Towns of Our Italian Ancestors

Our ancestors whether they are Sbanos, Blumettis, Buccolos, Calimanos, Chiaffetellas are known as Arbëreshë, Albanians who settled in Italy between the 15th and 18th centuries. They settled in the towns of San Paolo Albanese and San Costantino Albanese located in the province of Potenza in the Basilicata region of Italy and they emigrated to the United States in the 19th and early 20th century. What follows is a short history of Albanians in Italy with a description of the regions where our ancestors lived.

Please note that much of what follows is taken from an article written in 1964. While I believe the history portion is accurate I do not know if the parts describing dress, culture and the amount of isolation of Albanian villages is as accurate today.

Albanian History

Prior to the Ottoman invasion of Albania, all Albanians were called Arbëreshë. After some 300,000 people left and settled in Italy, these Italian-born Albanians continued to use the term Arbëresh whilst those in Albania called themselves Shqiptarë.



The original settlers of the Italo-Albanian villages in southern Italy came from the eastern side of the Adriatic Sea. Albania is a small area on the Balkan Peninsula, occupying part of the Adriatic Coast. The ancestral home of the ItaloAlbanians has geographic characteristics similar to their present habitat in southern Italy. About three-quarters of Albania is mountainous. The Dinaric Alps, which attain elevations of 12,000 feet, occupy the northern and central parts of the country. The Pindus Mountains stretch from the central portion southward into northern Greece. The country has a small coastal plain which has been unfit for settlement because of marshy conditions.

These two mountain systems have formed a physical and cultural barrier for Albania. The valleys are steepsided, the valley floors extremely narrow. Except for the higher elevations of the two mountain systems, it can be said that the physical settings of the villages in southern Italy are quite similar to those in Albania. Even the climatic conditions and vegetation are similar. The southeastern Adriatic region has a Mediterranean climate, with modifications as the distance from the coast or the elevation increases.

The geographic distribution of the Arbëresh in the mid-Fifteenth century, at the beginning of our ancestor's migrations, was much more widespread. Even though the exact origins and numbers of all the migrations have not been accurately recorded, it may be that equal numbers or, even a majority of our Arbëresh ancestors moved to Italy from locations that were far beyond the present Albanian borders

General History of Early Albania

In ancient times, Albania was originally part of an area known as Illyricum (also called Illyria), the same province visited by the Apostle Paul in the days of the early Christian church (Romans 15:19). The Illyrian were the earlist inhabitants of this region. They resided in the western area of the Balkans from modern Slovenia to approximately halfway through modern Greece.

Somewhere between the 8th and 6th century B.C., the neighboring Greeks created a string of colonies along the borders of what would later become Albania. The Illyrians were greatly influenced by the more advanced Greeks and began to grow politically and economically. The area became



Illyria during St Paul's time.

a valuable entrance to the Adriatic Sea and was taken over by the Romans in 229 B.C., who ruled for six centuries, influencing the Illyrians in art and Roman culture. When the Roman Empire fell, the area was divided and controlled by the Byzantine Empire from 535 to 1204 C.E. Throughout these occupations by others, the Illyrians retained their language and culture.



Albania today.

During the 2nd century C.E., the geographer Ptolemy of the Albanoi Tribe, who inhabited what is now central Albania, referred to his tribe as Arbëri. Others began using the self-reference, until sometime during the 8th to 11th centuries, the name Illyria eventually became Arbëri, and finally Albania with the people being called Arbëreshë.

Though now one nation in theory and

feelings, Albanian lands were populated with small fiefdoms, ruled by independent feudal lords and tribal chiefs, making them easy prey for other empires. Additionally, the urban areas reached a high point of development in the latter part of the Middle Ages (1000 to 1500 C.E.). Foreign commerce flourished to a point that leading Albanian merchants had offices in Venice, Ragusa and Thessalonica. Their society grew exponentially in education, the arts and culture, economic and political development, and prosperity, making the country a further enticement to others, as well as each other.

The fiefdoms constantly quarreled. Rival families fought. In 1385, some principal Albanian clans opened the door to the Ottomans by swearing fealty to the Turks in exchange for protection against the other fiefdoms. Thus, from the 11th through the 14th centuries, many of our ancestors moved southward, out of their ancient homelands and into what is now Greece. They moved mostly in tribal groups, sometimes numbering 10,000 to 12,000 people. They traveled with their herds of livestock, packed with all of their worldly possessions, and protected always by each tribe's fierce young warriors of the "military brotherhoods".

These young warriors facilitated the movement south and peaceful settlement in the new lands. The warriors were the favored mercenaries of the Serbian despots, as well as the Frankish, Catalan, Italian and Byzantine feudal lords of western Greece — all of



whom actively recruited the warriors for their armies and gave them lands in their various Greek domains.

In early 15th century, Sultan Murad II launched a major Ottoman onslaught in the Balkans. He allowed the conquered Albanian feudal lords and clan chiefs to maintain their positions and property; however, they had to pay tribute and provide the Ottoman army with auxiliary troops. They also were required to send their sons to be raised in the Turkish court, a customary practice during the Middle

Ages to ensure the loyalty of conquered rulers.

Georgio Castriota — The Heroic Skanderbeg

One of these sons was Georgio Castriota (born 1405 in Krujë), whose name has many different spellings throughout history — George, Gjergj, Giorgio, Castriota, Kastrioti, Castrioti, Castriot, and Kastriot. His father John, an Albanian nobleman, Lord of Mat, Krujë, Mirditë and Dibër in middle Albania, sent his four sons to Istanbul in 1421, where they trained in the Corps of Janissaries.

At the age of 16 Georgio's bearing and good looks got him noticed almost immediately, but it was his courage and daring that got the Sultan Murad II's admiration. A very intelligent young man, Georgio learned to speak Turkish, Greek, the Slavic language,

Italian and some accounts say Arabic. He didn't just train in the art of warfare — he studied it, learning everything there was to know about the available weaponry of the time, defensive and offensive battle strategies, horsemanship, and being a leader of men. He also converted to Islam from Christianity.

His three brothers were killed at an early age, but Georgio survived to become one of the Sultan's favorite generals. He led many battles for the Ottoman Empire and was awarded for his military victories with the title "Amavutlu Iskander Bey" (Skanderbeg, meaning "Lord Alexander, the Albanian" in Turkish, comparing his military brilliance to that of Alexander the Great).



His family's coat of arms. Notice the double-headed eagle on the helmet.

Sometime before 1443, his father sent emissaries to meet with

Skanderbeg in Adrianople, transmitting his father's greetings and delivering presents. They had long discussions on the poor conditions of Albania, the cruelty of the Ottoman rulers, and the misery and wretchedness the occupied people endured. The emissaries also told Skanderbeg of the hundreds of innocent Albanians the Turks had killed, beheading most of them.

Realizing his destiny was with his own people, Skanderbeg could not simply leave Adrianople for Albania. Though loved and admired by the Turks, including the Sultan, they were suspicious and guarded him well. So, he bided his time and waited for an opportunity to present itself.

In 1442, Skanderbeg's father died, opening the door for the Sultan Murad II to take over the Castriota region ruled by his father. Skanderbeg's homeland was given to an Albanian renegade named Hassan Bey, who put the entire principality under the rule of the Ottomans.

In the Spring of 1443, the Ottomans were in a battle against the Hungarians in Nis in present day Serbia. The Sultan's armies were defeated with the Hungarians continuing their march to take more land for their Empire. The Sultan Murad II sent an army under the joint

command of Kareman Beu and Skanderbeg, ordering them to stop the Hungarian advancement and hold them back, until the Sultan, himself, could join the battle with

greater and more organized forces.

This was the opportunity for which Skanderbeg had been waiting. Instead of directing the soldiers to fight the Hungarians on November 4, 1443, he ordered them to retreat, leading to a complete withdrawal of the Ottoman army. Skanderbeg withdrew with 300 Albanian horsemen, who had previously served under him and marched towards their native land. They first made their way to Dibër, where their arrival surprised the Albanian people. Here was



The remains of the castle today.

the famous Skanderbeg in Albania with a small Albanian force. Great rejoicing spread throughout the region. Skanderbeg and his troops moved on to his home of Krujë, on the western face of Mt. Dajti, and captured it by handing the Governor of Krujë a letter with the forged signature of the Sultan Murad II, granting Skanderbeg control of the territory. After taking his father's castle, Skanderbeg renounced Islam and the Sultan, proclaiming himself the avenger of his family and country, while re-embracing his Catholic faith. Above the castle, he raised his standard that later became the flag of Albania, saying to his people, "I have not brought you liberty. I found it here, among you!"

Skanderbeg united all of the Albanian princes under his command at the town of Lezhë in 1444. The princes furnished Skanderbeg, now the Prince of Albania, with men and resources. Even though his forces seldom exceeded 20,000 men Skanderbeg built fortresses and organized a mobile defense force that would force the Ottomans to disperse their troops during battle, leaving the Ottomans vulnerable in the mountainous



Andronike Arianite.

terrain to the hit-and-run tactics of guerrilla warfare. Skanderbeg fought against the Turks, repelling 13 Ottoman invasions, until his death in 1468.



Skanderbeg used the doubleheaded eagle from the family coat of arms as his standard.

Through all of this warfare, Skanderbeg married Andronike Arianite, daughter of George Arianite, an ally to Skanderbeg. Upon his death, his son, John Castriota, succeeded him to the throne and kept up his resistance to the Ottoman expansion for another 12 years.

Skanderbeg left a legacy as a national hero of the Albanian people, a source of national pride; and his fame reached far into Europe and Asia. His helmet and sword are still on display in a Vienna museum in Austria. The helmet bears goat horns legend says it was because Skanderbeg could climb rocks like a goat to set up ambushes against the Turks.

The castle in Krujë now has the Skanderbeg Museum at its side, with many other monuments and museums raised in his honor across Albania. In 2006, Albanian



President Alfred Moisiu and Cardinal Adam Maida unveiled a bronze statue of Skanderbeg in Rochester Hills, Michigan, at the Albanian St. Paul Church. Even a palace in Rome, where he resided from 1465 to 1466, is still named for him.



The Skanderbeg Museum stands next to what remains of his father's castle, circled in red.



The First Migration — 1448

After Skanderbeg's success in taking back the Krujë region from the Ottoman Empire, he caught the notice and admiration of the Papacy, the Republic of Venice, and the Kingdom of Naples, all of which were threatened by the expansion of the Ottoman Empire by Sultan Murad II (in his second reign as Sultan). They provided Skanderbeg with monetary resources and supplies, as well as occasional troops.

By the time of this map in 1494, the Ottoman and Hungarian Empires had all but taken over what was Albania and what was left was protected by Venice.

In 1448, Alphonse I of Aragon, the King of Naples and one of Skanderbeg's strongest supporters, was dealing with a rebellion of certain barons in the rural areas of his kingdom in southern Italy. Finding his military resources insufficient to put down the uprising, he called upon his ally for assistance. Skanderbeg responded by sending a detachment of Albanian troops, commanded by General Demetrios Reres and his sons George and Basil. The Albanian warriors were accompanied by their wives and families, another common practice during the Middle Ages.

Reres and his troops quickly suppressed the rebellion and restored order back to Alphonse, who rewarded Demetrios Reres for his service to Naples by appointing him Governor of Calabria. The Albanian troops received tracts of land to settle in the mountainous area of the province of Catanzaro. The 12 towns were:

Amato Andali Arietta Caraffa d' Catanzaro Carfizzi Gizzeria Marcedusa Pallagorio San Nicola Dell'Alto Vena Zagarise Zangarona



In 1450, Alphonse sent George and Basil Reres and their troops to Sicily, where he also reigned as king. He wanted them garrisoned

there to fight against a possible rebellion and invasion. They, along with some of the other Albanian leaders, troops and their families, established military camps that eventually became four new villages:

Mezzoiuso Palazzo Adriano Contessa Entellina Piana dei Greci (now called Piana degli Albanesi)

Back in Albania, Skanderbeg's citadel of Krujë was becoming the scene of one of Europe's most gigantic struggles. In May of 1450, Murad II (second reign) and 100,000 men were marching from Constantinople toward Krujë. The goal was to completely crush and end Skanderbeg and his Albanian army. The plan was to storm the citadel, hold it, and use it as a central command center, while conquering the countryside of Krujë.

Skanderbeg had only 17,500 able, armed and ready troops; since Reres and a full detachment were in Italy. Skanderbeg was outnumbered five to one by the Sultan. Dividing his troops into three battle groups, he left 1,500 provisioned troops in the citadel, itself, under the command of Count Uran. While Uran withstood the siege at the citadel, Skanderbeg used the two remaining groups of 8,000 men each to battle the Ottomans. He commanded one group that would nip at the Ottoman army, once it camped below Krujë. The other group of 8,000 was broken into small bands of guerilla warriors, who would ambush, raid and snipe at the Ottoman caravan on the cumbersome trek to Krujë.



After 4½ months, with an estimated loss of 20,000 men, and the onslaught of a hostile winter, Murad II retreated to his Empire, knowing his men would mutiny under the hostile weather. Skanderbeg and his troops had defeated the Ottoman army.

With this success, Alphonse took Skanderbeg under his protection as vassal in 1451, giving the Prince of Albania more monetary support, as well as troops, military equipment, and a sanctuary for himself and his family if ever needed. This also opened the door further for future Albanian migrations into Italy.

With support from four consecutive popes (Popes Nicholas V, Calixtus III, Pius II, and Paul II) of the Papal States, Skanderbeg now was considered an active defender of the



Christian cause in the Balkans. After the fall of Constantinople in 1453 to Sultan Mehmed II, Pius II considered Skanderbeg's battles against the Ottomans so important that he blessed Skanderbeg naming him Athleta Christi (Athlete of Christ) and promised to organize a crusade against the Turks with Skanderbeg as the generalissimo of the Christian armies. The Pope also promised to personally come to Albania and officially crown him King of Albania, Macedonia and Rumeli (the Turkish designation of Thrace and Romania)

Up until 1455, Sultan Mehmed II concentrated on conquering the last of the Byzantine Empire in

Sultan Mehmed II, after conquering Constantinople.

Europe and Asia Minor. Then, he returned his attention to the Albanians and Skanderbeg. At the Siege of Berat, located south of Krujë, Skanderbeg lost 5,000 of his



men, which was 40-50 percent of his mobile forces. Though Skanderbeg was out scouting and not present during the siege, it was his worse defeat throughout his military career.

In 1457, just like Murad II, Sultan Mehmed II set out to destroy the Albanian armies and Skanderbeg and conquer Albania for the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman army marched with an estimated 70,000 men, commanded by Isa beg Evrenoz (the only commander to have ever defeated Skanderbeg in battle) and Hamza Castriota, Skanderbeg's nephew. The Ottomans destroyed, plundered and murdered as much as they could during their march toward Krujë. They camped at the Ujebardhë field, halfway between Lezhë and Krujë. Having eluded the enemy for months, Skanderbeg and his forces of less than 15,000 men attacked and utterly destroyed the Ottomans at Ujebardhë.

Throughout these battles that brought devastation, the land could no longer be cultivated, complete

tribes were wiped out, and whole villages burned to the ground. With no hope for the future, Albanians were migrating away from Albania. They resettled in the Pindus range of western Greece, spanning down to Thessaly and along both sides of the Gulf of Corinth. Albanian villages also totally surrounded the city of Athens and dotted all parts of the Peloponnese, the southern most region of the Greek peninsula.

Gothic and Slavic invasions from the north had led to migrations of Albanians to Greece as early as the 8th century. The Ottoman invasions encouraged more extensive migrations of Christian Albanians. Many Albanian colonies had been established in Greece by the latter half of the 14th century. Coming from "Arvanian" they called themselves Arvanites. The Byzantine historian Contecus noted that feuds between Byzantine nobles and Latin Princes after the 4th Crusade (1202-1204) had devastated the Greek countryside but the Arvanite newcomers settled in barren regions, felled forests and made the soil suitable for tilling. It is believed that at one time over half the population of the lower Peloponnesus or Morea were Albanians.

The Second Migration — 1462

The second Albanian migration to southern Italy was similar to the first. Alphonse I of

Aragon died in 1458. His son, Ferdinand, succeeded him to the throne. His succession was opposed in Naples by the rural feudal barons, who began a revolt in the Province of Lecce in 1461. This time, however, the barons got military assistance from France. With the backing of Pope Pius II, Ferdinand appealed to Skanderbeg for assistance in suppressing the rebellion, as his father before him had done.

Skanderbeg came to Ferdinand's literal rescue at Barletta, where the Franco-rebel armies had Ferdinand entrapped. Skanderbeg's army was made up of an estimated 7,200 infantry and 2,200 cavalry troops, all seasoned, well-chosen men who were accustomed to victory. Ferdinand appointed Skanderbeg as commander of both the Albanian and



Italian troops. After two decisive battles, the rebels were defeated and the revolt broken.

In gratitude, Ferdinand granted the Albanian troops land near the city of Taranto in the region of Apulia. They established villages in the low, rolling landscape to the east of Taranto. The villages were:

Carosino Faggiano Fragagnano Monteiasi Monteneosola Monteparano Rocaforzata San Crispieri San Giorgio Ionico San Marzano



Ferdinand also awarded Skanderbeg large tracts of land in Foggia near San Giovanni Rotondo, the title Duke of San Pietro, and the village of Troia as a future "haven", where his family could flee should the Turks overrun Albania.

Hearing that Sultan Mehmed II was invading an area near Albania, Skanderbeg announced to Ferdinand that he intended to return to his homeland. The King expressed his gratitude in front of his entire court. Afterwards, he gave Skanderbeg additional gifts of land, including the cities of Trani, Monte Gargan, and San Giovanni Rotondo in Puglia. Upon returning to Albania, he found his government unstable with local Albanian rulers cooperating with the Ottomans against him. In 1464, Skanderbeg battled and defeated Ballaban Badera, an Albanian renegade. Though Badera did not win the battle, he did capture a large number of Albanian army commanders, some of Albanian's bravest, a few noblemen, Skanderbeg's nephew, Muzaka of Angelina, and other army captains, who were sent immediately to Sultan Mehmed II in Istanbul where they were tortured as Skanderbeg's offered ransom and prisoner exchange were denied.

In 1466, Mehmed II personally led an army to lay siege to Krujë, defended by a garrison of 4,400 men. The sultan failed and returned to Istanbul, though he left 40,000 men to continue the battle, building a castle in central Albania to support the siege. Skanderbeg, leaving the sultan frustrated at his inability to subdue the Albanians, broke the second siege.

A few months later in 1467, Mehmed II led the largest army of its time to besiege Krujë for a third time. While a contingent pinned down the city and its forces, Ottoman armies surrounded the whole country, effectively cutting off Skanderbeg's supply routes and



limiting his mobility.

The Ottomans had gained a foothold in Albania. Skanderbeg moved to the coastal city of the Venetiancontrolled Lezhë for safety. It was here that he was bitten by a malarial mosquito from a nearby swamp, fell ill with malaria, and died on January 17, 1468, just as the Albanian army defeated the Ottoman force in Shkodër. He was buried in the cemetery of Saint Nicholas church in Lezhë. Though defeated, Mehmed II reportedly shouted, "Asia and Europe are mine at last. Woe to Christendom! She has lost her sword and shield."

In 1480, the Turks found his grave and opened it. They used his bones as talismans for luck, hoping that the bones of such a great military leader would make them

braver and stronger.

Skanderbeg's will left the protection of the fortified cities in Albania to Venice. His wife and family fled to Italy, where one of his daughters married into the nobility of Naples to become Princess Bisagnato. Her influence paved the way for acceptance of the Albanian refugee resettlement. There now were constant migrations of Albanians to southern Italy to escape the ravages of war.

The Third Migration — The Fall of Albania, 1468 to 1492

Though Skanderbeg's son, John Castriota, continued the resistance against the Turks for another 12 years after his father's death, the cohesive union of fiefdoms and tribal chiefs faltered and splintered. There were only moderate successes and no great victories. Unfortunately, Skanderbeg was one of the best military commanders, both

ancient and modern, in his ability to command a small defensive army. John was not the military leader his father was, nor were John's commanders.

At some point during the Third Migration period, John Castriota fled with his family to Italy, where he was granted a Dukedom. He continued leading military expeditions against the Ottoman occupation of his homeland with only minor success.

Naples and the Vatican continued to support the Albanian resistance, which was mostly in the highlands, where chieftains wouldn't even allow roads to be built in order to subvert attacks. The fortified cities, however, began to fall to Sultan Mehmed II's armies.

In about 1470, five Albanian villages were settled on the margins of the Sila Greca, the southern edge of the Pollino Range in today's Italy, as well as Spezzano Albanese.

In about 1478, Mehmed II made a fourth siege of Krujë and succeeded. Krujë fell only because the people were demoralized and severely weakened by hunger and lack of supplies after a yearlong siege. The Albanians of Krujë surrendered to the Ottomans and handed over the castle upon the agreement that they could leave Krujë unharmed. As the Albanians were walking away with their families, the Ottomans killed all the men and took the women and children as slaves.

A year later in 1479, Mehmed II captured Venetian-controlled Shkodër, the last free Albanian castle, after a 15-month siege.

As each city fell, the people fled into the mountains or across the sea to Italy. Many found their way to cities in the north, especially in Venice. It was during this time that most of the villages on the western side of the Coastal Range were settled.

In 1480, Sultan Mehmed II's prediction at Skanderbeg's death came true. Venice could not keep up her war alone against the Ottoman Empire and was finally forced to sign an unfavorable treaty, giving away most of her ports in Albania. Venice sent ships to help evacuate some Albanians; while others went south to the Peloponnesus (now part of Greece), southern Italy (especially Naples), Sicily, Greece, Romania and Egypt. Many Albanians settled in the many abandoned and under-populated rural villages of in the south of Italy.

That same year, the Ottomans invaded Italy and conquered the city of Otranto. They also invaded the southern and western parts of Greece.

Though Albania was essentially lost to the Ottoman Empire, those who remained continued their resistance — sometimes organized and sometimes with random attacks — until 1500. Most of the Albanian population was forced to convert to Islam. They remained part of the Ottoman Empire until 1912, never again posing a serious threat to the Turks.



Otranto is circled in red.

Migrations to Italy — 1500 and After

The 1480 Turkish conquest of the Greek mainland meant another migration between 1500 and 1534 of Albanians who had served in the armies of various feudal lords of the conquered southern and western areas of Greece for several centuries. Most fled to various Venetian trading posts and fortresses on the coasts of Greece, such as Corone, Modone and Napulia in the Peloponnese (Morea). These warriors were again recruited for their valued military skills and enlisted into the stradiotti (colonial light cavalry of Venice), settling in isolated locations across the whole southern Italian peninsula and Sicily to discourage Turkish raiding and attacks.



Corone (Koroni)



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Key dates:

1209 The Venetians acquire Corone.

1500 Sultan Bayazet II invades Peloponnese (Morea) and forces the Venetians out of Corone.

1532 The Genoese Admiral Andrea Doria conquers Corone on behalf of Emperor Charles V.

1534 The Christian alliance leaves Corone which returns to Ottoman hands. **1686** Venetians return to Corone.

1714 The Venetians abandon the fortress which is occupied for the third time by the Ottomans.

Corone, which in classical times was a simple fort, became a large fortress during Byzantine times. It was captured by the Franks of the Fourth Crusade and granted to Geoffrey de Villehardouin (1205) who, under the Treaty of Sapienza (1209), ceded it to the Venetians; the terms of the treaty were later on ratified by Emperor Michael VII Palaeologus. *Coronis*, the ancient name of the town, means crow because a bronze crow was found when laying the town's foundation.



The fortress seen from the west: behind it the Mani Peninsula

The Venetians called the area around Corone *Belvedere* (fine view) not because of the views towards the Mani peninsula, but because it was very nicely farmed: today its landscape has a Tuscan appearance due to many rows of cypress trees.



Northern side of the fortress

Corone and nearby Modon were called the *eyes of Venice* because they controlled an important section of the maritime route between Italy and the Levant. The Venetians

strengthened the battlements of the old Byzantine fort: the town expanded beyond its walls: its population was a very mixed one.



1685 map and 1692 view of the fortress

In August 1500 the city was taken by the Turks (first Turkish occupation), causing many inhabitants to flee to Zante and Cefalonia.

In 1532 the Allied Fleet of Charles V, the Pope and the Knights of Malta under the command of the Genoese Admiral Andrea Doria, seized the city only to abandon it in 1534, taking with them 2,000 inhabitants, mainly belonging to the *Arbereshe* (Albanian) community. They settled in southern Italy where already other Albanian refugees lived. They never forgot Corone and Morea as their songs testify.

Oh my beautiful Morea

Oh my beautiful Morea/since I left you,/ I 've never seen you again./ There I have my father/ There my lady-mother/ My brother also/ all buried below the earth./ Oh my beautiful Peloponnese!

The Lament of Corone

We left behind in Coron our possessions and our goods, but have taken Christ with us, oh my beautiful Morea! Deeply sad, with tears in our eyes, we grieve for you Arberia...My swift-flying little swallow, when you return once more to Coron, you will not find our homes, nor our handsome lads, but only a dog (the Ottomans), may death come upon him! When the ships spread their sails and our land was lost to the eyes, all the men with a sigh and the women with a wail cried out: Get out Ghost! devour us! oh my Morea! oh Arberia!

Stradiotti

In the late 15th and early 16th centuries, Venice lost these outposts on the mainland of Greece, as well. She moved her garrisons, including the stradiotti, to new island posts on the islands of the Aegean, Ioanian and Adriatic Seas, where, due to their isolated locations, they maintained their culture until the 20th century.

The stradioti, mounted troops of Albanian and Greek origin who initially entered

Venetian military service during the Republic's wars with the Ottoman Empire in the fifteenth century, were among pioneers of light cavalry tactics in European armies in the early modern era. These warriors, who had previously served Byzantine and Albanian rulers, initially found asylum and employment in the Venetian strongholds of Napoli di Romagna, Corone, Modone, and Malvasia in the Peloponnesus. Later they were also stationed in Venetian holdings at Trau, Sibenico, Castellonuovo, and Zara in Dalmatia, and the islands of Corfu, Zante, Cephalonia, Crete and Cyprus. They were also introduced into Italy by the Venetians in the 1470's and participated in wars in Italy through much of the 16th century, not only for Venice, but also for other employers. It was in these wars that the stratioti made an impact on warfare in Italy and the west, chiefly by their style of fighting and tactics. The stradioti were armed and fought as light cavalry in a manner



Stradiotti Warrior

that developed from warfare among Byzantine, Slavic, Albanian and Ottoman forces. They carried spear, a long saber, mace, and dagger, and were attired in a mixture of oriental, Byzantine and western military garb. The stradioti continued the Balkan traditions of cavalry warfare, which used hit-and-run attacks, ambushes, feigned retreats, counterattacks and other tactics little known to western armies of the time.

The stradioti did not come from Albania proper, but from the Venetian holdings in southern and central Greece, that is Malvasia (Monemvasia), Modone (Methone), Corone, Napoli di Romagna (Nauplion), the Mani, and Lepanto (Naupaktos). Most of the stradioti who entered Italy in the late 15th and early 16th centuries, together with their families, had been born in the Peloponnesus, their progenitors having immigrated there in the late 14th and early 15th century. They had settled in southern Greece through the encouragement of the Byzantine Despots of the Morea, Theodore I Palaiologos (1384-1407) and Theodore II Palaiologos (1407-1443). The Albanians served as military colonists in the Peloponnesus in the attempt by the Despotate of Morea (Usually the current Byzantine Emperor's heir was given the title Despot) to survive the expansion of the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans. In addition, the Venetians began to settle Albanians in Napoli di Romagna (Nauplion) in the Argos region. With the collapse of the Byzantine state in 1453 and the dissolution of the Despotate of the Morea through civil war in the 1450's and 1460's, more and more of the Albanian and Greek stradioti found refuge and employment with the Venetians. The Venetians increasingly used them as troops in their conflicts with the Ottomans in Greece and the Levant in the second half of the 15th and throughout the 16th century.

In time the Venetians introduced some of these stradioti into their forces in Italy. Several factors probably played a role in the extensive use of these troops by the Venetians. One important factor was that there was an abundance of these troops. The small Venetian holdings in Greece could not employ the large number of refugee stradioti that sought asylum and employment. By the end of the 15th century some stradioti companies were transferred and reassigned to the Venetian-held Ionian Islands of Corfu, Cephalonia, and Zante. Soon afterwards, other stradioti were sent to Italy, to the Venetian-Ottoman border in Friuli, and to the Dalmatian holdings of Sebenico (Sibenik), Spalato (Split), Zara (Zadar), Trogir, and Bocca di Cattaro (Kotor). As the Venetians lost one stronghold on the mainland Greece after the other in the Veneto-Turkish conflicts of first half of the 16th century, more and more military colonists resettled on the Ionian Islands, Dalmatia and Italy. One Greek writer has estimated that the number of Albanian and Greek stradioti that settled in Venetian territories and in Italy reached 4500 men, together with their families they numbered about 15,500. If one includes those settled in Southern Italy and Sicily, the numbers reach about 25,000.

Another factor in the Venetian preference in employing *stradioti* was the troops' unorthodox tactics and methods of fighting, which could be utilized in different ways. The *stradioti's* light cavalry tactics matched those of Ottoman *sipahi* (feudal) and *akinci* (irregular) cavalry, which made them an asset to Venice in the garrisons of its Balkan and Levantine possessions, where they were maintained well after the 16th century. In Italy and elsewhere in Western Europe they proved to be useful in scouting reconnaissance, and in raiding forces in disarray or retreat, as seen in the descriptions above. According to the most important study of the Venetian army, "They may have been especially praised for raiding deep into enemy-occupied country where opportunities for loot were freest."

The stradioti impressed the Venetians and their adversaries with their tactics, which included repeated attacks and disengagement, which enticed opposing forces to pursue. Enemy forces would lose formation and become even more vulnerable to the *stradioti* attacks. Opponents would have to deploy infantry armed with arquebus, or artillery in defense against the *stradioti*

Later in 1538, after the Venetians abandoned Corone, the Spanish government in Naples accepted many refugees from that Peloponnesian town and region, some of whom had served the Venetians as stradioti. These troops now took on service with the Spanish in Naples. Spain continued to employ stradioti in the 16th and 17th century, chiefly in Naples and elsewhere in Italy. The most important recruiting area for these troops was Cheimarra.

Since Spain and Naples were connected with the Holy Roman Empire through the person of Charles V in the first half of the 16th century, stradioti were soon found serving the Habsburgs not only in Italy, but also in Germany and the Netherlands. Among those who distinguished themselves in Habsburg service and became knights of the Holy Roman Empire were the captains lakovos Diassorinos, Georgios Bastas, the Brothers Vasilikos, and the redoubtable Merkourios Bouas. Bouas was given titles by the Venetians and French as well. Henry VIII also employed Stradioti in France and England, notably under the captains Thomas Buas of Argos, Theodore Luchisi, and Antonios Stesinos. The former was named colonel and commander of stradioti in

Henry's service at Calais. There is also some evidence that Greeks served as cavalrymen, together with Serbs, in the Muscovite armies in the late 16th and early 17th century, during the notorious "Time of Troubles."

By the end of the 16th century, however, the number of stradioti companies employed in Italian and other western armies dwindled. The creation of light cavalry formations, borrowing from the traditions of the stradioti, as well as those of the Spanish genitours (genitaires) and the Hungarian hussars, replaced the stradioti in many European armies. These new units, made up of natives or various ethnic groups, also added firearms to their panoply, and the mention of stradioti, argoulets, estradiots, Albanese, Albains, Greci, Levantini, etc. become less and less frequent. Western armies had formed their own light cavalry units and relied less and less upon the stradioti.



Emperor Charles V came to power in the early part of the 16th century. He was king of the Spanish realms of Castille and Aragon, the Austrian dominions, and the Netherlands as well as Holy Roman emperor for some 40 years. He very nearly succeeded in uniting the world into a vast Roman Catholic fiefdom, stretching from the Americas to the frontiers of Asia. In his attempts to counter the Ottoman threat against Europe, Charles recruited large numbers of Albanian warriors, including the former stradiottis, because of their experience and success in fighting against the Turks. After a number of battles with the Turks gained control of

this area. Charles then ordered his Admiral, Andria Doria, to evacuate two hundered shiploads of these soliders from the south of Greece, including those of the garrison of Corone, and resettled them in many of the existing Arbëresh settlements of Southern Italy. This action is thought to have been because of a concern that the Sultan might have been planning to invade there.

He resettled many of them in the existing Albanian settlements of southern Italy, bringing a strong Byzantine Greek influence to many of the Arbëreshë villages. While the Italo-Albanians called themselves "Arbëreshë", the Albanians began calling themselves "Shqiperia" sometime during the 16th or 17th century.

Within a few years, the more rural villages lost many of the Greeks who preferred to live in the larger cities. Most of the villages then reverted to a predominantly Arbëreshë cultural identity. Many residents, especially those Albanians around Calabria, continued their professions as soldiers in the regiments of the Neapolitan army for several more centuries, especially during the Wars of Religion and into the Napoleonic Wars. Venice also continued to employ Albanian cavalry units in her mainland Italian armies for many years after the fall of her overseas possessions.

The final migration was in the 18th century. A group of Himariots, from the village of Himarë near Sarandë in southern Albania, was fleeing a massacre, instigated by Ali Pasha Tepelena, Albanian ruler (under the Ottoman Empire) of the western part of Rumelia, who slaughtered 6,000 Christian Albanians for refusing to convert to Islam. The refugees settled in Hora e Arbëreshëvet (Piana degli Albanesi) and subsequently founded the village of Sëndahstina (Santa Cristina Gelá).

From 1900 to 1910, a wave of emigration from southern Italy to the Americas depopulated approximately half of the Arbëreshë villages, putting the remaining residents at risk of losing their cultural identity despite the beginning of a cultural and artistic revival in the 19th century.

Culture of the Arbëresh

Southern Italy has known many settlers since the beginning of European civilization. Four ethnic groups, besides the Albanians, had settled in southern Italy. They are: (1) the ancient Greeks, (2) the Byzantine Greeks, (3) the Saracens, and (4) the Waldenses. Each of these groups established colonies in southern Italy but, for different reasons, failed to survive. They went to Italy under varying circumstances, remained there as an identifiable group for a length of time, and then their identity was lost.

This failure was not primarily due to cultural integration but to incompatibility. The ancient Greeks had to face the rising power of Rome; the Byzantines clashed with the Papacy; the Saracens (who were Muslims) were the scourge of the Christians; and the Waldenses were subjected to the Inquisition because of their different religious beliefs. Only the Italo-Albanians have remained as an identifiable group to the present day. The Albanians represent a unique group because, even though they came as foreigners, they did not rouse the ire of the natives, and no group desired their elimination or removal. For 500 years they have remained on Italian soil. It would be wrong to think of the Albanians as a passive group, living peacefully in southern Italy. Indeed, during the early days of their arrival they practiced brigandage (highway robbers/outlaws). This practice was forcefully suppressed by organized



military expeditions, but there was no movement to eradicate or evict the Albanians. The chief aim of the expeditions was to curb the practice of brigandage. Except for these actions, there is no record of a campaign designed to eliminate this foreign element from peninsular Italy, as there was against the other four foreign groups.

Several factors have contributed to the survival of the Albanian group in southern Italy. The first factor is the geographical isolation provided by the mountainous terrain of that region. The second factor is that the cultural traits of the Albanians did not arouse any suspicion which would have led eventually to their elimination by force. The third factor is intangible, the desire of the Albanians to retain their identifiable cultural traits

The Albanians arrived in southern Italy in the middle of the fifteenth century when the Ottoman Turks were nearing the peak of their power. The Albanians had just fled their native land because of the militant activities of the Turks and were seeking new land for settlement. It was natural for them to choose a site that could be easily defended rather than to settle on the coast and be exposed to the raids that the Turks conducted along the shores of the Italian peninsula. With few exceptions, the Albanian settlements are several miles from the coasts and on higher points of land.

Another reason why the Albanians chose to settle in high, remote places is the unhealthful conditions of the lowlands, both along the coast and in the interior of southern Italy. The lowland areas have always been the best agricultural lands because of the alluvial soils, but unfortunately they are also the breeding places for the Anopheles mosquito, the carrier of the malarial parasite to man. Malarial conditions were known to have existed there during the attempted settlement by the ancient Greeks.



The puppets (from left to right) the wife and husband (above the two workers) represent marriage, the two workmen represent work, and the black and red puppet represents the Devil. These are set on fire at the end of the procession.

Language

The language of the Arbëresh is called Arbërish. There is no official political, administrative or cultural structure in Italy which represents the Arbëresh community. The language is not legally recognized, nor is it used in administration (only the villages of Hora e Arbëreshëvet in Sicily and Katundi in Calabria recognize the Arbërisht language) There are associations that try to protect the culture, particularly in the Province of Cosenza. The Arbëresh language is used in some private radios broadcasts and publications. The fundamental laws of the areas of Molise, Basilicata and Calabria make reference to the Arbëresh language and culture, but the Arbëresh people still feel that their culture is threatened. Nevertheless, the increase in training in the use of the written language has given some hope for continuity of this culture. It is important to note that the Arbëresh dialect is not a regional dialect of Italian, it is a dialect of Albanian (shqip).

The Arbërish language is of particular interest to students of modern Albanian language as it represents the sounds, grammar and vocabulary of pre-Ottoman Albania. In fact, Arbërisht was the name of the Albanian language used in Albania prior to the Turkish invasion in the 16th century; as was the country itself called Arbëria. It is said that a Shqiptar listening to or reading Arbërish is similar to a modern English speaker listening to or reading Shakespearean English. Religion is another factor that helps to distinguish the Italo-Albanian from the Italians, but this factor is not conclusive because of the villages that are distinctively Albanian, half practice the Greek rite and half practice the Roman Catholic rite. However, the Greek Orthodox clergy has been closely associated with the Italo-Albanians, while the Roman Catholic clergy has not interested itself in affairs that are distinctively Albanian. It is not just coincidence that in certain villages, such as those in the provinces of Taranto and Lecce, where the clergy are Roman Catholic, the Albanians have lost their identifying characteristics, while in the villages where the Greek clergy are followed the Albanian characteristics have prevailed.

The origin of the practice of the Roman Catholic rite among the Italo-Albanians is not entirely clear. The Venetian Republic did have control of the port city of Durres (Durrazo) in Albania until the conquest of that area by the Ottomans, but it is not clear whether or not the cause of Roman Catholicism was furthered during Venetian rule. It is certain, however, that before and up until the conquest of Albania by the Ottomans, the Eastern Orthodox rite was practiced by the Albanians. (Later many became Moslems.) It is suggested that those who arrived with the earlier migrations perhaps found it politic to profess their union with the Pope when they arrived in Italy. It was not easy for a schismatic group to live in Italy at this time and to practice their rituals without being regarded suspiciously. It is also possible that the early arrivals were already Roman Catholics because this group originally came from the region of central and northern Albania which had been under the influence of the Venetian Republic. Many of the other Italo-Albanian villages adopted the Roman Catholic rite at a much later date. The adoption was not of their own volition but stemmed from necessity. A few generations after their arrival in southern Italy, there remained very few Greek Catholic clergymen, and parishes that were previously of this rite became staffed by clergymen of the Roman Catholic rite.

When the Byzantines occupied southern Italy during the ninth and tenth centuries, the Basilian monks established many monasteries throughout this region. One of their saints, S. Nilo, established the monastery at Grottaferrata in the tenth century. Today there are two monasteries where young men from Albanian villages can train for the priesthood. One is the Badia di Grottaferrata which is near Rome; the other is the Italo-Albanian college located in Piana degli Albanesi. There are also two bishops of the Greek rite, one in charge of the diocese of Lungro (Cosenza), the other of Piana degli Albanesi (Palermo). The principles taught to the clerical aspirants were founded by St. Basil. The language used for the Mass is Greek. Not all the young boys entering this monastery come from the Italo-Albanian villages, but they are in the majority.

Because of its close supervision by Rome, the Greek rite has adopted some Latin features; yet it has retained many characteristics by which it can be distinguished. These characteristics are seen in the various parishes that are found mainly in the Italo-Albanian villages

The Mass of the Greek Catholic church is said in Greek, differing from the Latin service of the Roman Catholic church. The worshippers memorize the responses when they are children; their teachers are either nuns or monks. In some parishes, the



priest recites the Mass in Albanian, and some of the older members give the responses in Albanian The Greek Catholic church in the ItaloAlbanian villages has helped the people to retain their identifying characteristics. In these remote villages, the church plays an important role because it is, and has been, the center of social life of the village. From birth until death, all the important social events that concern an individual are invariably within the realm of the

church.

In the villages observing the Greek rite, the villager is accustomed to hearing, seeing, and participating in things that pertain to the Eastern church rather than the Western. If an Italo-Albanian who followed the Greek rite were to attend a service in an Albanian Orthodox church, he would be in more familiar surroundings than in a Roman Catholic church in southern Italy.

Traditions of the Arbëresh

The Italo-Albanians have managed to retain some traditions which were brought to southern Italy by their ancestors. Most of these traditions are connected with religious festivals because the church represents (and in a sense regulates) social activity within the Italo-Albanian villages. The meanings and origins of some of the traditions have become obscured in the minds of the villagers. The traditions are practiced every year, but the people are not sure of their meanings, and, when they are questioned about their origin, they simply reply that they come from Albania. Whatever their meaning or origin, these traditions are unique to the Italo-Albanian villages and serve to distinguish this particular group.

San Costantino Albanese

Easter is celebrated in the ItaloAlbanian villages in accordance with the date set by the Roman Catholic church. This was another concession made by members of the Greek Catholic rite when they accepted recognition of the Pope as head of the church. Even though the date coincides with that of the Latin rite, the observance is different. At midnight, in those churches which follow the Greek rite, the parishioners conduct a candlelit procession through the town. This practice is still observed in Orthodox Eastern churches in many parts of the world.

The second great holiday of the year, Christmas, is observed by the Italo-Albanians with some of their own traditions. Many of these have been handed down from generation to generation, and their meanings have become obscure.

For this holiday, the Italo-Albanian housewives bake special pastries enriched with eggs and given a coating of syrup. The housewives make large amounts of this pastry because this is the time for visiting one another, and each visitor is urged to eat the pastry. In the Italo-Albanian towns on the eastern side of the Coastal Range, the young boys of the village begin gathering pieces of wood the day before Christmas and piling them in the middle of the town square. On Christmas Eve, the pile is lit, and the young men of the village stand around the fire and sing until dawn.

Honoring of Giorgio Castriota

Another way in which the Italo-Albanian has maintained his ethnic identity is in homage to the Albanian national hero, Giorgio Castriota. Although there are no statues of him, every village has a Via Castriota or Piazza Castriota named after

Skanderberg. Less important streets may be named after Italian notables such as Garibaldi or Mazzini, but the main thoroughfare or square is dedicated to Castriota. It has been the Italo-Albanians rather than the Albanians themselves that have kept the memory of Castriota alive. The people of Albania were forbidden by the Turks to write in Albanian or to produce Albanian literature. During this period of stagnation of Albanian culture, the Italo-Albanians kept it alive, producing several works. The poetic scholar Girolamo De Rada, in particular wrote numerous articles about the history of Albania, and a three-volume biography of Castriota, published in 1871. In the minds of the ItaloAlbanians, Castriota has been kept very much alive and commands greater respect than the Italian heroes

Women's Dress

One of the colorful identifying characteristics of the Italo-Albanians is the costumes of the women. These costumes can be seen as part of the daily clothing in some villages and are also worn on festive occasions.. In general woman's more limited movement has allowed little change in women's dress, but the men's wardrobe has completely assumed the Italian style. The women's costumes are today worn mainly by a few older women, in the more remote villages. There was a similarity of women's daily dress in the ten Arbereshe villages on the eastern side of the Coastal Range and the six villages on the northern side of the "Sila Greca." These women wear a white blouse, a short black vest, a long red skirt, a black apron, and a black kerchief. The whole dress is very simple and devoid of ornamentation, but some of the white blouses may have fancy needlework. In these villages, the younger girls have not retained this costume but have adopted Italian dress. The women in the two villages in the southern part of Lucania, S. Costantino Albanese and S. Paolo Albanese, further differs from other villages in that their blouses worn are more decoratively embroidered and they wear a white kerchief. Even though this distinctive dress is not as common as it was in the past, it is not a rare sight in these villages and is a point of distinction between the Italians and the Italo-Albanians. The festive dress has been retained in most of the Italo-Albanian villages because it is a very colorful costume. The style varies among the Italo-Albanian villages depending upon the region of former habitation in Albania. Costumes are worn on festive days such as Easter or Christmas, or they are worn for wedding ceremonies. They are much rarer than the daily dresses and are treasured highly by those who own them The festive dresses in Piana degli Albanesi are dyed with bright colors, predominantly red, and are richly ornamented and embroidered with either gold or silver thread. The costume is composed of a long red skirt, an embroidered white blouse, an ornamented red vest, and ornamental black apron, and an embroidered blue shawl. It also includes a metal belt with a large buckle that is mainly ornamental. The over-all style of the various costumes in Piana degli Albanesi is the same, but there are differences in the ornamental needle work.

The festival costume in the village of Castroregio is different from that of Piana degli Albanesi, but not radically so. The costume of Castroregio has the long red dress, an embroidered white blouse, and a white shawl. This costume lacks the rich ornamentation so evident in the costumes of the Piana degli Albanesi because it lacks the metal belt, and gold and silver thread is not used as a decoration. Various styles of costumes are found in the villages, depending upon the point of origin of the people in Albania. The ornamental style, with the metal belt, indicates that the people of Piana degli Albanesi originated from northern Albania, while the simpler style of the Castroregio costume indicates that these people came from the southern part of Albania. The festival dress has survived because of its colorfulness and because the people treasure it as an heirloom. Even in the villages where the people have lost their Albanian identity, the festival dress has survived, but it is not seen as often as in

the villages that have retained their Albanian character. The festival dress has remained distinctively Albanian and is part of the heritage that denotes the origin of these people and distinguishes them from the Italians.

Physical Characteristics of Arbëresh Villages

The Italian peninsula is some 800 miles long and has a mountainous backbone through its entire length, from the Po Valley to the tip of Calabria. The Apennines Mountains stretch continuously, from north to south and acquire



the names of the provinces in which they are located, e.g., Ligurian Apennines, Tuscan Apennines, Umbrian-Marchigiano Apennines, Abruzzi Apennines, Campanian Apennines, Lucanian Apennines, and Calabrian Apennines.

Not only do the Apennines form the backbone of the peninsula, but they occupy most of its land area. Peninsular Italy (that portion south of the Po Valley) does not contain any extensive plains that would compare in size with that of the Po Valley, but it does have several smaller plains.

The highest elevations of the Apennines are in the central portion, the Abruzzi Apennines, which rises to a height of 9,585 feet; the southern Apennines have higher average elevations than do the northern ones. In structure, the Apennines resemble the Alps. They have craggy peaks, steep-walled valleys, and narrow valley floors. They have been folded and warped in much the same fashion as the Alps. The peninsula is an area of volcanic activity both past and present, and sedimentary rock formations from various geologic periods have been greatly disturbed. The uplifting and folding have contributed to the ruggedness of the Apennines. They have caused an irregular stream pattern, with waters flowing swiftly to the sea. It is in this physical setting that the Italo-Albanian villages of southern Italy are located. The ItaloAlbanian villages of peninsular Italy are in the Lucanian (also known as Basilicata) and Calabrian Apennines about 250 miles south of Rome. Basilicata is within the "instep" portion of the Italian "boot;" Calabria represents the "toe."

The Basilicata Region

The Lucanian Apennines are separated from the Calabrian by the floodplains of several rivers and by a delta plain (formed by these rivers) called the Sibari Plain. The Lucanian Apennines attain their highest elevations in their extreme southern section, the Pollino Range. In this section there are two Italo-Albanian villages, San Paolo Albanese and San Costantino Albanese. These villages are on the southern slopes of the Pollino Range and are situated on either side of the Sarmento River. The Sarmento River has its headwaters in the Pollino Range and flows in a northeast direction into the Sinni River, which in turn empties into the Gulf of Taranto. The

Sarmento River has a torrential type of flow; during the summer months the river bed *is* dry, but during the winter months the volume of water increases sharply and the river becomes a fast-flowing stream.

By linear measure, S. Costantino Albanese and S. Paolo Albanese are less than two miles apart. But they are on either side of the Sarmento River and by road measure are at least five miles distant from one another. The villages are of the hillside type; the dwellings are clustered together on the side of a slope, removed from and well above the banks of the river. By road mileage, the villages are more than 50 miles from the east coast, where the main lines of communication, both railroad and highway, are found. It has been only since the end of World War II that roads suitable for all-weather traffic have been built to the villages.

San Paolo Albanese

This is one of the smallest villages in Basilicata. For a long time it was under the domination of the 'Stato di Noia' (the present day Naples). It was abandoned for and populated again only in 1534 by Albanian refugees who were fleeing the Turksih occupation of Corone. , after the colonization, changed the original name of the village, which was 'Casalnuovo'. The people living here still keep Arberesche traditions (most of all in the rites of weddings and funerals), costumes and language. The old Albanian culture is illustrated in the 'Museo delle Civiltà Arberesche'. (Museum of the Arberesche) and in the beautiful Church of San Rocco, protector of the village. A traditional event which is performed during the celebration of San Rocco is the transportation of the 'gregne' (bunches of wheat), carried on people's shoulders during the procession. At the end of the procession some folk groups perform in the typical dance of the 'falcetto' (reaping hook).

