior the complete turning Latin of these community¹⁴². Here it should be mentioned the fact that Michele Del Giudice, referring to the Arbëresh population of Bronte (a settlement on which today we do not have either the foundation chapters, nor chronological data on its creation), has put in evidence some common characteristics between the Arbëresh of Piana, implying that both groups would had have common origin or at least would have had earlier contacts¹⁴³. Since here, Schirò didn't hesitate to guess that "Bronte's foundation would had happened more or less at the same time with that of

¹⁴⁰ See Giuseppe La Mantia, *I capitoli*, quoted, p. 31-35.

¹⁴¹ See Placido Bucolo, *Storia di Biancavilla*, quoted, p. 40.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹⁴³ "L'anno determinato della fondazione di Bronte non si è potuto raccogliere dalle scritture che si sono vedute, ed è mancato il tempo vederle tutte. La tradizione che riferiscono i paesani è che fosse una Colonia de' Greci Albanesi, venutavi nel medesimo tempo dell'altre che sono in Sicilia, la qual poi havesse lasciato il Rito Greco e accettato in tutto il Rito Latino. Ne ritengono un vestigio nell'accento del parlare, e maggiore nel vestir delle Donne, tutto conforme a quello della Piana delli Greci, fuorchè nell'adornamento della testa»: Michele Del Giudice, *Descrizione, del real tempio, e monasterio di santa Maria Nuova, di Morreale. Vite de' suoi arcivescovi, abbati, e signori. Col sommario dei privilegj, della detta Santa Chiesa di Gio. Luigi Lello. Ristampata d'ordine dell'illustriss. e reverendiss. monsignore arcivescovo, abbate Don Giovanni Ruano. Con le osservazioni sopra le fabbriche, e mosaici della chiesa, la continuazione delle Vite degli arcivescovi, una Tavola cronologica della medesima istoria, e la notizia dello stato presente dell'arcivescovado. Opera, del padre don Michele del Giudice, nella regia stamperia d'Agostino Epiro, in Palermo, 1702, p. 27.*

Callicari, near Etna, that today is called Biancavilla, at the end of the XVI, from other Arbëresh, that headed by Cesare Masi, detached from their fellow countrymen”, which would establish Piana¹⁴⁴. Based on this assumptions, Francesco Giunta, uniting the verbal tradition with the written documentation guessed that “before to choose Piana, they had tried unsuccessfully to establish in other parts of the island. Here we may include the Arbëresh groups that were established in Bronte, Maniaci, Adrano, Callicari (later Biancavilla), during the western slope of mount Etna, in the fiefs of Giovanni Tommaso Moncada, count of Adernò, as in Cansoria, Caltagirone and in Piazza Armerina.”¹⁴⁵

21.– The temporality of the first settlements is proved by another feature which almost characterizes all the Arbëresh settlements. We speak on the fact that the new urban centers were not genuine “settlements”, but “re-settlements” or better said “repopulations” of old medieval abandoned villages, which thanks to the new colons arrival were reintroduced with more productive cycle, from one side creating the conditions, to renew the economy of these ruined areas, and from the other side, for the gradual formation of homogenous cultural environments, that later would be distinguished from the local population by language, religion rites, traditions and customs. This proves that, especially in the case of Sicily's Arbëresh, the new settlements were not a consequence of a free choice of the colons, but of a program aiming to renew the production regime of some depopulated areas and economically ruined. The consequences of this program, that conflicts with the colonial directives of Sicily since the first half of the XVI century, were sensitive belonging as the urban aspects, as the social assets developed in absence of an architectonic preparatory project of these new settlements.

The new communes, especially those established in Sicily during the XVI-XVII century, thanks to a political-economic willpower, constituted a true investment from the part of the inhabitants and of bishops. The villages were established and build according to a geometric project rationally spreading the dwellings and the different infrastructures. Then, attracted by the rich economic sources of the new settlement, there were transferred entire colons families which, where

¹⁴⁴ Giuseppe Schirò, *Canti tradizionali*, quoted, p. LXXVI.

¹⁴⁵ Francesco Giunta, “Albanesi in Sicilia”, quoted, p. 24.

they went to live in the new village, they found there crystallized the justice, art, religion and of course the political power. These new groups, the sporadic character of which didn't permit no social organization according to a hierarchy based on the existence and the stand of the customs, traditions and common institutions¹⁴⁶, of course should subdue to the laws and feudal will (of the inhabitants or Church). The officials that would govern the new village, should be at the same time trusted men of the lord feudal, ready to apply his orders without much thinking on the life conditions and population's interests.

22.– For the scholar Paola Misuraca this is clearly proved from some features of the applied urban models in these centers, as from the “feudal” ideology that those conveyed:

“I nuovi borghi, in ogni caso, al di là della maggiore o minore regolarità dei loro impianti urbani [...] rappresentano la concretizzazione della nuova e nascente vocazione urbanistica dei baroni siciliani, in un tempo in cui le città e lo spazio fisico, nelle teorie urbanistiche diffuse dai trattati, ma anche nelle realizzazioni concrete, vengono sistematicamente analizzati e rigidamente controllati attraverso le leggi della geometria e della matematica. Principio fondamentale di questa nuova cultura, così feconda, nelle trattazioni teoriche, di proposte relative a tipi e modelli urbani, era quello di una progettazione unitaria di un nuovo insediamento, controllato in tutte le sue parti attraverso l'adozione di una pianta prefissata; il che è quanto avviene presumibilmente in molti dei nuovi borghi siciliani, dove la pianta ortogonale viene applicata dal fondatore come strumento elementare per il controllo formale degli spazi urbani, che tale piano garantisce anche nelle espansioni del centro abitato oltre i limiti originariamente fissati, essendo possibile prolungare le strade e moltiplicare i lotti urbani senza che la armonia della pianta ortogonale venga alterata. Tale modello urbano diventa inoltre il mezzo per la materializzazione fisica dell'ideologia feudale, rispecchiata fedelmente, in questi impianti, nel suo concetto fondamentale dell'asservimento di una vasta popolazione ad una ristretta classe aristocratica egemone, detentrica non solo del potere politico, ma anche di quello economico legato alla concentrazione della proprietà della terra, la maggiore risorsa dell'isola. Questa concentrazione, sia del potere politico che

¹⁴⁶ See

della proprietà della terra, nelle mani della classe baronale siciliana, è sicuramente la circostanza che favorisce la generale adozione del piano ortogonale per i nuovi centri: la situazione tipica, infatti, in cui il modello ortogonale viene applicato, è quella coloniale, caratterizzata appunto da una concentrazione del potere decisionale; il grado e la misura di questa concentrazione e la sua permanenza nel tempo, influiscono direttamente sulla regolarità dell'impianto, che tende ad alterarsi quando e dove comincia a venir meno il controllo esercitato in modo assoluto ed autoritario (ed il piano ortogonale è un piano «autoritario») da un governo centrale o, nel caso siciliano, dal nobile fondatore, senza essere sostituito da adeguate forme di controllo pubblico e collettivo¹⁴⁷.

Totally different from the description that makes Paola Misuraca, are presented the forms and the urban structures that characterize Sicily's Arbëresh settlements, that cannot be explained only with the fact that these are often raised in mountainous areas, but mostly with the lack of preliminary urban project, as with the adaptation of the existing structures prior the Arbëresh arrival. The reconstruction of the abandoned rural houses where the Arbëresh were settled was not done according to a urban regulatory plan, but followed the rude morphology of the rocky terrain. The dwellings were spontaneously raised, according the inhabitants necessities, what outcome in disordered and vaulted outlines. Enough to look the Sicilian villages plan of the XVI-XVII centuries, including some Arbëresh communes raised on the XVII century, as e.g., Santa Cristina Gela, to immediately notice the distinction between the regular geometric forms of the orthogonal model described by Paola Misuraca and the chaotic spread of the homes with the inextricable combination of the roads that percolate the Arbëresh villages at the end of the XV century. On these last, the public buildings and those symbolizing the local authority were not much visible and didn't occupy an "ideologically" central position as in the case of the Sicilian villages, even often was totally lacking a central space in the general urban context. Also the churches, especially those newly build, that generally in Sicily were raised near the inhabitants

¹⁴⁷ Paola Misuraca, "Caratteri urbanistici dei nuovi insediamenti", in *Città nuove di Sicilia XV-XIX secolo. 1. Problemi, metodologia, prospettive della ricerca storica. La Sicilia occidentale*, a cura di Maria Giuffrè, Vittorietti editore, Palermo, 1979, p. 98-99.

palaces, in the Arbëresh villages have an asymmetric position. We have to do here with an urban polycentrism openly opposed to the dominant idea of the orthogonal model and refusing the presence of secular or religious superior authority.

23.— The urban view reflected a different conception of the internal relations between the Arbëresh migrants, that already had entered a new phase of integration: in that may offer a urban center with the complex system of rules and of social hierarchy. At the same time started to be outlined a special vision of the relation with the *outer* environment, which created the conditions for an anthropological and cultural differentiation process with context of the dominating culture, a process the effects of which would be manifested through Arbëresh communities, especially those of Sicily, starting from the second half of the XVI century and along all the XVII century. In other words, the Arbëresh rural centers structures prove exactly a different origin because were established from homogenous groups of individuals united by a special kind of social organization and particular cultural and religious dimension, which didn't accepted other rules except their own. Second, because the Arbëresh urban complex, howsoever similar might seem with those of other Sicilian communes established more or less at the same time within irregular morphological grounds, in true has some features reflecting original forms of social organization. Particular has been the situation of the village Piana degli Albanesi, as well as to some extent Contessa Entellina at the end of the XVI.

The dwellings' distribution and the later urban division in neighborhoods is generally the same with that of other Sicilian villages. In fact, according to a population census complied after *ad limina* visit of 25 March 1598¹⁴⁸, Piana figured divided in four neighborhoods coinciding with four principal churches of the Byzantine rite: *Shën Gergji*, *Shën Mëhilli*, *Shën Thanasi* and *Shën Mitri*. However in some later registers, as those of the years 1593 and 1606¹⁴⁹, the number of neighborhoods increased. Some of the new neighborhoods were named after the Albanian toponyms marking the areas closer the urban center

¹⁴⁸ *Archivio della Biblioteca Comunale di Piana degli Albanesi, Visita ad limina*, "In nomine domine Jesus Christi, amen; Descriptione delli anime et fochi dello quarteri chiamato di [...] della Terra della Piana dello Arcivescovo della Città di Monreale fatto nello anno XII Inditione 1598 a 25 di marzo nella strata".

¹⁴⁹ *Archivio di Stato di Palermo*, Tribunale del Real Patrimonio, vol. 563 e voll. 564-565.

(*Sheshi, Shkëmbi, Brinja*) or after the names of the new churches (San Vito). While the other neighborhoods were named after typical Arbëresh surnames: thus the inhabitants stated that lived in the “Matrangave” (delli Matranghi) neighborhood, of “Petëve” (delli Petti) neighborhood, of “Fuskëve” (delli Fuschi) neighborhood, of Kazazëve (delli Casesi) neighborhood, of “Skirojve” (delli Schirò) neighborhood.

Based on what we know today, we can put forward four hypotheses:

1. the onomastics nomination was due to a big number of families with the same surname living in those neighborhoods;
2. families that have gained a special social prestige and an important role in organizing the population after the village's establishment;
3. the social organization in hand was inherited from an old tribal structure preserved even after the displacement in Italy;
4. the families who gave the name to the neighborhood were among the most distinguished within the community;

24.– Indeed, none of the first three hypotheses cannot be excluded, even those could be considered as different factors of the same process. As to the first hypotheses, grouping the population according to surnames, comes that the biggest families in number coincides with those who had given the name to the neighborhood. The second hypotheses is documented from the individual records from which results that a medium or high social and economic level of the families came from the main officials and administrators of the village. The third hypotheses in the studies made by father Zef Valentini on the onomastics and toponymy developments, as on the organization of the Albanian tribes since the XIV century, the studies put in evidence similar social structures. Of course these hypotheses cannot exhaust the question, that deserves to be further investigated, but can constitute a help in the future research. The first step that should be undertaken is the verification in the historic-anthropological plan on the role these families had in the social organization of Arbëresh Piana, as the examination of the parishes registers to shed light on in-laws and family relations.

The situation of Piana is similar with that of other Arbëresh villages of the southern Italy. In Sicily, e.g., is the same distribution of the urban space which also results for Contessa Entellina settlement on

1593, where we find the neighborhoods of “Skiroi” (p. 25, 43, 92), of “Muzaka” (p. 36, 80, 91), (Mustacha) (p. 45), “Musacha” (f. 46) “li Musachj” (p. 53, 59, 96), of “Makaluzi” (delli Macalusi) (p. 39, 98), of “Nicolao Guidera” (p. 40), of “Dimitri Dulcj” (p. 50), of “Carnesi” (p. 55), of “li Cuchi” (p. 58), of “Petro Caljna” (p. 74), of “li Grjgnonj” (p. 75), of “Cola Lala” (p. 79), of “Giorgi Maza” (p. 84, 90), all these Arbëresh surnames¹⁵⁰. In Calabria today, where are studied the archival and the verbal sources, are found important data, that except putting in evidence the role of the toponymy proofs about the new historic approach about the Arbëresh cultural identity formation, allowing us to reconstruct the path the Arbëresh migrants crossed at the end of the XV century. In the beginning they arrived in Calabria where “would re-establish” Shën Mitër Korona, that would become a center of congregation for the migratory flux from the Balkans, then would enter in the “historic” furrow that from centuries headed the Calabresi towards Sicily, finally after many efforts would be settled in the island. This path is proved to us by the neighborhood nominations gathered by Camillo Trapuzzano¹⁵¹ on Gizzeria's urban toponymy, especially the nominations of the neighborhoods carrying Arbëresh names: “Li Dara”, “li Cacossi”, “li Bideri”, “li Masi”, “li Peta”, “li Manis”, “li Cralesi”, thanks to these surnames Francesco Altimari has discovered the historic-linguistic relations between the old Arbëresh settlement Gizzeria and Palazzo Adriano, where still today we face the same surnames. “In Santa Sofia we find “Baffi neighborhood” (Quartiere delli Baffi) [...], in Shën Mitër Korona we have neighborhoods with names like “dei Pissarre, “dei Betti” and “dei Lopez”: there is no doubt, says Cinzia Capalbio, that “these neighborhoods took the names of the most important family living there or the name of the greatest owner of the houses”¹⁵².

25.— These co-coincidences help us to understand the migrants' movements between the XIII-XV centuries, at the beginning within the Balkan peninsula, then in both Adriatic shores. The Albanians were

¹⁵⁰ See Laura Stassi, *I riveli di Contessa Entellina del 1593*, Università degli Studi di Palermo, Palermo, 1985.

¹⁵¹ Camillo Trapuzzano, *Gizzeria tra passato e presente: i nomi e i luoghi*, Tipolitografia Grafiche Calabria, Amantea, 2007, p. 233.

¹⁵² Cinzia Capalbio, “Il paesaggio agrario e gli insediamenti urbani” in *Gli albanesi in Calabria*, quoted, p. 69.

displaced following a tribal type organization, with groups of families carrying the same surname, which was changed in toponymy when the displacement was interrupted and the families were settled in a place. Not all the members of the tribe were definitively settled at the same place, because some of them detached themselves from the group and continued the journey to colonize other depopulated and abandoned villages. In Morea (Peloponnese), as also in other Greece's regions that already have fallen at the Ottoman hands, the Albanians who have mostly dedicated to farming and hirelings, found many places to repopulate according to their needs. Thanks of applying of this scheme in all the Balkan Peninsula wide and long where Albanians lived, were established many settlements that still today keep names coinciding with the most prevalent surnames among Arbëresh communities¹⁵³. Enough to see the map of Greece to find tens of such villages¹⁵⁴. After

¹⁵³ “By leaving asside the other documents, we would mention that the verbal tradition in Albania, in different regions of North and South, preserves the memory of earlier local displacements towards Italy; thus in Lumë and in Mat, at the areas of Kruja and Kavaja, in Vlora areas and in other areas of Bregu i Detit with its hinterland, and also elsewhere. In Northern Albania we find arbëresh family names as Gazullus, Plesha, Riolo, Skutari and Span; in the Middle Albania among others Gramshi, Keta, Manes, Matranga, Mirakko, Muzaki, Polisi, Rada, Skura; in Southern Albania Barbaçi, Borgia (Borshi), Bua, Damis, Dirmì, Dorsa, Dragotta, Dramis, Glava, Groppa, Kappareli, Jerbes (Gjerbës), Kakosi, Krávati, Kuçi, Kudes, Likursi, Lopes, Losh, Luçi, Petta, Pílor, Piquerri, Rerës, Spata, Stamati, Strati, Tanassi, Toskves, Thani, Varfi and many others. Some names have many meanings, because from Albanian responds more than a name to a place or family with the same form. From the North descent the fuggitives of Kruja and Shkodra”: Eqrem Çabej, “Histori gjuhësore dhe strukturë dialektore e arbërishtes së Italisë” in *Në botën*, quoted, p. 69-70. For the methodological aspects see Eqrem Çabej, “Çështja e prejardhjes së ngulimevet arbëreshe të Italisë në dritën kryesisht të gjuhës e të emrave vetiakë” in *Në botën*, quoted, p. 45-63.

¹⁵⁴ “Voici un catalogue des villages Péloponnésiens portant les noms des feudataires Grecs et Albanais. Préfecture de l’Achaïe: [...] Σκιαδᾶ, [...] Μαυρικί, [...] Πέτα, [...] Γολέμη, [...] Μάνεση, [...] Φλόκα, Πένεση, Σκούρα, [...] Λόπεση, [...] Μαζαράκη, Μπρακμάδη, [...] Κέρτεζη, [...] Σπάτα, Βάλμη, Μπελούση, [...] Μουζάκη, [...] Μπάστα, [...] Βράνα, [...] Καπελλέττου, [...] Μάζη, Μαλική, Ματαράγκα, Λάλα, [...] Βίλιζα, Μπισμπάρδη, [...] Δάρα, Λάτα, Γολέμη, Μαζαράχη, Δραγώμη, Λόπεση, Μουρτάτου, [...] Μάτεση; [...] dans les autres préfectures du Péloponnèse: Κυνηγοῦ (më se një herë), [...] Πουλίτσι, Κεφαληνοῦ, [...] Καλλίνα, [...] Δάρα (më se një herë), [...] Ράδου, [...] Γχολέμη, [...] Σούλου, Σούλη (më se një herë), [...] Λότη, [...] Βάλλου, [...] Δόριζα, [...] Μουζάχη, Μπέλεση, [...] Πένεση, Πέτα, [...] Μπέλεση»: Konstantinos Sathas, *Mnēmeia hellēnikēs historias. Documents inédits relatifs à l’histoire de la Grèce au moyen âge*, publiés sous les auspices de la chambre des Députés de Grèce, Tome IV. Maisonneuve et C^e éditeurs, Paris, 1882, p. XLV-XLVI. See Titos F. Jochalas, “Considerazioni sull’onomastica e toponomastica albanese in Grecia”, Comunicazione letta in occasione del 12° Congresso Internazionale di Onomastica tenutosi a Berna (25-30 agosto 1975) in *Balkan Studies: a biannual publication of the Institute for Balkan*

migrating to Italy, these populations followed for some time the scheme that they had applied in the Balkans, giving the neighborhoods the names they kept before in special villages. Thus can be explained the coincidences between the most prevalent surnames of Arbëresh, many toponymy in the Balkan and the urban toponymy that have preserved the archival documents and the historic memory of the Arbëresh.

The dynamics hiding after this social organization system are confirmed to us also by the data that contain the Ottoman fiscal registers of 1460-1461 about Morea villages where lived Greek and Albanian shepherds and farmers. According the scholars Nicoara Beldiceanu and Irène Beldiceanu-Steinherr, that have published materials (*Tapu ve Tharir n. 10 = TT 10*) preserved in Paris National Library and in the archives of the Council of Ministers in Istanbul,

“on constate que les agglomérations urbaines étaient divisées en quartiers qui portaient souvent le nom de la mosquée ou de l’église du quartier ou de leurs desservants. En Morée, les villes sont divisées portaient simplement des anthroponymes grecs – prénom et nom de famille – sans autre précision. Quelle est l’origine de ces noms ? Le *TT10* ne laisse subsister aucune doute sur ce point: le quartier tire son nom du premier habitant inscrit; le recenseur n’indique cependant que le prénom de cet habitant, le nom de famille étant remplacé par la formule “le susdit”. Soulignons que pour le restant des habitants, le recenseur donne les noms de famille. Il est possible que la Porte ait nommé le quartier d’une ville d’après la personne chargée de son administration”¹⁵⁵.

Also in Corinth the fiscal data put in evidence a social structure of the tribal type:

“Les toponymes des villages albanais dénotent que les agglomérations ont été fondées dans la majorité des cas par des clans. En effet, dans la liste des villageois, le premier inscrit porte la plupart du temps le même nom que celui de la localité. Douze villages sue seize se trouvent dans ce cas [...]. Le registre précise d’ailleurs qu’il

Studies, Thessaloniki, 1977, p. 313-329. See also Thoma Kacori – Rusi Stojkov, “Një regjistër osmano-turk i shek. XV për shqiptarët e Peloponezit” in *Studime historike*, Universiteti Shtetëror i Tiranës, viti XX, nr. 3, Tiranë, 1966, p. 149-164.

¹⁵⁵ Nicoara Beldiceanu – Irène Beldiceanu-Steinherr, “Recherches sur la Morée (1461-1512)”, in *Süd-Ost Forschungen*, R. Oldenbourg, München, Band XXXIX, 1980, p. 42.

s'agit de communautés. Parfois plusieurs personnes portent le même nom clanique"¹⁵⁶.

If the interest of this register, according to the authors, is justified by the fact that it "allows to put in evidence an important fact: the majority of the Albanian communities on 1461 didn't overcome the tribal stage"¹⁵⁷, extraordinary of this coincidence with this tribal organization is with that registered between the end of the XVI century and the beginning of the XVII century among the Sicily and Calabria Arbëresh, proves not only a kind of old traditions continuity, but also the preservation of the inherited social structures: this is a feature that generally characterizes the human groups detached from the origin countries and settled in distant areas.

26.– The continuity of the tribal organization lasted until the first half of the XVII century, hereupon the complete social integration of the migrants caused the unavoidable end of it. Few evidences think that kind of organization was still instilled by the end of the XVI century. Between these its worthy to mention "Matranga's Congregation" that is proved in a document found in the historic archive of Monreale's diocese¹⁵⁸ containing a prayer through which the Matranga family from

¹⁵⁶ Nicoara Beldiceanu – Irène Beldiceanu-Steinherr, "Corinthe eta sa région en 1461 d'après le registre *TT10*", in *Süd-Ost Forschungen*, R. Oldenbourg, München, Band XLV, 1986, p. 42.

¹⁵⁷ "permet de mettre en évidence un fait important: la majorité des communautés albanaises n'avaient guère dépassées le stade clanique en 1461": *ibid*.

¹⁵⁸ See Matteo Mandalà, *Lekë Matranga: njeriu, koha, vepra. Mbi botimin kritik të varianteve dorëshkrim e të shtypur të veprës E mbsuame e krështerë (1592)*, Ombra GVG, Tiranë, 2012, p. 29: "Havendo piaciuto alla suprema Maesta che Regge e Governa il tutto volere far moltiplicare ed accrescere in questa Terra della Piana della Metropolitana Ecclesia della fruttuosa Città di Morreale in questo fidelissimo Regno di Sicilia la quale Terra hebbe il suo principio regnando il serenissimo e cattolico Re Ferdinando nell'anno del Signore 1488 6^a Inditione 25 agosto possidendo l'Arcivescovado il Reverendissimo Cardinal D. Giovanni Borgia Arcivescovo il quale concesse alli smarriti et infelici Epiroti propria detta abitazione in dui feghi aridi et inutili umbrosi et dui habitaro nella grata allora nomata Val del Inferno a dritto sotto detta Valle della Montagna di Kseravulli al presente così nominata veramente li nomi proprij dimostrano essere infernali et aridi non trovando altro l'infelici per essere Albanese dove appoggiarsi per ritrovarsi poveri veteri soldati fuggitivi delli loro beni et poveri per l'impietà del Maumetto ottavo signore de Turchi primo tiranno imperatore de Costantinopoli ed essendosi quello fatto signore dell'Epiro per la morte della beata e felice memoria del serenissimo Principe de Epiroti Signor Giorgio Castriota ditto li grandi Alexandro il quale fu Bon Pastore e Reggitore ultimo di detti popoli albanesi e molto quello con gran miseria ed infelicità andavano li suoi particolarmente considerati e fideli con le loro famiglie per tutto il mondo come gregge senza pastore da cui fra gli altri Giovanna Matranga si vide in

Piana degli Albanesi on 1597 asked for permission to found a "congregation for protecting their tribe. Concretely, the document previews a kind of "of mutual help" that has no match in the medieval European tradition, but from the other side is a known practice in the tribal culture carried by the Albanians of that time. The fact that "Matranga" have felt the need to ask such a permission from the high judicial authorities represented by the Monreale's Bishop, holder of *mero e mixto imperio* in the fiefs where was included the repopulated Piana since a century from the Arbëresh, from one side proves that the new colons had already accepted the country's legal traditions and practices where they were living; from the other side, shows that the discovery of the urban space compound indeed the premises of a deep anthropological and cultural change of the colons, which after were roaming for a long time high and low through all the South of Italy, finally settled in a specific place.

Here stands the essential distinction between two kind of the Albanian migration in Italy. The first migratory phase, that of before the end of the XV century, was made through a long integration process of the migrants in the legal and social context of the urban realities, which inhabitants nourished great distrust towards the foreigners. The latter, were not such on foreigners, only because belonged to another ethnicity, but especially because they came from a different environment from the civil one. We shouldn't be surprised if since in the Balkans, before passing the Adriatic, these migrants felt the weight of the social exclusion and of marginalization from their fellow countrymen themselves, which closed the doors to the big masses of peasants, shepherds and of vagabonds who assembled in the city walls, asking to become part in a system that neither could or wanted to accept them. A reflex of this self-protection logic of the citizens is found by Brühilde Imhaus in the statutes signed in Zara on 1 April

sua vita il numero di dodici figli oltre tanti nipoti et pro nepoti e nore e quelli descendent i a essere in tanto che quasi haviano pieno la preditta Terra di detta parentela. Però la peste dell'anno 1575 molti sotterrò con tutto ciò come per sua divina volontà di oggi sono molti quasi la maggior parte di essa habitatione fra homini e donne et essendo da Dio sperate et molte l'anime in segno di carità considerando la calamità del mondo che giornalmente l'homo si vede di giovane vecchio o di fancultoso misero perciò li infratti persone propossero certa elemosina a figlie per sussiduo...".

1454, concretely in a paragraph that is dedicated to the Vrana (Aurana) neighborhood, on which

“on peut, par exemple, y lire que “tout habitant d’Aurana et de son comté peut saisir les biens de tout étranger pour récupérer son dû, à moins qu’il vienne pour moudre le grain... et on peut aussi indifféremment détenir tout paysan ou tout morlaque, qu’il appartienne à un seigneur ou à une communauté, réserve faite des sauf-conduits et créances de la commune, qui ont le pas sur les autres créanciers”. Le pauvre est averti : il existe des hommes, dans les villes, qui ne sont pas plus nobles qu’eux-mêmes, mais qui vivent incomparablement mieux et leur interdisent tout partage”¹⁵⁹.

Zara's Statutes weren't the only to contain norms aiming to limit, exclude or deny to the foreigners the rights reserved only to the city inhabitants. The Statutes of Shkodra, belonging the first half of the XIV century and contain “subsidiaries until 1469”¹⁶⁰, the only we have in hand from the cities raising on the surroundings of the inhabited areas from Albanians, previewed restriction measures, similar to that of Budva's Statutes¹⁶¹ on which “the inhabitants of Shkodra city were distinguished always as “citizens” from “the Slavs” and from “Albanians”, as also from “the foreigners” and “hosts”, terms these last that included the two first ones”¹⁶². According to Alain Ducellier, the same situation is also proved from the end of the XIV century in the city of Durrës where

“il résulte que la distinction entre Durrazzains et Albanais n’est pas à bas ethnique. Qu’ils fussent d’origine grecque, latine, slave ou albanaise, les habitants de Durazzo formaient une communauté

¹⁵⁹ See Brühilde Imhaus, “Vers l’Italie des communes et des princes”, in *Les chemins de l’exile*, quoted, p. 234.

¹⁶⁰ See *Statuti di Scutari della prima metà del secolo XIV con le addizioni fino al 1469*, a cura di Lucia Nadin, traduzione albanese di Pëllumb Xhufi, con saggi introduttivi di Giovan Battista Pellegrini, Oliver Jens Schmitt e Gerlando Ortalli, Viella, Perugia, 2002. *Statutet e Shkodrës të zbuluara nga Lucia Nadin* “mes kodikëve të koleksionit *Cicogna*” that are preserved in the Library of the Museo Correr in Venice, constitutes a document with extraordinary importance for the history of the mediaval communes in the Albanian shores. See Ermal Baze, “Institucionet qeverisëse të Komunës së Shkodrës (gjysma e parë e shek. XIV)” in *Studime Historike*, nr. 3-4, Qendra e Studimeve Albanologjike – Instituti i Historisë, Tiranë, 2008, p. 19-38.

¹⁶¹ See Gerlando Ortalli, “Gli statuti, tra Scutari e Venezia”, in *Statuti di Scutari*, quoted, p. 11 *et passim*.

¹⁶² Lucia Nadin, “Il Testo statutario” in *Statuti di Scutari*, quoted, p. 54

consciente de son unité et de sa supériorité de civilisation sur le plat pays: les activités politique, l'influence des différentes cultures qui y coexistaient, tout cela contrastait trop avec l'état encore fruste des pasteurs et des paysans albanais des environs auquel les Durazzains n'hésitaient pas à se livrer au détriment des Albanais...?"¹⁶³.

This was a typical urban stand owed to the dynamics that even in Italy during the communal age opposed the civil, high, cultured and wealthy identity to the masses of ignorants and of the poor characterizing the rural areas. In other words, was the same identity concept that the inhabitants of the "communal cities" interpreted as contraposition with the "village": for "the citizens" "the city was a spiritual situation, an altogether of customs and traditions, behaviors and feelings, organized around those customs and conveyed through those traditions"¹⁶⁴.

27.— This "spiritual situation" was not possessed by the others, the foreigners and especially the peasants, which not only were condemned to not profit the advantages of the city, but were violently marginalized and isolated as perturbing elements. This was one of the most important distinguished features, perhaps more than the language, the religious rites or ethnicity, that would mark the success or the failure of the Arbëresh settlements in Italy, as those of the XIV century and first half of the following century, or the later ones.

According to the scholar Imhaus from this refusal naturally comes in the awareness of the poor a new choice that spotted "the other shore as savior: they are determined to believe in the *felix Italia myth*"¹⁶⁵. This conviction was strengthened from the continuous comings and goings of the ships in the harbors, loaded with all the goods, with wheat, wine, fruits, spices, expensive draperies. Before being refused in the big coastal cities of the Balkan, may they be Dalmatian or Albanian, the dream to arrive in Venice and in Italy became more concrete. There is no doubt that for the Albanians between the end of the XIV century and the first half of the XV century the gaining of the citizenship right

¹⁶³ Alain Ducellier, *La Façade maritime*, quoted, p. 532.

¹⁶⁴ Robert Ezra Park, "La città: indicazioni per lo studio del comportamento umano nell'ambiente urbano", in *Città e analisi sociologica: i classici della sociologia urbana*, a cura di Guido Martinotti, Marsilio editore, Padova, 1968, p. 459.

¹⁶⁵ "l'autre rive comme salvatrice: ils sont mûrs pour croire dur comme fer au fameux mythe de la *felix Italia*", *ibid*.

composed a key objective and a decisive stage for the final integration, and if it's true what Bernard Doumerc says that “they try to achieve a greater integration by detaching the connections with the country of origin”¹⁶⁶, even when this undermined the alienation of their few goods possessed by them, so true is when the final break became definitive.

28.— The landing in Italy didn't guaranteed all the migrants the same welcome. If we put aside the case of Venice, that as has been put in evidence by Lucia Nadin, undertook an integration policy towards the Albanian vassals after the fall of Shkodra in the hands of the Ottomans, are rare the episodes that narrate for a social elevation that don't have to do with migrants groups, but with individuals. In the city of Venice was settled a big community of Albanians, who found work as sailors, craftsmen, merchants, laborers, soldiers, but also physicians and painters. Nevertheless we have many cases of conflicted integration, that is documented from the many judicial acts and convictions for different crimes, the masses of the Albanian migrants was engaged in searching a living space within a different cultural, social and economic context, mainly hostile. The first masses made that possible for the integration to be possible through accepting the Venetian system of life, with its rules and laws. Then started the assimilation and the loss of the cultural and linguistic identity of the migrants aiming to gain the citizenship right, that right that was denied in the homeland from the Dalmatians and the Albanian “citizens”.

In Venice wasn't easy to gain the citizen status. Differently from “the nationality” that was granted through a *social contract*, the citizenship “was reserved only to a limited number of families”. Only in the case of demographic crises or economic problems, so when “the state budget was in difficulty, or when required by the military needs, the government became more liberal” and spendthrift in granting the citizenship. Anyhow “the taking of citizenship remained for the foreigners the principal element giving him a legal position”: “to become citizen represented in a certain way “the social contract”, that clearly defined the rights and the duties”¹⁶⁷.

¹⁶⁶ “ils recherchent alors d'autant plus l'intégration en rompant les ponts avec le pays natal”: Bernard Doumerc, “Vers l'Ouest: la Dalmatie et Venise”, in *Les chemins de l'exile*, quoted, p. 122.

¹⁶⁷ Brühilde Imhaus, *Le minoranze orientali a Venezia*, quoted, p. 259-260.

The social elevation from the lowest rank to the highest previewed a vertical and a gradualism fixed by a certain legal and social concessions. The foreigner arriving in Venice and waiting to definitively placed, was put at the lowest social rank, in that of the "host" or vagabond. To achieve the highest level, that of the citizen, it had to pass through a intermediate cog represented from "the inhabitant" (*habitor*) category, which "was always a temporary or definitive placed migrant in the city. His legal status was expressed through a residence permission giving the holder a privileged position towards the foreigner. Indeed *the inhabitant (habitor)* almost seemed integrated in the Venetian society"¹⁶⁸. By taking this intermediate status, *the inhabitant* should made demand in the Commune's offices (*Provveditori di Comun*) and should prove that from years was living in the city. After paying the respective taxes he gained the right "to enter in some low offices", what "compound the first step towards gaining the citizenship". "The *inhabitant* status was gained by many easterners, but it's impossible to specify which ethnic group, Albanians, Dalmatians or the Greeks, were the bigger number of this category"¹⁶⁹. Except the numbers, there is no doubt that the taking of the intermediary status for those who have abandoned their country with the hope of a better life, was a great achievement. Few were those Albanians who reached such a level to be guaranteed the complete social and political admission. Practically, we don't have data on the existence of the special cases so sensational as that of the former

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid*, p. 265.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid*, p. 266; "between the 1300-1505 the majority of those who gained this status", were merchants and especially handicraftsmen. Among them 48 were Albanians. Between 1374-1453 their number achieved one thousand six hundred, but after 1440, when the migrants grew more in number, their number fell to 36, on which only 12 were Albanians, to then grow between the 1450-1509: indeed 341 are the decreed privileges, mainly for Italians and some Germans. Anyhow to the foreigners gaining the citizenship, never were recognized all the rights the Venetians enjoyed. The highest level of the rights recognized who was legally represented from the citizenship status "de intus e de extra", was very rarely given. *Ibid*, p. 268-271. "La concessione della cittadinanza veneziana comprendeva due gradi di naturalizzazione: la cittadinanza di "intus" ristretta, e di "intus et extra" che assimilava lo straniero ad un Veneziano di stirpe. Il suo ottenimento si accompagnava ad alcune condizioni: aver risieduto nella città per un certo numero di anni (variabili) e, durante questo periodo, aver pagato le imposte e sottoscritto ai prestiti pubblici": Brühelilde Imhaus, "Aspetti della colonia albanese di Venezia alla fine del Medio-Evo", quoted, p. 181.

Albanian slave “Giorgio da Durazzo”, that in 1389 was sheltered in Genoa¹⁷⁰.

29.– We long focused on these aspects to stress the distinctions between this phase of the Albanian migration and the later one. The distinctions have to do with the welcoming policy, but cannot be separately seen from the fact that the Albanians migration in the South was due to the special circumstances of their settlement. First, it must be said that this process included more or less compact groups of Albanians which when signed the establishment chapters or agreements with the local lords using the formula “in their behalf and of their friends”. In other words they also legally presented themselves not as individuals, but as a stable community aiming to be governed in accordance with the principles of that of the citizen spiritual situation that had they declassed for a long time in the level of social scum. The so-called “establishment chapters” compound one of the aspects that unite the history of Southern Italy's Arbëresh villages and, beyond special distinguishes that owe to the local customs, put in evidence one data that should be emphasized: the equal social and the economic situation of the new colons at the time of landing, and also the recognition of the “citizen's” status for all those who decided to definitively settle in one place.

As we highlighted above, the gradual change was manifested through the acceptance of the legal and social systems in force in the regions where the migrants lived. The integration process was difficult, especially in the beginning, but unstoppable. The today historiography that has taken into examination the reconstruction of these dynamics, leaving aside the myths of the past, has put in evidence the key moments that a population occurs during the change from “nomadic” to

¹⁷⁰ “Giorgio Durazzo Albanese” was an Albanian of a very low strata origin, one of the many “miserabiles” that had filled the surroundings of Durrës harbour waiting to arrive in one of the coastal cities of Italy. After taking to the sea on 1389 with his wife and children in a Sicilian ship towards Genoa, during the voyage turned to slave from the sailors of the ship. Arriving in Genoa he regained the status of the free man and achieved to raise his social level through lucky marriages of his children, also he created a powerful dynasty from which came out doges, cardinals and ambassadors of the Republic: the epopee of this migrant has been masterfully narrated by Angela Valenti Durazzo, *I Durazzo. Da schiavi a dogi della Repubblica di Genova*, La Compagnia della Stampa, Massetti Rodella Editori, Brescia, 2004, p. 32-39.

sedentary. The scholar Italo Sarro in a two volume work¹⁷¹, illustrated with many documents, has reconstructed *ubi consistam* who achieved to settle the Arbëresh of Valle del Crati in Calabria, from one side preserving the traditions of their ancestors and from the other adapting the new conditions and circumstances. Similar evidences are found in other Arbëresh settlements in the course of the centuries. The communities raised their proper administrative structures with Arbëresh officials and public services, strengthening in this way the feeling of belonging to "the city". Italy's Arbëresh found in their settlements the typical civil culture, so that "spiritual situation" that composed the necessary condition in a way that even them in a special moment of the European culture, to be settled in searching their origin.

To answer to the question "where do we come from and whose sons are we?", the bitter historic truth does not satisfy "the spiritual situation" they have gained. Therefore should history be re-written, should it exalt the origin and the invented tradition?¹⁷². This way sources the necessity to focus on research on the cultural identity in harmony with Europe's peoples inclinations, research that not by case were born long time ago before the new spirit could pervade the Balkan peoples¹⁷³.

¹⁷¹ See Italo Sarro, *Insediamenti albanesi nella valle del Crati*, voll. I-II, Edizioni Nuova Santelli, Castrovillari, 2010-2012.

¹⁷² See Eric J. Hobsbawn, "Come si inventa una tradizione" in *L'invenzione della tradizione*, a cura di Eric J. Hobsbawn e di Terence Ranger, Einaudi, Torino, 2002.

¹⁷³ See Matteo Mandalà, *Mundus vult decipi: mitet e historiografisë arbëreshe*, "Naimi" Shtëpi botuese dhe studio letrare, Tiranë, 2016.

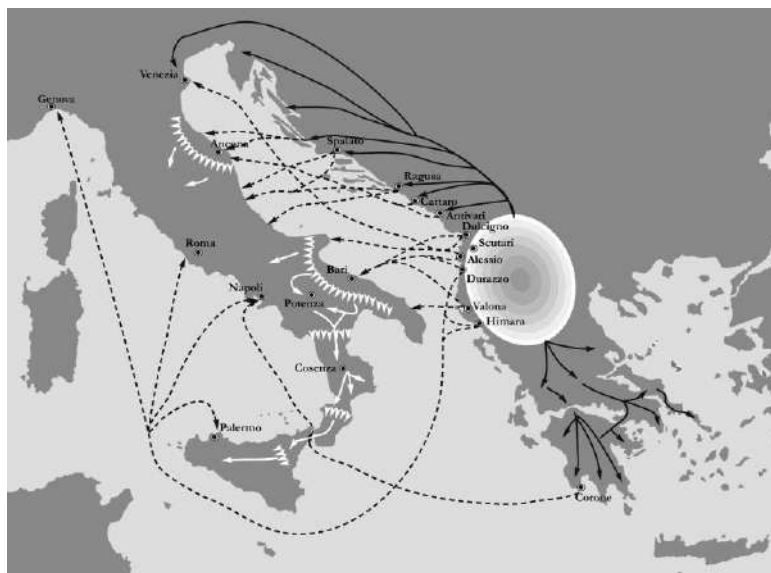


Fig. nr. 1 – Directions of the Albanian migration (XIV-XVIII centuries)

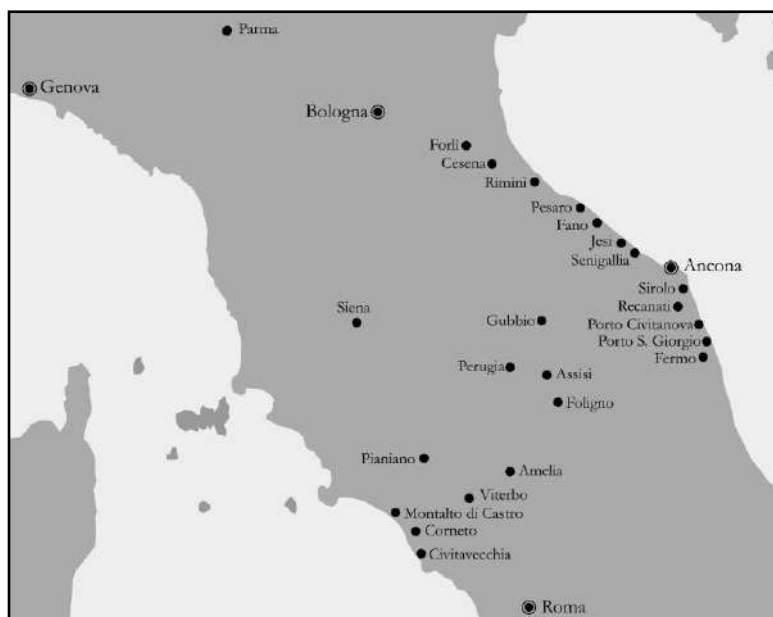


Fig. nr. 2 – Central Italy

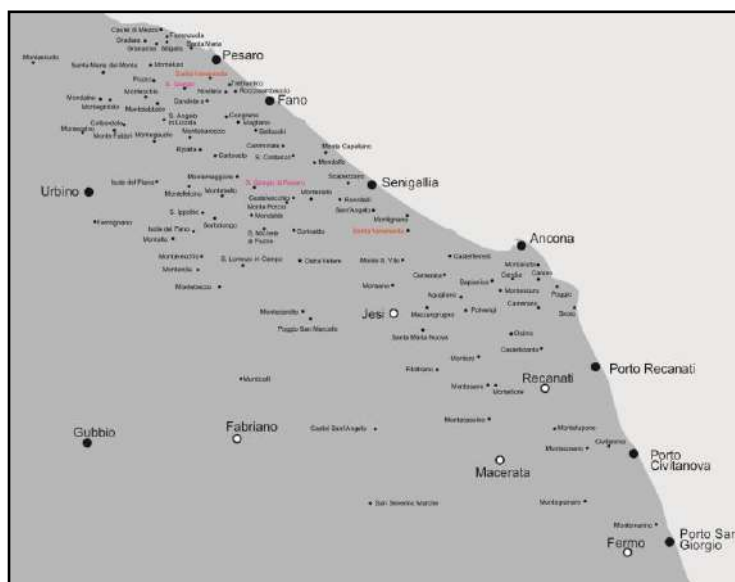


Fig. nr. 3 – Marche's coastal shores (see Ducellier Alain et alii, *Les chemins de l'exile.*)



Fig. nr.4 – Abruzzo

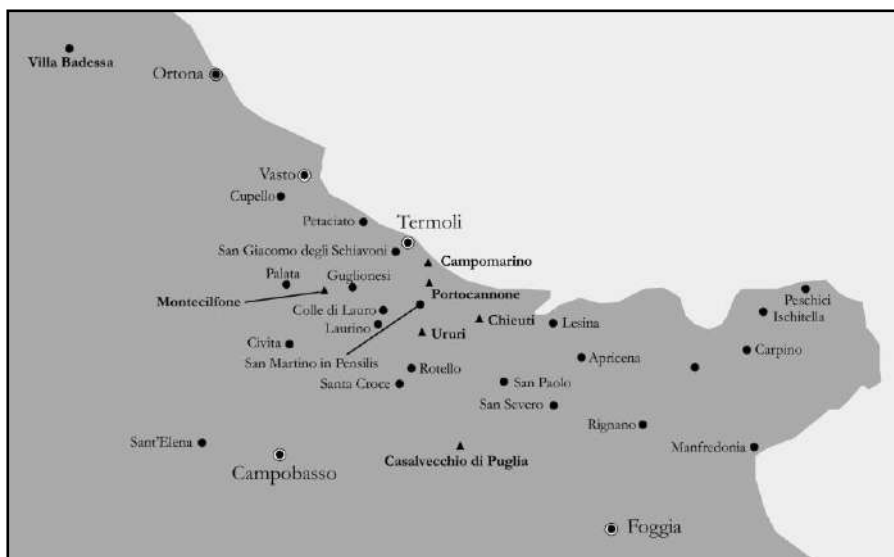


Fig. nr. 5 – Capitanata



Fig. nr. 6 – Arbëria Tarantine



Fig. nr. 8 – Between Potenza and Matera



Fig. nr. 9 – Senise valley



Fig. nr. 10 – Arbëria Deradiane



Fig. nr. 11 – Arbëria of Carmine Abate

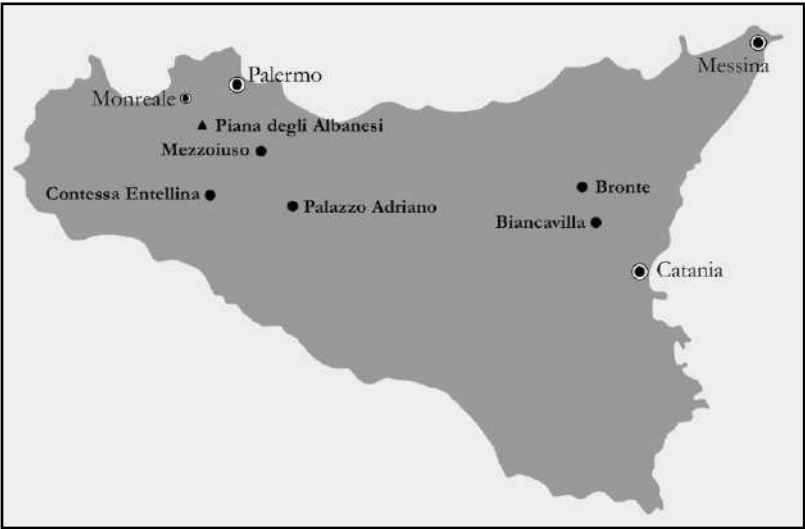


Fig. nr. 12 – Island within an island

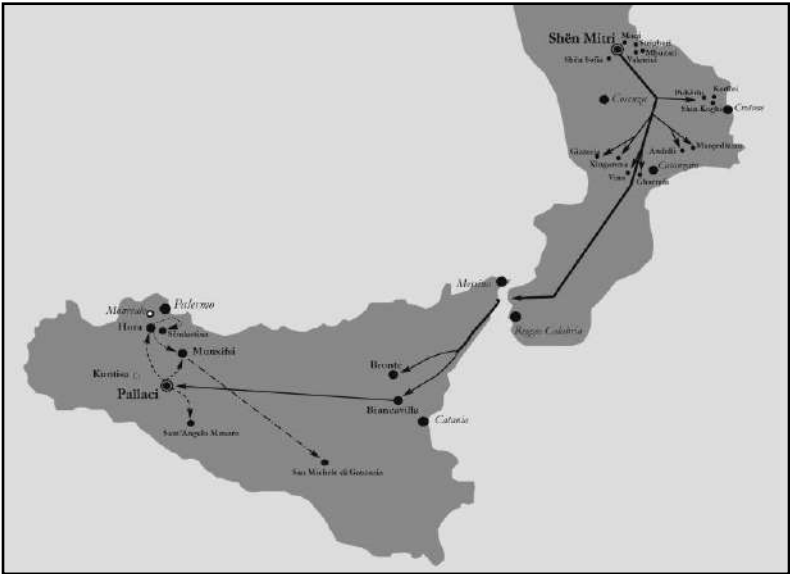


Fig. nr. 13 – Internal movement towards Sicily



Fig. nr. 14 – Areas of Arbëresh's origin: toponyms and anthroponomy in Morea

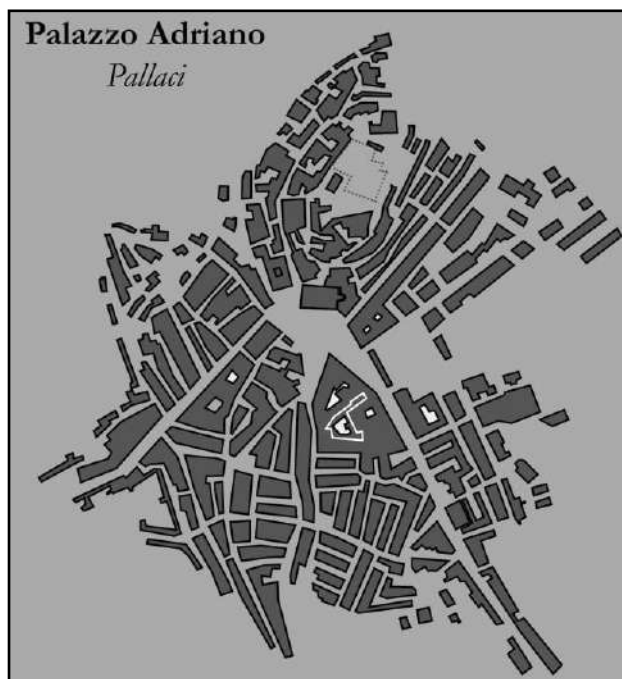


Fig. nr. 15a – Plan of three Arbëresh villages of Sicily: Pallaci



Fig. nr. 15b – Plan of three Arbëresh villages of Sicily: Hora e Arbëreshëvet



Fig. nr. 15c – Plan of Arbëresh villages of Sicily: Munxifsi

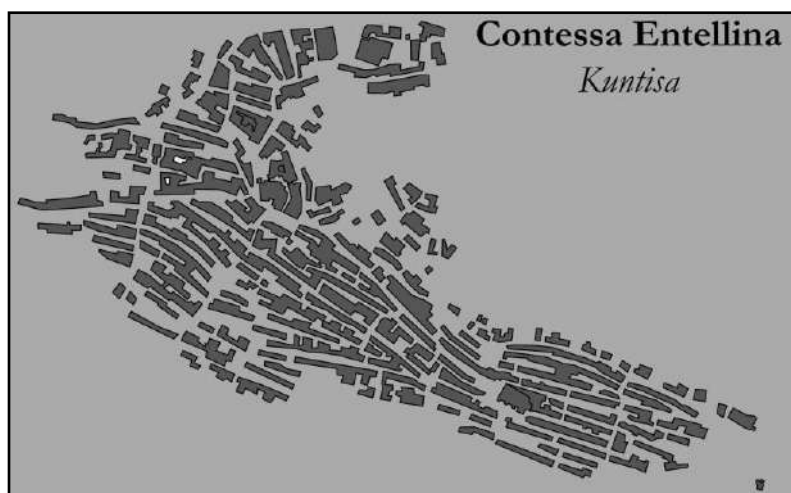
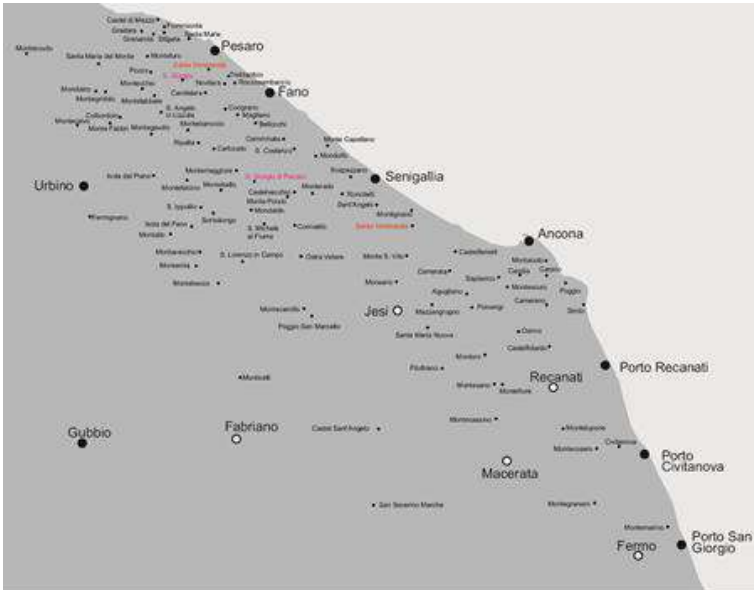


Fig. nr. 15d – Plan of Arbëresh villages of Sicily: Kuntisa



Fig. nr. 15e – Plan of the Arbëresh villages of Sicily: Sëndastina



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