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This volume is dedicated to the late Prof. G.T. Scarascia Mugnozza

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Cover

Two paintings by Liliana Corfiati.

Painting by Liliana Corfiati representing the traditional olive harvest, an occasion of collaboration for the community

Back-cover

Left: Skanderbeg landing in Campomarino.

Right: an ortodox marriage near St. Peter's church remains in Campomarino, seen in the background, symbol of the settlement of the Arbëreshë communities.

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LINGUISTIC ISLANDS AND PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES

THE CASE OF THE ARBËRESHË

edited by

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TUE U NGJITUR RËNJËT *
(TRACING BACK TO ONE'S ORIGIN)

* Title of a book on proverbs, maxims and sayings recorded from Arbëreshë people in Molise (Mastronardi 2004)

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Foreword

This book on the agrobiodiversity present in Italian towns of Albanian origin is intended as a small contribution of the Italian National Research Council (CNR) to celebrate the year of 2010, declared by the United Nations as the “International Year of Biodiversity”. In 1992, the Convention on Biological Diversity established the commitment of the international community to safeguard biodiversity. A decade later, during the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, the urgent need to intensify and coordinate efforts to reduce significantly the loss of biodiversity by 2010 at the latest was further stressed.

This global initiative, named "Countdown 2010", is the legacy the present generations wish to leave to future ones. Italy has formally adhered to the "Countdown 2010" at the meeting of the Working Group on Protected Areas of the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Montecatini in June 2005.

The most recent Charter of Syracuse, signed at the G8 - Environment in April 2009, reaffirms the importance of biodiversity. Within

this frame, Italy will lay the groundwork for an economic development compatible with environmental protection.

In particular the relations of scientific collaboration between Italy and Albania in the field of Agro-food and Agro-environment have traditionally been very fruitful. In 1992, following the initiative of Italian universities, particularly the University of Tuscia, and the National Academy of Sciences, said of the XL, an Italian delegation led by Hon. Luigi Berlinguer, by then Chancellor of the University of Siena, and by the writer, signed a protocol of cooperation in research and higher education, particularly in scientific collaboration in agricultural, food and environmental sectors, with the University of Tirana and Albanian scientific institutions.

Also as a result of these agreements a series of collaborative activities began, jointly carried out by Italian and Albanian institutions. Worth mentioning are, for example, the four emergency missions during the period 1993-95, funded by FAO, for the retrieval and preservation of plant genetic resources native to Albania, coordinated by former Germplasm Institute of CNR in collaboration with the Institut für Pflanzengenetik und Kulturpflanzenforschung of Gatersleben, part of the former German Academy of Sciences, three Italy-Albania INTERREG projects, developed on the Italian side by Southern Universities (e.g. Bari and Potenza) and the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Bari, belonging to the CIHEAM network, an institution strongly oriented to the Euro-Mediterranean partnership since the chair of Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza (1983-1987).

It is worth mentioning, that the Italian Cooperation is present in Albania since 1991. With a total financial commitment of around 650 million Euros, Italy is the first bilateral partner and the third donor after the European Union and the World Bank.

Through the resources available, Italy has supported and still supports the development and transition towards the euro area, aiding the Albanian authorities in the transition process started after the collapse of the Iron Curtain and intended to pursue democratization and socio-economic development, legal and institutional strengthening and integration in the international context, particularly the European one.

This book, is not only an occasion for considering what has been done but is also an intended will as an additional incentive to pay

more attention to Italian smaller ethnic and linguistic communities, in order to halt the decline and disappearance of this important socio-cultural heritage which is now part of our history and tradition.

Professor Gian Tommaso Scarascia Mugnozza†
President of the National Academy of Sciences said of the XL

† Rome May 27th, 1925, Rome March 1st, 2011

Foreword (in Italian)

Questo libro sull'agrobiodiversità dei paesi italiani di origine albanese vuole rappresentare un piccolo contributo del Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche alla celebrazione dell'Anno Internazionale della Biodiversità, proclamato dalle Nazioni Unite per il 2010. Ricordiamo, infatti, che nel 1992 la Convenzione sulla Diversità Biologica delle Nazioni Unite ha dato voce all'impegno della comunità internazionale per la salvaguardia della biodiversità. A distanza di dieci anni, nel corso del Summit di Johannesburg del 2002 sullo Sviluppo Sostenibile, la stessa comunità internazionale ha ribadito la necessità urgente di intensificare e coordinare gli sforzi per ridurre in misura significativa, la perdita di biodiversità al più tardi entro il 2010. Tale iniziativa globale, che è stata divulgata con il nome di "Countdown 2010", fa riferimento all'impegno siglato nel lontano 1987 con il "Rapporto Brundtland", che rappresenta l'eredità che le generazioni presenti intendono lasciare a quelle future. L'Italia ha aderito formalmente al "Countdown 2010" durante la riunione del gruppo di lavoro sulle aree protette della Convenzione sulla Diversità Biologica, che si è svolto a Montecatini nel giugno 2005. La più recente "Carta di Siracusa", firmata al G8 Ambiente nell'aprile 2009, riafferma l'importanza della biodiversità e la

volontà italiana di porre le basi per uno sviluppo dell'economia compatibile con la tutela dell'ambiente.

In particolare i rapporti di collaborazione scientifica tra l'Italia e l'Albania nel settore dell'Agro-alimentare sono stati tradizionalmente sempre molto proficui. Nel 1992, su iniziativa di Università italiane, in particolare dell'Università della Tuscia, e dell'Accademia Nazionale delle Scienze, detta dei XL, una delegazione italiana guidata dall'On. Luigi Berlinguer, allora Rettore dell'Università di Siena, e dallo scrivente sottoscrisse con l'Università di Tirana e istituzioni scientifiche albanesi un protocollo di collaborazione nei settori della ricerca ed alta formazione, ed in particolare nella collaborazione scientifica nel settore agrario, agroalimentare ed ambientale.

Anche in conseguenza di questi accordi sono iniziate una serie di attività di collaborazione portate avanti congiuntamente da Istituzioni Italiane ed Albanesi. Sono meritevoli di citazione per esempio, le 4 missioni di emergenza finanziate dalla FAO per il reperimento e la salvaguardia delle risorse genetiche vegetali autoctone albanesi, coordinate dall'ex Istituto del Germoplasma del C.N.R. in collaborazione con l'Institut für Pflanzengenetik und Kulturpflanzenforschung di Gatersleben, appartenente all'Accademia delle Scienze tedesca, nel periodo 1993-95; i tre Progetti Interreg Italia-Albania che hanno rappresentato occasioni di crescita e di integrazione attraverso i numerosi programmi scientifici realizzati con successo condotti per parte italiana dalle Università meridionali di Bari e Potenza e dall'Istituto Agronomico Mediterraneo di Bari, appartenente alla rete CIHEAM, istituzione fortemente orientata alla collaborazione euro mediterranea fin dalla presidenza dell'On. Carlo Scarascia Mugnozza (1983-1987).

Occorre poi ricordare che la Cooperazione italiana é presente in Albania dal 1991 e, con un impegno finanziario complessivo di circa 650 milioni di Euro, rappresenta il primo partner bilaterale ed il terzo donatore dopo Unione Europea e Banca Mondiale.

Attraverso le risorse stanziare, l'Italia ha sostenuto e tuttora sostiene lo sviluppo e la transizione del Paese verso la zona euro, affiancando le autorità albanesi nel processo di transizione avviato dopo il crollo della cortina di ferro e teso a perseguire democratizzazione e sviluppo socioeconomico, rafforzamento giuridico-istituzionale ed integrazione nel contesto internazionale, in particolare in quello europeo.

Il libro, oltre che momento di riflessione su quanto già fatto, vuole essere un ulteriore sprone affinché si presti maggiore attenzione in Italia alle comunità etnico-linguistiche minori per arrestare il declino e la scomparsa di questo importante patrimonio socio-culturale che ormai è parte integrante anche della nostra storia e tradizione.

Prof. Gian Tommaso Scarascia Mugnozza
Presidente Accademia Nazionale delle Scienze detta dei XL

Preface

The presence of Albanians in Italy dates back to the eleventh and twelfth centuries, when Venice drew strangers to rebuild their lives from everywhere, and, most dramatically, in the thirteenth century, when small groups came from Epirus and the harbours of Albania. Not only Venice, but the whole central and southern Italy, to Sicily, were crowded by Albanian families that joined feudal families in search of fortune. Their labour was important due to the event that the local population had been drastically reduced by earthquakes and diseases. In the fourteenth century, the Albanians were also present in Marche region, at Ancona, Ascoli, Fabriano, Jesi, Macerata and Recanati, but their low number did not allow any specific settlements and they fully integrated with the indigenous population.

The main immigration wave happened in 1468, at the death of Scanderbeg, or just earlier, when the hope of victory over the Turks began to fade while Albanian cities fell one by one, were looted and burned, so that every Christian presence was replaced by the Muslims.

Before proceeding with the history of Albanian emigration to Italy, it is worth clarifying that modern historians have corrected historical imperfections maintained for more than five centuries. In the light of new scientific studies, based on a large and detailed documentation, it appears that the communities of Crotona and Catanzaro were not founded by soldiers of Reres, and that they did not subsequently transfer to Sicily to establish other settlements; possibly Reres did not even exist. The same studies also show that neither among the refugees of the 15th century nor among Coroneo Albanians high caste dignitaries were present, being those ordinary people accompanied by a few Orthodox priests. Even the Arbëreshë have been induced and "educated" in a distorted knowledge of the history of Albanians in Italy, with no scientific grounds. New historical studies, in fact, do not support events and circumstances so far considered as absolute truths. The reasons that led them to misrepresent and distort history are due to inac-

curacy, or personal reasons, such as the attempt to attribute themselves a noble lineage.

Without going into details, according to the new studies, the history of the Albanians so far known is largely mistaken. In fact, there is no indication that Albanian mercenaries have established communities in Calabria and Sicily before 1468. The new studies point out that the arrival of the Albanians followed Skanderbeg's death. It was only since then that the great exodus began which lasted a quarter of a century, and led to the formation of urban settlements. Thus, it is more probable that the settlements in Crotona (Carfizzi, Gizzeria, Pallagorio and Upper St. Nicholas) and Catanzaro (Amato, Andalo, Arlette, Vena and Zangarona) were created by groups of refugees, who, after the death of their leader, left their homeland and arrived in Calabria, while others headed to Molise, Abruzzo, Campania, Puglia and Sicily. Even the chronological division, which so far has distinguished the Albanian exodus into seven stages of migration, is outdated. Only one emigration occurred after Scanderbeg's death, preceded by minor infiltrations of refugees, which, as mentioned above, for mainly economic reasons, moved to southern Italy, without producing any settlements. Other migrations followed, which lasted until the eighteenth century, and in which the new groups actually strengthened the already established Albanian communities. During their movements, the Albanians were directed towards specific territories based on the necessity of repopulating some areas and to fill the lack of labour in some feuds, avoiding, at the same time, too much concentration of Albanians and contrasts with local populations. This process is at the origin of several communities in Molise (Campomarino, Colle di Lauro, Montecilfone, Portocannone, Santacroce di Magliano, Sant'Elena Sannita and Ururi), Apulia (Casalvecchio, Chieuti, Faeto, Faggiano, Martignano, Monteparano, Panni, San Marzano di San Giuseppe and San Paolo), and Basilicata (Barile, Ginestra, Maschito, San Costantino Albanese and San Paolo Albanese). The region which hosted the highest level of immigration and where most of the communities were established was Calabria: along the Sila sides (San Demetrio, San Giorgio, Macchia, Vaccarizzo, San Cosmo and Santa Sofia), the Pollino heights (Acquafredda, Civita, Firmo, Frascineto, Lungro, Porcile and San Basile), on the Apennines (Cavallerizzo, Cervicati, Cerzeto, Marri, Mongras-

sano, Rota, San Benedetto, San Giacomo and San Martino), in the Esaro Valley (Santa Caterina), between the same Valley and the Polino Mountain (Spezzano), in the Ionian arch (Castroregio, Farneta and Plataci), and the Tyrrhenian coast (Falconara).

It is not possible to establish exactly the date of foundation of the communities in the area of Catanzaro and Crotona; on the contrary that is possible for other communities in the Cosentino area testified by documents such as the 1471 “capitula” assigning to the Albanians territories of the Abbey of Sant’Adriano. The same is true for the capitulations in Sicily regarding Palazzo Adriano (1482), Piana degli Albanesi (1488), Contessa Entellina (1490), Mezzoiuso (1501). Much later in 1691, S. Cristina di Gela was established by a group of Albanians coming from Piana.

In 1533, the inhabitants of Corone who fought against the Turks with Charles 5th asked the Emperor to be moved to Italy in order to avoid vengeance. Some of them settled within the existing communities around San Demetrio, San Benedetto Ullano, or in Basilicata, others moved to Campania where they founded Greci. A slow rate emigration followed in the next two centuries, heading to the already existing communities in Lucania, Apulia and Molise, and a small group from a village in the Chimera Mountains established the community of Villabadessa in Abruzzo.

The Albanians were well accepted by the Roman Catholics of monasteries and abbeys, as well as by the local barons and even from the Pope, who allowed them to keep the Greek-Byzantine rite and exempted them from paying tributes to the Church. Local bishops, though, were not confident, did not accept their rite and accused them of heresy. This allowed them to suspend the Albanians’ privileges. These contrasts continued also with the populations and even in churches, generating confusion. Over time, also the attitude of barons changed, and the Albanians were treated worse and worse. Also the populations did not tolerate their hard and incomprehensible language. Finally in 1919, Pope Benedict 15th established two Dioceses of Greek rite: Lungro, in continental Italy, and Piana in Sicily, recalling, this way, the Albanian religion under the influence of Rome. Nowadays, the communities in Catanzaro area, except for Caraffa, have lost the Greek rite, language, and habits; those in Crotona area have lost the

rite, but not the language; most communities in Cosenza province are very conservative, in contrast with those in Sicily which have been almost completely integrated. In Basilicata, the communities keep the language, but only San Paolo and San Costantino keep also the rite; in Molise, the language is conserved but not the rite. In the remaining communities, the language, habits and rite are lost, but young generations try to keep the language re-teaching it to younger ones.

After grossly describing the history of Albanian migration to Italy, it is worth to consider the reasons at its basis. The migration of Coronei was originated by their exile, thus by political reasons, while the migration in previous years, as well as those in the following ones, had essentially an economical cause. And from this very difference derive the characteristic traits distinguishing the Italian Albanians: sense of homeland, affection to family, pride, and *besa* (faithfulness). In fact, these feelings are more appropriate to those who were forced to leave their homeland than to generic emigrants. Homesickness of those forced to leave homeland is the driver for keeping habits, language, rites. After Skanderbeg's death, Albanian migrants had been forced to leave their country, therefore they kept a stronger grip on their own cultural heritage, while those who preceded them and could go back at any time were more easily assimilated in their new environment. Another difference relays on the census. Shepherds, farmers, peasants, who had fought against the Turks, had to fight again in Italy against prejudice and discrimination. Nobles and wealthier people moved to major towns, like Venice, Naples, or Palermo, often succeeding in conserving their privileges. Moreover, the earlier settlements experienced shakiness due to the autocratic attitude of barons and feudatories, which pushed these communities to move constantly in search of better opportunities. On the contrary, after the arrival of Coronei, who had been granted the protection of Charles 5th, real communities were set up, which were given a better treatment. Their culture could then establish and entrench.

Thanks to the priests, the community concentrated and got an identity within the groups they had formed. The *Papàs* (priests) were not merely a spiritual guide, but also helped the community transferring knowledge and values. The culture coming from Morea brought many innovations to the communities, like stone houses, fruit tree groves,

the commerce with other communities, etc. This was the dawn of a way of life based on common rights and duties and correct administration. In half a century, the Albanians became a real community, loyal towards the family as well as towards the authority, gaining rights and becoming aware of their duties.

As for the Byzantine Christian rite, some communities have nowadays lost it. This occurrence has many drivers: the end of isolation due to the establishment of good roads, the second turn of emigration out of Italy due to poverty in the 1950s and 1960s, the influences of modern media are among the major ones. But also the absence of laws to safeguard minority culture has been an important determinant. It is nowadays necessary to put efforts in rising the awareness of the origins and of the legacy. The act n. 482 is just a starting point to maintain the Arbëreshë cultural heritage. This does not imply that Arbëria means isolation. We are people from Calabria, Lucania, Puglia, Molise, or Sicily, but with an added value: being Arbëreshë, and proud to be so. Many are the Arbëreshë who contributed to history of Italy, with pride and courage: Pasquale Baffi, among the most recognized students of Greek and Latin hung in Piazza Mercato in Naples for participating into the Partenopean Republic; Agesilao Milano, sentenced to death for attempting on the life of king Ferdinando II; Gennaro Placco, jailed for fighting for the Unity of Italy, together with tens of young men who joined the troupes of Garibaldi's Mille. Many are the Arbëreshë scholars who helped keep alive the Arbëreshë culture: Domenico Mauro, Vincenzo Dorsa, Angelo Masci, Rodotà, Ribecco, Santori, Serembe, Lorecchio, Marchianò, Schirò.

The activity carried out by the CNR in this framework has been very important. They helped to keep knowledge of the ancient agricultural practices, and through this knowledge, helped to better understand the earlier Albanians of Italy, and the way they lived in their territories. This is surely beneficial to the new generations for knowing themselves and not forgetting.

Salvatore Bugliaro
President "Centro Studi Genealogia Arbëreshe"
July 2010