

*Southern Italy and Sicily
Mythology, Prehistory and History until
the 13th century*

**Stephano Sotiriou, historian
Athens, 2025**

**Edited by
George Manolopoulos**

Copyright © Stephano Sotiriou,
George Manolopoulos

All rights reserved, including the right to reproduce this book or portions thereof in any form
whatsoever.

ISBN 9798311397599



Introduction

In modern Sicily and the rest of Magna Graecia, no one learns or ever hears a single word in schools about the CONTINUITY of history of Hellenism in Magna Graecia, except for the period of the classical years. A very loud historical silence.

No Sicilian today knows that Magna Graecia was CONTINUOUSLY inhabited by Greeks, who only spoke Greek and were Orthodox Christians. Until the 13th century AD, they were called Magnogreci or Italogreci.

No one wonders about what happened to these 5 million Magno-Greeks of the 4th century BC. Did they disappear by magic?! Did they come to Southern Italy, lived there for about 2000 years and then left this territory again, to an unknown destination when the Romans conquered the Magna Graecia? Were nomads like Gypsies? And what about the medieval Greek Empire, Byzantium? Magna Graecia was a Byzantine province where Greek was spoken until the 12-13th century! This is also absent from schoolbooks in Sicily, Calabria and other Magno-Greek regions. Some people wondered when they saw in the most successful Netflix series "Vikings", that all the Sicilians spoke Greek (in the 10th century AD).

On a trip to Italy, I met a woman, professor at the Catania University: *We love Greece very much*, she told me. *We also teach modern Greek literature in our university. But you in Greece, you don't even teach our Dante Alighieri.* I answered her with a question: *When and where did Dante Alighieri live? The second half of the 13th century*, she answered me. *And you, as Sicilians and Calabrians..., what is your national relation with Dante and with the language that he spoke and wrote? At the time of Dante, Catania was still a Greek-speaking city and region. Dante was a stranger to Catania and Sicily, even though you adopted him in the 19th century, when you joined the Italian state*, I answered her. *Catanians were my Greek compatriots then, not Dante's! Indeed, Catania and Messina still spoke Greek at the time of Dante. But the official history of the modern Italian state, made sure that the Sicilians adopted him as their compatriot!*

Some malicious people in Italy are even trying to present the Italo-Greeks, who are reawakening today, as IMMIGRANTS. People who have no roots in Italy and were just something like guests! Something like the African illegal immigrants in Lampedusa!

The great attack against Hellenism of Magna Graecia began by the Vatican after the schism of the Churches in 1054 and the German domination over the Vatican. The Greek language was forbidden from the 13th century (the laws and decrees are quoted in the book), the Magnogreci were burned at the stake of Vatican's «Holy inquisition» as heretics, the persecutions and the tortures they suffered from the Vatican and its Franco-German vassals, who conquered Southern Italy, were untold.

Even today we can see in many Greek cities of Magna Graecia the reawakening of the ancient Greek religion, but in some cases the ancient Greek gods are called by foreign, Latin names. Ceremonies are held in honor of the goddess Ceres in the old Greek city Metapontion! But who is the Ceres? In the Greek Pantheon no goddess existed by the name Ceres! Cerere is the Latin

name of the goddess Demetra, and they carefully avoid mentioning this goddess by her Greek name, in her land of Sicily. She was the goddess Protector of the island. A Latin name for a Greek goddess in a Greek city? Paradox, suspicious and inadmissible!

When i asked once for information about Saint Philip of Agira (a Greek Saint who came to Sicily from Phrygia, patron of the old Greek city of Argyrion, where Diodoros of Sicily was born) and before they gave me any piece of information, they put me through an entire examination. Why am I asking about my fellow-ethnic Greek Saint? (However, the Roman Catholic Church grants the cathedral of Agira every year to the Greek Orthodox church, which does not have its own Church in Argyrion, so that it too, orthodoxy, can celebrate the Saint).

We don't practice politics. We don't try to create our own history. I, personally, have a great respect for the old Roman Catholic Church. You will see in the following chapters the facts. However, I cannot omit that the Vatican and its Franco-German vassals are those who **VIOLENTLY DE-HELLENIZED** Magna Graecia. Apart from the role of the Vatican and the “holy inquisition”, the Roman Catholics themselves recognize that and mention it. We only mention historical facts. Hundreds and thousands of images of unique masterpiece monuments show the uninterrupted relationship between Hellenism and Southern Italy, from 2000 BC until the 13th century A.D. Almost 3,200 years Greek! And still thousands more that lay today as ruins in the sacred land of Magna Graecia.

The History of Magna Graecia, without any scientific doubt, the history of Sicily, Calabria, Apulia, Vasilikata and Campania, is also Greek National History from 2000 BC until the 13th century AD. That's why I, as a Greek, wrote this history for the land and culture of my ancestors and compatriots in the Apennine Peninsula.

After the 13th century, history ceases to be Greek. Because the inhabitants of Magna Graecia no longer participate in it as Greeks. To the question that some ask, if the Sicilians are Greeks today, my answer is yes and no. Analyzing the components that make up ETHNOS and GENUS. Which of course are different.

Stephanos Sotiriou, historian

Mythology and Prehistory

“Mythos” in Greek means "memory bank" of human history from the ancient times, when there was no writing system and was not recorded in writing. Myths have a historical core. As Plato mentions in his book “Kratylos,” “*Mythology is a science, written with codes*”. For this reason, the Greeks used another word for imaginary stories, “Paramythi,” i.e. Fairy tale!

Italos, the first human resident of the Apennine Peninsula. Kronos, Italos and Sikelos.

According to mythology, Sicily’s first inhabitant was the god Kronos (Saturn in Latin), father of Zeus. He died on the island after the fierce “Clash of Titans”, which brought Zeus (Jupiter in Latin) on the throne of the gods. Zeus was born in Crete but lived many years in Sicily as a child. On the mountain of S. Calogero, northwest of Agrigento, is located the tomb of Kronos, better known as Cronion mountain. (Klimis of Alexandria, “Against Greeks”, p. 30).

The first residents of Sicily and South Italy, as reported by all the ancient writers, (Greeks and Romans), were the Greeks from the Aegean. Beginning in prehistory, long before 3000 BC. As it is reported in the ancient manuscripts "Nostoi" and "Tilegoneia", the first person, the famous Italos, son of Tilegonos and Penelope, grandson of Oinotros (Inotro), arrived from Greece at a small peninsula, on the southern coast of the Apennine mountains, called at that time Vrettia, today Calabria, (good breeze). Italos was the first resident and at the same time the first Greek that settled down in the Apennine peninsula which later received its name from this famous Greek settlement.

Italos in the Greek Aeolian dialect means the owner of good and many cattle. Italo = ox, cow, (Hesychius from Alexandria, lexicon of archaic Greek Dialects). Another etymological interpretation of Italos comes again from a Greek word: Aithalia-Aithalos-Ethalia. This word spelled in Latin as Italos-Italia, means “Land of fog and smoke”. It is the land that the first Greeks saw around 3000 BC in the southern region of modern Calabria (Rhigion – Ρήγιον - Reggio) and the ash and smoke was from the volcano Etna. That is why the first area that was called Italia was a small place around Reggio Calabria.

When Italos and the other people from the Aegean who came with him arrived at this peninsula, they founded the state of Oinotri (Enotri) and Italos became the first king of the Oinotrian people (Virgil, Aeneias, A-530). Italos had a son named Sikelos, who became the first king of Sicily (Thucydides).

Vrettia was an ancient Greek goddess, a nymph who came to Vrettia, current Calabria, from the Mysia, region of Asia Minor (Eleytheroydakís encyclopaedical lexicon). According to mythology, another mythological person exists with the name Vrettos. Vrettos was a son of Herakles and Valite. Valite was the daughter of Valitos. (Stefanos Byzantios, lexikon).

The Vrettian people settled down in the same place settled by Italos and gave their name to the region, until it was later renamed to Calabria. The tribe Vretti were also of Greco-Pelasgian origin, speaking an ancient language related to the Greek dialects and modern excavations in Calabria leave absolutely no doubt, that everything that's been written in mythology about them is true, and depicts the real history.

Kalavria. In the Peloponnese, on the small peninsula of Trizina, a green island exists until today with the name Kalavria. In the era of kings Anthas and Yperis (1250BC), the island of Kalavria was renamed Yperi or Ypereia, and later Skelerdeia, (which means Skelia>Sikelia (Sicily)). The name Kalavria or Kalavri or Kalavrea, was an older name, many years before 1250 BC. The name Calabria was taken/adopted from the local wind "good breeze" which is always present in the Gulf of Saronikos, or from the mythological Kalavro or Kalavrian, who was a son of Poseidon (Neptune in Latin). Many sources tell us that he was the grandson of Arcadian and Leanere, who lived in the region around 1290 BC.

Another mythological source tells us that Kalavro was the son of Evrymedis and grandson of Aganos - all descendants of Pelasgos. It appears, therefore, that the Arcadians came to the region around 1290 BC from Arcadia, not only as conquerors but also as settlers. When two brothers from Arcadia, Pittheas and Trizinios, arrived in the Peloponnesian region of Kalavria, Pittheas conquered the peninsula Trizinia and became king of the city of "Anthea". Antheas, the fallen king of the city of "Anthea" and his son Aetios, were forced to leave the peninsula and escape to Asia Minor where, with some other companions, founded the city of Halikarnassos (The future birthplace of Herodotos). Pittheas then also conquered the other city on the peninsula, Ypereia (Hyperia).

Yperis, the fallen king of Ypereia was forced along with other Kalavrians and Achaeans to escape to southern Italy. He founded first the city Hyperia in Sicily, in 1250 BC and after that he penetrated continental Italy. By then, the entire region of Apulia-Basilicata was called Calabria. Later, Yperis also founded the city Poseidonia in the current region of Campania. In the same region of Basilicata exists today a mountain with the name Poros. Poros is the classical and modern name of a small city next to ancient Hyperia in the Peloponnesian Kalavria). It is not ascertained exactly when the residence of the Peloponnesian Kalavria began. In any case, excavations that began in 1894 brought to light clues that show that it was around the Neolithic period. In 2002, the Kokoreli excavations came to show the same, adding further evidence.

Kalavros (Calabro) is known as a son of Zeus, while Messapios is known as a son of Poseidon. Poseidon was the god of waters and seas and Messapia means the "land between two seas or two rivers". This was one of the older names of the Peloponnese, the place of origin of the Messapians.



Mycenaean tomb. Necropolis in Messina, from 12-13 century BC

Nonos the Panopolitis, (from the “Pano polis” /upper city of Egypt), wrote the history of the god Dionysos in 40 volumes and informs us about prehistorical evidence (before 3000 BC). He reported the flood of Defkalion, also known as Noah's or Gilgamesh’s flood, which is probably connected with the sinking of the Aegean mountain (the present day Aegean islands are only the peaks of that ancient mountain), in the beginning of the Holocene geological period, about 10000 BC and according to another myth, that of Atlantis, the restorer of human life in Sicily was Elymos of Aegesta). In southern Italy was Ahatis, while in Athens Amfiktyon, brother of Hellene and son of Defkalion (Nonos A, 150). Another Elymos was a real historical figure, a warrior from Troy and companion of Aeneas.

Οινώτρος-Enotro (Inotros=Wine maker). The word Oinotros derives from the Greek word Οίνο (Vino in Latin, Wine in English). Enotrians were the first Greco-Pelasgian settlers in southern Italy. Their branches were the Pefketi, Davni, Iapyges and Skeli/Sikeli. Oinotros was the son of Lycaon, king of Arcadia and Melivoe or Cyllyne. (Lycaon was a son of Pelasgos). Another son of Lycaon was Peucetios. Oinotros and some Pelasgians, according to Greek history and mythology migrated from Arcadia to southern Italy during the Mycenaean era. Pausanias reports in his books the history of the migration of Oinotros to the Apennine peninsula to Oinotria/Enotria. Grandson of Oinotros was Italos (Italian) (Pausanias. Arcadica, 3).

In summary the genealogy goes as follows: God Zeus > Defkalion > Pelasgos > Lykaon > Oinotros > Pefketios > Italos > Sikelos... This is the genealogy of Italian Greeks.

Messapioi, were Oinotrian people who moved to southern Italy from the Peloponnese, Euboea and Boetia (modern central Greece) in the 12th century BC. To this day exist toponyms like, “Messapion” mountain, “Messapios” river and the modern “Messapion” city.

The Peloponnese was also known with another name these years, Apia. (Messapia = inter-apia, the land that laid between two seas, or two rivers. "Apos" is one of the names for water in some ancient Greek dialects). Certainly, the Messapians spoke a very ancient form of a Greek dialect, Physical evidence agree with this without exception, from excavations and the few scripts on stones that have been found.

Iapygas was the leader of the Oinotrian origin tribe of Iapyges. Greco-Pelasgians. The name Iapyx is the popularized name for the wind Northwest wind (Aristotele 973, v. 14 - lexicon Dimitrakou).

At the time of Oinotros's settlement in Italy, his brother Pefketios, patriarch of the Pefketians, also founded colonies in the southern regions of Apoulia (Pausanias, 4 v, 3,5 - Dionysios Alikaranseus A, 11- Apollodoros of Rhodes, G, 97).

Leukos. During that time, another settlement was established in the south of the Apennine peninsula by settlers from the island of Crete. Their leader was Leukos (Leukos=White) son of Talos. Talos was the cupreous giant who guarded Crete and was killed by the Argonauts. Leukos after the death of his father, turned against the king of Knossos Idomeneas and killed his daughter. Idomeneas was forced to leave Crete and escaped to the south of Italy, in Apulia - Salento to save his life. Leukos in turn was also forced to flee to Italy after a while, because the destruction he brought to Crete which caused general dissatisfaction. In Italy he founded a kingdom and became king of the region named Leukania (Lukania today).

Afsonas. In the seaside of Leukania also lived the people called Afsones. Their patriarch was Afsonas, son of Odysseas and the goddess Calypso, or as some other source state, son of Atlas and Circe.

Davnos. In southern Italy also lived the Davnian people. Patriarch of the Davnians was Davnos, son of the Arcadian king, Lykaonas.

Diomidis, one of the Trojan war heroes, after his return from Troy, left his unfaithful wife Aigialeia (Egialia) in Argos (Peloponnessos) and moved to Davnia. He became a mercenary in the service of King Davnos and received in return a part of Davnos's country to the north and one of Davnos's daughters as a wife.

Sikani and Sikeloi. The name Sikelia derives from the first king of the island, King Sikelos. He was the son of Italos, and grandson of Oinotros, <Lycaon, < Pelasgos, < Defkalion, < God Zeus. (Genealogy of Sikelos).

In Sicily, historically and not only mythologically, the Cretan tribe Sikani (and not the Ligurians or other Celtic tribes) are reported as its first residents. They are the ones who gave that name to the island. Heraclea Minoa is the city where King Minos of Crete was buried around 2000 BC. It is also the burial place of god Kronos and the architect Daedalos.

Other Cretans and other tribes from the Aegean Sea soon also appeared. This migration was continuous and long-lasting, and it possibly began 5000 years BC, when the maritime activity of Minoan Cretans started, as revealed by the archaeological discoveries by Sir Arthur Evans. These discoveries also agree with Plato and other ancient writers who wrote about the flood of Defkalion and Atlantis (Plato, Timaios and Critias).

In the Dictionary of Hesyhios (Dictionary of ancient Greek Dialects), which contains the ancient types of Greek words, the word Sikanos, derives from the word Sika, which means sword, (sicarius – handknife).

Sikanos was the king of the Sikanian tribe. He was the son of Vriareos. Sikanos himself had three sons: Cyclop, Antifanis and Polyfimios.





Tholos. Greek Mycenaean cemetery from the 13th century BC “Tholos Di Floresta” Sicily.



Another Greek Mycenaean Tholos, near Aitna (Etna) from the 12th century BC.



Greek settlements in the Bronze Age (1600-1100 BC).

Aitna (Etna) was a nymph of Sicily, daughter of Ouranos (Sky) and Gea (Earth). Ouranos was a brother of Kronos (Saturn), who is reported as the very first resident of Sicily and where he was also buried. When his son, the god Hephaistos (Hephaistos -god of Fire and Iron = Vulcan in Latin) and his daughter, the goddess Demetra (Ceres) had a strong disagreement about who will become protector of the island, the nymph Aitna intervened as arbitrator. Thus, Hephaistos took only the volcanoes (Etna and Stromboli), where he set up his workshop, while Demetra (she symbolizes the big granary that is Sicily) became protector of the island!

Demetra, the goddess protector of Sicily. Her name is a compound word from Da-mather in Doric and Aeolian Greek dialects and means "Mother Earth". From Aeolian, hundreds of years later, the Latin language was created. It is believed that the temple in Egesta, was a temple in honor of goddess Demetra - Mother Earth, built by the Elymians, who were according to ancient sources, Greek tribes from Aiolia, (the islands of Lemnos, Lesbos and the Trojan coasts).

As is passed on to us by the Homeric epic poem Odyssey, by Isiodos and by Diodoros of Sicily, the daughter of the goddess Demetra, Persephone, used to play with her friends the Nymphs, in the region of the city of Enna (center of Sicily). Suddenly, she saw the beautiful flower narcissus and wanted to cut it. This however was a trap that the Plouton, (or Hades) god of the underground world, had setup to catch her. Since then in the place of Persephone's

kidnapping, a source of water can be found, which was named "Cyani" (Azure). The goddess Demetra waited for 9 days in Enna for the return of Persephone and then she began to look for her. While searching, she arrived in Elefsina, Attica where she established the eminent Elefsinian Mysteries.

The theory that in the 10th century BC a new race, a tribe of the Illyrian or Celtic nation, or of another unknown nation called Sikeli, settled down, coming from northern Italy, is not valid, because it is not proved with any way. For this opinion to have reliability there should exist:

a) Written sources (historical or mythological) that would report the existence of this migration. In the 10th century we already have plenty of written documents.

b) Archaeological findings, which would show where this supposed tribe lived before, when, why, how and where it moved etc.

In the absence of any material proof (stone inscriptions) it is certain that the name Sikelia derived from:

a) Either from the Peloponnesian Skelia (Triskelia-Triskeles-Triskelion), the place from where the Kalavri or Skeli emigrated to Italy.

b) From corruption of the word Sikania.

c) From the residents who used to call themselves Skeli (Sikeloi), because they used to live on the two banks of the narrow straight, of the Scylla and Harivdes (Messini and Righion. Skelos=Leg- Skeli, plural legs. Skelia= also means two banks)

d) Or because Sicily was the granary of the Italian peninsula, and it was the island under protection of the goddess of granaries, and her residence. Sikalis = Rye, a kind of grain – cereal, more ancient than wheat and in the prehistorical and historical era was the basic agricultural product of Sikelia.

e) From the geographical shape of the island, which has three skelia (three legs).

f) From some native mythological traditions, with gods and heroes. It is impossible to accept as argument the position that, the Siculi/Sikani are not a population of Greek origin and at the same time have as local gods and heroes only Greeks, long before the 1st millennium BC. The Cretan King Minos and Dedalus in western Sicily from the 2nd millennium. And from the 3rd millennium BC, Herakles, Hefestos, Poseidon, Demetra, Persephone, Aitna (Etna), Ortygia, Kronos (Saturn), Enotros, Messapios, Idomenas, Lefkos, Rea... and so many others.

g) Beyond the mythological reports and archaeological excavations, the written historical and mythological sources, we also find evidence in Athens as well. The hill "Sicily-Sikelia". The German archaeologist Lollig believed that the hill Sicily is the current hill of Filopappos, but his locality is the hill of old slaughterhouses, in the left bank of river Ilyssos. As we saw, skelia means legs, trilegged or two water banks metaphorically. On the border between the present-day suburbs of Neos Cosmos and Kallithea, there is the stadium of "Esperos" and the Panteion University. This hill was called Sikelia many centuries before classical Athens. Before the 8th century BC and the Athenian colonization to the Sicily. It is very strange the existence of this name in Athens, centuries before the archaic colonization of Sikelia.

Finally, Trinakria is the other Greek name, that gives the geographical description of the island, long before the names Sikania-Sikelia. “The three akres” (Three ends - tri limb). This name was well known from the Cycladic-Minoan era, about 3000 BC.



Mycenean tombs, Sicily, 1300 BC.

So, the Sikeli were Greeks then. But are they Greeks today? The answer is, yes!

Yes, because they have Greek origin and pure Greek genes derived from:

a) The first colonization from the Aegeans and Minoans of Crete, from 2000 to 1600 BC. The best-known Minoan cities were Heraclea Minoa, Thapsos, Ippion Argos, Minoan Taranto, Faliron (later Parthenopi and even later Napoli), Argyrippa, Scoglio del Torro (modern Latin name), Torro Castelluccia and many other Minoan and Argonautic era cities. A total of 98 locations are under excavation today.

b) The second colonization. Aeolian and Pelasgic settlements from the Aegean islands and Asia Minor and the Mycenaeans – Achaeans in the 12th century BC, after the destruction of Troy. (see chapter “Mycenaean colonization”).

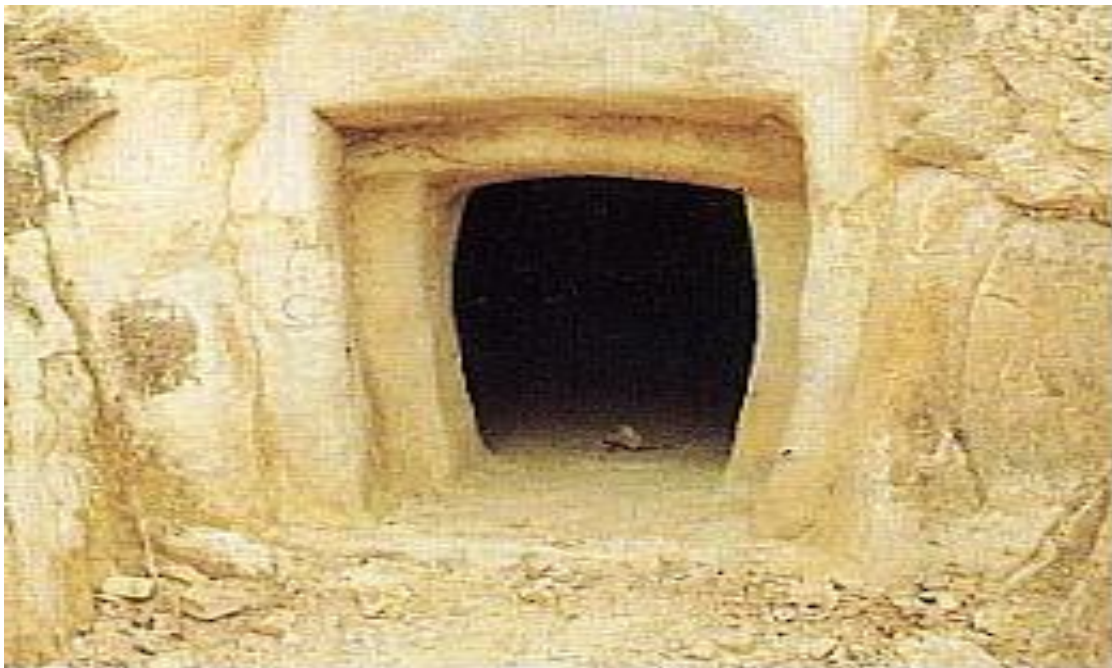
c) The third colonization of Achaeans, Aetolians and other Greco-Pelasgian tribes from Epirus, Acarnania, Aitolia etc., in the 10th BC century, after the Dorian (Lacedemonian or Spartan) invasion from N.W. Macedonia to the Peloponnese, which pushed this Greek-Pelasgian tribes to exit to the west (Oinotroi -Inotri, Leukanoi-Lefkani, Vrettioi, Messapioi etc).

d) The great, fourth colonization of the 8th century BC, which brought the Greek population in Sicily and southern Italy, to exceed 5 million in 4th century BC. The Greek colonization continued unabated in the Late Roman and Byzantine years. The most populous cities in Magna

Graecia then were Sybaris with an estimated population between 300,000 and 500,000, from 600 to 510 BC and Syracuse with 800,000.

e) From the 7th century AD, Sicily and the south of Italy (particularly the part under Byzantine rule until the 12 century) received new waves of Greek “iconolates” and later “iconoclasts”, to escape the religious persecutions-civil war-discord, in the eastern Roman- Byzantine territories (Balkan and Asia Minor). Later, the invasions of the Arabs and other Islamic tribes from Asia in Asia Minor, pushed more waves of Greeks to their "Western homeland".

f) The last Greek waves arrived in southern Italy & Sicily after the conquest of Asia Minor and the Balkans by the Turks (from 14th to 19th century).



Mycenaean necropolis. Aguila, Agrigento, 13-12th century BC.

It consists of two types of tombs: artificial caves and chambers. Some are accessed through a 1.5-5 meter long corridor called a "dromos- δρόμος", located in front of the tomb itself. The tombs consist of one or two chambers with a corbel vaulted dome (Tholos-Θόλος) containing a platform with the corpse and votive offerings (vases, rings, arms, tools) on it.

Who were the Sikani, the Sikeli and the Elymi

The Sikani are known as Pelasgian (Pelasgi and Leleges, were the residences of the Greek Peninsula, before the formation of Greeks. We call them Pre-Greeks, but also Proto- Greeks. Herodotus wrote that they were the fathers of the Greek tribes. And this is correct. The integration of Pelasgians with other relative tribes between the two shores of the Aegean Sea, created the Greeks. The Pelasgian Sikani well, were one of the three oldest peoples in Sicily.

Diodoros of Sicily writes that the other two peoples of Sicily were the Elymians who lived to the west and the Sikeli to the east, and the boundary between these tribes, after great battles, was the river Imera.



How and when did they arrive in Sicily?

Three different theories exist.

1) They were proto-Greeks or early Greek tribes (Pelasgians and Leleges), as we saw above and came from Greek territories around the Aegean Sea.

2) According to Thucydides, they came from the west, from the land of the river of Sikano in Catalonia. They came to Sicily after being attacked by the Ligurians. But the Celtic tribe Ligurians lived in N.W. Italy (Genova) and it is incomprehensible that, if they attacked the Catalonians, they pushed the Catalonians to the south and east, towards Sicily. Why did the Catalonians escape by ships and not towards the interior and south of Spain? The sources of Thucydides are unknown. So is the location of the river Sikanos.

3) The third theory describes them as migrants from N.W. Greece, (Epirus, Aetolia, Acarnania), at the time of the Dorian penetration from N.W. Macedonia to Doris in central Greece and in Lacedaemon in the Peloponnese (1200- 1.000 BC), which pushed many other Greek tribes to the West. They in turn came to the island of Sicily and southern Italy and subjugated the previous primitive native tribes.

Archaeology confirms that of these three theories, the oldest population and civilization in Sicily was the Cycladic, Minoan, Pelasgian and Mycenaean Greek. And that their languages were related to the Greek proto-language. (what we usually call Indo-European but the correct is Arian (Iran) or European). Historians have unanimously acknowledged that the Sikani were the most ancient of the other two peoples. The Elymi came later from the Greek islands of the north Aegean Sea and displaced the Sicanians in the west. The Sikani were first recorded historically in the 11th century BC, immediately after the fall of Troy and the flood of Mycenaean settlers to Sicily. The Sikani were gradually mixed and assimilated by the newer Greeks, who arrived during the third, archaic Greek settlement, in the 8th century BC.





Right. King Minos's Palace in Knossos Crete. The Minoan civilization flourished from 3000 BC till 1500 BC.

According to Greek mythology, King Minos of Crete came to Sicily long before of the existence of Sicanian as name and people. He came to Sicily in search of the architect Daedalos, who lived in Drepano (Trapani). There, king Minos died with a violent death and his tomb was in the city of Herakleia Minoa (the name Minos was like a title for Cretan kings so we don't know who exactly Minos was).

The few inscriptions that have been found of the Sikani language, are written with the Greek alphabet. Except for the names, which are all of Greek origin, linguists have not been able to understand their language due to the small number of words. (we don't have a full text, but sporadic names and toponyms). It was probably related to the language of King Minos. The Minoan Language was written with "Linear A" letters, which is not fully understood until today (see Phaistos disc). They were mentioned as a people related to the Cyclopes who appear to have lived initially in Attica (under King Cecrops) and next in the Cyclades islands of the Aegean Sea.

The Sikuli-Sikeli according to archaeological excavations shared the same culture with the Mycenaeans. Were the Sikeli Mycenaeans in origin who came from Greece and the Aegean, or were they simply local inhabitants of Sicily influenced by the Greek Mycenaean culture through contacts and trade?

The size of the archaeological finds (nowadays there are almost 90 Mycenaean sites under excavation all over southern Italy) is so large, that shows with every certainty that the Sikeli were a branch of the Mycenaean peoples who settled on the island, arriving from the Greek islands of the Aegean Sea, the Peloponnese and central Greece.

Homer records Sicily as Sikania. As British historian Robin Lane Fox points out, he considers the Sikani and the Sikeli the same people. It is indeed strange to say that two separate nations

existed on the same island, not related, but with the same ethno-racial name. Because both the words Sikeli and Sikani have the same root (which is Greek root) and the same etymology. It is the same word practically.

The Shekels people in the Great Inscription of Karnak Egypt, in the 5th year of the reign of Pharaoh Merneftha (1207 BC), are recorded as one of the "Sea Peoples". Or the peoples of the Aegean Sea. They were pre-Hellenic or proto-Hellenic tribes of the Aegean. Their integration formed the Greek tribes. This is the scientific evolution in Ethnology.

The name "Sekeles" is also recorded in the inscription on the tomb of Medinet Habu, which is related to the second invasion (30 years later), of the "Sea Peoples" to Egypt, in the 7th year of Ramses III's reign as Pharaoh. Archaeological evidence places the arrival of the Sikeli to Sicily, between the 13th and the 11th century BC at the same time when the "Sea-Aegean- People" attacked Egypt. Around the same time as the fall of Troy, which drove the Mycenaeans from Achaia and the Aegean Islands and the Trojans, to southern Italy and Tuscany en mass.

The most important Sikeli cities were: Agyra, founded as "Agyrion" or Argyrion (Argyrion>argentum=Silver). Argyrion was the birthplace of Diodoros of Sicily), Kenturippe, Enna, medieval "Castroziovanni", Thapsos, Hybla the Great, Hybla the Small and Hybla Heraea, founded by the Megarians (who also founded the famous city of Byzantium in Bosporos, Constantinople later, capital of the Byzantine Empire).

Studies have shown that the Sikeli spoke a language that was a branch of the Aegean-Pelasgian language, the closest relative of the very ancient Greek (2000 BC) languages, from which evolved later the known Greek dialects, beginning from the Mycenaean Greek!

The Sikeli lived in the eastern part of the island, the Sikani lived in central Sicily and the Elymians in the western part. The only alphabet used on the island, by all these tribes, was the Greek alphabet.

The Elymians. The mythical founder of Elymians is considered to be the Trojan hero Elymos, illegitimate half-brother of Aeneas. Thucydides writes that many Trojans who escaped the destruction caused by the Achaean-Myceneans, arrived by ships to Sicily and founded two cities. Erykas (Eryx was son of the god Poseidon) and Aegesta (a sacred name for the Greeks. Aegis, Aegai which is the capital of Macedonia, the Aegean Sea, Aegypt (Aegypt means south of the Aegean), the Aegade islands in western Sicily, Aegesta-Segesta in Italian, Aegialia region in Peloponnese, Aegion city, kataigis, Aegis etc.).

The Elymians had the same culture as the Greeks. They believed in the same Olympian gods, they had the same alphabet, they spoke very closely related Pelasgian languages, but their oldest language is unknown (if an older language existed today it is unknown due to lack of evidence). Their most important cities were Segesta/Aegesta, which was their political center, and Eryx-Erycas, which was their religious center, with a cult of Poseidon.

Conclusion:

Recent archaeological findings have made it almost certain that the pre-Hellenic peoples of Sicily (Elymi, Sikeli-Sikuli and Sikani had the same name, so probably we speak about the same people). They migrated to Sicily from the Greek regions from the two shores of the

Aegean Sea, Asia Minor, the islands and N.W. Greece (Epirus, Acarnania etc.) between the 12-11th century BC.

Note:

The Phoenicians were a semitic people from present day Lebanon. They built three main colonies in Sicily. Solus, Motya and Ziz (Ziz means flower). Ziz was located very near to the Greek city of Panormos- Palermo. I'm not sure if I can call all of their settlements, "cities", or just commercial stations. Archaeological research has not found enough remains of the various institutions that an ancient city should have had. Temples, assemblies etc. Only in Motya, archaeologists have unearthed enough finds that show that here was an organized big city, and not just a trade station.



More of Greek Mythology & History

Daedalos was an Athenian architect who, together with his son Icaros, built King Minos's labyrinth in Heracleion (Knossos) Crete. He was the first known engineer and architect in human history. After he built the labyrinth, King Minos wanted to keep Daedalus in Crete forever so that he would not be able to build anywhere else works equal to those he built in Crete. However, with the invention of wings made from wax, Daedalos and Icaros managed to escape by flying from Crete, destined to Athens. However, while flying over the Aegean Sea, Icaros's wings began to melt, resulting in him falling into the sea near the island that bears his name, Ikaria. Daedalos then rested for a while in the city of Kymi in Euboea and trying to escape from Minos who began to pursue him, first went to Sardinia (as the Latin writer Servius says) and then sought refuge with the Sicani and the king of the city of Kamikos, named Kokalos. There he left great and wonderful works that survived and in very good condition until the days of Strabo (60-30 BC), as Strabo himself describes. However, King Minos did not stop pursuing him and followed him to Sicily. After building a large fleet, he sailed to the region of Akragas to capture him. In the area where Minos set up camp, he built the prehistoric city of Minoa, which is identified by many historians with the later city of Akragas (Agrigento).

According to archaeological excavations, it seems that the Minoans settled in southern Italy, Sicily and Sardinia, during the third millennium BC. The great archaeologist Sir Arthur Evans places the first Cretan settlement in Southern Italy at the end of the Middle Minoan period, that is, at the end of the third millennium BC, around 2,330 -2,100 BC. The findings of vessels and metalworking workshops that have been found on the southern coast of Sicily from this time until the Late Minoan period (around 1500 BC) show that the story of Daedalos tells us the real history.

In the "Chronicle of Lindos" (6th century BC) there is the oldest written reference to Kokalos and Daedalos and the inscription on a bronze krater that Phalaris had offered to Athena of Lydia is recorded: "Daedalus gave hospitality to Kokalos".

In inscriptions of Linear B, which is the Mycenaean Greek language, and which were found around Akragas, the names of Daedalos and Kokalos were found as "Ko-ka-ro, i.e. Ko-ka-los".

Many historians and archaeologists, mainly Italians in the fascist period, attempted to minimize this fact and the importance of tablets from Crete. (Kokalos means "Bone", or "very slim man" in Greek). This name exists in written documents in Crete, in Linear B inscriptions.

Herodotos (5th century BC) in his history (book 7), writes about the arrival of the Minoan Cretans in Sicily and the 5-year siege of the city of Kamikos, which "hosted" Daedalos, but without being able to conquer it. This siege is placed chronologically three generations before the Trojan War, that is, about 100 years earlier, a date which, according to the existing evidence from excavations and Homer's history, must have taken place in 1300 BC.

We must not overlook the opinion expressed by Sir Arthur Evans, based on archaeological findings, regarding the arrival of the Greeks in Italy long before 2,000 BC. And considering

Herodotos's information of the period about 1,300 BC, perhaps we should also examine the opinion of many archaeologists who place the Trojan War much earlier.

According to Pausanias, the city that the Minoans besieged was called Inykos, which researchers believe is the same as Kamikos, in the area of the later city of Akragas (founded in 528 BC by Rhodians and Cretans) and considers Inykos as the first capital of King Kokalos, in the hinterland of Akragas.

Herodotus writes that King Minos initially fled to Sicily and then to Sardó (Sardinia). Then, on his return, the daughters of Kokalos killed him, or in a different version, Kokalos himself killed him with scolding water and oil, and then handed over his body to the Cretans, telling them that he slipped and fell into the hot bath. A bath that Daedalos built, like many other and wonderful works, mainly in Kamikos and Megara which were built as a newer city in 728 BC. His works are also reported other prehistoric Greek cities, such as Hybla Geleatis, in Selinunte, in Trapani and in Erycas.



Diodoros of Sicily mentions as works of Daedalus the creation of a dam in Megara, on the Alabon River in Sicily, to control the flow of the river, drain the marshes and accumulate water for use during the months of drought. This work was called "kolymbithra" (basin), because in addition to the above uses, its water was also used for bathing, the second most famous baths in the world after those of Crete.

In Selinunte, a city founded by Hyblaeon Megara in 650 BC, he built thermal baths, for treatment and pleasure. The thermal baths are not completely known where they were. Some place them in the Cronion area (the place where Kronos or Saturn was buried according to the Latins), on mount S. Calogero near the present-day city of Sciacca, where there is a cave with hot water springs, known until recently as the "cave of Daedalos". This area, according to

archaeological excavations, has been inhabited since before 2000 BC, probably due to the thermal baths, and probably ceased to be used by 500 BC, when human habitation there ceased. In Akragas were the most important works of Daedalus were found. Their special value, however, is that they prove that the story of Daedalus with Kokalos was real. In Akragas, in the archaic acropolis, a "Greek wall" was excavated as the Italian researchers called it, which surprised with its defensive layout, and which is attributed to the design of Daedalus.

In Eryx, a city located on the western side of Sicily, which some wrongly, or with afterthought, call it a Phoenician colony, there is the flattening and expansion by Daedalus of the top of the natural rock "Eryx Rock", on which the temple of Aphrodite was later built. This city was founded by the mythical hero Erykas, son of Poseidon and Aphrodite, or according to Thucydides, son of the argonaut Boutis, or according to Thucydides again, by the Trojans, after the destruction of their city by the Achaeans. The inhabitants of the wider area (the triangle of Palermo Erykas, Drepano, Aigesta) were also known by the name "Elymi" or "Elymiotes" and according to all evidence, were indeed Pelasgians from Asia Minor and the islands of the north Aegean. (Elymos was the restorer of human existence in Sicily after the flood of Deucalion, Nonos I, 150).

Today's topography places it in the modern city of Monte S. Giuliano. The excavations, twelve kilometers northwest of Trapani, brought to light everything that was mentioned in ancient texts by the inhabitants of Erykas as the "Daedalian Wall", a Cyclopean fortification around the rock of Eryx, which is similar to the Pelasgian Cyclopean walls in Greece, in Sardinia and in Asia Minor, as well as other findings from the Neolithic and early Bronze Age.

Pausanias in Volume II, 16-25, calls the Cyclopean Pelasgian walls "ancient Ogygian walls". That is, walls that were built before the flood of Ogygos, which is the oldest of the three known floods in Greek mythology and occurred, according to geological and astronomical data, around 14500 BC. For these walls the Italian professor of Physics at the University of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil and Lima in Peru, Enrico Mattievich, conducted extensive and documented research, in the book "Journey to the Mythological Hell", concluding that they are all Aegean buildings.

Let's return to Minos and Kokalos. After Kokalos delivered the body of Minos to the Cretans, they buried him with great honor in a great ceremony, building a two-storey temple in his honor. In the basement they worshiped Minos and on the ground floor the goddess Aphrodite. Thus, Minos was also worshiped as a god at one time. Later, according to Diodoros (book 4), during the reign of King Theron of Akragas in 490 BC, the tomb of Minos was demolished, and his bones were given to the Cretans to bury them in Crete. Archaeological excavations under Sir Arthur Evans in Crete revealed that this dual cult dates to 1600 BC. But where was Minos born? Did he come from Sicily to Crete, or did he go from Crete to Sicily?

Minos was murdered in Kamikos and after he was buried and deified by the Cretans and other inhabitants in Sicily, it seems that a portion of the Cretans (according to Herodotos book 7) decided to return immediately to Crete. Having no more forces, food and with their king dead, the Cretans decided to lift the siege of Kamikos and return to Crete, but they were stranded by a storm on the coast of Apulia, in the Gulf of Taranto and settled there permanently. They were known there by the names Iapyges and Messapians, initially founding the city of Iria and then dozens of colonies in Apulia. (Iria is the present-day Oria between Brindisi and Taranto).

Another version of the origin of Iapyges, Messapians and Lefkanians is found in Strabo's texts, who tells us that they were not Cretans, but Athenians, descendants and compatriots of Daedalos, (Iapygas was the second-born son of Daedalos).



The Athenians, were defeated in a war by the Cretans and were forced to send every year as a form of taxation to king Minos a number of Athenian youth into the labyrinth as food for the Minotaur beast. So, when Theseus killed the Minotaur, he freed the Athenian prisoners and traveled with them to Apulia, where he settled them there, on the advice of the Oracle of Delphi. Another source, which also goes back to older Greek sources, is that of the Roman poet Virgilus in the third book of the "Aeneid", who mentions the king of Crete and his son-in-law Idomeneas, as the first colonizer of Apulia. Idomeneas was one of the greatest heroes of the Achaeans in the Trojan War. When he was on his way back to his island from Troy, he encountered a storm and asked the god of the sea, Poseidon, to save him with the promise to sacrifice in his honor the first man he would meet on the island. However, the first man he saw happened to be his grandson, whom he was forced to sacrifice to the god Poseidon. When his deed was discovered, he was forced to abandon Crete. He then arrived with his subjects in Apulia and settled in Salento. Another version has him as colonist of Sicily and the leader of the Sicilians.

Archaeological evidence for the early settlement of Greeks in southern Italy, is also provided by the archaeological excavations of the University of Rheggio, such as the one in Epizephyri Locri, which shows that before the settlement by the Locri (8th century BC), the area was inhabited by Cretans since prehistoric times. Given that matriarchy still prevailed in the Minoan era, that is before 3000 BC (the Locrians never had matriarchy, neither in Greece nor in Calabria), the same matriarchy also prevailed on this side of Calabria and is proven by numerous archaeological finds.

Prehistory of course does not provide very precise data. Only the historical core has been preserved from events, which were transmitted orally from generation to generation until it was recorded. It has of course been altered with elements of popular imagination. This is the difference between myth and mythology and fairy tale. Myth describes historical events, even if without complete scientific accuracy, while a fairy tale is clearly a fictional story. As Plato writes in his book "Cratylus", mythologists are scientific astronomers, who describe history in codes and in detail. It is, however, an indisputable fact that the first inhabitants of southern Italy were Greeks, descended from the Greek tribes of the Aegean and the Pelasgians, and that all these references go back to the actual colonization, which again undoubtedly took place between 3000 and 2100 BC.

We must always bear in mind that the city of Athens was founded in 3000 BC by King Cecrops. That is 5000 years of history while Rome has the number of years.

The Pelasgians in Italy.

Who were the Pelasgians? The proto-Greeks, the ancestors of the Greeks, from the three shores of the Aegean Sea. (As proven by the genetic research in the book by Prof. of Genetics, Constantinos Trantafyllidis, Aristoteleion University at Thessaloniki "the Genetic History of Greeks").

According to Plato (Plato's Laws), the Greek tribes originated from the Pelasgians and Leleges. Various populations of the Pelasgians, however, remained outside this evolutionary process and preserved the old language and customs such as the Thracians, some Asian Minor tribes etc. Athanasios of Stagira in his book "Ogygia" writes that Pelasgos was the son of Phoroneus and the nymph Laodice.



Phoroneus (he who brings the light) is known from the most ancient Greek epic, the "Phoronis", which has not survived in its entirety. According to this, Phoroneus is the first human being, whom Zeus created and placed in heaven, which was Argos, also the most ancient city in the world. (like Adam in Hebrew mythology).

Dionysios of Halicarnassos writes that Roman scholars also said that the Pelasgians were Greeks, who lived in Achaia for many generations before the Trojan War. *"The Pelasgians are also a Greek ancient race from the Peloponnese"*.

The Roman poet Virgilius, in the "Aeneid", calls the Greeks "Pelasgians" and writes about Italy that, *"Inotroi inhabited this place. Now it is rumored that later peoples called this nation Italian from the name of their leader"*.

Pelasgian's brother was Apis, who became king of the Peloponnese, which was called "Apia" until the years of the Achaeans and Pelops (the Mess-apan of Apulia were Greeks). Pelasgos received Pelasgia (Thessaly) as his kingdom.

In Epirus they praised him: *"Zeus king Dodonae Pelasgike"*, and Aeschylus in the tragedy "Persians", writes that, *"and the country that is beyond Pindus, Macedonia and Thrace, is Pelasgian"*.

Herodotos (Heroes I, 57), mentions that the Athenians believed that they were autochthonous, descended from the Pelasgians.

Diodoros of Sicily, conveys the testimony of Linos and Orpheas, that the Greek writing and language were an evolution of Pelasgian (Diod. III, 67).

Pausanias (Arkad.8.43), and Dionysios of Halicarnassos (Roman Archaeol. II,13) wrote that, *"Pallantios, grandson of Pelasgos, moved from Arcadia and founded the city of Palatine in Rome"*. That is why the emperor Antoninus Pius (138-161), exempted Pallantion of Arcadia from all taxes.

Homer, Pausanias, Menecrates, Eleatos, Thucydides, Strabo, Herodotos, Ephoros, Curtios, the Orphic Hymns, which is also the oldest surviving written epic in the world, composed before 1900 BC but with reference to events thousands of years earlier, they affirm that Pelasgians and Greeks were the same people.

According to oral tradition, the Greeks settled in southern Italy long before the passage of Hercules through it. But who was Hercules and why did he find himself in Italy? According to Diodoros of Sicily (Diodorus III, 74.), there were three Hercules. The second lived in 2500 BC and is the one who established the Olympic Games. The third Hercules was the best-known Hercules son of Alcmene, who lived around 1150 BC (Cicero writes about six Hercules, while D. Bardicos mentions 9 Hercules). Hercules, therefore, probably the second one, went to Gibraltar and erected the "pillars of Hercules", a name by which the ancient and medieval peoples called the Gibraltar straits. (Pausanias I, 10,7, 13). On his way back, he passed through Italy, where the Iapygians and the Venetians in the north had already settled. Along with Pausanias, Strabo mentions that at the same time the Pisatae from Pisa in Ilida in the Peloponnese, settled in Tuscany and founded the city of Pisa. (Str. E, 296. It is today's Pisa). Hercules also passed through Latium. There, on the Palatine Hill, he was hosted by the Kings Evandros and Pinareos.

One robber by the name Casios, stole the oxen of Geryon, which he was bringing from Erytheia. But Hercules captured Casios and took the oxen back. Then, Hercules stayed in Latium for some time and had a son, named Latinos. Before leaving for the Peloponnese, he built two cities. Herculaneum (Heraklion) and Sagunto.



It is therefore undeniable that the main inhabitants of Southern Italy, such as the Messapians and Iapygians of Apulia, the Leucanians of Leucania, the Bretii of Calabria, the Chones, the Oinotri, the Pefketi, the Davni of Apulia, etc., were Pelasgians who came from Greece. For the Epirot Chaones, who were called Chones in Italy, archaeological evidence showed the 1500-1300 BC as the time of their settlement in Italy.

Strabo (c. 225), mentions a city named Regisuilla in Italy, writing about it that, "*History says that this place was the kingdom of Maleo the Pelasgian, about whom it is said that, after ruling in these places with the Pelasgians, he then fled to Athens*".

The Tyrrhenians-Etruscans were also Pelasgians, who went to Italy after the Trojan war and settled in the area that took the name Etruria. The arrival of the Tyrrhenians is noted, based on archaeological findings and written sources, which we mentioned above, such as their clashes with the Celts in Tuscany. However, as we read on the "Aeneid", the arrival takes place after the war. Of course, if we knew exactly when the Trojan war took place, we might be able to accurately approximate the dates that interest us.

However, the Pelasgians also did a two-way move. From Aegean to the Apennine and from the Apennine to the Aegean. Boeotian, the ancestor of the Boeotians (a province north of Athens), son of Poseidon and Arne, was born in Metapontion with his brother Aeolus. When

he grew up, he returned to Greece, while his brother Aeolus settled permanently in the “islands of Aeolus” in the Tyrrhenian Sea, north of Sicily (Stroboli, Panarea and others).

The Etruscans, Tyrrhenians or Tyrsenes

The official Italian historiography insists that Etruscan origin is unknown. Of course, a lot of scientists do not share this opinion. The Swede Furumak, who excavated the first discovered Etruscan city, at San Giovenale, in 1962-65, clearly placed them as Aegean origin. Same for the German Emilius Kunze, director of the German archaeological school in Athens. Most scientists generally accept this reality. It is curious, however, how the opinions of those who are in bad faith usually pass into public opinion.



We will repeat once again that the name "Etruscans" was not the name by which they called themselves, but the name by which the Romans called them. They identified themselves with the Greek name “Tyrrhenians”, and "Tyrsines" (as well as with the less well-known "Razeniens"), a name by which the sea in the region is also known. According to Strabo, Tyrrhenos was the son of Telephos, (son of Hercules) and Iera. He had three brothers, Lydos (Lydia), Karos (Caria) and Tarchon (he founded Tarquinia, today's Corneto. Strabo 5, 219). According to Herodotos, who was born in Halicarnassos in Caria, Lydios and Caros were brothers and spoke the same Greek language.

Dionysios of Halicarnassos (Dion. Introduction), writes that the Etruscans were from Greece, who together with the Lycians, the Oinotri, the Pefketi, the Leleges and other Pelasgians, settled in Italy. "The Etruscans are a very ancient Greek tribe, originating from Tours of Asia Minor. Their leader was Tyrsinus, son of Attius, who was a son of King Minos". Diodoros of Sicily, and Thucydides support the same.

The Caberians or Corybantes were brothers, priests of the goddess Cybele and founders of the Caberian mysteries in Lemnos and Samothrace (islands in northern Aegean Sea, which is also considered the birthplace of the Tyrrhenians-Pelasgians). They took the box in which the penis of the god Dionysus was kept and transported it to the new Tyrrhenian home in Italy. (Clem. 2, 19).

Hellanicos the Lesbian claims (as Thucydides and Sophocles convey his view) that the Tyrrhenians were previously called Pelasgians, and when they settled in Italy, they received this name (i.e. Etruscan-Tyrrhenians).

The Athenian writer Anticleides, whose sources are cited by Strabo (c. 221), informs us that the Tyrrhenians migrated to Italy from the island of Lemnos in the northern Aegean, which is located directly opposite the Asia Minor coast of Dardania-Troy. The etymology of Tyrsenos = Tyrins means tower-fortress. It is the same as the Pelasgian city of Tyrins - Tyrinthos in the Peloponnese. Tursa was the city of Asia Minor where they also originated.

As Ephoros testifies, both Lesbos and the Peloponnese were called Pelasgia, and Euripides, in his tragedy "Archelaos", claims that, "*Danaos the Pelasgian, who had fifty daughters, after coming to the region of Argos, built the city of Argos on the Inachus River...*" Anticleides testifies that they, the Pelasgians, were the first that built cities in Lemnos, Samothrace and Imbros and that some of them, together with Tyrrhenus, son of Attius, fled to Italy". (Strabo c 221-221)

Thucydides also confirms the information that the Pelasgians who lived on Lemnos, were called Tyrrhenians (Thuc. D. 109). The Greek origin of the Etruscans, however, is also attested to by archaeological findings, some of which the reader will see on the pages of this book, with images of Greek heroes and gods, as well as inscriptions. From these it appears that both the alphabet and the language of the Etruscans were clearly related to Greek. It is surprising that despite reading many of them, many insist on the view that the origin of the Etruscans remains unknown to this day! Many thousands of inscriptions and two texts of approximately 120 words have been found. From the vocabulary and the proper names, it is clear that they are proto-Greek, that is, Pelasgian.



Etruscan. - Archaic Greek. - English

Frounda = Vrondi = thunder
nanas = nan'o = I fly-fly
klan = kelor, son. Kelorion = grandson, child
sek = sko = the childish girl, the girl
thoura = thorós = uncle, brother
rakouneta = rakōmene- sad, rakōmai = I grieve.
Andas = north, antara
arakos = yeraki-ierax = hawk
arse = aratto = I persecute, I strike, I knock
svalke = svennyimi = I extinguish, that is, I die.
Lap = I drink, Lapto, laptis = a wine drinker
southi = sor'os = heap

Numbers

mach = mia = one, (i.e. woman)
Thou = Thyo = two, two, twos
tsi = three, (tsia in Pelasgian).
Sa = taresa = four

Adjectives, in relation to modern Greek adjectives

Verou = Veras
Zikou = Zikos
Zoulou = Zoulas
Tselou = Tselos
Larou = Liaros
Nazo = Nazos
Soure = Souris
Chanou = Chanos
Kounou, = Kounos
and many more

Names of deities

Tina or Tinia = Zeus, (Zeus, Cretan form of Tinas)
Apoulos or Aplou, = Apollo, (Thessalian type of Aplon or Aploun)
'Artumes or 'Artum = 'Artemis
Menerva = Athena (Minerva is the Latin form)
Touran = Ourania Aphrodite, Thyraea Aphrodite
Laran = 'Ares the god of war
Fouflun = Dionysus, from the type of Fleon, Flios, Fleus (older form of the name of
Dionysus)
Eutourpa = Euterpe
Charoun = Charon
Athrpa = Atropos (fate).
And many more.
Names of Greek history

Ourousthe = Orestes
Clouthmousta = Clytemnestra
Atresthe = Adrastus
Toute = Tydeus
Atounis = Adonis
Kasdra = Cassandra
Peske = Pegasus
Poultouke = Pollux
Achmemrun = Agamemnon
Areathe = Ariadne
Erkles = Heracles
Achle = Achilles
Menle = Menelaus
Elinai = Helen
Elsdre = Alexander
Uthouse = Odysseus
Terasia = Teiresias

Their most important cities were Luca or Lefka, Riza, Telamon (From the Greek hero Telamon, king of Salamis and father of Ajax. According to mythology, the city of Telamon was built by the Argonaut Telamon when he stopped there, returning from South America, where, according to mythology from the book "Argonautica" written by Apollodorus of Rhodes and the Orphic Hymns, the Argonauts had traveled). Pisa, Arreteion and Pyrgos which were very close to Rome. All the cities have Greek names, in contrast to the other cities of central and northern Italy which had foreign names, Celtic in most cases, except Palatine, an ancient Arcadian colony next to Rome. Rome itself, Roma in Doric = strength, power, Romus = Romulus = strong, powerful. And Pallace, which was the epithet of the goddess Athena Pallas-Pallada. Pallace-Paladion = the temple of goddess Athena).

It is thus clearly demonstrated that both linguistics and archaeology confirm the sources of Herodotus' Anticleides (6th book), Thucydides, Strabo, Virgil with the Aeneid.

Professor George Thomson passionately argued in his book "Prehistoric Aegean", that, *"the inscriptions found on Lemnos are in a language related to Etruscan"* but also the great archaeologist of Cambridge, Michael Ventris, who deciphered Linear B, was the first to associate Pelasgian with Etruscan, Minoan and the Asia Minor languages, (Carian, Lydian, Hittite, Lycian, etc.). However, Italian historiography insists on maps and books to characterize it, not simply "non-Aegean" but abstractly "non-Indo-European"!

However, since the date of the Tyrrhenians' arrival in Italy, is a bit unclear, we consider as terminus post quem 1300 BC when the first clashes of the Tyrrhenians with the Gauls/Celts are mentioned in Tuscany and the first objects that testify to their settlement are found.

The first Etruscan stone from the island of Lemnos.

This inscription was found in 1886 in the village of Kaminia on Lemnos. Although it was written in the Greek alphabet, its language was unknown. Finally, after persistent efforts by a linguist from Alexandria, Egypt, Iakovos Thomopoulos, it was deciphered at the beginning of the 20th century. It was then translated by three other researchers, the French Cousin, the German Durrbach and the Swede Nachmanson, all with similar results. According to their conclusions, every word of the inscription is found in the "dictionary of very ancient Greek dialects" by Hesychios of Alexandria and in the poems of Homer. The importance of the decipherment is enormous, not only because it proved the Aegean proto-Greek origin of the Etruscans, but also because it eloquently and clearly presented the connection of Greek with the Pelasgian language, (Greek is its evolution), confirming Herodotus, Strabo, Hesiod and other ancient authors, who wrote that, "the Greeks consider themselves autochthonous and descendants of the Pelasgians", because no tradition and no evidence of their descent from some abstract north exists in history and their mythology, except for the Dorians or Heracleides who returned from Macedonia, where Eurystheus had exiled them, to the Peloponnese. That also validated many modern scientists and most of all, Cambridge professor John Chadwick, who supported the indigenous origin of the Greeks and the Greek language, rejecting the Nazis and their Pan-Germanic, and of course completely unproven and imaginary, theories about the existence of Indo-Europeans and the descend of the Greeks into the Mediterranean, from an unspecified north!



The Enigmatic Lemnos stone with the Tyrrhenian script: Bridging Aegean and Etruscan Civilizations. It is housed in the archaeological museum of Athens. Lemnian and Etruscan languages were similar and belonged to the Aegean-Pelasgian languages. The myth of the Trojan migration to Italy (Vergilius "Aeneis"), was proven real, after this finding. Scientists know that the Etruscans originated from the Aeolian islands and the Aeolian coast of Asia minor. The Etruscans had the same gods as the Greeks. The same architecture. The same names. The same culture, but their language, which is related to the language of the island of Lemnos, has not been understood to this day. It is one of the dialects belonging to the so-called Pelasgian language, which was spoken in the Aegean before the creation and dominance of Greek.

- 1) Iolae = Iodae = oh Odita, that is =, oh traveler
- 2) z = relative pronoun = who
- 3) naf = noo = I know, Doric verb nafo = I have my mind, Neptic fathers in Byzantium.
- 4) ou = second person personal pronoun = your
- 5) ziazi or diadi = deios and daios = unhappy, miserable (the ζ becomes d in the Aeolian dialect like Deus instead of Zeus)

Thus, the first verse says: Traveler, you who know your miseries.

- 6) maraz = wilting, melancholy
- 7) mav = marptō = I hold, I seize

The second verse says: hold marazi i.e. be sad.

- 8) sial = iallō = I send, I send, I forward, I forward
- 9) xFei= demonstrative pronoun = he
- 10) z = who
- 11) aFiz = aissō and atto = I rush, I desire. In Hesychius' dictionary "Avesse" = to desire. In Doric aitas "aFittas" = partner, friend, neighbor.

The third verse says: when he who is neighboring came.

- 12) e= possessive pronoun 3rd person= his, her
- 13) Fistho= Ionian dialect Fisthi, Doric istia = hearth
- 14) zeron = 3rd singular of the final past participle of the Rom. eryomai= save
- 15) aith = personal or demonstrative pronoun = he
- 16) Fa = disjunctive conjunction = or
- 17) Mala = a) multitude b) desire, c) mountain
- 18) siaal, zeron, aith, we saw them above.
- 19) morinael = national name, Myrinaeus (Morina in Tyrrhenian is Lemnos)

The fourth verse says: or when the land of Malis came, he saved the Myrinaeus.

- 20) aker = but, however, in Homer it is found as atar
- 21) Tavarzi = oh Tavarzi (name)
- 22) zhiFai = from the verb ζῆφω = to live, to live

The fifth verse: But oh Tavarzi, let us live

In summary: “The dead Tavarzis from Myrina, saved his homeland first from the neighboring invaders (from Thrace) and then from the Malians. The traveler is called to have constant sorrow for the death of this hero”.

Decipherment, Iakovos Thomopoulos, Linguist. Alexandria Egypt 1922



Genetics

Many DNA studies have been conducted on the genetic origin of the Etruscans and the results were almost all the same. Naturally, studies with somewhat different results often appear, since these studies often depict the result desired by the person ordering the study. So, we mention some important ones that were conducted by Italian geneticists, because the Italian ones carry greater weight, since they concern the population of Italy.

DNA samples were taken from 3 generations of residents of Tuscany and Umbria by Professor of Genetics Alberto Piazza, professor of Human Genetics at the University of Turin, and specifically from the towns of Volterra (116 individuals), Murlo (86) and Casentino (61). They were compared with 1,264 individuals from the rest of Tuscany, 306 from northern Italy, 359 from the Southern Balkans and Asia Minor, 60 from the island of Lemnos and 276 from Sicily and Sardinia. He showed that the samples from Volterra, Murlo and Cosentino resembled only the DNA of the inhabitants of Asia Minor, inland from Smyrna (Lydia region) and not the DNA of their Italian neighbors. The research was done on the Y chromosome (from father to

son) and on mitochondrial DNA (from mother to daughter). It was presented at the European Conference on the Human Genetic Code in Nice France on 19/06/2007.

In 2005, the University of Ferrara, Italy, conducted the same research again and came up with the same results. In 2007, the Università Cattolica Di Piacenza, Cremona, conducted a genetic test on a specific breed of Tuscan cattle with an also isolated breed of cattle from Lemnos and proved that their DNA is similar and does not resemble the cattle of the surrounding areas.

Genetic research has been done several times. Most of them verify Herodotus who said that the Etruscans originated from Asia Minor. The Italian Archaeological School of Athens, excavating Lemnos since 1924 until today (100 years), found evidence that Lemnos was a transit and not a permanent residence of the Etruscans/Tyrrhenians, who settled in Tuscany around 1200 BC. That is, when Troy fell (which Troy is located exactly opposite of the eastern coast of Lemnos) and the wave of Achaean-Mycenaean immigrants to southern Italy and Trojans, or some of their allies from Lydia (according to Virgil's "Aeneid") landed in Tuscany. The Kaminia stone was found in 1885 by the French Archaeological School of Athens, professors Cousin and Dorbach. Its text resembles the texts of the Etruscans of Tuscany. The deciphering of the stone was done by the linguist Thomopoulos.

In 1924, Professor Alessandro Della Seta, director of the Italian Archaeological School of Athens, found in the area of Hephaestia of Lemnos another 4 clay fragments with Tyrrhenian inscriptions.

Recently, in 2024, a new Italian DNA study was released with the participation of other European countries, which showed that the Etruscans have the same DNA as their other Italian neighbors. And the Italian researchers in question concluded that the Etruscans are an indigenous Italian tribe and did not come from Asia Minor. However, this study does not prove anything about their origin, except for the kinship they have with the neighboring Umbrians and Latins. Incidentally, all valid genetic research, even on the origin of the Latins, (except for the northern Italians of "Gisalpina Gallia", who have a Celtic genetic background) show their Ponto-Caucasian genetic origin. They came from Asia Minor to Latium in the Neolithic period. The fact that they have the same DNA does not prove history and linguistics by itself since it is possible that this similarity developed on the spot. History, however, is a more complicated science. It is based on a multitude of elements. Archaeological findings, historical sources, geological, physical, linguistic, paleographic, chemical, to which DNA is added.

13,000 Etruscan inscriptions have been found in Tuscany. Surprisingly, they all have funerary texts. They are all related as dedications to the dead and the gods. There appear the names of Greek pantheon.

Other Pelasgian tribes.

Southern Apennine peninsula was inhabited by Greek tribes, long before Odysseus's journey there. The Greek cities of Croton, Rhegium, Catania, Eloros, Gela, Akragas, Locri existed long before the well-known colonization of the archaic period (8th century BC). The Greeks who arrived then, found other Greeks there. The Greeks of the 8th century BC found there, rivers, lakes and seas with Greek names, which, as science proves, hydronyms are the most conservative in linguistic changes. That means, their names remain even if the people who inhabit them change. The rivers Tyrros, Aisaros, Symethos, Eloros, Chalikos, Hypsos, Asinis, Chrysas, the mountains Etna, Kronion, Varvaron, Poseidonion, Ekonomos, the Aegonion Pelagos, the Aegade islands, the Sicilian, Adriatic, Tyrrhenian Seas etc.

They knew and named since prehistoric times the islands of Capri (Capria), Nicosia (Lycezi), Pandeleria (Ventotani), Pontia (Ponza), Pithikousa (Ischia), Prochytyis (Procinta), the Aiolian islands (around Stromboli), Aegade island in the Aegonion sea in the west of Sicily, Lamedousa (lighthouse) etc.

Messapian is a variant of old Greco-Pelasgian. Messapine inscriptions of the 7th century BC are in the Greek alphabet and in the Greek language.



Messapian script. Very close to Greek. Even Hippos=Horse, is written with two "pp" just like in Greek dialects.

"To the queen (Ana-Anax-Anactoro) Aphrodite, from Lachona Theodoridda and Hippaca. Theodoridda is fathfull to the goddes Keosorres".

In the "Dictionary of Ancient Greek Dialects", written by Hesychius, we find that the Latin language also is related to Greek. Latin looks like a distant Greek dialect, which resembles Attican remarkably, although as a dialect it is an evolution and originates from older Aeolian.

Oinotros, son of Lycaon, king of Arcadia and grandson of Hellene, "arrived with ships in Italy and named the country he ruled over after his name" (Pausanias, Arcadian, 3).

Bretios (Brutus later in Latin) was the son of Hercules and Valito.

Akragas before taking this name, was called Minoa, because "it had been built by Minos long ago" (Diod. Siculus, 19, 9).

After the fall of Troy, Idomeneus arrived in Apulia, while other Cretans arrived in Sicily: "Merionis the Cretan, who lived in Sicily, welcomed the Cretans who sailed there after the fall of Troy, because of the kinship and the culture that they had transmitted there" (Diod. IV, 79).

The first name of the Sicilian Sea was Aegonion Sea (Aegean), which the Greeks from the Mycenaean period, renamed Sicilian Sea later. It shows that this sea was home to the Greeks just like the Aegean.

Even "in Rome Pelasgians had settled" (first as settlers of course, who built Palatino). (Plutarch, Romulus, 1). Both the Arcadian colony Palatine, and the Pelasgian-Tyrrhenian Rome, grew and became the later superpower under the leadership of the Latins. The river Tiber also took its name from the husband of Manto (Μαντώ), daughter of the seer Tiresias. Manto according to mythology, was the founder of the city of Mantua.

Strabo and Pausanias mention an old mythical tradition of the Romans. A tradition confirmed by the Roman poet Cuius who accepts that "Rome is a Greek construct" (Str. c, 230). Plutarch writes that in Rome there were festivals in honor of Carmenta, wife of the city's settler, Evandros the Arcadian (the one who welcomed Hercules to the Palatine) who came from Arcadia, as well as for Lycaeus Apollo of Arcadia. The accuracy of Strabo's information is proven by the fact that the Roman emperor Antoninus Pius (2nd century AD) exempted the Palatine in Arcadia from taxes, as a sign of honor for the origin of Rome (Pausanias Arcadica, 8.43). Finally, we have the famous Pelasgian castles "Castles Pelasgica", which survive to this day on the outskirts of Rome, precisely in the village where Cicero was born.

"The settlement of the Greeks in Italy dates back to the time of Cronos" (Plut. Roman Causes, 41). Cronos was the king of the gods before Zeus and father of Zeus. Janus, "a Greek from Perrhaebia", son of Apollo and Creusa, reigned and taught the locals agriculture, civilized them and changed their language (Plut. Roman Causes, 22). Janus was the later Roman god, "January", and Perrhaebia the older name is a part of Thessaly.

Napliios, settled, many years before the Argonauts' voyage to America, on the islands of Meliti (Malta), Lampedusa and Kosoura.

Diomedes founded Ravenna (Rauena) and named the opposite islands (Tremiti) Diomedean islands.

Hadrias founded the city of Adria and named the Adriatic Sea after himself.

The Arcadian Pelasgians also founded Brindezi. It took its name from the word "Brendon" by which "the Messapians called deer and Brendon the head of the deer". The word Brendon is a Greek-Pelasgian word and in Arcadia there was the prehistoric metropolis with the name Brindezi, Brenthe, which also meant deer (Pausanias, VIII, 28, 7). The city became a Roman colony in 246 BC.



Scylla (The other side of Charybdis in the Strait of Messina) was the daughter of Forkis, granddaughter of Oceanus who was the founder of the homonymous city that is inhabited to this day.

In Sardinia, the Greeks had arrived long before Odysseus. They called it "Ichnoussa", because the shape of the island was like a human footprint. (Pausanias, Phocica, 17). The son of Heracles and Libya, Sardos, renamed it Sardo when he established his kingdom there. Later, other Greek settlers arrived from the Boeotian city of Thespies, the district of central Greece which today has Messapian city, Messapian Mountain and Messapian River. These Greeks were led by Iolaus and founded the cities of Olbia and Orgyle (Pausanias. 17).

Corsica owes its name to Cynus, also a son of Heracles (Polybius 12, 3 and Pausanias. Phocica 17).

Venice and the Venetians (Uenetes according to Diodorus, A, 25), were the only non-Celtic-Gallic tribe in North Italy. "They were a most valuable part of the Paphlagonian tribe, whose king was Pylaemenes (who led them in the Trojan War). They crossed into Thrace after the fall of Troy and after wandering for a long time, they arrived in the area of Venice" (Strabo c253).



Homer, Virgil and Italy.

The most important work written in the Latin language is Virgil's "Aeneid". It was the most important book in Latin and is taught in Italy at all levels of education. However, all of Virgil's sources go back to older Greek writers and possibly to oral tradition of the inhabitants of Etruria who were in the area just north of Rome. According to the Aeneid, Aeneas, the ancestor of the Etruscans and Romans, was from Troy and migrated to Latium after its destruction. Let us see what kind of people the Trojans were, (and by extension the Etruscans), inhabitants of the city of Troy or Ilion in Asia Minor, in Dardania (there is also Dardania in the Balkans north of Peonia), who belonged to the Pelasgian nation.

The Dardanians in Asia Minor belonged to the Pelasgian people, that is, Greek tribes. They spoke a language similar to the Achaeans, they worshiped the same gods and had the same Greek names. The war between the Achaeans and the Trojans was fought for control of the straits of Hellespont and the Dardanelles, because Troy dominated the straits and controlled trade and access of the Achaeans to the Black Sea, which was the main source of grain of Europe.

"The Dardanians came from Samothrace, an island that was once united with Thrace and was separated by the submergence of a large land mass caused by the Ogygus flood.¹ It was called the "flood of Ogygus" because Ogygus reigned in Attica and Boeotia at that time. Then some survivors led by Dardanus, son of Electra, daughter of Atlas and Zeus, crossed over to Asia Minor and founded Dardania, the capital of which was Troy". (Diodoros of Sicily V' 47, 4-5-48). Along with Dardanus, Idaeos also came to Troy from Crete, and established the cult of the "Idaeian Mother". This cult originated from Mount Ida on Crete. In the rest of Greece, they worshiped "Idaeian Hercules".

Dardanos was succeeded by his son Erichthonius, who had a son, Troas. Troas married Callirrhoe who gave birth to Ilos, Assaracas, Ganymede and Cleopatra (Apollodorus III 12, 2,3.). Troas gave his name to southern Dardania, which was since called Troad, while the northern part continued to be called Dardania and the strait Dardanelles.

Ilos built the acropolis of Troy, called "Ilion" in Homers Iliad. When he was looking for a place to build the acropolis, he prayed to Zeus to guide him. Zeus pointed out the hill "Atis" where there was already a temple of Dionysus, by casting an auspicious sign from the sky, the "Palladium". This was, a wooden statue, which Ilos placed in the sanctuary of the temple he built.

Ilos married Eurydice, daughter of Adrastus. Their son was Laomedon, and his son was Priamos (or Podarkis). He also had a daughter named Themiste. Priamos was the father of Hector and Alexandros-Paris. It turned out that Priamos was also going to be the last king of Troy. From Ilion, Homer's epic was named "Iliad".

The patron gods of Troy were Apollo and Athena. In Athena's temple, two virgins were sent as servants every year by the Opundian Locrians, the ancestors of the Locrians of Calabria. Anchises, great-grandson of Troy, had intercourse on Mount Ida with Aphrodite, and from this union Aeneas was born. Aeneas was descended from the race of Zeus, which is why the gods love him (Iliad, 10, verse 347).

Aeneas is also mentioned in the Cypriot epics, by Stesichoros of Sicily and Sophocles. They present Aeneas studying with the Centaurs on Mount Pelion in Thessaly and then, after the fall of Troy, leaving with the permission of the Achaeans, carrying his elderly father Anchises and his son Ascanius on his shoulders.

Hellanicos, Aristotle and Timaeos mention his settlement in Italy and his founding of Rome. Of course, before arriving there, he passed through the oracle of Delphi and, as all Greeks who founded new cities did, received an oracle about where he should settle. His flight is depicted in dozens of Etruscan archaeological finds (terracotta vases, etc.).

The Cretans, however, claimed that Troy was a Cretan city and were therefore in conflict with the Dardanians and the Phrygians. They claimed that sometime before 4000 BC, a great famine and disease struck Crete. At that time, led by Scamandros, many Cretans migrated to the coasts of Phrygia and the Hellespont, where, according to tradition, Helle, the sister of Phrixus,

¹ Flood of Ogygos. The largest flood mentioned in Greek mythology. It submerged a large part of the Aegean mountains and the Black Sea. Based on geological surveys, it took place around 14500 BC. The second flood was that of Cecrops. The final was that of Defkalion, with an ark that resembles that of Noah. It occurred around 9500 BC, as mentioned by Hesiod and Plato in Timaeus and Critias. It is associated with the sinking of Atlantis.

drowned when she fell from the golden-fleeced ram. They settled at the mouth of the Xanthos River (which was later named Scamander, because the mythical hero was killed there). The hill that dominated to the right of Scamander they called "Ida", in memory of Mount Ida in Crete and the Idaean Andros (cave) where the god Zeus was born. In the area where they settled, there was an abundance of musk deer. There they built a temple in honor of Apollo, who indicated to them the place to settle, which they named "Apollon Smydias" from the Pelasgian word "Smys", which means "mys" in Greek, and mouse in English.

After the death of Scamander, his son Teucros became the leader of the Cretans, from whom the inhabitants were renamed Teucrians. Soon, the aforementioned son of Zeus, Dardanos, who married the daughter of the King of Teucrians, Batia, arrived from Samothrace, and together they founded the city of Dardania on the shores of the Hellespont, which has since been called the Dardanelles.

Their grandson was Troas, who renamed Dardania to Troad, married Cassiroe (or Calliroye) and had four sons. Ilos, Ganymedes, Assarakas and Cleopatra. The sons divided the kingdom, Ilos took Troy and Assarakas, Dardania. A grandson of Assarakas was Anchises and great-grandson was Aeneas. Descendants of Aeneas 14 generations later were the Greek named Romulus and Remus; founders of the Greek named city of Rome.

Ilos' successor, Laomedon, wanted to unite the Trojan tribes. In his attempt, he was helped by the gods Apollo and Poseidon as well as Ajax (Ajax from Salamis, founder of the city of Aeanteion in Corsica). However, Laomedon did not give the rewards he had promised the gods, and they sent famine, earthquake and a sea beast to punish Troy. The oracle ordered Laomedon to sacrifice his daughter Esione to the beast to redeem the city. Then Hercules arrived with his friend Telamon, son of Ajax (in his honor the Etruscans built the city of Telamon in Italy) and, dazzled by the beauty of Esione, killed the beast and liberated Troy. However, Laomedon did not keep his promises to Hercules either. Thus, Hercules and Telamon conquered the city, resulting in Laomedon retreating and giving Esione as a wife to Telamon. Telamon then freed Laomedon's son Podarchis, who took the name Priamos, which in Pelasgian means "freedman".

Priamo's dynasty was the last before the Achaeans destroyed Troy and Aeneas left for Italy, where he would establish the Etruscan state and from them Romulus and Remus founded Rome.

The Etruscans and the Elymians of Sicily, who believed that they originated from Troy and the Aegean islands, and the other Pelasgians (Achaeans, Cretans, Phrygians etc.), were the same people. They spoke a group of related languages, or rather dialects. They worshiped the same gods, shared the same customs, same architecture and as the Roman poet Virgil says, "the only difference was the pronunciation of the language". They were related to the Greeks and differed from the local tribes of the Apennines and the Celts or Gauls who lived in the central north of Italy.

In Homer's *Odyssey*, Sicily and northern Italy are mentioned many times and in a way that shows that it is anything but an unknown and hostile place for Greeks. In the *Odyssey*, one of the suitors tells Telemachos to go to Sicily to sell Theoclymenos and Odysseus, who was disguised as a beggar, as slaves. (Y, 282-284). The old Laertes, father of Odysseus, had a Sicilian woman in his house where he lived in seclusion, who took care of him in his old age (Ω, 209-210). Odysseus also claims she was from the city of Alyvanta in Sicily. (Ω, 302-304).

In this city the demon (god) Alyvas was worshipped. This is a prehistoric Greek deity, who was worshipped only in this Sicilian city. Alyvas was a companion of Odysseus. He raped a virgin and was stoned to death. His ghost appeared frequently from then on and killed people. The Sicilian inhabitants of Temesa addressed the Oracle of Delphi, and the Oracle advised them to build a temple in honor of Alyvas and to offer him a virgin every year in his service!

We do not need to elaborate on Scylla and Charybdis in the Strait of Rhegium and the Laistrygonians of Messenia, etc., since they are very well known.



The Mycenaean Achaeans in southern Italy.

In addition to the ancient Aegeans, the Minoans (Cretans) and the Pelasgians, the Mycenaean - Achaeans had also settled in Italy before 2000 BC. Modern excavations by Italian universities have proven that the city of Thapsos in Sicily, north of Syracuse, the island of Castiglione in the Bay of Naples, the Valle di San Montano, in Pithecussa island, where the famous "Nestor's Cup" from 831 BC was found in a tomb, the Scoglio del Tonno east of Taranto, Punta Delle Terrare north of Otranto, Torre Casteluccia in Gallipoli in the Gulf of Taranto, Argyrippa, a city with rich silver mines, Hipponion Argos and many others were from that time period. In Sardinia as well, Mycenaean cities have been found, some with a known and others with an unknown to us today, Greek name. Nowadays, excavations are being carried out in many more areas in Sicily and Southern Italy, mainly towards the Adriatic and Ionian Seas, because there are finds that prove the existence of many Mycenaean cities.

Pan-Illyrianism

The term "Illyrians" is used to describe a large group of tribes. Over 100 tribes, that occupied a vast area, from Pannonia (Hungary) to current northern Albania. Most of them with no connection between them. The term "Illyrian" is a name given by the Greeks. It is a Greek word with two "LLs" and "Y" as in the Greek language. In reality no one knows if they had a common national name. If they felt like relative nations to each other.

In the Big Soviet Encyclopedia in the year 1990, I read that: "The science still knows nothing about the language of the Illyrians. Because no archeological findings exist nor any inscriptions. The only things that we know from them are some hydronyms and the names of some Illyrian kings, most of them Greek names. Pefketios, Kleitos, Monunios, Tefta". Since 1990 archeologists have been unable to find/uncover any Illyrian inscription. It seems that they did not have any civilization and written language, so they did not leave anything behind for us to learn about them.

Of these tribes, according to the written sources by the ancient Greeks and Roman authors, as well as archaeological excavations, only 22 tribes can be characterized as genuine Illyrian, that is those who lived in Dalmatia, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, Montenegro and northern Albania. The ancient writers considered some of those tribes, Greek. "A people homogeneous with the Greeks" (Thucydides) and "they resemble the Macedonians" (Strabo).

Therefore, any comparison that is attempted to be made with the current Albanian language is arbitrary and is based only on the imagination of those who write such science fiction. The Albanian language appeared in the 11th century AD, 1,000 years after the official disappearance of the Illyrians, i.e. their name is not mentioned in any source for 1,000 years, and the Slavic languages are present in Bosnia, Dalmacia etc.

Of all the inscriptions found, not a single text is found in the Illyrian language. Only inscriptions with names, in the supposed regions of Illyria, written initially in Greek and then in Latin. We see mostly the proper names of Illyrians, which are all of Greek origin and etymology or they are known Greek names, because with these Greek names the Greeks addressed them. The same is true with the known Illyrian toponyms, hydronyms, names of cities and villages, which also have mostly Greek names.

In mythology, Illyrios was the great-grandson of Deukalion, the ancestor of Hellene. Therefore, the Greeks considered some of them fellow countrymen! Yet some historians, both in Italy and in other countries, write that the Iapygians, the Messapians etc. were Illyrians, in the sense of the ancestors of today's Albanians! Those who write these things deliberately and maliciously conceal that Boeotia, Attica and Euboea were called Messapia. There exists a Messapian Mountain, a Messapian river, city etc. They deliberately ignore that Iapygas is mentioned in Greek history and mythology as the second born son of Daedalus. They deliberately ignore that the Peloponnese was called Apia until the times of the Achaeans. Even when asked, "why do the Messapians have a Greek name?", which means, "a people who live between two seas", they answer with even more audacity: "But that's the name that the Greeks called them! But we don't know their real name!".

They deliberately ignore the participation of the Aegean peoples, including the Danaeans, the Pelasgians and the Sicilians, in the campaigns against Egypt (the sea people), as mentioned in the Phoenician and Egyptian inscriptions. They ignore the Messapian inscriptions that have

been found. They ignore the excavations of the University of Lecce in the area of the Iapygians and the Messapians, which prove the continuous and uninterrupted presence of Greeks since the Mycenaean years. (Lefka, Porto Cesareo, Cavallino, Galatina and other places).

Illyrian with the two "LLs" and a "Y" has a very clear Greek etymology, identical with "Illyrian fields". It means the high or mountainous and Illyrian means "the upper, the highest, the supreme part of Heaven (where the dead went). Beyond the etymology of the word, Illyrian himself had a son called Cadmos, founder of Thebes and brother of Europa "Cadmus the Theban was king of the Illyrians and the Illyrians were a Greek nation" (Herodotus, 5th book, 3, p.61.). Also, "Cadmos, after leaving Thebes, went to the Enheleans and became king of the Illyrians" (Egheleanes, were an Illyrian tribe, with Greek culture. Apollodorus, Argonautica, 4, 516). Herodotus provides a lot of information about the Greek origin of some of the Illyrian tribes in his 5th book. Nonos the Panopolites refers extensively to the Illyrians in his 40-volume history entitled "Dionysiaca", where talks about the history of the "great civilizer of the world", the god Dionysos, in times after 3000 BC.



The Phoenicians in Sicily

Phoenix is a Greek word used to name the semitic Lebanese nation. It means "Deep Purple", a dye which was the most famous product of Phoenicia. It is also the mythological bird which was reborn from its ashes. Phoenix in mythology was the brother of Cadmus and Europa, son of Agenor and Telephasis. The word is given in all dictionaries as Greek, meaning: "deep red, purple". It was in use in Minoan times, and probably earlier. It was the name of a city "Phoenix" and "Limin Phoenikos", in southern Crete, built in the third millennium BC, from where they travelled to Lebanon for trade. The Phoenician city of Byblos (means book in Greek) took its name from Byblos, daughter of Miletus, founder of the city of Miletos in Ionia. They created a remarkable civilization, and above all the "Phoenician alphabet". Their name spread even

further from the geographical region of Phoenicia, and in the middle of the second millennium, the Semites, the uncivilized inhabitants of the region, were called "Phoenicians". According to Strabo (XVI 766) and Herodotus (VII 89), the Semites whom we know as Phoenicians, lived in Lebanon.

Recently, a clay tablet was discovered on the island of "Gioura" in the "Sporades complex" in the northern Aegean, with one of the oldest inscriptions in the world, dating back to 5500 BC, in which the letters A, D, Y, T, O are clearly visible. However, the Semito-Phoenicians appeared in history approximately 4,400 years after this inscription. Therefore, the Phoenicians cannot be related to Alpha, Taf, Ypsilon, Delta and the other letters of the Greek alphabet! Furthermore, the Semitic Phoenician alphabet had only consonants and no vowels.

In Greece in antiquity and to this day still exist some cities with the name "Phoenicia" (Like Phoenicia, capital of the Molossians in Epirus, etc.). In Sicily there was the Greek city "Limin Phoenicus", south of Syracuse, built hundreds of years before the founding of Syracuse, as well as the islet "Phoenicoussa" of the Lipari Islands. Also known with this name is the Phoenix tree (Palm tree), from whose leaves they, the Phoenicians got the deep purple color dye for fabrics.

During the archaic colonization of the 8th century BC, the Spartans went to Eryx demanding rights over this Pelasgian city, because according to tradition, Eryx, son of the Argonaut Boutes (or god Poseidon) and Aphrodite, challenged Hercules to a duel when he was returning with the oxen of Geryon, with the city Eryx as the prize. Hercules won, but did not take Eryx, because he was in a mission to bring the oxen to the Peloponnesian King of Argos, Eurystheas. Thus, the Dorians considered that they had rights over the city and when they returned to Sicily in the 8th century BC, demanded it.

Aegesta (Segesta) was a city of the Elymians. Elymos was also the name of one of the sons of Priamos, King of Troy, while the Elymians are mentioned as one of the most ancient people in Sicily. According to Strabo, the founder of the city was the famous Aegestus. Strabo's reference to the Elymian residents of the area, is well known: "they were Greeks, followers of Philoctetes, who according to legend came here directly after Troy". In Aegesta there was the temple dedicated to the Great Mother, possibly the goddess Rhea, wife of Cronos and mother of Zeus, whom the Elymians worshipped. Mother Earth was also the goddess Demetra. (Da-Mater in doric - Spartan).

One region of Macedonia was called then (and until today) Elymia. Elymos was the name of one of the Centaurs which lived in mount Pelion in Magnesia. Elyma was the capital of the Elymian region and tribe in Epirus, which is located directly in the opposite bank of Hydrunta (Otranto). Elyma was a city of Arcadia and Elymos was one of the ancient kings of the Tyrrhenians. Elymos was also a hero of the Trojan war, who was king of the Thessalian city of "Olyzon" in Magnesia and fought in Troy with the poisoned arrows of Heracles, which had been given to him, when Philoctetes burned Hercules to save him from the pain of the poisoned tunic, which the Centaur Chiron had given him. Stephanos Byzantios writes that Elymia and Ellinia have the same meaning: "Ellines, is a Greek nation in Thesprotia Epirus. Ellinia is a country and city in Sicily. The nation Ellines, Greeks and Hellene, are the same".

The etymology of the word is Greek. We know that the Latins called the letter "Ypsilon" "Y-Grecum", because it was used only in words of Greek origin. How is it possible that we have a word with Ypsilon but for this case the rule of Y-Grecum does not apply? Why do some

scientists still believe that: “cities and inhabitants of unknown origin”, when they refer to Aegesta, Eryx, Trapani and Libylaion?

There is of course an ancient reference to a Phoenician trading station west of today's Palermo, with the name “Ziz = Flower” but of course the city of Palermo is known with the Greek name Panormos (great Harbor).

Greek cities on the coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea

We are referring to the ones with the largest population and most important of them. The Greek population of Magna Graecia in the 4th century BC, according to survey calculations, reached 5 million. The cities of Magna Graecia became metropolis themselves and founded hundreds of other colonies, in Dalmatia-Croacia, on the coasts of France and Spain and in the Adriatic side of Italy.

Cumae is the oldest colony of the archaic settlement. It is perhaps the most important, since its alphabet, the so-called Cumaic, was adopted intact by the Romans. This alphabet had all the letters of what is known today as the Latin alphabet. Most of Greek cities adopted the Attic or Ionian alphabet, which is still in use today. Cumae was founded by Cumaeans, Eretrians, and Chalcidians in 775 BC. Megasthenes and Hippocles were settlers in chief from the Cumaean side. The Cumaeans also settled on the island Pithecuses. The city developed rapidly and became a model for all economic and intellectual activities towards neighboring italic peoples, culminating in the adoption of the Cumaic alphabet by the Latins, Etruskans and Samnites. Its great prosperity quickly led to overpopulation, resulting in the Cumaeans creating new cities, such as Pyrgos, north of Rome, Parthenope, Dicaearchia (today's Pozzuoli) etc. In all these cities, ancient artifacts and ruins are preserved, irrefutable witnesses to the greatness of Magna Graecia. Other Cumaean also settled on the islands of Ischia, Capri, Ponza and Ventonene. The Cumaeans are probably also responsible for the oldest inscription of the Greek language to date, written in the classical Greek alphabet, which was found in Gavia, the city where Romulus and Remus were born (Osteria del Osa). It dates back to 770 BC.

South of Cumae is Neapolis, a large city known today as Naples. It was built at the foot of Vesuvius by Cumaeans and Rhodians, initially under the name Parthenope. Later, the Chalcidians also settled in the city, who named their suburb Neapolis, in contrast to the Paleopolis which was Parthenope. In 328 BC it was conquered by the Romans, without serious consequences for its Greek population and became the largest intellectual center in Italy, since all the Romans flocked to Neapolis to study in its famous Greek schools. The great Roman poet Virgilius also lived here and was buried here on Pausilypon hill. After a short interlude of Gothic occupation in the 5th century AD. general Belisarios, reintegrated it into the Byzantine state in 536. At the beginning of the 8th century AD, Pope Gregory III, organized a conspiracy and removed the power of the Byzantines from the city, which declared independence, headed by an elected Duke. Its independence lasted 400 years, until the descent of the Normans in the 12th century. The Neapolis museum, is perhaps the most magnificent and richest museum of Greek culture in Italy. It has a hugely valuable collection of Greek statues, originals and copies from the Roman era, vases, mosaics, with the greatest one, the "Battle of Issus", made of rice grains. It depicts Alexander the Great on his horse Bucephalus, a work by the artist Philoxenos.



Greek statue found in the sea of Baia near the Greek cities Dikiarheia and Naples in Campania.

Near Naples was Herculaneum (Ercolano), a Greek city that was covered by the ash of Vesuvius in the Roman era. Today's excavations have brought to light one of the richest Greek libraries in the world, which was located in the villa of Julius Caesar's father-in-law.

Elea. The most important city of this region was Elea or Velia, a city well-known for its famous scientific and philosophical school and the philosophical movement of the "Eleatic Philosophers". It was founded in 535 by the Phocaeans from Asia Minor, who fled from Phocaea in droves to escape massacre by the Persians. Initially, they settled in an older colony of the Phocaeans, Alalia in Corsica, but an alliance of Tyrrhenians and Carthaginians crushed them and after 5 years, forced them to leave Corsica and come to Italy, to found Elea. The main representatives of Eleatic philosophy were Xenophanes, Parmenides, Zeno of

Elea, who was the inventor of the "dialectical" method, and others. Its basic position was the opposition to the "everything flows" of the Ionian (Heraklitos in Asia Minor) school. Xenophanes (580-485) is the inventor of scientific monotheism. "A great God exists for both gods and men. He does not resemble mortals, neither in body nor in thought... In fact, if even calves could paint their god, it is certain that they would paint him in the form of a calf and not as human being." Zeno opposed Democritus' theory that the atom is the last indivisible body of matter, with the "eternal (infinite) disintegration of matter" (theory of the disintegration of the atom, atomic energy). He proposed the nucleus. From glorious Elea, many ancient monuments are preserved in modern Velia, such as the Acropolis, the Gate of Roses, the baths and temples, etc. The city never ceased to exist until today and was called Velia (a corruption of Elia) by the Romans.

Other important cities in the area were Poseidonia-Pestum, 70 km southern of Naples, Pyxus, 480 BC, built by Mikynthos, ruler of Sicilian Messina, which is today called by the Byzantine name Polykastion, as well as the entire bay of Maratea, Ippononeion from the 7th century BC, Metaurus, Medma, the doric Gaeta, Emporion, Philadelphia, Skila, Reggio, modern capital of Calabria, with an intense philhellenic movement and interest in the Greek past of Calabria and with a famous museum, where the famous statues "Warriors of Riace" (Ryaki= small river) are located. In the Gulf of Ausonia there was the City of Circe, which had an altar of Circe and Athena, as Pausanias recorded, Formiae or Ormiei, a colony of the Laconians, Praenestinos or Polystephanos, in which there was a temple of the goddess Tyche and hundreds more smaller cities.

Reggio was built in 717 BC by the Chalcidians and at the same time was also settled by the Messenians. Its founders were Cumaeans, Perieres and Chalcidians. The name comes from the word "rift", since it was built right on the rift that separates Sicily from Calabria. In 495 it reached the peak of its glory and extended its rule to the Sicilian city of Messina/ Zagle. In 387 it was destroyed by their neighbors, the Locrians, but soon was rebuilt. It experienced great prosperity in trade and literature, as mathematician Pythagoras, the poet Ibykos, the historians Hippis and Glaucos, Riginos a Pythagorean philosopher (mathematician) and great musician, inventor of the "Chalkeophon", lived and created in this city. It was preserved as a large city throughout the Byzantine Middle Ages and the German occupation. The modern city was built exactly on top of the ancient one, which is why not many finds have come to light.

Cities on the coast of the Ionian Sea

The oldest city in the region was Sybaris, which was built in 721 BC by Achaean colonists, coming from Achaia, a district of Aegialeia in the Peloponnese and later by Peloponnesian residents of Troezen. The city developed so much that it exceeded 500,000 inhabitants. At one point it even had an army numbering 300,000 soldiers. Due to its enormous power, it ruled over 25 cities of the wider region. Cities that it also supplied with population due to its own overdevelopment. The luxury and soft life of the Sybarites became proverbial. They organized taste and cooking competitions and awarded the best chef with a golden wreath. They preferred to spend their days at symposia, while at night they established hours of common silence, prohibiting professionals and craftsmen from working in the city, and even chariots from circulating on the street. The arrogance of the Sybarites, however, led them to a painful defeat in the conflict with Croton, who completely destroyed them. Ruins of Sybaris are buried in the marshy area of the Kratis River.

But what happened to the hundreds of thousands of Sybarites? Many escaped in the hinterland and in the villages, others founded other cities, some stayed in Sybaris and others participated in the founding of the first Panhellenic city of Thourii, an effort led by the Athenian politician Pericles in 444 BC, in the area of the destroyed Sybaris. It was a model city, both because it promoted the unity of the Greeks, who were consumed by bloody civil wars, and for its pioneering urban planning. It was designed by the famous architect Hippodamus of Miletus, the first scientific urban planner in history, and its first inhabitants are mentioned by Protagoras, Empedocles and Herodotos.

North of the Thourii was Siris, which had been founded by the Colophonians of Asia Minor. Strabo, however, informs us that the city was much older than Colophon. It was built by Pelasgians who came to Calabria from the coast of Asia Minor. It experienced great prosperity and population growth, but was destroyed by the alliance of Croton, Sybaris and Metapontion in 450 BC. Then the inhabitants of Siris went further north and built Heraclea, a city where the king of Epirus, Pyrrhus, defeated the Romans. The Byzantine city of Polichoro is located on the site of Heraclea today.

Tarantas was the only colony of the Spartans in Magna Graecia. It was founded in 707 BC and took its name from Taranto, son of god Poseidon. It was the megalopolis of Apulia, with a population that reached 600,000 and an army that exceeded 50,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry. The city was dominated by the huge statue of Hercules, which was the largest statue of antiquity after the Colossus of Rhodes. This statue was sculpted by the great sculptor Lysippos. The Romans, dazzled by the beauty and size of the statue, took it to Rome in 208 BC, where it remained until 1204. Then the Roman Catholic-Frankish crusaders, blinded by hatred for everything Greek, tore it into pieces, melted it down and made coins and weapons! It was founded by the "Parthenes" (virgins), that is Spartans who were descended from unmarried Spartan parents and who rebelled when the state did not give them lands from the conquered Peloponnesian Messenia. To escape execution, they fled to Italy and founded Taranto, with Phalanthos as its leading settler.

Next to Tarantas was the ancient Greek city of Satyrion. It took its name from Satyria, daughter of Minos, with whom Poseidon fell in love with and had a son, Taranto, with her. Thus, the Dorians met there the earlier Greeks. The city became the most important port for exporting agricultural products from the hinterland of the Messapians, with whom relations were good, since the Messapians were quickly fully assimilated by the Hellenes and adopted the same Greek dialect. It was also an important industrial center, producing pottery, silverware, weaving and dyeing woolen fabrics. Letters developed equally and the Pythagorean philosopher, mathematician and mechanic Archytas (4th century BC) lived there. He invented the flying drone and turbine, creating a self-flying wooden pigeon. The famous sculptor Lysippos also created other statues there.

Tarantas was the leading Greek power in the fight against the Romans in southern Italy. It managed to keep the Roman fleet away from the Gulf of Taranto, by agreement. However, when Thourii, Locri, Croton and Rhegium accepted a Roman garrison in their city, the Romans broke the Greek front and violated the agreement by sending 10 ships to Tarantas (303 BC). The Tarentines sank four and captured one, but this was the cause of a larger Roman intervention, which was stopped by the king of Epirus Pyrrhus in 280 BC in a battle fought near Heraclea. However, the victory was temporary. Pyrrhus left a garrison at Tarantas and returned to Greece. There he was killed in a battle in the of Argos and after his death, the leader of the garrison, Milon, surrendered Tarantas to the Romans. In modern Taranto we can see some ruins from the temple of Demeter, another temple of another unknown deity, and a wall

from the archaic era. The museum of course is full of Greek antiquities. Taranto is also famous for the Tarantella. The national dance of all south Italy, the Greek national dance for all Magna-Greeks. It is an ancient Dionysian dance, a ceremony for the healing of the venomous bite of a spider. Both the dance and the spider took their name from Taranto.

Next to Taranto, in Basilicata was Metapontion. It was founded around 700 BC and experienced great prosperity despite being in the shadow of Tarantas. Its founder was the mythical Metapontos, son of Sisyphos and grandson of the god Aeolus. Aeolus, of course, and his brother Boeotian, were born precisely in this place, and from here Boeotian moved to mainland Greece, to the region of Boeotia. It was the seat of the famous Greek leader of the revolution of the slaves, Spartacus. Pythagoras lived and taught in Metapontion when he was exiled by the Crotonians. Remains of imposing temples of Apollo and the Pythagorean survive, while the city's museum makes the residents proud of their Greek ancestry.

Further south, on the shores of the Gulf of Taranto, is the city of Croton. A city famous for Pythagoras and the Pythagorean school, for the Olympic champion Milon of Croton, who lifted an entire cow on his back and carried it around the Olympic stadium in Olympia, for Alcmaeon, a great physicist, astronomer and physician, etc. Croton was the name of the mythical hero who welcomed Hercules to this city on his way back with the oxen of Geryon. And in this case, we see the same story as that of Rome. Here Lycinus tried to steal his oxen, but Hercules defeated him and kept the oxen. Croton was the brother of Alcinous, King of the Phaeacians (Corfu). These references do prove that the Greeks inhabited the area from immemorial prehistoric times. It was built in 708 BC by the Achaeans with Myskelos as its leading settler. However, as Strabo tells us, the city was originally founded by the Greek-Pelasgians after the Trojan War. It quickly grew with livestock raising and trade and in turn founded two more colonies. Pythagoras settled in Croton, exiled from his birthplace of Samos in the Aegean by the Tyrant Polycrates. He transformed Croton into a world center of Pythagorean philosophy - mathematics and music. Pythagoras is the inventor of pentagram for music. The Crotonians were simple, frugal eaters who practiced the ancient Greek "metro" (measure), in contrast to their luxurious neighbors, the Sybarites. It is important to note that Croton was the city with the most victories in the Olympic Games. It was a very large city, since in its battle against the city of the Locrians in 540 BC it fielded an army of 130,000 men. The population must have exceeded 500,000 inhabitants. The city's museum is very rich, while only one column of the temple of Lacinian Hera survives from ancient times.

Further south was Skyllacion, Kaulonia, a colony of Croton, which still today is called Kaulonia and Riaki where the famous bronze statues were found. Hieracis, a large Byzantine city and finally Locri. The city was known as Epizephyrioi Locri, and was built by Eusebius in 673 BC on the cape that was called "Zephyros" (name of the southeast wind) by an earlier Greek colonization. Its inhabitants were Dorians from Locris and the city remained famous in history by its great legislator Zalefkos, who laid the foundation of the later Roman law. It is important to note the role of matriarchy from ancient times in the Minoan city that existed since the 3rd millennium in the area.

Angona, a colony of Syracuse, with its shape of the human upper limb, meaning elbow in Greek. Spina, a smaller town where today is Ravenna (Pausanias). Ravenna was certainly a Greek city, built by the Thessalians, with Diomedes as its founder. In the same area there is also the city of Timaeon, with a memorable Sanctuary of Diomedes (according to Pausanias). In the open sea the islands of Diomedes (Tremiti islands today). Further north, near the mouth of the Po River, Agrigrippa, renamed by Diomedes Hipponion Argos. Teatea is the

modern Chieti, which according to tradition was built by Achilles. And beyond these dozens and perhaps hundreds of smaller cities, villages, settlements and trading posts, built there from time immemorial.

Sicily

Sicily is the region in which Plato lived a significant part of his life and in which he wanted to apply his ideas about the ideal, Platonic state. In the archaic colonization of Sicily (which began in the 8th century BC), the Euboeans and the Megarites also took the lead here. Chalcis in Euboea, is a city located today directly in front of the Messapian Mountain in Boeotia, Messapios river to the south, and the city of Messapia to the north. It had very close prehistoric ties with the region, since the Pelasgian Messapians also set out from there for Apulia. The Euboeans were the first to found Zaggli (Messina) in 725 BC, at the strait of Scylla and Charybdis; the strait that separates Sicily from Calabria. The name Zaggli etymologically is derived from the Sicilian-Pelasgian word Zaggli = sickle, due to the sickle shape of the bay in which it is built. Zaggli was later settled by settlers from other cities and Samos and Miletus in Asia Minor, when those cities were conquered by the Persians. Later, in the 5th century BC, Messenian refugees settled in the city after a Messenian war against the Spartans and the city was renamed Messina. In 396 BC, the city was destroyed by the Carthaginians, but very soon rebuilt by the Tyrant Dionysius the Elder. The city was destroyed again by the Carthaginian Hamilcar, and some residents of Messina fled further west, where they founded the city of Tyndaris. Other Messenians stayed and rebuilt the city. The islands of the god Aeolus, (Aiolian islands) Panarea, Salvatore Dei Greci, Stromboli.... are famous to today.

Halfway from Messina to Catania, there is Naxos - Giardini, which is also the oldest city of this particular Greek colonization in Sicily. It was built by the Chalcidians in 735 BC, under the leader Thucles-Theocles, at the foot of Mount Etna. Later, the Megarians and Naxians settled in it and gave it their name. In 476 BC, the inhabitants of Naxos were expelled by the Tyrant of Syracuse, Hieron. However, they returned and remained loyal allies of the Athenians. In 413, when the Sicilian campaign of the Peloponnesian war ended with Sparta victorious, the Tyrant of Syracuse Dionysios took control of the city. Then the decline of the city began with new migrations to other cities and the Sicilian countryside. Before its decline, Naxos, with the great increase in its population, founded the cities-colonies of Taormina, Catania, Leontini, Gallipoli and Evia (Eubati today). Today it is full of ancient Greek monuments as well as modern monuments copies of ancient Greek ones, avenues with Greek names (Chalkidos Avenue, Megaron Street, etc.), friendship associations with Greece, mutual hospitality of children in the summer, rebirth of the Greek language, etc.

Taormina (today Taormina, then Tavromenion), a place of inspiration for both the great Sicilian Nobel Prize winner Luigi Pirandello, which often awakened in him a pleasant and proud feeling of Greek ancestry, including his Greek surname (Pyr&Angelos), and the great German philhellene Goethe, who described it as the most beautiful place in the world. It is known for its famous theater, with a capacity of 15,000 seats. It was built in 358 BC by the Naxians. It belonged to the area of influence of Syracuse, until it was conquered by the Romans, who respected it and declared it a federal city (Civitas Federata). Apart from the ancient Greek theatre and part of the Odeon from Roman times, the other ancient sites are still buried because the modern city is built right on top of the old one.

West and towards the Sicilian hinterland, is Leontines, known today as Lentini. From 729 BC it was built on the banks of the Tiresias River, in the area that according to the Odyssey was inhabited by the Laistrygonians.

Catania (Katani) was founded at about the same time by the Naxian-Chalkidians, with Evarchos as its leading settler, around the Symethos River (Simeto today). It suffered from earthquakes and destruction from the volcano of Etna, where according to mythology the terrible titan Encelados was buried by the bulk of the mountain that goddess Athena had thrown on him. Etna was also the workshop of god Hephaestus. The famous Charondas legislator of this city, together with Zalefkos of Locri, laid the foundations of the later "Roman law". Today, archaeological excavations show the great prosperity of the city. Its huge theater, with a capacity of 16,000 seats, and other treasures in its museum are famous.

West of the city and towards the foot of Etna, the Catanians had founded the city of Innissa. This city was in a way the guardian and guide to the sacred volcano and the nymph Etna. In Catania today operates the second largest in Europe (after Palermo) "Center for Greek Studies", with enormous interest on the part of the locals to study the history, language and culture of their blood ancestors.

South of Catania is Hyblaean Megara. Initially, it was called Hybla, by its older Greek colonizers, the Pelasgians. Its settlement with Megarians, added the name Megara in its name, as we saw in more detail above, in the chapter on Daedalus. The heyday of this colony did not last long, due to its proximity to Syracuse, which was the superpower of the region. Thus, part of the Megarians moved to southwestern Sicily and founded Selinunte, at the mouth of the homonymous river, in 629 BC. The name refers to the homonymous plant, celery, which was native to the banks of the river. The Megarians drained the marshes of Selinunte and transformed the area into a paradise. Its heyday is witnessed by its three gigantic and magnificent temples of Apollo, Hera and Hercules, for which art historians have written that the works of Sicily are those that reach perfection. There are also ruins of a temple of the underworld gods, probably Pluto and Persephone, but also many ruins of orthodox Christianity from the Byzantine era. In 409 BC it was conquered by the Carthaginians and destroyed. In 250 BC it was destroyed again and was not re-inhabited in ancient times. The population moved inland where they built new cities. Some of the people also moved to Syracuse.

Syracuse was the largest and most important Greek city in Sicily. A megalopolis that reached a population of 800,000 inhabitants, with the surrounding municipalities. It was founded by the Corinthians with the settler Archias in 735 BC. The city and its surroundings were inhabited by the previous Greek colonization of the Pelasgians and around 1200 BC more colonists Aetolians and Epirotes, were added. Alongside the Corinthians, settlers from Ortygia and Chalkidiki settled on the islet, who gave it the name "Arethusa". Arethusa was a nymph who was transformed by Zeus into a beautiful spring at the request of Alpheus, in order to escape the torment of the insane love he felt for her. But Alpheus did not get over his love and so the goddess Aphrodite turned him into a river in the Peloponnese, so that its waters would join the waters of Arethusa.

The development of Syracuse was rapid, so that from the 7th century it developed three other colonies in Sicily, Acra, Kasmeni and Kamarina and many others outside Sicily, mostly in Dalmatia and Adriatic Italy. The city itself was united with the suburbs of Ortygia, Neapolis, Tyche, Arcadia and Epipolis (the well-known Pentapolis) and became the megalopolis of the region with a land wall of 27 km. that surrounded it and 800,000 inhabitants. Its regime was

oligarchic and its relations with neighboring Gela, which had a tyranny, were always hostile. Gela supported the Syracusan democrats when they fled to Kasmeni and asked for the help of the tyrant Gelon to take power in Syracuse. Gelon took advantage of the situation and quickly managed to take power himself in Syracuse. The Syracusans honored him as the second founder of the city, equal to the settler Archias, and in 418 BC, when he died, they built an imposing mausoleum in his honor and placed a statue of him in the temple of Hera. Gelon was succeeded by his brother Hiero, who transformed Syracuse into a world intellectual center. Aeschylus premiered his trilogy "Persians" in the famous "Teatro Greco" of Syracuse. The Syracusan Epicharmus (5th century BC) wrote dramas and comedies many years before Aristophanes. The poet Formis was also a comedian, while the poets Pindar, Simonides of Cea and Bacchylides lived and wrote in Syracuse. The Tyrants Dionysius, the Elder and Dionysius, the Younger were also poets. The philosophers and sophists, Xenophanes, Gorgias and Parmenides, contributed to the progress of science and Reason, while the great mathematician and philosopher Empedocles also lived here for a time. The orator Teisias, a student of the famous Corax, is the inventor of artistic recitation. Plato also lived in Syracuse during the time of the Tyrant Dionysius, and so did the historian Philistos who wrote the history of Sicily from ancient times to the time of Dionysius the Younger in 363 BC. Cicero called him "little Thucydides". Dionysius the Younger was succeeded by his son-in-law Dion, a student of Plato. Also noteworthy were the governors Timoleon and Agathocles, who gave Syracuse days of great prosperity. Agathocles made laws in favor of the poor, against the aristocrats, in 317 BC. He waged victorious wars against Carthage and reached Carthage itself and besieged it. At that time, the other Greek cities of Sicily turned against Syracuse, and he was forced to return, making peace with Carthage, to which he ceded sovereignty over Egesta and Selinunte.

The last days of prosperity were marked by the tyrant Hiero II. In his days, the famous mathematician Archimedes, one of the greatest minds in world history, and the poet Theocritus lived in Syracuse. In 215 BC, the Romans, under the generals Claudius and Marcellus, besieged the city. They took advantage of the laxity of the guard when the festivals in honor of the goddess Artemis began and managed to infiltrate from Hexapylus, invade Epipolis and then conquer Neapolis and Tyche. During this conquest a Roman soldier killed Archimedes, while he was working on the solution to a mathematical problem. This act was also the "greatest contribution of Rome to science!" The Romans were not concerned with science, but only with administration and entertainment. They left science to the Greeks, whom they hired as teachers of their kids. The only Romans, who were literate, were historians and chroniclers, not scientists. The city began to decline from then on. Its population began to flee to neighboring cities but mainly to the interior of Sicily, to smaller towns and villages. At the time of Augustus Octavian, only Ortygia, Naples and part of Tyche were inhabited.

Of the ancient monuments, two temples survived in Ortygia, the temple of Athena, which is better preserved, and of Apollo, which is also the oldest in Magna Graecia, built in the 7th century BC. They were works that certainly approached perfection, as are the temples of Selinunte and Acragas, but they were not preserved in a similarly good condition. Cicero had even written about the temple of Athena that: "In no part of the world are there such magnificent decorations of gold and ivory". In the 7th century AD, during the Byzantine Empire, the temple of Athena was converted into a Christian church and during the Norman conquest (11th century) it was converted into a cathedral and remains to this day. Despite all this, the Syracusans continue to call their cathedral the "Temple of Athena - Tempio di Atena". Also preserved are Arethusa Spring in Ortygia, ruins of the ports and the famous Greek theater "Teatro Greco", which was located in Syracusan Naples. The theater seats 15,000 and was

built by Hieron I. Part of it was destroyed in the Middle Ages to build a Spanish fortress. The famous quarries, behind the hill of the theater, became a place of martyrdom for thousands of Athenian prisoners, after their defeat on the Sinaros River (Peloponnesian War) and their retreat into the interior of Sicily. The quarries consist of three artificial caves that are today called: Paradise, Dionysius and Capuchin. Also preserved are the aqueduct of Hiero, which still functions today, a Caryatid from the altar of Hieron II, of unparalleled artistic value (as described by Diodoros Siceliotis), a Gymnasium from the Hellenistic period (2nd century BC), remains of the bouleuterion (assembly), the obelisk erected by the Syracusans in memory of their victory over the Athenians, the famous catacombs of the Christian era, about which we will see more in another chapter, the temple of Zeus, known as "Olympion", located outside Syracuse on the banks of the Anaplos river, the Acropolis of Epipolis, the fortress of Euryale and many others. The most important findings are of course in the Syracuse Museum.

In the outskirts of Syracuse, there are the cities of Acra, Kasmeni, Kamarina, Eloros and Morgantion, all with ancient Greek monuments. In Acra, the theater and temple of Aphrodite are preserved, in Eloros the theater and temple of Demeter. In the uninhabited Morgantion today, also called Kastro, the ancient theater and sanctuary of Demeter are preserved.

Notos. South of Syracuse existed an older, Mycenaean city with name "Notos" (South). A smaller city during classical times.

Heading southwest, we come across Gela, founded in 690 BC by Rhodians and Cretans, under Antiphemus and Epimus, on the mouth of the Gela River. The river and the city were named by Pelasgians from Caria in Asia Minor (Kares, Greek tribe compatriots of Herodotus) who settled there around in the second millennium BC. We saw above that it had a tyrannical regime and was a major rival of Syracuse. We saw how and in what way the tyrant Gelon became the ruler of Syracuse. In today's city, one can admire several Greek works of art in its museum as well as its ancient wall.

Ragusa was founded in the second millennium BC by colonists that came from the Aegean Sea islands and Crete. Its old name was Hybla Heraia (Hera was the queen of the Olympian gods). In the Christian era it was renamed Ragusa from the Greek word Rag or Rog, which means grape berries. The area was famous for its grapes and wine. The city is a UNESCO protected monument and preserves many ancient Greek findings, as well as the Byzantine fortification of the city.



The Byzantine fortification around the modern city of Ragusa.



Ancient Greek gymnasium. Ragusa



Greek necropolis Ragusa.



Greek, Christian-Byzantine Hermetaries. Ragusa.



Agia Maria (Madona) di Cava, "Glykofilousa". Ispica.



Greek Orthodox (Byzantine) convent. Ispica.



Ispica. Map of Greek Orthodox churches, monasteries and hermataries (Caves)

Acragas was founded in 580 BC by settlers from Gela and Rhodes. Just 80 years after its foundation, it managed to become the most important city in Sicily after Syracuse in terms of population, wealth, art and literature. It fought fierce battles with the Semitic Phoenicians for the zone of commercial influence in Sicily. It was also destroyed by the Carthaginians in 405 and rebuilt by Timoleon in 345 BC, who brought residents from the Aegean island of Kea to repopulate the city.

In the Valley of the Temples there are fortifications, the Acropolis, the temple of Demeter, the temple of Hera, the temple of Omonia, which is the best-preserved temple in Magna Graecia, the temple of Hercules and the temple of Olympian Zeus, which is the largest temple in all of Greek antiquity, 105 m. in length and 18 m. wide. Next are the temples Dioscuri (Castor and Polydeucis) and Asclepius. There are also ruins of many private houses, which testify to the extent of prosperity and wealth with wonderful mosaics. The monuments of the Tyrants Phalaris and Theron, giant “kouroi” that adorned the temple of Zeus, the fortifications of Daedalus and newer walls, and a wonderful archaeological museum.

In Akragas lived one of the greatest philosophers of antiquity, a follower of the Eleatic philosophy, great scientist, mathematician and physicist, Empedocles (493-439 BC). He was the son of Meton and grandson of the Olympic champion Empedocles. Tradition says that he died by jumping into the crater of Etna, to be purified and atoned for by its light. He was the first to formulate the theory of the separation of matter from energy. Aristotle called Empedocles the father of rhetoric and Galenos the father of medicine. Opposite Akragas was the Greek island of Lampedusa and across the sea, in Africa, numerous Sicilian colonies, such as the Syracusan city of Nabal (Naples) in Tunisia.

Akragas was conquered for the second time by the Carthaginians in 262 BC, when it was destroyed. At that time, 25,000 of the inhabitants who had rebuilt the city after the first destruction were captured and sold as slaves. In the place of the magnificent and prosperous city, a small town continued to exist for centuries but most of the Greeks who escaped the massacres fled to the interior of Sicily and in other neighboring cities.

West of Akragas is Selinunte. It was founded in 629 BC by residents of Hyblaean Megara on the banks of the Selinunte River, which we talked about above.

Further west and inland, is Aegesta. It is built on Mount Varvaro and has a wonderful and one of the best-preserved temples of antiquity and a large theater. Much has been written about the origin of the inhabitants of Aegesta. That is, they were not Greeks but were later Hellenized to the point of being the most important ally of the Syracusans. Science has already given the answer. The Elymians, who inhabited the area, were a Greek-Pelasgian tribe. This is based on archaeological findings about the settlement of the Creto-Pelasgians in Magna Graecia, but also after the Trojan war, according to the testimonies of the authors we mentioned. Colonization of Semito-Phoenicians is not mentioned anywhere else in western Sicily, except the few main colonies that we discussed in detail.

The same applies to Drepano-Drepani (Trapani), the complex of the Aegades islands in the Aegean Sea, the islet of Pantelleria, Kossyra (Pantelleria is a newer Greek and medieval name), Eryx which dominates, Trapani and in which works of Daedalus are preserved, such as the "Daedalian" wall and the temple of Aphrodite.



Temple at Aegesta.

Himera, in Palermo Province in Sicily, was the site of two bloody battles between the united Sicilian Greeks and the Carthaginians. The Carthaginians were defeated in 480 BC but avenged their defeat in 409 BC by razing the city to the ground and massacring its Greek population, whose mass graves have now been found by archaeologists.



On the road between Selinunte-Acragas to Palermo was the ancient Greek city of Scheria. Cicero had visited and mentioned it. Scheria was also called the island of Corfu, while others called the whole of Sicily by this name. Today the city of Corleone is located there. Still a Greek name, which comes from the words Cardia+Leon and with many Greek antiquities found there. The etymology of the name is uncertain, undergoing various modifications from ancient Greek Kouroullounè, to the Siculo-Arabic Qurlayun, from Latin Curilionum, to the Norman Coraiglion, from the Aragonese Conillon, Coniglione from which the Sicilian Cunigghiuni originated. The modern name originates from 1556.

Palermo-Panormos (Big Harbour) is the largest city in present-day Sicily and home to the most important university and center of Greek studies in Europe. In antiquity it was a smaller Greek town.

There are also the towns of Calakta (Kali akti), Millazo (Mylai) and Kefaloidion (Kefalu). Enna in the interior was the city where the god of the underworld, Plouton, stole the daughter of goddess Demeter (protector of Sicily), Persephone.

Argyriion, also in the interior, was the birthplace of Diodoros of Sicily. The famous patron of the city, Saint Philipppo D' Agira, is also a Greek Orthodox saint.

And many other, hundreds of cities and villages during its history, from ancient times to today.

The Name and Flag of Sicily



Three Skelia (plural) means three legs, (three legged). It is a Greek symbol and a Greek word of course. The Triskeles in the picture above is the most ancient one found, from the 8th century BC. It is exhibited in ancient Olympia's Museum. The word skelia is one of the most likely Etymologies for the name Sikelia (corrupted to Sicilia in Latin). Another name for Sicily (Greek also) is Trinakria (three ends or tri-limb). Known by that name at least from the 3rd millenium BC by the Minoans.

Trinakros was also an eponymous hero of Trinakria, son of god Poseidon, or son of god Helios from other sources. His figure appears on a denarius of Alliena from 47 BC. A naked young man, with his right leg bent and resting on a prow; he holds the Triskelion in his right hand and his left arm is covered by a cloak.



Medusa with snakes in hair.

So, the Greek Sikelos was the first King of Sicily. He was the son of Italos, or as some other mythological sources tell us, god Poseidon's son, or, in real history, grandson of Oinotros (Inotros). The name means wine maker. Oino (Ino) in Greek is vino in Latin.

According to Thucydides, Sicilians were a branch of the Oinotrian who were a Greek tribe. Some other mythological sources say that Oinotros originated from Rome, but Rome did not exist at this time. He was adopted by King Morgis. Morgis was the son of King Italos.

Other Sicilian Languages

I wrote this chapter when I read that some “linguists” discovered that the pre-Greek dialects that the ancient Siculi and Sicani spoke were similar to the ancient German. However, the ancient German language did not exist in 1000 BC. We have no written or oral source for any Germanic language to compare with, but only 1,000 years later. So, it is curious how the comparison was made with the Sicani words that were found. The Germans had not even begun to form tribes then.

The Indo-European linguistic theory is maintained today only to support the Afrocentric, through Asia, origin of the European white human. It is a branch of the Woke movement for the degradation of Greek and European culture. Europe, until the beginning of the Holocene period, experienced a period of glaciers. The only ice-free area that was home to human life was the three south European peninsulas. With the melting of the ice, after 10,000 BC, the inhabitants of the Greek, Apenine and Spanish peninsula began to gradually expand northwards. This also explains the similarity of the languages as they all evolved from the same pre-Hellenic language and the similarity of DNA found between the Greeks and the Scandinavians or the Poles for example!

The “Indo-European” Language

Let’s begin by asking two questions.

A) How can someone explain the huge chronological gap between the creation of the different European languages, which theoretically have a common ancestor in the so-called “Indo-European” language? In particular, the Greek language appears on written monuments with the Linear B script, during the Mycenaean civilization. It theoretically began to be spoken between 2500-3000 BC. We exclude the Minoan-Cretan language, which is written with the Linear A script, because deciphering it has not been widely accepted by the scientific community.

The second chronologically known European language, Latin, appears with its first written monument in the 6th century BC, and theoretically it started to be spoken between 1000 and 800 BC. How do the “Indo-Europeanists” answer the question? Why doesn’t the newer Latin language derive directly from the much older Greek and why doesn’t the French language derive from Latin, but they have to make a leap of logic and chronology and must derive it directly from some unknown until today, “Indo-European language”?

The other European languages were created in the first years after Christ. They were not created at the same time. So, how is it possible to have the same ancient mother tongue from a common “Indo-European cradle”.

B) In the science of history, which I studied for 7 years, I learned that the necessary precondition for writing the history of ancient times, is the material sources. That means, the primary sources, not the later bibliography. However, we are constantly reading when we are looking for the etymology of the words that a word, for example: “Pater” in Greek, “Father” in English, both have a common root, the “Indo-European” word “Patir”. Why should not the

English word “Father” derive from the 3,000 years older Greek word “Pater” and must derive from a theoretical “Indo-European”? Did English people and the English language exist 4 or 5,000 years ago? No. The English language is a Germanic language in structure, with French (Latin) vocabulary. It is one of the newest European languages. So, is it possible to have contact with the so called “Indo-European” at the same time as Greek? No, this is absurd. This is a gap of thousands of years! How can the older European language (Greek), have a common mother language, with a language created 2000 years later (English)? Has any inscription ever been found in the so-called “Indo-European” language, so that we can compare some common words and decide that they have common roots?

Some scientists make the comparison of the root of a Greek, or Slavic, or Germanic word, with another word of a non-existent “Indo-European” language? A language that exists theoretically and not documented with material elements. As far as I know, there is absolutely no tangible evidence of the existence of a “Indo-European” language. So, the question remains. How do some scientists compare words and find/conclude the common root with something non-existent? Between Greek and Latin, or German... it’s easy to compare words, grammar, structure. Between Greek and “Indo-European”?

Let’s look at the evidence.

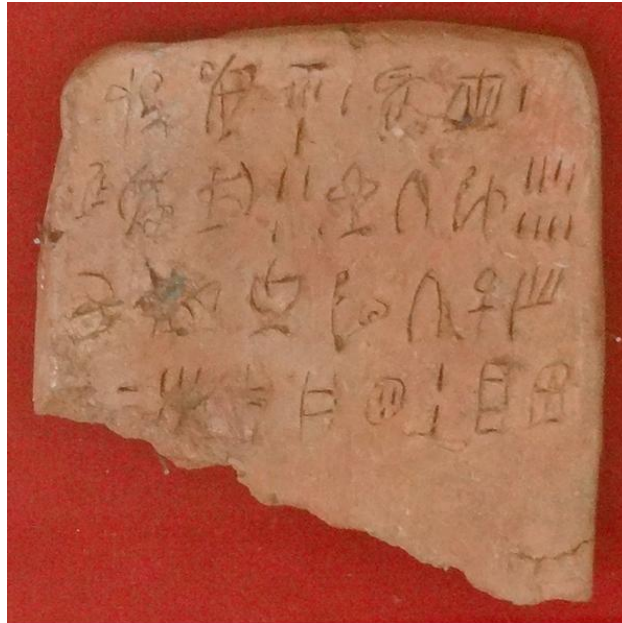
1) As an “Indo-European” language related to European languages, Sanskrit is often mentioned. It is one of the 2,000 languages of the Indian peninsula and one of the 34 official languages of modern India.

2) Sanskrit is also known as Vedic. It is similar to the Greek language, (the Greek language specifically, not generally the European languages as we often hear) and is a language spoken only by the Cast of Hindu priests. Not by the ordinary population. In this language were written the sacred books of Hinduism, the “Vedas”, “Mahabharata”, “Ramagiama” etc. The word “Veda” means “Knowledge”. It is the same word as the archaic Greek word (verb) “Foida”, where the letter “F” (digammon in Greek) is spelled as “V”.

3) Where does this similarity come from? The Hindu taught the Greeks or the Greeks the Hindu?

4) In the science of linguistics, “Glossology”, the Greek language is the oldest European language. It is a written language since 2000 BC. The Mycenaean language with the Linear B script. Mycenaean civilization starts at 2000 BC in the Peloponnese, in central Greece and in the Asian Minor coasts. The Greek language is probably older, maybe from 3000 BC, from the beginning of the Cycladic and Minoan (Cretan) civilization. This is based on the deciphering of Linear A, the Minoan script from the Disk of Phaestos, in the year 2015, by the Oxford professors, Gareth Owens and John Coleman.

So, we must suppose that the contact between the Greek and Sanskrit language took place in that time. Is that possible? No!



Linear A script. The writing of the Minoan (Cretan) civilization since 3000 BC.

5) In Sanskrit, the first text/written testimony is from 250 BC the famous stone inscription of King Asoka's laws. Literature in this language was developed in the year 350 BC, more than 2,000 years after the onset of the Greek language.

6) The French intellectual and politician Victor Berard attacked the linguistics establishment, because it ostentatiously ignores chronological and linguistic evidence, dozens of writings of ancient Greek literature, and the history and mythology of the Greeks.

7) Megasthenes (the father of Indian history, wrote the first history of India in the world. In his books with the title "Indica" he wrote about the direct influence from the Greek civilization and the teaching of the Indian priestly class (the Cast who spoke Sanskrit) by the Greeks. Megasthenes, a Greek from Asia Minor, was the ambassador of the Macedonian King Seleucus I Nicanor for 10 years in the palace of Tandragupta (Sardookottos in Greek) in his capital Patalipura (Palibothra), in today's city of Patna. He wrote the history of the Indians (Indica) around 288 BC. He noted that the oldest Indians with whom he conversed, remembered and told him the story of the arrival of Hercules and Dionysus in India. It refers to the Hindu religion and its gods, Hercules (Shiva in Hindi) and Dionysus (Krishna or Indar). It has no references to Buddhism, which means that it was not very widespread at the time. We know that it was later popularized by King Ashoka. Excerpts of his work were collected and published by E.A. Schwanbeck J.W. McCrindle in 1887.

We regret to note that no "Indo-Europeanist" has studied the work of Megasthenes, which is the **only primary source** for India!

8) About India and the ancient Greek travelers in this region, we learn a lot from the references of Democritos, the scientist who developed the theory of the atom and is considered the father of atomic physics and energy. Aristoxenos from Tarantas also wrote about India.

9) Nonos the Panopolitis wrote in 48 volumes and 21,411 verses, the history of the god Dionysos, his trips to India and how he civilized the priestly class of Hindu. Dionysos was the great teacher of the Hindu Sanskritic Cast. Of course, Nonos did not write things deliberately to reject the “Indo-European” theory, since this theory-story appeared 1,400 years after his death. He is referring in detail to the campaign of Dionysus to India, the enlightenment of the Hindu by the Greeks, the creation of the Hindu priesthood and the writing of their holy books in Sanskrit. The “Veda” under the guidance of the Greeks...

10) Plutarch in his book “Alexander about Fortune and Virtue”, refers clearly in Alexander’s desire to visit India, where his ancestor Heracles had gone and taught. The Macedonian dynasty was called Heracleidae because their direct ancestor was Hercules. Also, Macedonian was god Dionysos. This is of course another Hercules. Not the one that is linked with Sicily and the Peloponnese, since this name in later years became a sort of title. Maybe he was Hercules B’, or C’.

11) The important German linguist, Franz Bopp, one of the creators of the “Indo-European” theory (he later rejected the theory), claimed that there is a gap of centuries between the creation of the Greek language and Sanskrit. He wrote that: “Sanskrit derives from Greek and not the opposite”. Greek has written monuments before 2000 BC while Sanskrit only after 250 BC, almost 2,000 years later. It is logical to accept that Greek influenced Sanskrit and not vice versa.

12) The same was echoed by the famous linguist Ferdinando Sagriendo (Iakinta Baitha, F. Kr. Sagriendo, 1933 Bilbao, Spain) and hundreds more modern, real linguists.

13) The BBC recently presented the greatest discovery in China, as reported by the Chinese state archaeological service and the state chief archaeologist Li Xiuzhen, referring to the clay army from the 1st dynasty, which was created under the direct influence of the Greeks.



14) Professor Nors Josephson (Stanford University of California and Berkley), conducted a study, issued by the University of Heidelberg, Germany. “Eine archaisch grechische kultur auf der sotarinsel/Universitetsverlang C.winter, Heildelberg”. It refers to the language spoken in the “Easter” Islands and other islands of the Pacific Ocean, which is very similar to Greek, and comes directly from Greek, through India and Indochina, according to Greek mythology and history.



15) The distinguished Hellenist and linguist Professor F.R. Adrados from Spain has repeatedly stated that the European languages are all Greek-Hellenic or Crypto-Hellenic. For example, Greek words in French, according to the French Ministry of Education, amount to 65%, while in Portuguese it reaches 80%, according to professor Alcina Dos Martines, in the ancient Greek-Portuguese dictionary. And since Portuguese is a Latin language, then the percentage of ancient Latin has the proportional percentage of Greek words. The English language, according to voluminous dictionary of Mr. Konstandinidis, has more than 150,000 words with Greek roots. The current German language is modelled by Martin Luther in 1453, according to the rules of grammar and syntaxis of the Greek language.

16) Canadian linguist professor Jacques Buchard from the University of Montreal: “The Greek language is the mother language of all European languages...”.

17) The European languages were not all born at the same day. One is the grandmother, some are the daughters, some are the granddaughters, some the great-granddaughters. Yes, they are relatives. Yes, they have a common origin and a common ancestor. Slavic and German as well, with Greek. But Greek is already documented and written before 2000 BC. The German written

language appears between 300 and 500 AD. More than 2,500 years later. Is it possible for these languages to have the same mother, with a chronological gap of 2,500 years between them? Is it possible for Greek and Latin to have the same mother (Latin is formed at least 1,300 years after Greek), or their similarity is only due to the fact that Latin evolved directly from the Aeolian dialect of Greek? What “Indo-European” heritage talking we talking about?

18) In conclusion, the Pre-lingua/pro-glossa or proto-glossa Europea is only the Greek language. All the other languages originated from it. Not from some theoretical Asian or African ancestor. Sanskrit, based on its first written monument, is 2,000 years younger than Greek and simply a creation of Greek influence. A transfer of civilization to the Hindu hieratic cast! “Indoeuropean” is an imaginary, never existed language!

The European languages are two. Arian (Iranian) and Greek!

The Holocene Geological Period

The “Indo-European” theory is maintained today by certain circles, solely to support the Woke culture and the Afrocentric theory of the origin of the European man. The Indo-Afrocentric culture which civilized the barbaric white European man.

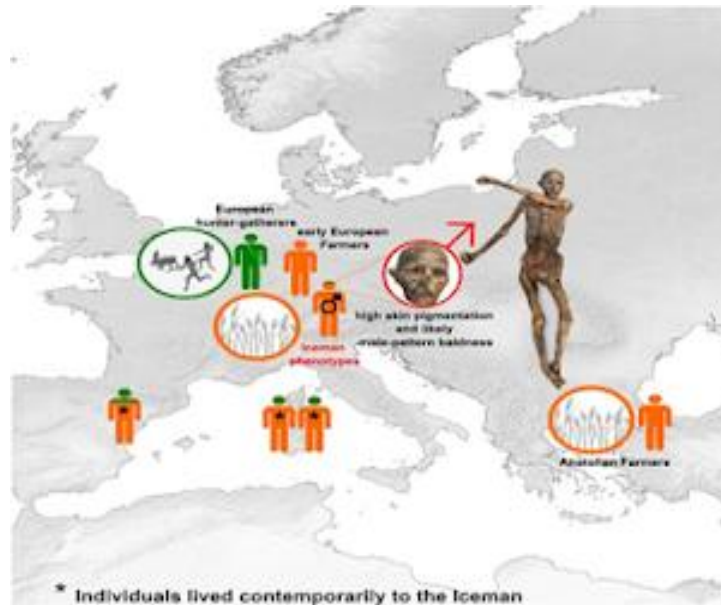
Europe before the Holocene geological period (12000-10000 BC) was covered by ice. The only uncovered part of Europe was the Greek, the Apennine and the Iberian Peninsulas. They were the only European home for human life. After 10000 BC the ice began to gradually melt and people from the south began to spread northward. From Greece and Asia Minor mainly, because the glaciers in the Alps and the Pyrenees remained and functioned as a fence towards central and northern Europe, for the inhabitants of these two peninsulas (Iberian and Apennine). So, geology explains better than the abstract theories of linguists and Woke political correct culture how the similarities of languages, as well as in DNA of European nations (we know that the Scandinavians, the Polish etc. have similar DNA with the Greeks), is based on the fact that their life and language started in south Europe after the last ice age and spread northwards.

Otzi, or Iceman is the name given to a well-preserved mummy who died in the Bronze Age (3350–3120 BC) in the Tyrolean Alps. A study published in 2012 provided new insights into European prehistory, despite high DNA contamination from present-day humans. The Iceman’s DNA revealed ancestry from Anatolian-Balkan Neolithic farmers. Not from the Asian Steppes.

Professor Wang and colleagues² re-examined this individual in 2023 using the latest DNA sequencing techniques to gain further information about this individual’s genetic history and phenotype. They found no detectable ancestry related to the Steppes north of the Black Sea. Instead, they found that the highest ancestry is associated with Anatolian farmers among modern European populations, indicating a rather isolated Alpine population with limited gene flow from related hunter-gatherer populations. Phenotypic analysis revealed that the Iceman likely had darker skin than present-day Europeans and carried risk alleles associated with male pattern baldness, type 2 diabetes and obesity-related metabolic syndrome. These results

² Ke Wang, et al. (2023). High-coverage genome of the Tyrolean Iceman reveals unusually high Anatolian farmer ancestry. *Cell Genomics*, 100377 DOI: 10.1016/j.xgen.2023.100377.

confirm phenotypic observations of the preserved mummified body, such as the high pigmentation of its skin and the absence of hair on its head.



Otzi's DNA. The DNA of the iceman reveals an origin from neolithic farmers of Anatolia and not from the steppes.

So, What was the Language of the Siculi, Sikani, Elymians and Messapians?

From a very small number of inscriptions that were found in the language of the Sikani and a few in the language of the Messapians, both were written with the Greek alphabet, with many words of Greek origin-etymology and older Greko-Pelagic origin. We can conclude that they don't have any connection with Hindu and Sanskrit, or some imaginary, non-existing old German at this time, to call them "Indo-European" or "Indo-Germanic", beloved term of the Nazis.

I am wondering why some "scientists" search for evidence in places all over the world and ignore the evidence that is present in their own backyard? The old German language did not exist in 1000 BC. So, what is the connection of the old German language with the old Sicilian languages? We cannot talk about the influence of Sanskrit on Europe. Sicily in our case. These inscriptions show affinity with the pre-Hellenic and proto-Hellenic language, which is partially and not fully understood (e.g. Phaistos disk (Crete) linear "A" script from the third millennium BC, Minoan and Cycladic era). Linear "B" is from the Mycenaean era, second millennium BC. Moreover, it is reasonable that in the chaos of these ancient times, the dialects had not yet begun to take their normal form. Especially when we refer to the older Greek dialect, Aeolian, which is not fully known, even by scholars of Greek.

It is absurd for some “scientists” to try through two inscriptions, written in the Greek alphabet, to identify the languages of the population of Sicily, before 1000 BC, with Sanskrit, or some imaginary and unknown Iberian, or old Germanic. The comparison should be made with the use of the scientific method. Where are these ancient German inscriptions from 1000 BC to compare them with the Messapian and Sikuli inscriptions from the 7th century BC?

This is science fiction! They ignore linguistics, as well as history and prehistory. This thesis cannot stand against any scientific criticism. The tribes in the island of Sicily were formed from the integration of very ancient local populations and people who came from the Aegean and eastern Mediterranean long before 1000 years BC. Not from the other side of the world (India or Germany). All the evidence points to that. The Sikani were Minoans from Crete and the Siculi from the Aegean and southern part of Asia Minor. The Elymians were from the Aeolian islands and Aeolian coasts of Asia Minor. They have Greek tribal names, toponyms, hydronyms etc., at least since 2000 BC. The hydronyms are the most conservative in changes. So, if you have Greek hydronyms as Elymian, that shows your origin, even if we don't have inscriptions to see more words of the language you spoke!

Historical Times

The Mycenaean Colonization of Sicily and southern Italy

Mycenaean Cities in the Apennine Peninsula.

According to Strabo, who wrote the history of the Italian cities (Geographica), Dionysios of Halicarnassus who wrote "Roman Archaeology", Lykofron, who wrote "Alexandra" and Homer in his epic, Odyssey, the Greek tribes lived in the south Apennine peninsula from the Mycenaean era (starting in 2000 BC), and not from 8th century BC. Archaic colonization, as we usually call it. A lot of Greek settlers of course used to live in Italy long before, from the Minoan era, meaning before 2000 BC.

Aeneas, together with Antinor (source, "Alexandra" and "Aeniada") were the patriarchs of the Romans. They were Trojans. The Trojans were a Greek tribe. The Trojan war was between the Trojans (their protector god was Apollo) and the Achaeans and Danaus (as Homer wrote in the Iliad) from the Peloponnese and central Greece (goddess Athena was their protector). The war was not between two different nations. The name Greek-Hellene at this time was not in use as common national name for the dozens of Greek tribes. Homer does not mention the name Greek a single time in the Iliad.

The most famous war of antiquity happened for the control of the straits of the Hellespont (Dardanelle) and the commerce between the Mediterranean and the rich in grain and metals Black Sea coast. Dionysius from Halicarnassus wrote that the Romans and the Greeks were relatives, because they had the same origin from Aeolia (Ilion or Troy, Lemnos, Imbros, Tenedos, Lesbos...).

Aeneas after the fall of Troy, passed through Macedonia, Aitolia, Epirus, the islands of Kefallinia, Lefkada, Kythera and other Greek provinces, and founded a lot of cities on his way to the Apennine peninsula. When he arrived in the south of the Apennine peninsula, he got in contact with two of his friends from Troy. Elymos and Egestos. They were the patriarchs of the Sicilian tribe Elymians and founders of the city of Aegesta. He also founded the city of Gaeta north of Naples. The name Gaeta is doric Greek, and it means cave. North of Gaeta, Aeneas also founded the city of Lavinium. His son Askanios founded the city of Alba Longa, birthplace of the two famous brothers Romulus and Remus, later founders of Rome. The name Rome in the doric Greek dialect means power.



The “golden Mycenae” in the Peloponnese. The hill was inhabited from 2500 BC. The famous Mycenaean civilization begins in 2000 BC. Mycenaean or Achaeans, as mentioned in Homers Iliad, were the enemies of Troy. The Mycenaean polygonal, or non-Cyclopean walls, are everywhere in prehistoric southern Italy and Sardinia.



Atreos tomb. The tomb of King Agamemnon in Mycenae, circa 1250 BC. Many Achaean Kings, after the long Trojan war (lasting more than 10 years), lost their kingdoms from usurpers. So, they had to leave their kingdoms and search for a new homeland and eventually new kingdoms. The most attractive place was Sicily and the south of the Apennine peninsula, where hundreds of years before, other Greeks from the Minoan Kingdoms of Crete, the Aegean and the Cycladic islands, (long before 2000 BC) had moved in significant numbers.



Knossos Crete. King Minoas's palace. The Minoan civilization in Crete and the Aegean islands was the first European civilization. It flourished between 3000-1450 BC.

North of Rome, in Aquila (Achilles), existed a sanctuary of Diomedes. He was the former King of Argos. Diomedes was a Homeric hero. He lost his kingdom from his wife's lover, so he had to escape from Argos to Apulia. In Apulia Diomidis became the son in law of King Davnos. In Apulia he founded the famous cities of Arpoi, Sipous, Kanission and Argirippa.

North of Apulia, in cape Garganon, there is the tomb and the sanctuary of the prophet Kalhas (known from the Odyssey). Not far from the sanctuary we find the river Altheas (Alteo in modern Italian), which means healing river.

Another group of Homeric heroes, soldiers from the army of King Nestor of Pylos, founded the city of Metapontio in Basilicata province, and some other heroes from the Peloponnesian city of Pissa, in Olympia province, established the city of Piza in Italy.

Philoctetes from Magnesia (Thessalian Magnesia was birthplace of the famous Achilles), established the cities of Kroton, Petillia, Krimissa, Manalla and others.

Ajax from Locrida. He raped the Trojan princess Cassandra in the Palladion temple of Athena Pallas in Troy. But he was punished by the goddess. Most of his fleet sunk in the Aegean and Ajax with his companions washed ashore in south Italy, together with the King of Crete, Idomeneas. The place where they arrived took the name Salento (from joint sail), Salentina Graecia in Apulia today.

Idomeneas had a son back in Crete. His name was Lefkos. Lefkos took by force the kingdom from his father, but he was not able to keep it for long. Soon Lefkos was forced to flee to Italy to save his life from revolts on the island. The place he fled to was named Leukania.

Menelaos, King of Sparta, also had adventures in Sicily and southern Italy. He founded the city of Drepani (Trapani) and Eryx (Eryx was son of Poseidon). He also founded the city of Elba on the island in the Tyrrhenian Sea. In Elba existed an older Greek city with a gorgeous megalithic temple of Hercules, founded by the Argonauts, around 1800 BC. Other cities that Menelaos founded were Lefka (present Santa Maria Di Leuka) and the city Lakainia Hera a precursor to the city of Kroton.

Odysseus on Sicily founded the city of Ligali (or Isole Di Sirene) in the Gulf of Naples. The palace of the famous Circe from the Odyssey, existed in the city with the same name, south of Rome, with a gorgeous acropolis and a great temple of Aphrodite. Just north of Naples existed the lakes Aherousa and Aornos (the gate to the underworld). In cape Pachynos (southeast corner of Sicily) were the cenotaphion of Ekave and the tomb of Politis, a beloved companion of Odysseus.

The city of Neapolis was founded by the Athenian Argonaut Faliros. It was first named Faliron, after him, around 1800 BC. When the siren Parthenopi arrived in the city it was renamed Parthenopi (around 1200 BC). Later, during the fourth great Greek colonization (8th and 7th century BC) it became Neapolis.

The island of Licosia also took its name from a siren.

In the country of the Davnians came Greeks from Aetolia, a province in west-central Greece. They were experts in copper mining. They arrived in Davnia in the 12th century BC, after the invitation of Diomedes. Diomedes, former king of Argos, became Davnos son in law. His

origin was from the city of Kalledonia in Aetolia. In the seafront of Davnia, exist Diomedes Islands (Tremity today) with Diomedes's gorgeous horses (Known from the adventures of Herakles).

In the far north, the Homeric hero Antilohos, founded the city of Perugia.

Another refugee from the Trojan war, was Antinoos. He left Troy and led the Trojan neighboring tribe of Paflagones, he arrived in Venice. There he founded the city of Enetia which was the name of the capital of Paflagonia at this time. (later, Enetia in Paflagonia was renamed to Sinope in Pontus, Asia Minor).

And many other smaller cities by other heroes...



Mycenaean artefacts and Mycenaean locations from the 16-12 centuries BC. Big collections of Mycenaean artifacts are exhibited in museums in Caliari, capital of Sardinia, Syracuse in Sicily, Taranto in Apulia and other museums.

Pantalica

Pantalica is an archaeological site/necropolis in Sicily. The archaeological record starts from the end of the Bronze Age (13th century BC) and reaches with some interruptions until the Middle Ages. The site, along with the neighboring city of Syracuse, was included in 2005 in the UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Pantalica has been identified with the ancient Greek city of Hybla, whose last king, Hyvlon, allowed settlers from Megara. Hyvlon lived during the second Greek colonization of Sicily, 1250-1100 BC. The first colonization was the Minoan, from 2000 BC or earlier to 1400 BC. The settlers from Megara built the city of Megara Yvlaia in 729 BC. Little remains of the prehistoric settlement, probably destroyed by the Syracusans when they founded the city of Akrai in 664 BC, including the impressive-sized rock necropolis, which dates from the 13th to 7th century BC. The area was repopulated during the Byzantine period when small rock settlements were created and many of the caves were used as houses, hermetaries, and orthodox churches. The grave artifacts, goods and the rest of the archaeological findings, let archaeologists divide the so-called "Culture of Pantalica" into 3 periods: Pantalika I (1200-1000 BC), Pantalika II (1000-850 BC), Pantalika III (850-750 BC).

At the top of the small plateau in Pantalika, the Italian archaeologist Orsi was the first who found traces of a building, that he called the Palace-“Anaktoron”, according to Mycenaean standards. The discovery of Mycenaean artifacts in Pantalika, in the tombs and in the Palace, proves, in my opinion, that Pantalika was a Greek Mycenaean settlement. It was the ancient city of Hybla. According to some other archaeologists, the existence of Mycenaean findings, indicates that the “unknown” inhabitants of Pantalika simply had trade relations and shopped from Mycenaean Greeks.



Pantalika, the Mycenaean Palace, “Anaktoron”. Anax is the Greek Mycenaean word for king. Anaktoron is the palace.

Mycenaean Archaeological Locations. Excavated or still under excavation.

- 1)Fondo Paviani,
- 2)Fabrica dei sotsi,
- 3)Montaniana,
- 4)Fratezina,
- 5)Ancona,
- 6)Trezzano,
- 7)Pientiluco,
- 8)Luni sul minione,
- 9)Monte Rovello,
- 10)San Giovenale,
- 11)Kasale Nuovo,
- 12)Vivara,
- 13)Ischia,
- 14)Empoli,
- 15)Pesto,
- 16)Polla,
- 17)Praia a Mare,
- 18)Santa Domenica di Rricardi,
- 19)Panarea,
- 20)Lipares Isole,
- 21)Filicunti,
- 22)Ustica,
- 23)Salina,
- 24)Manacore,
- 25)Molinella,
- 26)Copa Navigata,
- 27)Toppo Dagutso,
- 28)Trani,
- 29)Bari,
- 30)Giovinazo,
- 31)Santa Sabrina,
- 32)Punta Del Terrare,
- 33)Sourbo,
- 34)Otranto,
- 35)Leuka,
- 36)Parabita,
- 37)Porto cesareo,
- 38)Avetrana,
- 39)Oria,
- 40)Torre Castellucia,
- 41)Porto Perone,
- 42)Satyrion,
- 43)Taranto,
- 44)Scoglio Del Tonno,
- 45)Cozzo Marziotta,
- 46)Palazziano,
- 47)Timmari,
- 48)San Vitto,
- 49)Termitoo,
- 50)Francavilla Marittima,
- 51)Broglia di trembizace,
- 52)Tore del,
- 53)Capo Piccolo,
- 54)Serra Orlando,
- 55)Valsavoia,
- 56)Molinello,
- 57)Thapsos,
- 58)Syracusa
- 59)Plemmyrion,
- 60)Mantrensa,
- 61)Cotso del Pandano,
- 62)Florindia,
- 63)Pantalica,
- 64)Kava Kana Barbara,
- 65)Monte Salia,
- 66)Busemi,
- 67)Canatello,
- 68)Milena,
- 69)Caldare,
- 70)Agrigento,
- 71)Borg in Nantur
- 72)Albuziu,
- 73)Sa Mandra sa Giua,
- 74)San Antioco de Bizarzio,
- 75)Ponsomazzio,
- 76)Orosei,
- 77)Rio Locula,
- 78)Nuoro,
- 79)Perda e Floris,
- 80)Tertenia,
- 81)Domu s' Orcu,
- 82)Antigori,
- 83)Capoterra,
- 84)Asemini,
- 85)Netsimopouzzu,
- 86)Gonosfanadiga,
- 87)Barumini,
- 88)Sierra ilixi,
- 89)Abini,
- 90)Tharros



The most interesting thing in the map above is the Mycenaean Sardo (Sardinia). Regarding the prehistoric civilization of Sardinia and their megalithic monuments, most scientists agree that it is about people who came to Sardinia from the eastern Mediterranean (the usual historical route for human migration) and the Aegean Sea. Among them were the Mycenaeans of the Bronze Age and the Minoans before them. We will not expand in this book on the fascinating mythology and early history of the island of Sardinia as our subject here is Magna Graecia. Magna Graecia is related to archaic, classical and Byzantine southern Italy, which does not include Sardinia to a large degree.

Roman Era

The Unstoppable Supremacy of the Greeks and the Domination of the Greek Language through the Roman Period.



The first Greek city to be absorbed by the Romans was Neapolis in 327 BC. At the beginning of the 3rd century BC, Rome was a great power but had not yet entered conflict with most of Magna Graecia, which had been allied with the Samnites. However, the needs of the Roman populace determined their need for territorial expansion towards the south. As some Greek cities of southern Italy came under threat from some Italian tribes at the end of the 4th century BC, these cities asked for help from Rome. Rome exploited this opportunity by sending military garrisons around 280 BC. Following Rome's victory over Taras after the Pyrrhic War in 272 BC, (Pyrrros was the King of Epirus and cousin of Alexander the Great of Macedonia) most of the cities of southern Italy were linked to Rome with pacts and treaties (foedera) which sanctioned a sort of indirect control.

Sicily was conquered by Rome during the first Punic war. Only Syracuse remained independent until 212 BC, because its king Hieron II was a devoted ally of the Romans. His grandson Hieronymos, however, allied himself with Hannibal, which prompted the Romans to besiege the city, which fell in 212 BC.

Roman colonies (*civium romanorum*) were the main element of the new territorial control plan starting with *lex Atinia* in 197 BC. In 194 BC, garrisons of 300 Roman veterans were implanted in Volturnum, Liternum, Puteoli, Salernum, Buxentum, and Sipontum on the Adriatic. This model was replicated in the territory of Calabria. 194 BC, saw the foundation of the Roman colonies in the old Greek cities of Kroton and Tempa. The social, linguistic and administrative changes arising from the Roman conquest, took root in this region only in the 1st century AD, while Greek culture remained strong and was actively cultivated as shown by epigraphic evidence.

Cumae and the “Latin” alphabet.

Cumae was a Greek city from the 8th century BC south of Naples in Campania. The form of Greek Cumaean alphabet was adopted by the Romans and is the alphabet called “Latin” that we use today.



Cumae, Temple of Apollon.



Cumae. Cave of Sybilla. (Andro de la Sibilla).

The Arrival of Christianity in Southern Italy

The first reference to a Christian presence on the island appears in Acts (28.12–13, written in Greek as all the 28 official books of Christianity): "We landed in Syracuse, where we remained for three days and then we travelled along the coast and arrived at Rhegion." In this way, Apostle Paul, a Jew from the Greek city of Tarsos in Asia Minor, who spoke only Greek with a Syriac accent, and not Hebrew, on his voyage from the Levant to Rome travelled through Sicily. He stopped in Syracuse after having been shipwrecked and forced to disembark in Malta (Melita in Greek). From Malta, according to the account in Acts, Paul travelled to Syracuse, but it is not clear why he stopped there. Syracuse was still used in this period as a station on the way to Rome on commercial trade routes. Perhaps Paul was hosted by a Jewish community, which existed in many ports of the Mediterranean. The Jewish community at Catania for example, is well-attested epigraphically. Besides Paul, there are no sources before the 3rd century AD which expressly mention a Christian presence on the island.

There are various legends which link the arrival of Christianity in Sicily with Paul's brief sojourn on the island, while other traditions report that Paul met Christians who had already arrived before him and that this was the reason why he stopped on the island. But Acts doesn't mention any of this and these traditions may respond to the desire to make the arrival of Christianity in Sicily as early as possible (60 or even 40 AD), to reinforce the authority of the Sicilian Church.

The first certain reference to a Sicilian church is found in an official letter (Epist. 30.5.2), sent from Rome to Cyprianos, Bishop of Carthage. This document dates between 250 and 251 during the Decian persecutions and discusses the Lapsi Christians who had performed acts of worship to pagan deities in the face of Roman persecutions. The letter mentions a similar letter sent to Sicily, which suggests that apostasy was considered a problem on the island as well and that the Christian presence on Sicily was already significant enough to have a hierarchical relationship with Rome. It is possible that this community developed at the end of the 2nd century AD or at the beginning of the 3rd century, the period in which the first archaeological evidence appears.

The Decian (250 AD) and Diocletian persecutions (304 AD) are the setting for the stories of two important Greek Sicilian martyrs, Santa Agatha and Santa Lucia. These saints are known only from hagiographies written about two hundred years after the events, which present them as young and beautiful virgins, victims of two persecutors called Quintianus and Pascasius. It is likely that these sources respond to a desire to link the two most important cities of eastern Sicily: Catania, home of Saint Agatha and Syracuse, home of Saint Lucia. Significantly, all the principal saints of the island are women. In addition to Agatha and Lucia, there are the Greek Palermitan saints, Nympha (4th century martyr), Olivia (5th century martyr), and Christina (martyred in 304 AD), who was introduced into the cult of the Norman princess Santa Rosalia by the Palermitans. Perhaps this emphasis on female figures in Sicilian Christianity reflects the emphasis on female deities in pre-Christian Greek Sicilian religion (e.g. Demetra, the goddess protector of Sicily and her daughter Persephone, Aphrodite of Eryx, Isis etc.).

Two important Christian inscriptions have been discovered from this period. One is the epitaph of Julia Florentina, discovered in Catania in 1730, in the necropolis on the site of the modern via Dottor Consoli which now is exhibited in the Louvre in Paris. It is a funerary inscription, dating to the end of the 3rd century AD, which records in Latin the death of a child of little more than a year in age, buried next to the "Christian martyrs" (but it is not clear whether this refers to Agatha and Euplios). The inscription is the first direct evidence for Christianity on the island. The other inscription, also sepulchral, is the so-called Inscription of Euskia in Greek, which was discovered at the end of the 19th century in the Catacombs of San Giovanni in Syracuse and dates to the beginning of the 5th century. The document indicates a local cult of saint Lucia. At the time of the inscription's creation, the cult of Agatha is already attested at Rome and Carthage.

With the end of the period of the persecutions, the Church entered a phase of expansion, even as fierce debates arose within the church on doctrine, leading to the convocation of synods. Eusebios includes a letter of Constantine to Crestos, Bishop of Syracuse, in his Church History (10.5.21), which invites him to participate in the council of Arles of 314 AD. Cresto was assigned an important organizational role at Arles, which indicates the relevance of the Sicilian church at the time.

The Language of Christianity

In the Roman Republican period the predominant language in southern Italy was still Greek, since the Romans had no policy of enforcing their language on the communities of Magna Graecia. Even in the period of Cicero, Greek was the main language used equally by the elite and almost all the Sicilians and southern Italy. It is mentioned by Cicero in "Verrine Orations", that the entire population has Greek names. Cicero also refers to the Greek calendar in use throughout Sicily in this period, Greek festivals, relations between the Sicilian cities and Panhellenic sanctuaries like Delphi, Sicilian, Calabrian and other Greek athletes at the Olympic Games and Greek civil architecture. Literature remained almost exclusively Greek, with authors like Diodoros of Sicily and Caecilius of Calacte. There is no evidence of the existence of other languages in Sicily and in most places in the rest of southern Italy, except Greek.

With the establishment of six Roman colonies (August converted some old Greek cities into Latin colonies in the beginning of the Imperial period), Augustus tried to establish bilingualism in Sicily and southern Italy. But his success was limited. That's because, 1) Greek culture and language was superior. As the Latin writer Horacius wrote. "The barbarian Latium conquered the Greeks by arms, but the Greeks conquered the barbaric Latium with their spirit". 2) The Sicilians and Magna-Greeks had strong Greek national consciousness and finally, 3) Because in a short time after Augustus, during the imperial period, Christianity arrived in southern Italy. Christianity is a religion based in 28 Holy Books. 27 official and one semi-official, the Apocalypse, all written in Greek, by Greeks. So, as it is natural, all the Christians used the Greek language.

The predominance of the Greek language continued uninterrupted during the Byzantine period. Generally, in the Imperial period, Latin became the administrative language in southern Italy, because all the officials who came from Rome, spoke only Latin. Some intellectuals who came from Rome also wrote in Latin, but the number of Greek intellectuals was much greater. Pantaenos, Aristocles of Messene, Probos of Libylaeon, Citharios etc. In this period the non-Greek languages must have definitively disappeared, although Punic (Phoenician) may still have been spoken at the end of the Imperial period based on the testimony of Apouleios. The

same happened with Jewish and Samaritan communities, who at this time spoke almost only Greek.

Middle Ages

During the Early Middle Ages, following the disastrous Gothic War, new waves of Byzantine Christian Greeks fleeing the Slavic invasion of Greece in the Balkans, settled in Calabria, Apulia and the rest of southern Italy, further strengthening the Hellenic element in the region. The Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire, continued to govern the area in the form of the Catepanate of Italy through the Middle Ages, well after northern Italy fell to the German Lombards.

At the time of the Normans medieval conquest of southern Italy and Sicily, most of Apulia, more than two-thirds of Sicily, mostly in the Val Demone (Demone comes from Lacedaemon), the eastern coast and Val di Noto (southern coast and interior), and much of Calabria, Lucania-Basilicata and Apulia, had a still largely Greek-speaking population. Some regions of southern Italy experienced demographic shifts as Greeks began to migrate northwards in significant numbers. One such region was Cilento next to Naples, which came to have a Greek-speaking majority. At this time the language had evolved into medieval Greek, also known as Byzantine Greek. The resultant fusion of local Byzantine Greek culture with Norman and Arab culture gave rise to the Norman-Arab-Byzantine culture in Sicily.

Sicily used to be the Roman Republic's granary. It was divided into two quaestorships: Syracuse in the east and Libylaeon in the west. Roman rule introduced the Latin language to the island, which underwent a slow process of Latinization. Sicily remained largely Greek in a cultural sense and the Greek language did not become extinct on the island, facilitating its “re-Hellenization” under the Byzantines.

Germanic rule (469–535)

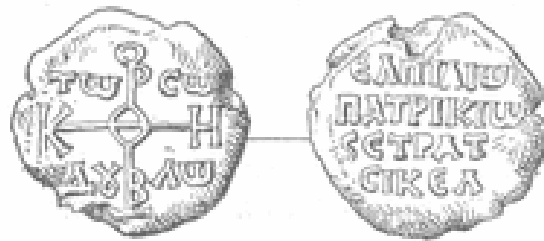
The Western Roman Empire began falling apart after the invasion of the Vandals, Alans and Sueves across the Rhine River on the last day of 406 AD. Eventually the Vandals, after roaming about western and southern Hispania (known as Iberia to) for 20 years, moved to North Africa in 429 AD and occupied Carthage in 439. The Franks moved south from present-day Belgium. The Visigoths moved west and eventually settled in Aquitaine in 418 and the Burgundians settled in present-day Savoy in 443 AD.

The Vandals found themselves in a position to threaten Sicily which was only 100 miles away from their North African bases. After taking Carthage, the Vandals, personally led by King Caesarius besieged Palermo in 440 AD as the opening act in an attempt to wrest the island from Roman rule. The Vandals made another attempt to take the island one year after the 455 AD sack of Rome but were defeated decisively by Ricimer at Agrigento and in a naval victory off the coast of Corsica in 456. The island remained under Roman rule until 469. The Vandals lost possession of the island 8 years later in 477, from another Germanic people, the Ostrogoths, who then controlled Italy and Dalmatia.

The island was returned to the Ostrogoths by as a tribute to their king Odoacer. He ruled Italy from 476 to 488 in the name (as vassal) of the Byzantine or Eastern Roman Emperor. The Vandals kept a toehold in Libylaeon, a port on the west coast. They lost this in 491, after

making one last attempt to conquer the island from this port. The Ostrogothic conquest of Sicily and of Italy as a whole, under Theodoric the Great began in 488. The Byzantine Emperor Zenon had appointed Theodoric as a military commander in Italy. The Goths were Germanic, but Theodoric fostered Greek culture and administration and allowed freedom of religion. In 461, from the age of seven or eight until 17 or 18, Theodoric had become a Byzantine hostage in Constantinople. He resided in the great palace of Constantinople, he was taught how to read, write and do math and was favored by Emperor Leon I (r.457–474).

The first Byzantine period (535–827)



Seal of the Greek Elpidios as patrikios and strategos of Sicily.

In the 6th century, Emperor Justinian's troops liberated Magna Graecia from the occupation of the barbarian Germanic tribes who had invaded and dissolved the Roman Empire, and the province/theme of Lower Italy was established.

After taking areas occupied by the Vandals in North Africa, Justinian I, retook Italy as an ambitious attempt to recover the lost provinces in the West. The re-conquests marked an end to over 150 years of accommodationist policies with tribal invaders. His first target was Sicily, in what became known as the Gothic War, 535-554. General Belissarios was assigned the task. Sicily was used as a base for the Byzantines to conquer the rest of Italy, with Naples, Rome, and Milan. The population welcomed general Belisarius as a liberator and they joined him, because they belonged to the same nation. The Byzantines took five years before the Ostrogoth capital Ravenna, was captured in 540. However, the new Ostrogoth king, Totila counterattacked, moving down the Italian peninsula, plundering and conquering Sicily in 550. Totila was defeated and killed in the Battle of Taginae by the Byzantine General Narsis in 552 but Italy was in ruins.

At the time of the reconquest Greek was still the predominant language, spoken on Sicily, in Calabria, in Apulia, in Basilicata and some places in Campania. Samples of Byzantine Orthodox art from this era are the exceptional mosaics that adorn the churches of Ravenna such as Agios Apollinarios, Agios Vitalios, the Mausoleum of Gala Plastina, but also the basilica of Agios Apollinarios and so on.

In 652, Sicily was invaded by the Arab forces of Caliph Uthman, but the Arabs failed to make permanent gains. They returned to Syria with their booty. Raids seeking loot continued until the mid-8th century.

Syracuse, Capital of the Byzantine Empire

The Eastern Roman Emperor Constas II moved the capital from Constantinople to Syracuse in 660. The following year he launched an assault from Sicily against the Longobard Duchy of Banevento, which occupied lot of southern Italy's territory. The news that the capital of the empire was to be moved to Syracuse probably cost Constas his life, as he was assassinated in 668. His son Constantine IV succeeded him. A brief usurpation in Sicily by Mezezios was quickly suppressed. Contemporary accounts report that the Greek language was widely spoken on the island of Sicily and all south Italy during this period. In 740 Emperor Leon III the Isaurian transferred Sicily from the jurisdiction of the church of Rome, to Constantinople, placing this Greek island within the national Greek, eastern branch of the Church.

In the 7th and 8th centuries, due to sects and the spread of Islam and mainly the iconoclasm, 50,000 monks settled in Lower Italy over a period of 120 years. When the so-called "easterners" adopted Monophysitism and Iconoclasm, the Christians of Italy remained faithful to Orthodoxy (the Vatican was still Orthodox at this time). After 800 AD the Archbishopric of Syracuse for the flock of Sicily and Reggio Calabria, for the southern tip of Italy were established. Calabria in the 10th century was called "new Thebes" since 265 Greek monasteries were operating. Great holy figures emerged such as Saint Elias the Sicilian, Saint Philaretos, Saint Nilos and Saint John the Theristis.

The Arabs

In 826 Euphemios, the Byzantine commander in Sicily, having apparently killed his wife, forced a nun to marry him. Emperor Michael II found out about it and ordered General Constantine to end the marriage and cut off Euphemius' head. Euphemios rose up in revolt, killed Constantine, and occupied Syracuse. But he was finally defeated and driven out to North Africa. There he offered the rule of Sicily to Ziyadat Allah, the Aglabid Emir of Tunis, in return for a position as a general and a place of safety. A Muslim army was sent to the island consisting of Arabs, Berbers and Persians.

The Muslim conquest of Sicily was a see-saw affair and met with fierce resistance. It took over a century for Byzantine Sicily to be conquered. The largest city, Syracuse, held out until 878 and the city of Taormina fell in 962. It wasn't until 965 when all of Sicily was conquered by the Arabs.

The most important Byzantine cities during that period were: Amalfi, Alessio (Lecce), Sorrento, Callipoli, Monopoli, Bari, Polykastro, Seminara, Rossano, Salerno, Gerace, Gaeta, Otranto, Palmi, Nicotera, Tropaia, Mantinea, Kalogero, Paradisconi, Piscopi, Zaccanopoli, Diamante, Polykastro, Papisidero, Philadelphia, Reggio, Mesimeri, Nicosia, Cosenza, Enna, Palermo, Agira, Kefalu, Syracuse, Notos, Palermo, Ragusa, Troina, Messina along with many other smaller towns and villages .

The official language in Sicily under Arab rule was the Siculo-Arabic, but the spoken language by the population, still was Greek. The Arabic influence is still present in some Sicilian words today. Although long extinct in Sicily, this language has developed into what is now the Maltese language.

Around 1050, the (Arab) western part of Sicily was ethnically and culturally distinct from the Greek central, south and east Sicily. During this time, there was also a small Jewish presence in Sicily, evidence seen in the catacombs discovered on the island.

Palermo was initially ruled by the Aghlabids. Later it was the center of the Emirate of Sicily, which was under the nominal suzerainty of the Fatimid Caliphate. During the reign of this dynasty, many revolts by Byzantine Sicilians continuously occurred. Parts of the island were re-occupied before revolts were quashed. Under the Arab rule the island was divided in three administrative regions, roughly corresponding to the three "points" of Sicily: Val di Mazara in the west, Val Demone (Val Lake-demone) in the northeast and Val di Noto (Noto means South in Greek) in the southeast (around Greek Syracuse). As dhimmis, that is as members of a class of allowed monotheists, the Orthodox Christians were allowed freedom of religion, but had to pay a tax, the jizya (in lieu of the obligatory alms tax, the zakat paid by Muslims), and were restricted from active participation in public affairs. By the 11th century, intra-dynastic quarreling fractured the Muslim government.

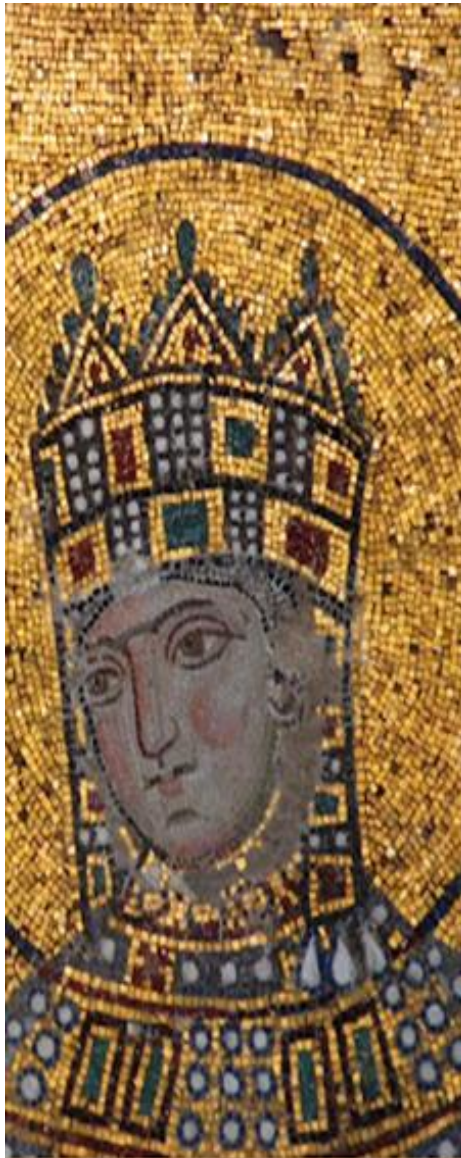
These areas suffered from the depredations of the Saracens, who destroyed many Greek monasteries. But Orthodoxy flourished in this Greek land until the 11th century, when Western Christianity started following the path of the dark and brutal doctrine of the Papacy.

Norman Sicily/Magna Graecia (1038–1198)



Giorgio Maniace Castle in Syracuse. It was built by the Byzantine general Georgios Maniakis, who liberated the city from the Arabs in the 11th century.

In the 11th-century Byzantine armies carried out a partial reconquest of the island under Georgios Maniakis, but it was their (Byzantine) Norman mercenaries who would eventually complete the island's reconquest from the Arabs at the end of the century. In 1038, seventy years after losing their last cities in Sicily, Maniakis invaded the island together with the Varangian guard and Norman mercenaries. Maniakis was killed in a Byzantine civil war in 1043 before completing the reconquest and the Byzantines withdrew. Later, his mercenaries, the Normans, invaded in 1061 and took Apulia and Calabria.



"Men! Have pride in your bravery, and don't let yourself have hearts of women. What cowardice makes you run? Remember your ancestors, whose courage has made the whole world the subjects of Greeks! Hector, the bravest of all men, fell into Achilles' hands; Troy was handed over to the flames of Mycenaean wrath; India knew Philip's bravery. His son, Alexander, with his bravery, did he not make the most powerful kingdoms submit to the Greeks?"

The West and indeed every part of the world was once afraid of us. What nation, listening to the name of the Greeks, dared to confront them on the battlefield? Cities, fortresses and states barely kept our enemies safe from Greek rage.

Be brave, and remember the courage of your ancestors, and do not humiliate them by putting your confidence in your feet only! He who dares to fight as a man will overcome the enemy's power! Try to follow the footsteps of your ancestors, and abandon every idea of fleeing. The whole world should know that you are men of courage. You should not be afraid of the Franks, because they are inferior in numbers, and in bravery."

The Speech of Exavgostos Boioannes, Eastern Roman Katepan of Southern Italy, to his men before battling the Normans



The 11th century Byzantine castle of Saint Niceta (San' Aniceto in Italian) in Calabria, South Italy. Aetna in the background.

Some modern Italian scientists, look for Norman DNA heritage in Sicily and the rest of southern Italy. But what DNA footprint can we find from the 200 Norman mercenaries, in southern Italy? Normans were only a marginal group of soldiers, who became rulers of the territory. A Norman population did not exist in Sicily.

Roger I, occupied Messina with an army of 700 knights (200 Normans and 500 local Greek vassals). In 1068, Roger I was victorious at Misilmeri-Mesimeri. Most crucial was the siege of Palermo, which fell in 1071 and eventually resulted in all of Sicily coming under Norman control. The conquest was completed in 1091 when they captured Notos, the last Arab stronghold.

Palermo continued to be the capital under the Normans. The Normans formed a small but violent ruling class. They destroyed many of the Arab towns in Sicily and very few physical remains survive from the Arab era. The Norman rulers in Sicily adopted the habits and comportment of previous Muslim rulers and their Byzantine subjects in dress, language, literature, even to the extent of having palace eunuchs and, according to some accounts, a harem.

While Roger I died in 1101, his wife Adelaide ruled until 1112, when their son Roger II of Sicily came of age. Having succeeded his brother Simon as Count of Sicily, Roger II was

ultimately able to raise the status of the island to a kingdom in 1130, along with his other holdings, which included the Maltese islands and the Duchies of Apulia and Calabria. Roger II appointed the powerful Greek George of Antioch to be his "emir of emirs" and continued the syncretism of his father. During this period, the Kingdom of Sicily was prosperous and politically powerful, becoming one of the wealthiest states in all of Europe, even wealthier than the Kingdom of England.



Martorana, Palermo. Work of Georgios of Antioch, The Greek prime minister of Roger II. Built by local and Constantinopolitan artists.

The court of Roger II became the most luminous center of culture in the Mediterranean. This attracted scholars, scientists, poets, artists, and artisans of all kinds. The palace secretariat issued documents in at least 5 languages, Latin, Greek, French, Arabic and Hebrew. Communities coexisted harmoniously. Laws were issued in the language of the community to whom they were addressed in Norman Sicily, at the time when the culture was still heavily Arab and Greek. To Roger we owe the "Assises of Ariano" the most complete codification of legal provisions of the Middle Ages. In their preamble we read that: "The laws and decrees of the king apply to all subjects, Latins, Greeks, Jews, and Saracens. However, the existing morals and customs and the laws of these peoples are not affected at all, unless they manifestly contradict the law". Governance was by rule of law which promoted justice. Muslims, Byzantine Greeks, the rulers of the Lombard Duchy, the Norman rulers of Sicily and small

communities of Jews worked together fairly amicably during this time with many extraordinary buildings being constructed.

Roger the Norman appears in mosaics with Byzantine splendor, appropriating the symbols of the emperors of Constantinople and appearing as their successor. His main advisor was Georgios from Antioch, a Greek from Syria who served the Zirid emirs of Tunis, until Roger discovered him and assigned him the high office of “emir of the emirs”. In the highest echelons of the administration, we find Greeks, Arabs and Normans. Their collaboration led to the creation of the most sophisticated and efficient bureaucracy of the time (land registry, taxation and other financial matters).

Roger II linked his reign with an unprecedented cultural flourishing, which is witnessed by the Norman Palace with its magnificent chapel, the Martorana, built on the previously Greek Orthodox church of Saint Nikolaos in Palermo (Santa Maria dell' Ammiraglio, the work of Georgios of Antioch), and in the cathedral of Kefalou (Kefaloidion in ancient Greek).

Greek and Arab sages frequented Roger's court. Al Idrisi prepared an atlas accompanied by seven maps and a plane. All sailors whose ships docked in the kingdom's ports were asked to fill out the Arab geographer's questionnaires. The theologian Theophanis Kerameos and Nilos Doxapatris, monks from Calabria, wrote a “History of the five Patriarchates”, drawing on his knowledge and the information he collected over a number of years.

But the Greeks were forbidden, by orders of the Vatican, to have Greek bishops and their church services in the Greek language. The bishops now and for the first time in history, came from Rome. They didn't know Greek, and they changed the liturgy from Greek to Latin. At the same time the Normans opened the borders to the Benedictine monks, who are the first papal monks to appear in Magna Graecia. Despite their significant number, they respected the parallel existence of the Orthodox monasteries and generally there were no frictions then.

The Normans themselves respected Orthodoxy to a considerable extent, out of political calculation of course, because they could not come into direct conflict with the vast majority of their subjects. Thus, they repaired many monasteries. Twenty by the King of Sicily Roger I and over 30 by his successor Roger II. And in all the buildings and churches they built, such as Monreale in Palermo, Kefalou Messina and elsewhere, they invited architects, craftsmen and artists from Constantinople. However, many famous monasteries (Our Lady of Lecce, Agios Mavros in Gallipoli, Agios Nikolaos Casoulo Otranto, etc.), lost their autonomy and were left to wither, by the religious policy of the Normans.

At some point, Roger II wanted to change his policy and strengthen Orthodoxy, aiming to maintain an independent Archbishopric of Magna Graecia, and for this reason he invited the Sicilian Nilos Doxapatris from Constantinople to become Archbishop in his kingdom. But he could not carry out his plan, because the Pope did not want to lose what he had just now acquired, after a thousand years of predominance of Greek Christianity. This is how the autonomy of the Orthodox Church in Magna Graecia was extinguished.

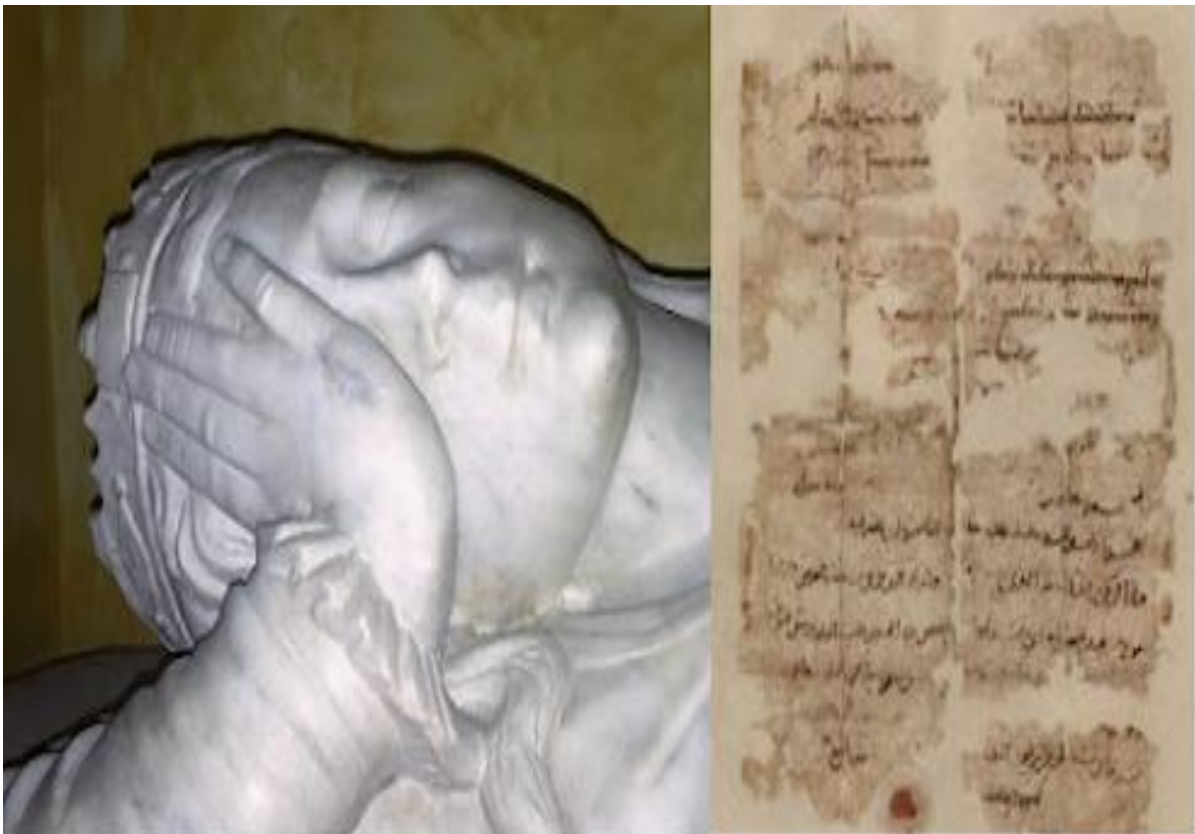
In addition to the Latin language, which came with the arrival of papal bishops and Benedictine monks, the Normans also introduced their French language, resulting in four equal languages on the island. The prevailing Greek among the people, in the church and among those who Latinized under strong pressures, Latin, French which the Normans adopted in their court and

Arabic for those Arabs who remained on the island. From the mixing of these languages, the Sicilian language began to be created.

At the same time, Naples, which was then an independent city, reconnected spiritually with Constantinople, together with Salerno, Gaeta and Amalfi. All these were large cities, outside of the Byzantine territory in southern Italy. Amalfi was founded by Constantine the Great himself in the 4th century, and he settled it exclusively with Greek residents. Thus, it was, in a way, a sister city of Constantinople, with many privileges and an Amalfine monastery on Mount Athos.

However, Greek predominance started to gradually change at the time of the Norman conquest and to become Latinized. In terms of religion the island in the next centuries became completely Roman Catholic, bearing in mind that until 1054 the Churches owing allegiance to the Pope and the Patriarch of Constantinople belonged to one Church. Sicily before the Norman conquest was under the Eastern Orthodox Patriarchate. In 1098, the Pope Innocent III made Roger I, Papal Legate, who created several Catholic bishoprics, while still allowing the construction of 12 Greek-speaking monasteries. The Greek language, the monasteries, and 1500 parishes continued to exist, gradually declining until the adherents of the Greek Rite were forced in 1585 to convert to Catholicism or leave the country.

The Greek Language was Official in Sicily in the 12th Century



The Countess Adelasia letter is the oldest text written on paper in Europe. It was found in Sicily. It is a letter written on March 25, 1109 by Countess Adelasia and is written in Greek and Arab.

Countess Adelasia and her husband Ruggero were very close to the Greek abbey of San Filippo di Fragalà or Demenna in Frazzanò, in the Nebrodi mountains. In this abbey, there was a religious community of ancient tradition devoted to the Italogreek San Filippo d'Agira. Abbot Gregory, in 1090, had turned to the couple to ask for their intervention in the reconstruction of the Abbey which had been partially destroyed by the Arabs. The couple not only worked to find the funds for the reconstruction but also tried to find protection for the structure and the monks who lived in it. The letter written in black ink was found in the State Archives of Palermo where it was transferred in 1877 to coincide with the suppression of the Messina monasteries which was ordered by a law in 1866. The peculiarity of the letter is precisely the use of paper that was not used for official documents for which the noblest parchment was used. Paper became ordinarily used in the peninsula only after 1264 as documented by notarial deeds preserved in the Historical Archive of Matelica.

From the analysis of the paper, we see that it is not a Fabriano-made paper like the one more commonly known in other similar documents. From the characteristics of the cellulose compound, it is probable that the paper used by Adelasia came from eastern countries. Before reaching its current exhibition in the State Archives of Palermo, Adelasia's letter passed through the Ospedale Grande in Palermo. That this paper came from Muslim paper mills is supported by the fact that this type of paper matrix was used in Sicily by the Norman chancellery in documents of a transitory nature such as mandates.

In 1996, Adelasia's original letter was restored at the Center for Photoproduction, Binding and Restoration of the State Archives, in Rome. The restoration was particularly challenging due to the interventions it underwent in the 16th century, when the document was attached to a sheet of parchment for its maintenance. Adhesion to the parchment seriously damaged the document due to the different response of the two materials (paper - parchment) to humidity and temperature, causing tears, bubbles and favoring the action of moths.

The Crusader Attack Against the Greek Byzantine Empire

The Crusades were started by the Roman Catholic Church with the aim of liberating the Holy Lands from the Muslims. In reality, however, there were wars in search of fortune, which ended against the Christian Greek Byzantine Empire, which they plundered and brought the stolen wealth and works of art to the Western cities and to the Vatican. In the 4th crusade in 1204, the Crusaders conquered Constantinople and held it until 1261. However, the main consequence of the western crusaders was the weakening of the Greek empire which was not able to withstand the attack of the Turks that took place in the following century and who effectively enslaved and genocided Hellenism from then until now. Today in Constantinople live not more than 3,000 Greeks! Magna Graecia was the place where the Roman Catholic Crusades departed for the war against Greeks. Three Popes of our times, John Paul II the Polish, Benedict the Bavarian and the current, the Argentinian Francisco Bergoglio, have officially and multiple times asked for forgiveness from the Greek Orthodox Churches and the Greek people for this destruction and the Roman Catholic role to the genocide of Hellenism in the East and in the regions of the Byzantine states.

Regarding Sicily, notable is the example of Richard the Lionheart. The Crusader king of England stopped in Messina on his way to the Holy Land in the Third Crusade. He captured the city after a dispute with his son-in-law William the Good, who had married his sister Joan of England, over her dowry. Then he killed the entire Sikelogreek leadership in the year 1191. The Magno-Greeks opposed Richard's plans to attack Greek lands in the East, with the excuse

of “liberation of the Holly lands”. The memory of this massacre lays today in a hill in the city of Messina, by the name “Greek hill”, where they were all buried.

In the end, the only thing Richard did, was to seize the Greek island of Cyprus and leave the memory of his criminal violence there as well.

Kingdom of Sicily. The Hohenstaufen

After a century, the Norman Hauteville dynasty died out. The last direct descendant and heir of Roger II, Constance, married the Emperor Henry VI. This eventually led to the crown of Sicily being passed to the Hohenstaufen dynasty, who were Germans from Swabia. The last of the Hohenstaufens, Frederick II, the only son of Constance, was one of the greatest and most cultured men of the Middle Ages. In her will, his mother had asked Pope Innocent III to undertake the guardianship of her son. Frederick was four when he was crowned as King of Sicily at Palermo, in 1198. Frederick received no education and was allowed to run free in the streets of Palermo. There he picked up the many languages he heard spoken, such as Arabic and Greek. At age twelve, he dismissed Innocent's deputy regent and took over the government. At fifteen he married Constance of Aragon and began his reclamation of the imperial crown. Subsequently, due to Muslim rebellions, Frederick II destroyed the remaining Muslim presence in Sicily, estimated at 60,000 people, moving all to the city of Lucera in Apulia between 1221 and 1226. Conflict between the Hohenstaufen house and the Papacy, led in 1266 the Pope Innocent IV to crown the French prince Charles, count d' Anju and Provence, as the King of both, Sicily and Naples.

In 1231, Frederick II wrote his famous legislation in two languages. It was published in Greek, to be understood by the ordinary population, who spoke and understood only Greek, and in Latin, the scholar language of legislation. Chapters I, II, IV, provided harsh measures against the Greeks of Magna Graecia and their heretic Orthodox Church in the Kingdom of two Sicilies, with many heavy penalties against them. Prohibition of owning property, prohibition of inheriting property from parents, imprisonment, not allowing use of the Greek language, banning church ceremonies held in Greek, prohibition of studying in universities in Constantinople (allowing studies only in the Naples University, which was established in the year 1244) and many others.

Frederico's Legislation. Original Text (in Greek):

Βασιλικαὶ διατάξεις του αυτοκράτορα Φρειδερίκου Β' (1232)
Αρχὴ του πρώτου βιβλίου των βασιλικῶν διατάξεων
Ρώμης ο κλεινός ευσεβέστατος μέδων,
Αιλίας αὐ ρήξ, πρὸς δέ καὶ Σικελίας
Φρειδερίκος κράτιστος ἐν στεφηφόροις,
Νέον νόμον τίθησι Σικελῶν κράτει,
Ὀν καὶ πέπομφε λύτρον ἡδικημένοις.

Royal Decrees of Emperor Frederick II (1232)
Beginning of the first book of royal decrees
The most pious and devout of Rome,
King of Aelias and also Sicily
Frederick the most powerful among the crowned,
A new law was enacted for the Sicilian states,

And he promised to send a ransom to the aggrieved.

Βασιλεύς Φρειδερίκος
αεί αυγουστος
Ιταλικός Σικελικός Ιεροσολυμίτης Αρελατένσης
Ευσεβής, ευτυχής, νικητής και τροπαιούχος.

King Frederick
eternal Augustus
Italian Sicilian Jerusalemite Arelatense
Pious, happy, victorious and trophy-holder.

Κεφ. I, II, III, IV.

Το Α' κεφάλαιο της νομοθεσίας είναι η «Προθεωρία», αναφέρεται δηλαδή στους λόγους που οδήγησαν στην έκδοση της παρούσης νομοθεσίας. Το Β' και Γ' κεφάλαιο αναφέρεται στην τιμωρία των αιρετικών και των Παταρένων (Καθαρών), ενώ το κεφάλαιο Δ' (IV) είναι αφιερωμένο στην Ορθοδοξία και τον Ελληνισμό αναγγέλοντας σκληρά σε βάρος τους μέτρα, όπως στέρηση περιουσίας και κληρονομιάς.

Chapters I, II, III, IV.

Chapter I of the legislation is the "Preliminary Statement", that is, it refers to the reasons that led to the issuance of the present legislation. Chapters II and III refer to the punishment of heretics and the Patarenes (Cathars), while chapter (IV) is dedicated to Orthodoxy and Hellenism, announcing harsh measures against them, such as deprivation of property and inheritance.

Κεφ. IV

Περί αποστατούντων από της καθολικής πίστεως.

Τους από της καθολικής πίστεως αποστατούντας το καθόλου διώκοντες εκ πάντων των πραγμάτων αυτών τούτους απεκδύομεν και τιμής αυτούς υστερῆσθαι βουλόμεθα, διαδοχήν και παν ἄλλο νόμιμον δίκαιον αυτοῖς αφαιρουντες.

Chapter IV

Concerning those who apostatize from the Catholic faith.

We are persecuting those who apostatize from the Catholic faith in general, stripping them of all these things and intending to deprive them of honour, taking away their inheritance and all other legitimate rights }.

Κεφ. V

Παρόμοιες ανθελληνικές και αντιορθόδοξες διατάξεις περιέχει και το διάταγμα για την ίδρυση του Πανεπιστημίου της Νεάπολης, στις 5 Ιουνίου 1224. Σε αυτή τη διάταξη διατάσσει όλους τους υπηκόους του βασιλείου της Σικελίας, να μην ξανασπουδάσουν στο μέλλον εκτός του βασιλείου και διατάσσει όλους όσους σπούδαζαν εκτός, (στην Κωνσταντινούπολη), να επιστρέψουν πάραυτα μέχρι την εορτή του Αγίου Μιχαήλ (29 Σεπτ. 1224), διαφορετικά θα αντιμετώπιζαν «προσωπική και κτηματική ποινή».

Chapter V

Similar anti-Hellenic and anti-Orthodox provisions are contained in the decree for the establishment of the University of Naples, on June 5, 1224. In this provision, it orders all subjects of the Kingdom of Sicily not to study outside of the kingdom in the future and orders all those who were studying abroad (in Constantinople) to return immediately by the time of the feast of Saint Michael (September 29, 1224), otherwise they would face "personal and property punishment".

Nevertheless, shortly after, the famous English humanist Roger Bacon, in one of his letters, which he sent to Pope Nicola the 3rd Orsini in 1280, when touring Sicily, described the compact Greek-speaking regions on the island.

Sicilian Vespers



Most of the information about the “Sicilian Vespers”, derives from the book written about these events, by the Byzantine scholar, Sir Steven Runciman, professor at Cambridge University. The term Sicilian Vespers derives from the Greek word Εσπερινός, which means evening prayers. It refers to the revolution of the Sicilians against the French d' Anjou, who conquered and ruled the island from 1266 (they succeeded the German conquerors, Hohenstaufen). The Sicilian Vespers was one of the most important events in European, Sicilian and Greek (Byzantine) medieval history. Greek because a very large part of the population of Sicily was

still Greek speaking in 1282, while there was also a strong Byzantine involvement by the Emperor Michael Palaiologos.

The rebellion broke out on Easter 1282. It lasted six weeks and during its course thousands of French were slaughtered, threatening the rule of the d' Anjou. Carlo d' Anjou ruled Sicily after the German Frederick Hohestaufen was defeated by the Pope and his allies. However, the ambitious Carlo considered Sicily as a base for a war against the Byzantine Empire, which had recently taken back its capital, Constantinople, from the Crusaders. Carlo drained Sicily financially, to finance his war against Byzantium. At the same time, he completely sidelined the Sicilians from the government, alienating them. Michael Palaiologos took advantage of this situation and with agents on the island he incited the revolt.

On the afternoon of March 30, 1282, the bell of the church of the Holy Spirit in Palermo rang out Vespers, giving the signal for the uprising. The cause was the attempted rape of a local married girl by a French soldier, named Drouet. Her husband attacked Drouet and killed him with a knife. The other French soldiers attacked the husband, but the Sicilians fought back and killed them all. Immediately the plan of rebellion was put into action. The bells of all the churches in Palermo began to ring and under the guidance of Byzantine agents the Sicilians poured into the streets shouting: "Death to the France"! The Sicilians broke into inns and lodges where the French and their families lived and slaughtered men, women and children indiscriminately. They even slaughtered local women who had married Frenchmen and even French Catholic priests and monks.

By the morning around 2,000 French had been massacred and the rebels had taken complete control of the city. According to another source, the events with Drouet that are described were only a false pretext, as the rebellion was organized by Michael Palaiologos's agent, Giovanni da Procida.

After the uprising prevailed in Palermo, the rebellion spread to most of the island (mainly in its northern and western parts), before the French could react. Within the next six weeks all of Sicily was controlled by the rebels, except Messina, which was well fortified by the French and the local inhabitants were reluctant to clash with them. Finally, this city fell from within, on April 28 and the rebels actually set fire to the French fleet anchored there, crushing Carlo d' Anjou's dreams of destroying the Byzantine Empire.

Is it worth noting that apart from Giovanni da Procida, one of the leaders of the rebellion was Bartholomeos of Neocastron. He notified the Greek Emperor Michael Palaiologos, by sending him a message with a Genoese sailor who sailed to Constantinople.

The revolutionaries also asked from Pope Martino IV to recognize them as an autonomous community and to become their sovereign. But the French pope, Simon de Brion-Martino IV refused. This was the final mistake of the French.

The island still hoped that Pope Martino would relent. In the early days of May, they solemnly presented themselves before the entire Church Council chanting three times: "Oh God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us", but the Pope answered bitterly by repeating three times the words of the Passion: "Hail, King of the Jews" Carlo had the full support of the Pope. Then in April, a mission arrived from Palermo to Orvieto to ask the Vatican's Holy Synod to take under its protection the new Community of Sicily, but Pope

Martino refused to receive it in a hearing. The embassy did not get any other response from him. Instead, on May 7, Ascension Day, the Pope issued three excommunications:

A) The first was the excommunication of those who belonged to the Sicilian movement and anyone who offered them help.

B) The second was the excommunication of Michael Palaiologos, whom he called "Emperor of the Greeks" and not "Romans", which was the official title of the emperors of Byzantium.

C) The third was the excommunication of Guido da Montefeltro and the Ghibellines of Northern Italia.

The commission of the Sicilians, when Byzantium and Michael Palaiologos did not show the strength and determination to intervene personally and restore Sicily to Byzantium, turned to Pedro D' Aragona. Pedro claimed that the throne of Sicily belonged to him, because his wife was a German princess from the previous rulers of Hohenstaufen and they (the Sicilians) appealed for his protection. Pedro of course accepted and on August 30, 1282, he landed in Trapani. Pedro arrived at Palermo on the 2nd of September and promised freedom to Sicilians and preservation of their customs. He was well accepted by them. On September 4th, he was crowned as king Pedro I di Sicilia. Carlo attempted to react and tried to recapture the "gateway" of Sicily, Messina, but failed.

The Sicilians revolted for two reasons. First, because Carlo d' Anju impoverished them with taxes and the seizure of goods, so that he could have supplies to attack Constantinople. Second, because the Greek emperor organized the uprising with money and agents, to prevent Charles's attack.

The Germans and the French were forced to leave the southern Italian peninsula and the eastern Mediterranean. It is notable that Michael Palaiologos wrote about the Sicilian Vespers: "I dare to boast I was the instrument of God who brought freedom to the Sicilians...". Byzantine gold helped the most the revolution carried out by the Sicilians, many of whom still spoke Greek and almost all of them had Greek roots. At that time the Latin Sicilian dialect had begun to take form, mainly in the cities of western Sicily.

There was a bitter and disastrous consequence for Hellenism, however. The Sicilian Vespers and Pedro d' Aragona marked both the final dominance of Catholicism and the rapid and violent Latinization of Sicily with the final loss of the Greek language. The definitive loss of Sicily for Hellenism, after almost 3000 years of Greek History!

That's when the Sicilian Latin dialect, which was created in Palermo and some other cities of western Sicily such as Trapani, Corleone etc. began to spread. The process of Sicilian national autonomy began a few years later. The Sicilians started to create a separate language, the Sicilian Latin. In the following centuries the Sicilians developed a national sense of difference from the other populations of the Apennine peninsula. After the creation of the unified Italian state in 1870, it changed, and most Sicilians began to declare themselves Italians by nationality and fewer as Sicilians. The interests, the educational policy, the Italian language and the media of Rome, created the Italian national consciousness for the Sicilians and the other Magno Greco. In recent years, this is changing again and there are even reawakened Greeks.

Ethnological Makeup of the Island of Sicily

The Normans, Germans and other conquerors who were Vatican vassals, were only an army and not a population. There weren't any inhabitants of German or Norman origin in southern Italy. The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche describes in the "birth of Tragedy", from the ethnological and cultural aspect, the first attack of the German Roman Catholic West, against Hellenism and Hellenic culture, beginning from southern Italy and Sicily. The Greeks were violently forced to convert to Catholicism and adopt Latin names and surnames, but the Greek language was still alive and spoken for many more decades, especially in southern and eastern Sicily, except for some larger cities in the west, such as Palermo, Trapani, Corleone, Kefalou etc. where the Greek language had been extinguished then and forever.

In 1280, the English humanist Roger Bacon, wrote and sent a letter to Pope Nicolò Orsini the 3rd while travelling through Sicily. It was written in Latin and in it he said: "... in most places, the clergy and people were purely Greek". "Nec multum eset pro tanta utilitate in Italiam, in qua clerus et populus sunt pure Graeci in multi locis". Source: Roger Bacon, *compendium studii philosophiae* chap.VI, Bacon-Opera quaedam hastenus inedita, 434.

In 1231 the German Emperor, of Two Sicilies, Frederick II, wrote his famous legislation (Constitution of Melfi) in two languages; In the spoken by the population medieval Greek (because the everyday language that Sicilians spoke and understood, was only Greek), and in Latin. Latin was used only as the scholarly language for legislation. At that time nobody could speak the ancient Latin language.

In the following years/centuries, the region also witnessed the "Holy" Inquisition for the "heretic" Magno Greco. Many Magno Greco Orthodox communities existed until 1580.

What Was Happening in the Rest of Southern Italy

In Calabria and Apulia, and in smaller scale in Basilicata and Campania, Hellenism remained a blooming ethnicity, and so did the Greek language. The Orthodox Christian doctrine was prevalent, at the time of Sicilian Vespers. It started gradually to decrease after the papal "Holy" Inquisition and persecutions, like the one witnessed in Frederick's legislation, until the middle of 16th century.

An old French chronicler stated in the 13th century that: "The peasants of Calabria spoke nothing but Greek". "Et par toute Calabre li paisant ne parlent se grizois non"... Source: P. Mayer, "les premières compilations Françaises d'histoire ancienne", Romania XIV (1885), 70, n.5.

In the 14th century, in one of his letters, Petrarca spoke of a young man who he advised to go to Calabria for studies in Greek. He wanted to go directly to Constantinople, but he told him "Greece once abounded in great talents which it now lacks...". "The young man believed my words, hearing from me that in our time there were many men in Calabria who were scholars in Greek literature, and he decided to go there".

Between the 15th and 18th centuries, waves of Greeks from the Peloponnese, such as the Maniots and Arvanites, migrated to Sicily in large numbers to escape persecution after the Ottoman conquest. They brought with them Eastern Orthodoxy once again, adding to the extensive Byzantine /Greek influence.

The Violent Latinization/Catholicization of Sicily and Southern Italy (Calabria, Apulia, Basilicata and Campania)

The territory of Sicily and Southern Italy was at least partially under Greek control until the 11th century, when the feudal lord Melos, of Varis (Bari), asked for the help of the Normans as mercenaries, to help him become independent from Constantinople. The 200 Norman mercenaries, who founded the state of two Sicilies and began the violent Latinization of the Greeks, did not leave any DNA footprint in the territory. It was simply impossible because these Viking conquerors were so few. The same goes for all the various conquerors in Magna Graecia. They were only military (Normans, Germans, France, Spanish...). They were not a population. They were not settlers.

The Concordat of 1059. The beginning of the end for Magno Greeks.

At the end of August 1059, the Bavarian Gerardo de Chelone (Pope Nicholas II (Greeks used to call him Chelona, Turtle in English) celebrated a “council” in Melfi di Potenza. He was accompanied by the infamous Cardinal Hildebrando di Soana (the future Gregory VII) and an impressive entourage of cardinals, bishops, and abbots. The reason for all this pomp? The stipulation of a Concordat with the Norman barons engaged in the conquest of southern Italy. By displaying the Constitutum Constantini, a false document according to which the Emperor Constantine I, had abdicated in favor of the Pope, making southern Italy (Magna Grecia) Patrimonium sancti Petri, the first nucleus of the Papal State. Nicholas II granted Robert Guiscard possession of all of Magna Graecia, continental Greece and Sicily, naming him Apostolic Legate, his personal alter ego. For his part, Roberto swore by God and the Gospel that he will be the Pope's ally against any adversary; he promised not to advance in war without the Pope's authorization; he promised to hand over the conquered population of southern Italy, keeping it in obedience to the Holy Roman Church.

The bishops from Sicily, Apulia, Basilicata and Calabria had remained in the Orthodox faith in the period after the Schism and participated in the Synods called by the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. The Pope with the help of the Franko-German conquerors who ruled these areas, put unbearable pressure on the Orthodox inhabitants and forced them to follow the Latin ritual and Latin language. The oppression and persecutions forced many Orthodox to flee to Byzantium, such as Saint Nikephoros, who was a Philocaly teacher of Saint Gregory Palamas and Saint Bartholomew from Symeri, reformer of the Monastery of Saint Basil in Arsana of Chilandarius on Mount Athos.

They politically subjugated Apulia, Basilicata, Campania, Calabria and Sicily and in 1071 installed Franko-German bishops in Sicily. But in Calabria and Apulia there was a reaction. Here the Latinization was more violent, because the resistance of the Orthodox was strong. In 1089 they replaced the Archbishop of Regio Vasilios. Two great confessors were Saint Luke (†1114) and Saint Bartholomew (†1131) were miraculously saved from the flames thrown at them by the Fracolatins. In Ierakas (Gerace), the apostate Athanasios Chalkeopoulos replaced

the Orthodox standard with the Latin one in 1480, and in Voua (Bova) in 1572, the Armenian-Cypriot Julius Stavrianos.

The methods used to reduce the Orthodox Italo-Greek nation to obedience, during and after the military conquest, are well known:

- * Ethnic cleansing: extermination of the inhabitants of entire cities, then repopulated by settlers of the same ethnic group as the invaders, brought in from Provence.
- * Evacuation and mass deportation from one part of the occupied territory to another (between the 12th and 15th/16th centuries, Greek names and surnames disappear from the cities).
- * Expropriation of Greek homes and fields (except for the collaborators). All the landowners of southern Italy from the 12th century were Anglo-French-Saxon barons. Also known as the *gattopardi*.
- * Seizure and destruction of Greek books (between the 12th and 17th centuries, all Greek manuscripts, disappeared from Sicily and the rest of southern Italy, which used to be one of the major centers of book production in the Eastern Roman Empire).
- * Replacement of the local Italo-Greek and Orthodox bishops with trusted hierarchs (Normans by blood and English, such as Walter of the Mills in Palermo).
- * Suppression of Orthodox monasteries and establishment, in the same buildings, of new religious organizations. For example, Benedictines in the Monastery of San Filippo di Agira, near Enna. Or submission of Orthodox monasteries to the feudal authority of Catholic bishops/princes or abbots/barons. For example, the Salvatore of Messina submitted to the Catholic bishop of the city; the Monastery of Theristis submitted to the abbot of the Chartreuse.
- * Latinization or, better said, Catholicization of the local Magno-Greek population. It is no coincidence that, with the conquest still in progress, Catholic churches and monasteries dedicated to the Trinitarian doctrine sprung up like mushrooms throughout Southern Italy.



“The Pope sent inquisitors to southern Italy to investigate the Greeks, and if they had found any who did not adhere to the Latin doctrine, they would have had to burn him at the stake...” (Anonymous Calabrese of the 12th century, code Vatic.gr.316)

After the region was cut off from the East, due to the conquest by the Turks of Constantinople in 1453, and especially of mainland Greece, which was adjacent to Calabria and Sicily, the Orthodox submitted by force to the brutal power of the Pope.

After the ecclesiastical Synod of Messina (1520) and Otranto, (1580) the last Greek Sicilians, Calabrians, Apulians... were forced to leave Orthodox Christianity. More than 1600 churches hermetaries and monasteries, were forced to close, or to change language in their ceremonies. We can still see the ruins of these churches today, everywhere. The Greeks had two choices. To convert to Roman Catholicism and become Latins or lose their lives as heretics. So, the Sicilians-Calabrians... lost their language, their conscience and their heritage. They became the latinized Greeks of today.

In 1579 the Pope established a Unitarian Diocese for the Orthodox Albereshi speakers of Sicily in Palermo. They had arrived in small numbers in the 15th century, from the Peloponnese, in order to save their lives from the Ottoman Turks. They considered themselves Greeks. Their village of “Piena degli Greci”, was renamed by Mussolini in 1934, to “Piena degli Albanesi” for political reasons.

Controversial was and the Bourbonic policy against the Magno-Greeks and the remaining Orthodox. Around 1830, the king of the Two Sicilies (in Caserta), Francisco I, issued a decree

against the Greeks who insisted on remaining Greek and Orthodox: "Whoever among the inhabitants of the state did not recognize the Pope as head of the Christian Church, must leave the country". This decree, if nothing else, shows that even in the 19th century the Greek population of Magna Graecia was quite considerable. A few years earlier, in 1821, they had forced the closure of the last 16 Greek monasteries in Calabria and Apulia.

Mussolini's fascist regime, whose every act of violence received the blessings of the Vatican, completed the persecution with the attempt to de-Hellenize the last Greek-speaking towns of Calabria and Apulia. To completely erase every memory of 3,000 years of Greek history in the area. The government of Rome did not develop economically the regions of Calabria, Basilicata, Apulia, Campania and Sicily, and millions of inhabitants of the region and its last Orthodox presence migrated in the twentieth century to Argentina, Brazil, the USA and Australia.

In 1932, the German linguist, Gerhard Rholfs, published his research in four Books with the titles: a) Hellenism in Sicily, b) Hellenism in Calabria, c) Greek toponyms d) Etymology of toponyms, names and surnames. Mussolini's regime reacted. The books were banned, and the remaining Greek speaking population in Sicily, Calabria, Apulia and a small region near Napoli, the Cilento, were oppressed and the men pushed in the frontlines of WWII.

In 1994, a new era began when the saintly monks Fr. Cosmas and Fr. Gennadios from the monastery of Megisti Lavra of Athos, (Macedonia, Greece) settled in the monastery of Agios Ioannis the Theristis in Bivonzi, Calabria. The katholikon (the main church) was without a roof and floor and in it lived hens and goats. With the death of Fr. Cosmas, Romanian Orthodox monks seized violently the monastery with the assistance of an anti-Greek local mayor. The holy monasteries of Agios Ilias in the cave of Melikoukas, Agios Ilias and Filaretos in Seminara Calabria and of the Annunciation in Madranici in Catania Sicily, have also reopened. In Reggio, a new church of Saint Paul the Apostle was built with the assistance of the "Paracletos", a Greek monastery in Oropos.

In the last twenty-five years there has been a strong interest by the local population in Calabria, Apulia, Sicily etc. to find their cultural and ethnic roots. The initial interest was for the Greek language, history and culture. Searching for the roots, the interest in Orthodoxy and the ancient Greek religion, also began. In Palermo, with the help of Cypriots, a new church of Apostle Andreas was erected, and an effort is made to establish parishes and an Orthodox monastery. Palermo University has become the biggest center in the world (according to number of students) for the teaching of the Greek language and history.

The population of southern Italy is proud of their Greek origin, but above all, they are proud because they are the descendants of the last Orthodox of Italy who were Latinized by force and deceit. They are proud of the holy Bishops Leo, Agathon and Pagratius, the martyrs Agatha and Loukia and the Saints Elias the Younger of Spileotis, Philaretos the gardener, Nicodemus of Mammola, John the Theristis, Luke of Demena, Nilos of Rossano, Fantinus the Old and New, Saint Nikephoros the Myroblyte and Monk and Saint Luke of Melikoukas, Philippos di Agira and the countless other martyrs that this region produced who were confessors of Orthodoxy.

The Ethnic and Religious Cleansing in Magna Graecia



Linguistic map in the 10th century. By Alessandro Palieri.

Here is Pope Gregory's thought, condensed in the autograph *Dictatus Papae*: the Pope is bishop of the entire world (§3) and has the exclusive right to use the insignia of the emperors (§8); everyone must kiss his feet (§12) and only his name must be pronounced in church (§10) because his is the only name in the world (§11) and no one can judge him (§19); the Church of Rome has never erred nor will it ever err (§22) and no one, if he does not agree with the Pope, can be considered Catholic (§26).

Archimandrita Antonio Scordino. Sicily.



Galatro, Magno-Greek Monastery

“The ethnic and religious cleansing in the south is still with us in the public imagination which says that the Italo-Greeks, who for example founded the monastic lordships such as Licusati, San Giovanni a Piro and Rofrano, came here as refugees from the iconoclastic policy of Constantionople and that they were therefore not our ancestors but “Foreigners”.

Michael Shano, “Eredità culturale del monachesimo italo-greco”



Osios Helias Monastery, Galatro.

“The Italo-Greeks or the so-called “Basilians” were indigenous from the ancient Magno-Greeks and not immigrants to Italy from the East. A large part of Italy was still in the Roman Empire after the so-called “fall” of the empire (in the West). Historians of the Renaissance and early modern era tried to make us forget this history.

In the south the general public still believes the false propaganda that was passed down, with the help of the Habsburgs of the "Holy" Roman Empire (Franco-German). During the Risorgimento and after the unification, Manzoni used to make the Italo-Greeks, criminal and “non-Italian” because they didn’t follow Latin religion, traditions and customs, transforming them into aliens who are not part of “us”.

We now note that even today in popular literature in Cilento (a place near Napoli where the famous Elea – (Velia in Latin) used to be and where the famous Presocratic philosophic school was established) the presence of the Italo-Greeks is explained as "refugees" from iconoclasm in the Eastern Mediterranean, to "delegitimize" the brothers in the faith of the neo-Greek language and rite. "Forgetting" that the Italo-Greek Church had centuries-old roots in the south, even before the so-called fall of the western Empire in 476. An alternative plausible explanation was then needed for their presence here. Same for Licusati, Lentiscosa and San Giovanni a Piro.

In good faith the "lovers" of local history repeat the distorted history promulgated already a few centuries ago. But institutions such as schools, journalism and the municipal cultural

departments can, if they wish, promote the correct education of the general public and in the promotion of tourism. In democracy the obstacles of royal and ecclesiastical censorship are presumed to be absent”

Michael Shano, Santi Italogreci

Greek Calabrian, Saints and Popes

The Magno-Greeks contributed a lot in the founding of the Vatican Church. There are other Greek popes besides the Calabrians. In total, there are 23 Greek popes. The second ethnicity after Italian. We must note also that, the official languages of the Vatican, then and now, are three. Latin, Greek and Aramaic.

Pope Anacletus (Ανάκλητος) (51-54 / 63-66).

Saint Telesphorus (Τελέσφορος) from Thurio. Terranova di Sibari (CS)
Elected in 125. Died as a martyr in 136 under the emperor Hadrian or at the beginning of the reign of Antoninus Pius. He was the 9th pope after St. Peter.

Pope Hyginus (Υγίνος) (138-142).

Pope Eleuterus (Ελεύθερος) (174–189).

Saint Antero (Αντέρως) from Petilia. Strongoli (CZ). Elected on November 21, 235. Died as martyr on January 3, 236, at the beginning of the reign of Maximinus. He is the 20th pope after St. Peter.

Pope Stephen I –Στέφανος (254–257).

Pope Sixtus II (Σίξτος Β) (257-258).

Saint Dionysius (Διονύσιος) from Thurio, Terranova di Sibari (CS). Elected on July 22, 259. Died on December 26, 268. He was the 26th pope after St. Peter.

Antipope Heraclius- Ηράκλειος (309 or 310).

Saint Eusebius (Ευσέβιος) from Casegghiano. Episcopal city near the castle of San Giorgio Morgeto (RC). Elected on April 18, 310. Died as martyr on August 17, 311. Emperor Maxentius decreed the exile of Pope Eusebius, who died in Sicily. The date of the beginning and end of his pontificate is uncertain. He is the 32nd pope after Saint Peter.

Pope Julius (337-352).

Saint Zosimos (Ζώσιμος) from Reatio Mesurgo, the current Mesoraca (CZ). Elected on March 18, 417. Died on December 26, 418. He was the 42nd pope after Saint Peter.

Pope Boniface III- Βονιφάτιος (607).

Pope John IV- Ιωάννης Δ´ (640-642).

Pope Theodore I –Θεόδωρος Α´ (642–649).

Saint Agathon (Αγάθων) from Reggio Calabria. Elected June 27, 678. Died January 10, 681. He was the 80th pope after Saint Peter.

San Leone (Λέων) II da Reggio Calabria. There is no certain proof of his birthplace. The Calabrians indicate that he was born in Reggio. The Sicilians in Messina or Piazza Armerina. However, it is certain that Pope Leo II wore the habit of canon regular in the Monastery of Bagnara. Having moved to Rome, he was made cardinal by his fellow countryman Pope Agathon. Elected on August 17, 682. Died on July 3, 683. He was the 81st pope after Saint Peter.

Pope Conon- (Κόνων) (686-687).

Pope John VI (Ιωάννης Στ΄) (701–705).

Pope John VII (Ιωάννης Ζ΄) (705–707).

Giovanni (Ιωάννης) VII° da Rossano (CS). Elected March 1, 705. Died October 17, 707. He was the 87th pope after Saint Peter.

Pope Zachary (Ζαχαρίας). Santa Severina (CZ). Elected on December 10, 741. Died on March 22, 752. He was the 92nd pope after Saint Peter.

Stefano (Στέφανος) III° da Reggio Calabria. According to tradition, he was born in S. Stefano d'Aspromonte RC. Elected on 7 August 768. Died on 24 January 772. He was the 96th pope after Saint Peter.

The antipope Giovanni Filogato, (Ιωάννης Φιλόγατος). Elected antipope with the name of John XVI, in opposition to the legitimate pope, Gregory V, cousin of German Emperor Otto III. Philogatos was tortured by Otto's soldiers, with serious mutilations, and subsequently condemned as a usurper and traitor by a council convened by Pope Gregory V. Locked up in prison, he died there after a few months in atrocious suffering.

Antipope John XVI (Ιωάννης ΙΣτ΄) (997-998).

Antipope Alexander V (Αλέξανδρος Ε΄) (1409–1410).

Pope Innocent VIII (Ινικέντιος Η΄)(1484–1492), distant partial Greek ancestry.

Pope Julius II (Ιουλιος Β΄) (1503–1513), Greek mother and Italian father.

The Greeks in Salento in the 16th Century

It is really extremely interesting how much important historical knowledge there is about Hellenism of medieval Italy that one can find in works of the time. One of these works is the book "Historical memories of the city of Gallipoli" (Memorie storiche della città di Gallipoli) in which there is a reference to an Italian historian of the 16th century. Francesco Camaldari in the year 1513, living in Gallipoli of Salento and having contact with the Greek community, wrote:

“The Gallipoli Cathedral is full of priests, deacons, sub-deacons and clergy who, together with their bishop, are all Greeks. They serve the temple with dignity and seriousness much better than the Latins because every day they celebrate vespers and chant the Orthro. The priests are 40, while the rest of the clergy are 20. There are 12 monks. They wear cassocks and vestments made of luxurious oriental fabrics. Their appearance is awe-inspiring. They are all highly educated, adorned with virtues and love. It is a true brotherhood. They live in love, unity, true friendship like a family. When they walk the streets with their beautiful beards they look like the ancient prophets and patriarchs”.

What is very interesting but at the same time shocking is what he writes after almost 20 years. “The Greek clergy served until 1513. The last service they sang was my mother's funeral. In 1530 only 10 Greek priests survive now and they are all Latin and do not love Hellenism”.

(328)

CAPITOLO TERZO

Antico Rito greco , ed actual Capitolo della Chiesa di Gallipoli.

Siccome Gallipoli , Città di antica origine greca fu sempre addeita alle sue istituzioni anche ne' secoli ne' quali fu l'Italia inondata da barbare nazioni , serbandosi al dominio de' Greci , ritenne il greco linguaggio , i riti , e le costumanze sino al tempo del Galateo , morto in Lecce nell' età di anni 73 ai 12 novembre 1517 (1) ; del pari la Chiesa di Gallipoli conservò il Rito greco , e recitò l' ufficio greco sino ai tempi di Monsignor Alessio Zelodano nel 1513. L' antico Protettore della Città e titolare della Cattedrale sin da' tempi remoti era il Santo Padre Gio: Crisostomo , uno de' quattro Dottori greci della Chiesa , come osservai nel Capitolo precedente. I Vescovi ne' passati secoli si eligevano alternativamente or greci , ed or latini (2).

(1) Antonio Galateo nella descrizione di Gallipoli ne fa chiara testimonianza con queste espressioni , *Haec Urbs consecrata , et in orationem vergente Graecia , ut ceterae Italiae Urbes , graecam linguam quae suae patriae tribuitur , amittit.*

(2) Nimbisio de' Brevoli *Scuola parte 3 , pagina 200.* Gallipoli lingua graeca , rito ecclesiasticus graecus , latinisque , sicut et regio quae Graecia plerum . Pietro Pompilio Rodata , nell' opera dell' origine , progressi , e stato del rito greco in Italia , nel libro pri-

Vestivano allora i Preti di fini panni torchiati e Preti greci neri con lunga barba, e con un contegno venerando. Merita esser quì riportata la memoria, che ne ha tramandata l'Abate Francesco Camaldari nella breve storia manoscritta de' suoi tempi.

De più io sò tuca la Chiesa matre de Gallipoli piena di Preti, Diaconi, et Subdiaconi greci, et Chierici tucci greci, et così serviano detho Vesco- vato li Greci, et serviano con tanta solemnità assai più che hoggie non fanno li Latini, perchè omne di se dicea vespero, et cantava nocturno. Et era il numero de quaranta Preti de messa in circa, et li restanti sacri et chierici da vinti altri in circa, che in tucci erano da sezzanta. Li canonici andavano vestiti tucci de panni fini con loro capuccii, et erano la miglior parte panni turchini, nactili di grana, et negri, et en tucci erano duodeci, et da trenta altri erano Preti, et tucci portavano una grande magnificencia, et erano cuà en facti lieterati, como di presentia, di tractare, birtuosi, et amorevoli. Tiravano tucci de accordio con grandissima amore et benevolentia tucci assieme, et erano come fraternitate.

non, scrivendo di Gallipoli: Si ha tutto il fondamento da credere, che sino alla fine del secolo XIV, stabilmente fosse l'elezione de' vescovi ora greci, ed ora latini.

Tancta era l'amicitia fra de loro, et andavano con quelle loro belle barbe come Patriarchi et Profeti. Li Preti greci servivano comunemente la predicta Chiesa Callipolitana, et sino allo anno mille cinquecento et tredice. Lo ultimo officio greco solenne de li morti fo facto et cantato alla morte di mia Matre, quale fo alle dieci de Gennaio de dicto anno, et ora sono rimasi li Greci solo dieci, essendo li altri morti, et successi li Latini (3).

(3) L'autorità del Camaldari di sopra descritto è riportata nell'Italia Sacra alle abbazie del Calabi, e nel Basilato citate. Lo stesso Camaldari molti nel suo manoscritto diversi Preti greci e latini eh'erano alla sua morte. Ecco elenchè ne scrive: Sono in Abate Francesco Camaldari li cinque Preti latini in dicta Chiesa. Lo primo se chiamava D. Nicola de Badogliata, et era homo di 70 anni, et questo fu Arcidiacono di Gallipoli finchè vivo, et fu diacono di l'ultima Abate di S. Sabastiano: l'altro se chiamava D. Agostino Paja: l'altro D. Jacopo de Sarnatara: l'altro D. Giorgio Finlaque: l'altro D. Nicola Tarantino, et questi stavano a dir l'officio et messa a San Sabastiano, et non alla episcopata. — Sono in Abate Francesco Camaldari se'oggi li cinque Arcipreti in Gallipoli: Lo primo D. Giovanni Paja, et fu l'ultimo Arciprete greco: lo secondo D. Agostino Paja: lo terzo D. Francesco Cusi: lo quarto D. Gio. Battista Perinari Protomacario: et lo quinto D. Ciriacino Buffonata. — Sono li Arcidiaconi quattro: lo primo D. Nicola Badogliata: lo secondo Lorenzo Barrella Buffoni, nipote della Episcopa Maria Saladano: D. Nicola Barrella: D. Jacopo Albino Barrella, son de Figuali — Sono li Cantori quattro: lo primo D. Jacopo Andrea Buffonata cantore greco, et dignissimo cantore, et dicto: lo secondo D. Guglielmo Buffonata son figlio: lo terzo D. Nicolao Fannari: lo quarto D.

Ancient Greek Temples in Magna Graecia

Some of the most beautiful monuments in the world are found in Magna Graecia. There are thousands. We mention the most representative of them.



Akragas, temple of Omonia



Akragas, temple of Hera



Akragas, Dioscuri, (Castor and Polydeukis).



Agesta (Segesta), temple of mother Earth (goddess Demetra)



Selinuntas, temple of Zeus.



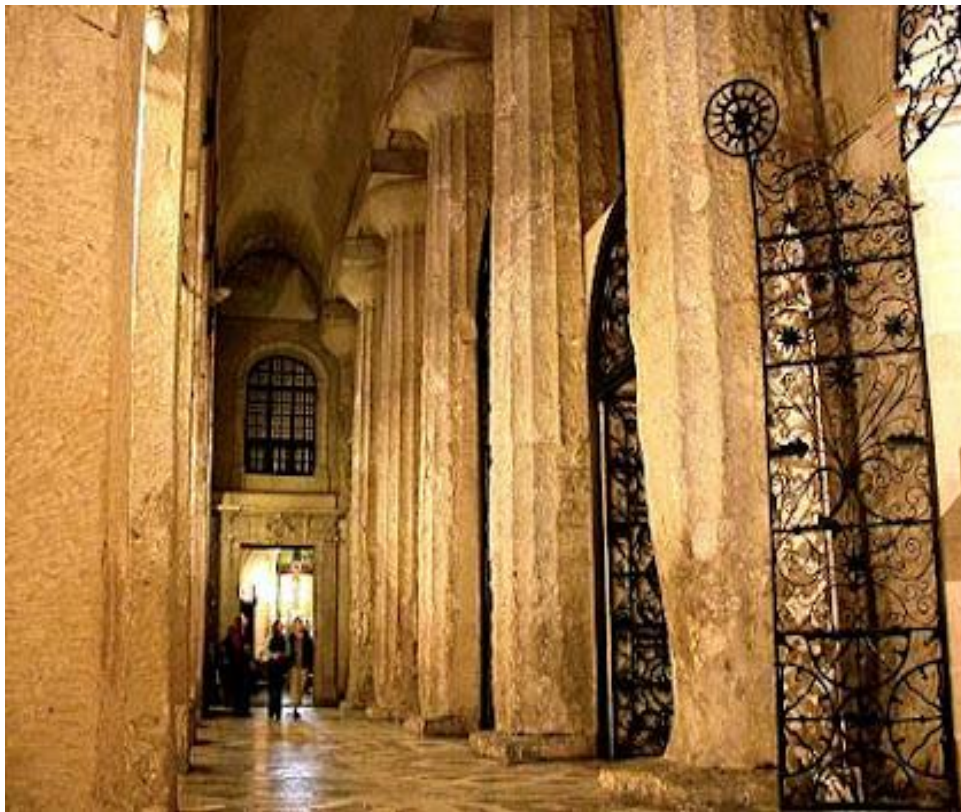
Selinountas, temple of Hera.



Selinuntas.



Syracuse, temple of Apollo.



Syracuse. Ancient temple of goddess Athena (exterior and interior). Christian church of Saint Mary today.



Il Bronzi di Riace, Regio Calabria, Museum de la Magna Graecia.



Poseidonia, Campania.



Metapontion, Basilikata, theater and temple of Hera.



Epizephyrioi Locri and Riace warriors (Magna Graecia museum Reggio).



Naples, teatro Greco, Pausilipon hill. This hill was so beautiful, that the Greeks gave it a name that means, a place so beautiful that it takes away sadness.



The Greek cemetery in underground Naples. The best-preserved part of it, the "Plateia" (square), or as it is also called the "Crystalline Basement".



Thourii, the only pan-Hellenic city. The city that Plato chose to implement his “Ideal State”. Plato lived here for a long period. The city is located next to Sybaris, which was the largest city in Calabria at this time.



Sybaris, excavation.



Tavromenio (Taormina), Greek theater.



Syracuse.



The Fallen Icaros. Temple of Omonoia, Akragas. Icaros was the son of the Athenian, Cretan and Sicilian architect Daedalos. According to mythology, he was the first man who attempted to fly. But he flew too high, and the god Helios (Sun) burned his wings. So, he fell on the island of the Aegean Sea that bears his name: Ikaria in the Dodecanese complex of islands.



*Statue of the titan Telamon, in front of the temple of Zeus.
Valey of Greek temples, Akragas, Sicily.*



Taras (Taranto).



Croton, capo Kolona. Temple of Hera.



TAORMINA

SIRACUSA

©Travel Sicily

MORGANTINA

TINDARI

SEGESTA



Temple of the queen of the Olympian gods, Hera. Metapontion, Basilicata.



Poseidonia (Pesto) Campania, south of Naples.

Ancient and Medieval Greek Orthodox Churches in Sicily and Magna Graecia

At the time of the great attack against Hellenism (second half of the 13th century) there were almost 1700 Greek churches, and monasteries in southern Italy and Sicily. Greeks and the Greek Orthodox Church in the medieval era in northern Italy existed continuously since the early Byzantine era, thanks to the good relations between Byzantines and Venetians. In the south the population was mainly Greek.



Byzantine Italy in the Early Middle Ages



Christ Pantokrator in Monreale Abbey

Martorana/Monreale, Palermo. Built by Byzantine Greek architects and artists. Like the cathedral of Kefalou, the church of Martorana was built on the older Greek Church of Agios Nikolaos.



Cefalu (ancient Greek Kefaloidion, medieval Greek Kefalou). Greek Byzantine mosaics in the famous Duomo, build in the era of the Norman King Roger II.



Greek Orthodox church of Papisidero, (Father Isidoros). Turned into a home for goats and cows! Following the religious and cultural example of Turkey!



San Elias.



Santa Euphenia, Calabria.



Santa Maria Tridetti.



Seminara Calabria.



Messina, Sacro Monastero Santissimo Salvatore in lingua phari. Built in 1124 on the eastern pier of the canal port of Mazara by order of Roger II and initially entrusted to Greek rite monks. Later became part of the Benedictine abbey complex of San Nicolò and Giovanni Prodromo which no longer exists today.



The famous icon of the Crucifixion, by the Italo Greco Antonello da Messina. The Monastery of the Savior, was jealous of the prosperity of the monastery of Santa Maria Patir of Rossano, founded by the Basilian monk Bartholomew of Simeri. When the Benedictine monks of the Holy Trinity of Miletus accused Bartholomew of heresy, the King of Sicily, Roger II, invited him and entrusted him with the creation of a new monastery in Messina, in the location of Pharos (Φάρος) or Grafeos (Γραφέος). Bartholomew began to create the new monastery but died in 1130 and the construction of the monastery was completed in 1132 under the guidance of his disciple Luca da Messina, who arrived from the Monastery of Odigitria with forty-nine monks.

At the behest of Roger II, the monastery was named "archimandritic" and from 1133 a total of 45 Greek monasteries joined it (32 in Sicily, 13 in Calabria). At some point the number reached 62. It thus became one of the four Italian centers, which included the monasteries of the Orthodox banner. The others were the monasteries of Panagia Odegetria in Rossano, Agios Nikolaos in Otranto and Theotokos Kryptofernis. The abbot of the monastery of Sotiros, who also bore the title of archimandrite, was by election the father and provost of the monasteries that depended on it and chose their abbots. He also had powers of civil and canonical justice and was not subject to the Latin bishop of Messina.

The monastery received many assets and privileges, which made it an important owner on the island. It was placed under the protection of Popes and Norman rulers until its decline, after the conquest of Sicily by the French D'Anju in 1266. The followers of the Sicilian Vespers, who sought the separation of Calabria from Sicily, also influenced the power of the monastery.

It developed into a cultural center, as it ran a school of fine arts and calligraphy, but also a large library with writings, which came from the monasteries dependent on it or were produced in by its own scribes. In various raids it played an important defensive role due to its location.

In the 16th century, Charles V ordered the demolition of the monastery and the construction of a fortress in its strategic position. A new location was thus sought and a point directly in front of the port was chosen where it was rebuilt. In 1783 an earthquake destroyed the monastery of San Bartolomeo Trigona in Saint Eufemia d'Aspromonte and the surviving monks came to join the monastery of Sotiros.

In 1866 the newly formed Italian State confiscated the ecclesiastical assets. The Monastery of Sotiros was functional until the great earthquake of 1908, which destroyed it completely, killing all the monks who had not already dispersed. When the building that now houses the Regional Museum was built in its place, a crypt was discovered under the temple, with 16 burial niches. The Monastery is depicted by Antonello da Messina in the background of his work "Crucifixion", which is currently located in Sibiu, Romania.



*Monastero Italo Greco dei Santi Quaranta Martiri nelle Terme di Caronte-Sambiase (CZ).
The Italo-Greek Monastery of the Santi Quaranta Martiri, (Gr. Saranta Martyres) was
founded between the 9th and 10th century, after having been under the jurisdiction of the
Bishop of Nicastro (Neocastro) together with the vast forest of Mitoio. In the mid-15th
century fell into 'commenda'.*

*The name Caronte has nothing to do with ancient Greek ferryman to the word of dead
"Charon", but is a popular deformation of Quaranta, the name of the ancient waters of
Sambiase. The current Caronte spa has always been known as the baths or mineral waters of
Sambiase. The name Caronte is later and is to be linked to the monastery of the Quaranta
Martiri.*



*Church of the Holy Trinity (Cuba di Delia). Castelvetro, Sicily.
It is located in the countryside west of Castelvetro, a few kilometers from the city.
It was founded between 1160 and 1140 and was the catholikon of a Greek Basilian
monastery. It is characterized on the outside by three visibly pronounced apses that develop
on the east side.*



Sacro Monastero Ortodosso Magnogreco, "San Nicolaos", Agios Nikolaos, Kasole Otranto.



San Pietro e Paolo d'Agro, in Palermo, Sicily.



*Church of Saint Nicolaos Regale, Mazara del Vallo, Sicily.
It was a large Byzantine Stavropigiatic monastery, located on the peninsula of the lighthouse,
at the entrance to the port of Messina in Sicily.*



San Giovanni Theristis. Bivoggi Calabria.



La Catholica di Stilo. Calabria.



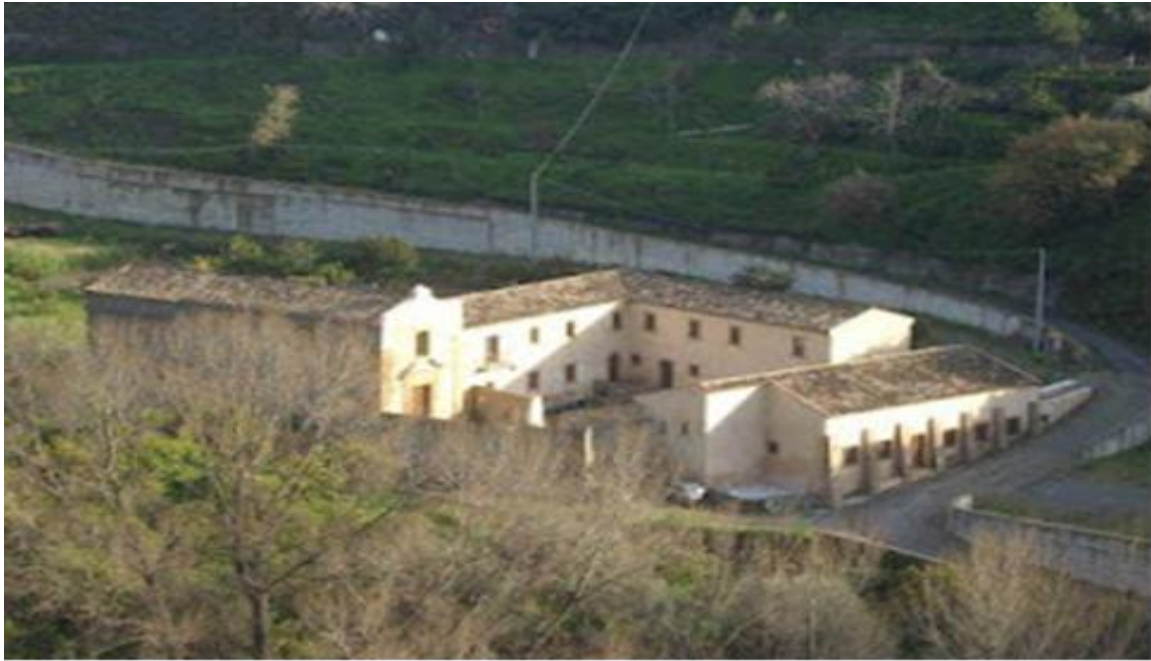
Orthodox Church of "Saint Niccolò dei Greci". Lecce Apulia. (Renamed from San Giovanni di malatto cirka 1765).



Greek Orthodox Church "Saint Leon. Catania, Sicily.



"Myrophores". Apulia.



Holy Monastery (Sacro Monastero) Mandranici, Catania, Sicily.



Archimandrita Filareto Colucci. Sicily.



Saint Philareto D' Ortolano. Sicily.



Caltanisseta Sicilia. The modern Greek-Orthodox Church of "San Calogero".



Church of Santa Maria di Mili, Messina Sicily, 1090 AD.

Couldn't the autonomous administration of Sicily preserve a few monuments that are still alive and in relative good condition? Built by those glorious ancestors of modern Sicilians. Is it not their history? How much does it cost? The EU provides money for heritage monuments.



Il monastero di S. Maria del Rogato, presso Alcara Li Fusi, in contrada Carbuncolo. (Foto FAI)

Alcara di Fusi, Sicily.



Monte Casino, Caserta, Campania. Church of Saint Aggelo, 11th century.



Monastero Basiliano Magnogreco, Barcelona, Sicily.



Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomeos, in the Naples Roman Catholic Cathedral. (Saint Petro and Paolo is the Greek church in Naples. Another cemeterial Greek chapel also exists.



“Parnassos”, Byzantine tower in Tropea-Nicotera Bay, Calabria.



Galiciano, Calabria







Ruined Greek churches. Hundreds of churches in almost every municipality.



The home of the last Greek priest in Kalimera, Apulia. He was murdered by Roman Catholics.



Lecce, Salentina Graecia, Apulia. Hundreds of Paleochristian and Medieval Magno-Greek Caves, hermeteries and churches.





The great cities of Egnazia and Fasano in Apulia, where the Greek inhabitants literally dug their houses, churches, workplaces, into the living rock. But cave villages can be found everywhere, in Bridizino (see San Biagio), Tarantino and Lecce, with the villages of Macurano in Ugento.



Kryptofenri. (Grottaferata in Latin). Magno-Greek monastic complex.



Byzantine Church of Agios Petros (Saint Peter) Hydrunta (Otranto).

On August 11, 1370, Pope Urban V chose the Archbishop of Otranto, Jacobo d'Itri, to visit the royal monasteries of the Kingdom of Sicily. The same archbishop had already been chosen to examine the liturgical books of the Latins and Greeks. A sign that the Holy See recognized his special proficiency in the knowledge of the Greek religious world.

In Otranto, despite the presence of the Latin archbishop bound to eliminate every trace of Greek ritual as appears from numerous documents, in 1684 we find three Greek churches in operation, regularly operated by the Greek clergy.

In 1700, despite the fact that every day the Greek ritual became more and more impossible, in the two dioceses of Otranto and Castro, much of the population still declared adamantly through the church ceremony their desire not to disappear. Besides Otranto, the same was true of the populations of Corigliano, Giurdignano, Muro Leccese, Giuggianello, Palmariggi, Melpiignano, Martano, Castrignano, Calimera, Martignano, Sternatia, Zollino, Cur.



Saint Giovanni a Piro.

The monks belonging to the order of Saint Basilios the Great were expelled from Epirus in the year 750 by Emperor Constantine V Copronymus, who succeeded his father Leo III the Isaurian, who continued with extreme ferocity his iconoclastic fight, based on the prohibition of reproducing sacred images inherited from the Old Testament. In reality, Constantine V exploited iconoclasm to fight the excessive power of the monks who, on the one hand, marketed icons thus strengthening their economic condition and their political influence within the Empire, and on the other, influenced the crowds, taking away influence from the imperial court.

The condemnation of iconolatriy gave Constantine V the opportunity to take possession of the property of the monasteries. Many monasteries and monastic possessions were confiscated, closed and transformed into stables, spas or barracks. Even before the construction of the cenobio, Basilian monks – fleeing persecution – had come to San Giovanni a Piro, kindly welcomed by the Lombards, lords of these lands, to settle in the Ceraseto area, around 800. They settled in the various caves at the foot of Mount Bulgheria where they practiced prayer as hermits. The most majestic of the caves, was later fortified and turned into the Grotta del Ceraseto, used for worship and as a place of defense and refuge from Saracen attacks. Thanks to the lands donated by the Lombards, the Basilian friars, around 990 AD, built the cenobio and became Barons of the Contrada, maintaining power over these assets even with the arrival of Roger the Norman who ratified the donations made to the monks.



The ruins of a medieval monastery in the monastic community in Mount Athos, in Macedonia Greece. “The Amalfinon Brotherhood Monastery” (Amafli, is a former Byzantine city in south Italy, and the only Italian Christian Brotherhoud that had a monastery in Mount Athos.



Santa Maria del Patire (Pathirion in Greek).



Italo-Greek monastery of San Nicola de' Nemori at Mount Eurako in Caccamo, Palermo. Today Mount Eurako is known by all as Mount San Calogero thanks to San Teoctisto, who like all Greek monks, was called "calogero" or "good old man-good elder".



Frazzandò, Sicily.

Recommended works about Orthodoxy and Byzantium in the south of Italy and Sicily are the following:

All the Italo Greek saints, over a thousand churches, monasteries and hermetaries, can be found in the book Synaxarion-Sinassario.

Also, in the Facebook page of “Santi Italogreci”.

And the website of the Orthodox Metropolis of Italy.



A great scientific work on Byzantine Sicily are the books by Susanna Valpreda “La cultura bizantina della Sicilia orientale”, Lithos Edizioni, 2023, or on academia.edu.

For all the medieval Byzantine and Orthodox churches of Sicily, with photos, an excellent reference is the wonderful work of the Moldavian traveler and historical researcher Vasile Mutu:” Luci e riflessioni bizantini in Sicilia”. Bonano Editore Catania, 2024. (Vasilemutu.com).

The Regional Autonomy of South Italy and the Flag of Autonomous Sicily



Triskeles, meaning three legs. A Greek symbol and a Greek word of course. The most likely etymology for the Name Sikelia (Sicily). The one featured here is the oldest one in the world, from the 8th century BC, and is exhibited in the museum of Olympia.



The official Sicilian flag, of the Autonomous Region of Sicily.



The original flag of Sicily, with the snakes in Medusa's head. Not the grains. Also the flag of the Sicilian "Independence movement".



Panormitan (Palermian). Picture from an ancient Greek Medallion from the Greek city of Palermo.



Kroton!



Krotoniadi. Modern local flag.



“Neriidi di Kroton”, in a ceremony in Metapontion (Basilicata).



The flag of the officially recognized “Greek minority of the Straits”, of Messina and Reggio.

The “Basiliani” Monks and Other Monuments



Gerace (Ierax). The former Orthodox cathedral in Gerace, Calabria

The term "Basilians" or "Order of Saint Basil", which refers to Greek-speaking Italian monasticism from the 9th century onwards, is an invention of later Latin writers. Eastern monastic tradition does not know separate "orders", each with different traditions and purposes. All communities follow the rule of the Great Canon of Caesarea (Asia Minor). As this contrasted them with the existing Latin monks of Italy, who as we said belonged to the Benedictine Order, Westerners described the Greek-Rite monks as another, distinct order.

The golden age of Greek Orthodox monasticism in Italy begins with the accession to the throne as Autocrator (Emperor) of Basilios the Macedonian, initiator of the Macedonian Dynasty (867-886). The new king renewed the imperial efforts to control the coasts of the Adriatic and built an aggressive Greek navy, to suppress piracy and stabilize and expand the bases in lower Italy. Basilios used the old and reliable tool of colonization in order to economically and demographically strengthen the Italian possessions with Greek-born populations.

Here we enter a great dichotomy that still divides scholars of late Italian Hellenism. While one side establishes historical continuity of the Greek-speaking communities of the region from antiquity to the present day, the other argues that at the time in question the Greek element of the era had essentially disappeared and Emperor Basilios I "replanted" it. The main source of this argument comes from, "The Greece of Salento" by Roco Aprile. Be that as it may, it is certain that economically and demographically the region had declined, and the Greek language was deteriorating (deteriorating but had not disappeared) after centuries of raids and conquests. Basil's policy gave new life to "Greater Greece". With Greek rule restored, merchants, soldiers, and officials began to flock to Italy. Constantinople also organized demographic strengthening, such as with the transfer of 3,000 freed slaves from Patras, a legacy by the famous widow Danielis to Basil I the Macedonian.

The image of Church revival becomes more than evident in the following passage: "Calabria had acquired the reputation of a land of monks and hermits. In the 10th century it changed into a new Thebaid, whose fame spread throughout Byzantium. From Rome to Constantinople and Jerusalem. The political influence of the Macedonian Dynasty weakened under the leadership of the Longobard rulers of Campania, even in Apulia. Nevertheless, the language, culture and civilization of Byzantium, with the great support of the activity of the monks, was revived not only in the glorious Magna Graecia, but even further. Into the territories of the Vatican (Held by their Franco-German vassals) and led to the medieval triumph of Hellenism".

G. Gay, "L'Italia meridionale e l'impero bizantino"

The Basilian monks did not build large and impressive monasteries. They sought the Divine with great humility and modesty. They were true Christians. Their hermitages were in caves or dug into the ground. They were connected by a complex network of arcades that included ancillary structures such as oil mills and presses, some in continuous use well into the 20th century. Greek Orthodox monasteries were not only centers of prayer and meditation, where ascetics struggled to approach divine love and pilgrims flocked to receive support and consolation. They were cultural centers where scribes copied and preserved ancient manuscripts, while teachers taught letters to children. They were hives of economic growth, with experienced monks teaching farmers agricultural techniques and trading for what they needed. The monastery storehouse was the last line of defense against famine if the harvest was bad. Many monks had medical knowledge, which they offered to the local population. Soon around the monasteries farmers and shepherds set up their residences, and thus laity and clergy lived side by side in a regime of mutual assistance. Unlike the Latin clergy who over time maintained a certain distance from the common believer, the Basilians lived with the flock. The fact that the Greek Orthodox elders married and started families helped a lot in this direction. The monks led an almost nomadic life, wandering from one hermitage to another and ministering in the surrounding villages. Some became great travelers. For example, Saint Elias the Sicilian (823-903) toured Africa, Egypt, the God-favored Mount Sinai and as far as Palestine and Persia.

With Greek monasteries scattered throughout the ancient Magna Graecia (some authors speak of 1,500 monasteries, although this number is disputed as an exaggeration) they were the core of the region's re-Hellenization. There was popular support of the political and military sovereignty of Romania (Romania was a popular name for Byzantium-Greece), under the umbrella of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. The Greek clergy also extended to Latin-speaking or bilingual communities in southern Italy, where they were welcomed with

pleasure. The 10-11th century was, after all, a time of terrible crisis for the Latin Church and the papacy, with corruption and indifference reigning. Basilians are praised as being purer and humbler in their living and socializing.

Conquest and Decline (The Normans).

By the middle of the 11th century small groups of Norman mercenaries of the Byzantine Emperor, began to flock to Italy together with the Byzantine army, who tried to liberate the Sicily from the Arabs. They entered Sicily first as pilgrims and then as mercenaries. At a time when the star of Constantinople was beginning to dim, the Norman warriors realized that they could conquer their Roman, Arab, and Longobard employers rather than serve them. Under the formidable warlord Roberto Guiscardo I, the Norman knights fell like a paver into lower Italy, capturing one of the Greek possessions, Varion (Bari), in 1071 and driving the Muslims out of western Sicily (Panormos) two years later. Initially this new power found itself at war with the papacy, but the latter's failure to form an alliance with the Greek Empire forced it to compromise with Vatican.

This was decisive for the future of Greeks in the region of southern Italy. It was not only raids and looting that devastated Greek villages and cities and paralyzed the economy. Along with the Normans came the Roman Catholic priests, to impose the will of Rome.

The new rulers showed remarkable flexibility and moderation in ecclesiastical matters, without imposing direct persecutions on the Greek clergy and the Basilian monasteries. This respect helped the Greek-speaking population to accept Norman rule more easily. On the other hand, the Latin hierarchy was imposed on lower Italy and the Latin standard in worship spread. The cutting off of the Greek-rite Greek-speaking communities from the Ecumenical Patriarchate left a very large administrative vacuum, which accelerated the decline of Orthodoxy in the region. On the other hand, the Latin clergy launched a campaign to slander the Greek, whom they accused, beyond the expected doctrinal-functional differences, of corruption, rapacity, illiteracy and pagan practices. In a West where the celibacy of the clergy had relatively recently been strictly enforced, the family life of the Orthodox elders scandalized the Latins.

Historically, no source has been found that confirms abuses and problems in the Greek clergy. Of course, human weakness is eternal and omnipresent, but we do not have specific incidents or any wider or systemic problem. On the contrary, later Catholic writers have only good words to say about the conduct of the Basilians and Orthodox priests. The slander, however, acted as an effective screen for the appropriation of monastic property by the feudal lords, especially when the Norman dynasty fell and their successors, the French and the Aragonese, did not show the same tolerance towards Orthodoxy. With the expansion of feudalism, the Basilian monasteries slowly declined and were abandoned. Some survived until the Renaissance and are famous for the wealth of Greek writings they preserved. From them came the infamous Barlaam the Calabrian, the monk who tried to introduce Latin scholasticism to the East and oppose Saint Gregory Palamas.



Greek Christian hermetaries in Basilicata.

In short, between the 12th and 16th centuries the Greek clergy of lower Italy disappeared. Its last strongholds were today's remaining Greek-speaking regions of southern Calabria around Reggio and Salento Apulia, but they were also displaced from there by the Latins. The decline of Orthodoxy led inevitably to the decline of the Greek language. Although there was a constant flow of refugees from the Turkish-occupied East, without ecclesiastical autonomy these people quickly assimilated.

The Roman Empire fell in 1453, while in the Latin-controlled areas where Greeks lived, Orthodoxy was under strong Latin pressure. On Holy Wednesday of 1480, in an official ceremony at the church of the Dormition in the city of Ierakas (Gerace, Calabria), the Saint, monk and bishop Athanasios Chalkeopoulos abolished the Greek standard and introduced the Latin. In 1621 the last Greek priest of the small city of Kalimera in Salento was found dead, murdered by Roman Catholics.

A testimony on the priests of Salento in the 15th century.

Curiosities of the Italo-Greek monastery of San Nicola di Casole (Otranto), later destroyed by the Turks in 1480. The monastery had a vast and rich library and constituted a very important spiritual and cultural center. In a manuscript we find annotated loans of books, mostly concerning the sphere of the liturgy of the Orthodox Church:

- *- "The Church of Santa Maria de Mallia has borrowed the liturgy of St. Basil"
- *- "Biagio, priest of Casamassella, has borrowed the Triodion"
- *- "The Priest of Cantarello has borrowed the Tipicon and the Eucologhion"
- *- "Bartolomeo, priest of Surdini has borrowed the Triodion"

- *- "Clemente, deacon of Otranto has borrowed a Gospel"
- *- "...priest of Lecce has borrowed the Triodion"
- *- "Giovanni, son of judge Nicola has borrowed a Gospel, a Sticharion, a Felonion and a Eucologhio"
- *- "The priest Giovanni brother of the judge Costantino of Lecce has a Gospel"
- *- "Nicodemo hieromonk and igumen of Turlazzo has on loan the Gospel that...of the priest Cyril"
- *- "Martino, priest of Mallie has on loan the Patericon and the Gospel..."
- *- "Papàs Michele of Pugiardo has returned the Sticherarion menologii"...



San Ippolytos. In Badia di Sant' Ippolito, located on the northern shore of the Piccolo di Monticchio Lake.



Baptistery of Sant' Anastasia in Santa Severina. 8-9th century.

Today in the south of Italy exist Greek, not Orthodox but Roman Catholic churches, in the towns where the Grieco people live. 10 towns in Apulia, Salentina Graecia and another 10 towns of the Grecani people in Calabria–Messina-Regio.

Older Greek churches, Orthodox ones exist only as archeological sites. Anyone interested can easily find more with a quick search online or at:

<https://orthodox-world.org/en/z/4263/Italy/Sicily>

or on Facebook at:

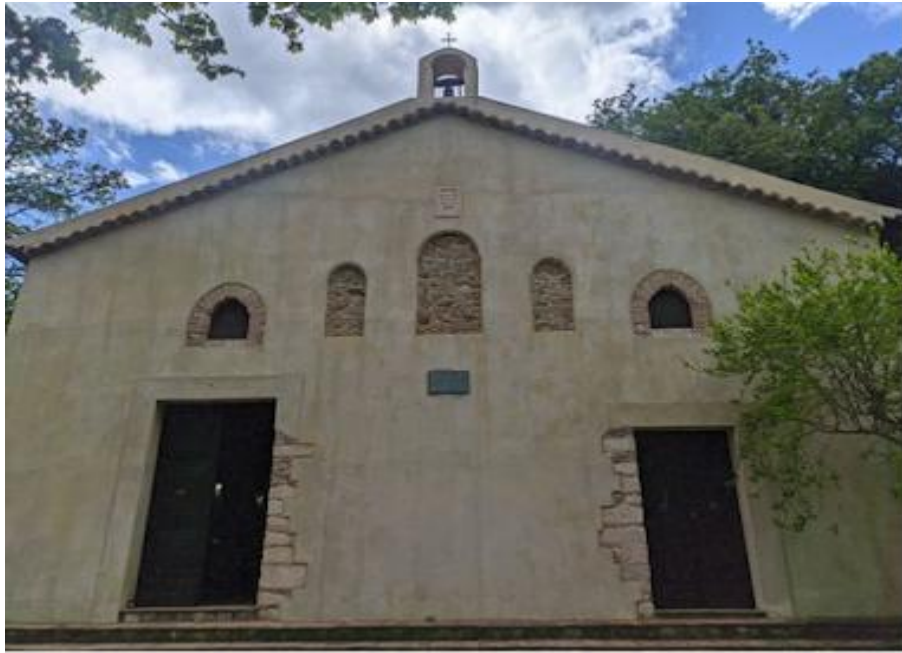
Eredità culturale del monachesimo italo-greco

santi Italogreci

Greci nell' Italia meridionale e Sicilia.



Basilian Byzantine monastic complex. Here the central Church or “Catholicon” in Greek” of Santa Maria del Patire, Rossano Calabria (Cosenza). Latinized today.



Saint Mary in Gruttam in Kuropalati.

A few kilometers from the community of Cropalati (Kuropalati), in a small village of the lower Ionian Cosentino, in the area of Pizzuti, nestled among the green heights bordering the wide bed of the river Trionto, the Abbey of Santa Maria in Gruttam looks like a revelation. An artistic-religious "unicum" which elicits strong emotions from the visitor. The name is of obvious Byzantine Greek origin, which etymologically refers to "Kuropolates" the head of the palace. The town has existed in historical documents since 1325, under the name of Karopilatis. The church, however, an integral part of a Cenobitic complex, as it is now called, was founded in the 12th century by Italo-Greek "Anachoretti" monks who lived in the small building in absolute poverty, in undecorated cells to remember that they were pilgrims passing through this world.



San Nickolaos di Kasole, Otranto.



San Nikitas, Lecce Apulia.



*The church of Santa Marina, Muro Leccese.
One of the oldest churches of Otranto. Built in the 9th century, it is one of the most important
and interesting artistic expressions of Byzantine architecture.*



San Vitto, Lecce, Apulia.



La chiesa Bizantina di Santa Filomena a Santa Severina (Kr) a Krotone Calabria.



S.Maria Rometta, Sicily.



Modica, Sicilia. San Nikolaos.

Modern Notable Magno-Greeks



Ricciotti Garibaldi, in Athens, Panepistimiou Street, 1912.

This rare photograph was taken at Panepistimiou Street in the center of Athens, on December 6, 1912. The historic photograph depicts the Italian revolutionary Ricciotti Garibaldi (son of Giuseppe) who arrived in Athens to support the Greeks in the great military campaign for the liberation of Epirus, Macedonia and the Aegean islands. Garibaldi had acted accordingly in 1897 in the Greco-Turkish war when he fought with 3,000 Italians (mostly Italo-Greeks from southern Italy) including 8 members of the Italian parliament from southern Italy, on the side of Greece, in Domokos and Thessaly. Today a street in the suburb of Koukaki is named Fratti, after one of those volunteers. In 1912 he decided again to fight in the Balkan wars and formed a Corp of 1,200 Italian and Italo-Greek volunteers, led by his son, Pepino Garibaldi. He helped liberate Ioannina, the capital city of Epirus, from the Turks.

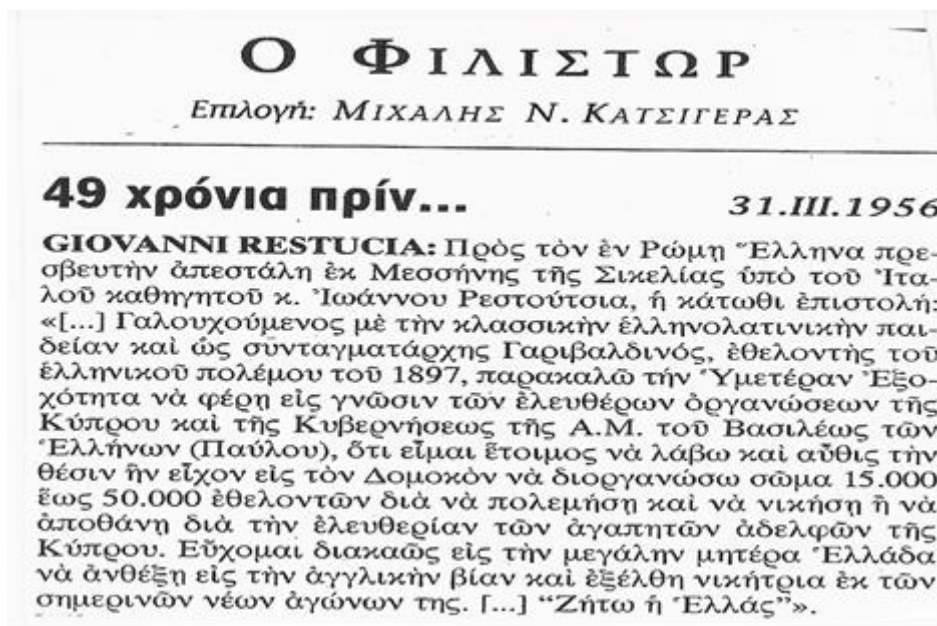
A few years later (1919-1922), Pepino Garibaldi gathered an army of Italo-Greeks to fight in Asia Minor, to liberate the eternal Greek homelands of Ionia, Aeolia, Caria, Pamfylia, Pontos, Caesarea, Cappadocia, Lydia, Pisidia... where the indigenous Greeks were the majority of the population before their genocide and ethnic cleansing by the Young Turk Movement led by Kemal Ataturk, in 1922-23. 1.5 million Greeks were massacred/genocided by the Turks and their German patrons, together with 1.5 million Armenians and 1 million Assyrian. Another

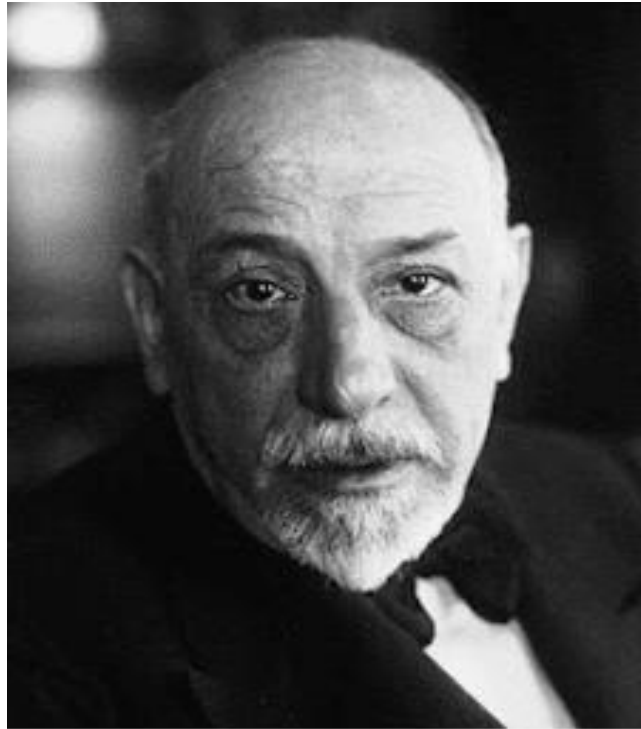
1.5 million Greeks were expelled. This is what is called ethnic cleansing. Half of the 9,000,000 population of Asia Minor were Greek, Armenian and Assyrian Christians. But the interests of Italian government were on the side of the Turks. Thus the southern Italo-Greeks and Pepino Garibaldi were ordered by the Italian King Vittorio Emmanuele III to immediately return to Italy, to avoid being punished.



Volunteers of Magna Graecia who fought alongside the Greek forces during the Cretan War (the liberation of Crete from Turkish occupation in 1896). They pose here with Greeks. “All the sons and daughters of Greece fought for the freedom of the homeland in this war. Volunteers from Sicily in the west to Cyprus in the east flooded Crete for the war against the Turks”.

Professor Giovanni Restucia. Known for the following published letter to the Greek ambassador in Rome, sent from Messina, Sicily. "... being Greek educated and as a Garibaldine Colonel and a volunteer of the Greco-Turkish war in 1897, I beg your excellency to notify to the Liberete organizations of Greece and Cyprus and the government of HM King Pavlos of Greece, that I am ready to organize a body of 15,000 volunteers, which will fight to win or die for the freedom of our dear brothers of Cyprus. I always pray for our Great Mother Greece to withstand the English violence and to emerge victorious from today's new struggles... Long live Greece". Written in 1956, shortly after the start of the anti-colonialist revolution in Cyprus, against the British.





The most Famous Greek of modern Sicily was Luigi Piradello. “... I do carry Hellas in my mind. Her spirit is consolation and lighthouse for my soul. I am from Sicily, in other words from Greater Greece and there still exists a lot of Hellas in Sicily. The measure, the harmony and the rhythm live on her. I am of the same Hellenic origin. Yes, yes, don't be surprised. My family name is Piragellos. Piradello is the phonetic alteration of it, Piragello-Piradello...”

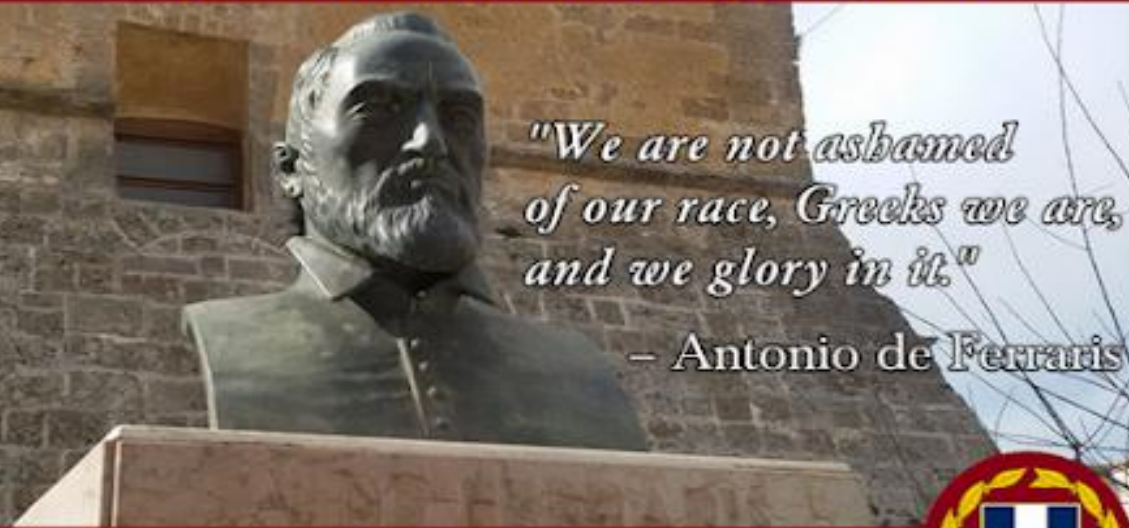
Luigi Piradello interviewed by Costas Ouranis. The whole interview in the magazine “Nea Estia” (next), No 191, December 1934. Costas Ouranis Foundation, Plaka, Athens Greece or in the National Library.





Luigi Piradello's interview.


Famous Italiotes of the 15th Century A.D.



*"We are not ashamed
of our race, Greeks we are,
and we glory in it."*

– Antonio de Ferraris

Ἀντώνιος Φεράρις





Vittorio Domenico Palumbo, Calimera, Salentina Graecia, Apulia. Famous scholar of the Greek language, and poet.



Tony Benet

Anthony Dominick Benedetto was born on August 3, 1926, in New York City. His parents were grocer John Benedetto and seamstress Anna (Suraci) Benedetto. In 1906, John emigrated from Podargoni, a rural eastern district of the southern Italian city of Reggio Calabria. Anna had been born in the U.S. shortly after her parents also emigrated from the Calabria region in 1899.

Podargoni in Reggio Calabria, is a small town close to the Aspromonte mountains. The town is inhabited by the Griko people who to still speak their ancestral Calabrian Greek dialect.

Other famous people, proud of their ancestry from the Greek Regio include Versage, Francis Coppola from Basilicata. But the list is truly remarkable. Peter of Candia antipope (1339–1410), Pope Innocent VIII (1432-1492), Francesco Maurolico mathematician and astronomer (1494-1575), Gioachino Greco chess player (1600-1634), Nicholas Kalliakis philosopher (1645-1707), Andreas Musalus mathematician and philosopher (1665-1721), Simone Stratigo mathematician and natural science expert (1733–1824), Ugo Foscolo writer, revolutionary and poet (1778–1827), Constantino Brumidi historical painter (1805-1880), Francesco Crispi Prime Minister (1818-1901), Matilde Serao journalist and novelist (1856–1927), Sotirios Voulgaris founder of Bvlgari jewelry (1857-1932), Giorgio de Chirico artist and writer (1888-1978), Ovidio Assonitis director, screenwriter and film producer (1943), Demetrio Stratos singer (1945–1979), Antonella Lualdi actress and singer (1931-2023), Sylva Koscina actress (1933-1994), Fiorella Kostoris economist (1945), Antonella Interlenghi actress (1960), Anna Kanakis actress and model (1962-2023) and others.

Today in Magna Graecia



*Gela, Sicilia. Olympiad for Sicelo-Greek youth.
Organized by Prof. Giuseppe Veletti. "We Sicilians of Gela in Sicily are proud of our Greek past and we never forget our own Hellenic identity! We are Magna Graecia. The great Greek past of Magna Graecia is also its future".*



Magno Greeks in Poseidonia (Pesto in Italian), ceremony in temple of Hera.



Taranto. Citta Spartana. Persephone was the daughter of the goddess Demetra. Not daughter of Ceres as some malicious, antigreek people in Magna Graecia try to present the goddess protector of Sicily!



The Return of Persefoni. Taras.



Spartani di Taranto.



Tarantini. Ancient Greek dances and the famous ancient Greek Tarantela.

Taranta, le origini magnogreche nel nuovo studio di De Giorgi

Fernando DURANTE

La taranta e le tarantelle non sono temi di questi giorni. Affondano le radici in quelle che fu la Magna Grecia. Affronta la questione in un approfondito studio, lo studioso ricercatore, etnomusicologo, Pierpaolo De Giorgi, nel suo libro "La Grande Armonia: la terapia musicale in Magna Grecia" (Argo Ed.), che sarà presentato questa sera alle 20 presso l'Edizione dei comuni della Grecia Salentina a Palazzo Ducale. A fare gli onori di casa ed aprire i lavori sarà il presidente dell'Unione greca, Roberto Calafaci, introdurrà il dibattito Paolo Pellegrino, già docente di Estetica presso l'Università del Salento. A coordinare gli interventi, invece, sarà il presidente della Società greca di Terra d'Otranto, Luigi Orlandi.

Da anni l'autore della ricerca indaga la relazione fra i riti terapeutici della Magna Grecia e la musica e danza dei "monaci" della mitica taranta. "Le vicende tradizionali dell'animale simbolico detto taranta, che "possiede" le tarantate e le obbliga ad una terapia musicale e coreutica in trance", secondo De Giorgi, "si connettono con le cerimonie religiose analoghe di Taranto magnogreca, e



La expertina Sopea, Pierpaolo De Giorgi

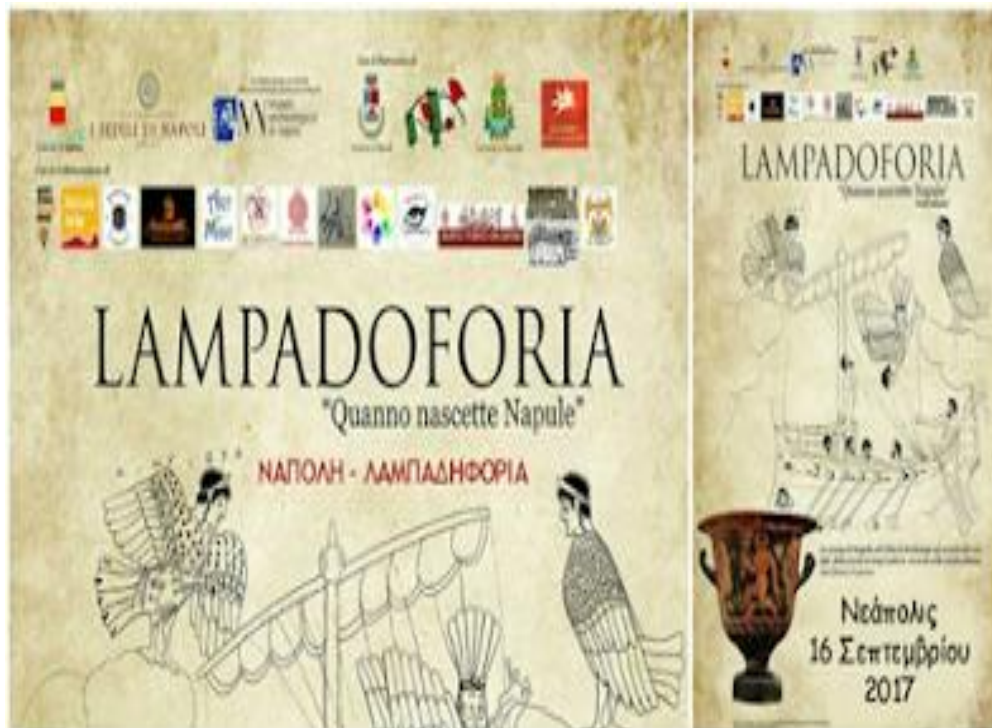
con l'antico rimedio dell'armonia, presente nei riti di Dioniso, di Apollo e della Grande Madre". Il volume sta suscitando un forte interesse per le numerose innovazioni presentate, tra le quali, le foto esclusive e rivelatrici delle immagini di un vaso della seconda metà dell'VIII sec. a.C., proveniente da un santuario di Sparta, che riproducono la prima forma di tarantismo al mondo. Questa sera si continueranno studiosi ed appassionati della materia. Le vicende tradizionali dell'animale simbolico che "possiede" le tarantate

le e le obbliga ad una terapia musicale e coreutica in trance, secondo De Giorgi, si connettono con le cerimonie religiose analoghe di Taranto magnogreca, e con l'antico rimedio dell'armonia, presente nei riti di Dioniso, di Apollo e della Grande Madre. Il tarantismo, come sostiene l'autore, non è una malattia ma una terapia tradizionale e popolare giunta dalle ditte allo stesso modo dei culti di Dioniso, e di tutto questo la ricerca fornisce le prove. Il volume, non a caso, sta suscitando un forte interesse per le numerose innovazioni presentate, tra le quali le foto esclusive e rivelatrici delle immagini di un vaso della seconda metà dell'VIII sec. a.C., proveniente da un santuario di Sparta, che riproducono la prima forma di tarantismo al mondo. Si tratta di un vaso lacedaemone di stile geometrico, le cui immagini raffigurano una terapia musicale e coreutica contro il morso di uno scorpione, con una danza in cerchio praticata non a caso dagli stessi spartani che nel 706 a.C. hanno fondato Taranto. È evidente, quindi, che il tarantismo di Sparta è tramitato a Taranto sin dalle origini della città. La musica come terapia, inoltre, si ricollega direttamente alle pratiche dei Pitagorici, che in tutta la Magna Grecia utilizzano strumenti musicali e acustici.

Tarantela. Its Greek roots. New study by De Giorgi.



Naples, "Simmachia Ellenon". Alliance of Greeks.



Annual "Lambadoforia" (Torch race) in Napoli. See extraordinary videos from the streets of Naples, on Youtube.



Reggio, capital of Calabria. Statue of the goddess Athena Promachos.



Street signs for Messina, Sicily.



Messina, center. Aghios Nicholas, little chapel.

Reggio

Un anno record per l'associazione "Incontriamoci Sempre"

La "mission" dell'associazione presieduta da Pino Strati non si ferma mai e corre veloce come un treno delle Fs; pronta un'estate ricca di eventi in vetrina al Ci "Rocco Polimeni"

Dalla Magna Grecia all'attualità

Dall'inizio all'estate, il suo passo deciso quello dell'associazione "Incontriamoci Sempre" che vi coinvolge e arricchisce la vostra vita, il sociale e la promozione culturale. Agente in questo che la società, diventa, che il Paese viene ed è stato, ma altrettanto importante il mondo con cui mettiamo, ovvero la collaborazione del lavoro e l'esperienza di ciascuno e alle realtà che lo rappresentano.

Cristina Corleo

Magna Grecia
 È così il circolo "Incontro Polimeni", nato dai più illustri di Italia, la cui storia non è stata "scoperta" di alcuni mesi fa, ma è un'associazione che ha una storia e una tradizione che risalgono al 1977. È un'associazione di politici, intellettuali, giornalisti, giornalisti, che ha sempre con sé il gruppo di lavoro "Incontro Polimeni", di cui è presidente il professor Carlo Polimeni, che ha sempre con sé il gruppo di lavoro "Incontro Polimeni". È un momento quanto mai storico e felice: la nostra associazione nasce nel 1977 e quindi al vertice a Sanreggio 90 anni di vita, fiorente e prospero di questi giorni "Incontro Polimeni" e il gruppo di lavoro "Incontro Polimeni".

Neurali contenuti sociali e culturali
 Un anno ricco per "Incontro Polimeni" "Incontriamoci Sempre", con iniziative e progetti da coprire, con la direzione di Santa Caterina riferimento culturale di prima mano e tante iniziative di comunità, "Incontriamoci Sempre" è un'associazione di cultura e di promozione del territorio calabrese, di cui abbiamo grande stima - insieme a Pino Strati - che hanno permesso di organizzare nella loro sede la prima volta una serie di appuntamenti della nostra associazione, tra cui le due conferenze del "Comune di Santa Caterina" e la rassegna "Calabria di Antonio Saccomani".

La Biennale alla Italia
 Il secondo anno la Biennale internazionale del cinema nel Sud, diretta magistralmente da Agneta Scarpitta, con la guida di all'anno per la sua grande competenza e professionalità per le diverse proiezioni. Emerge giovedì 26 maggio alle ore 20, al cinema Polimeni con il gruppo dei Delfini (che ha fatto, un viaggio che ha dato del cinema nel Sud, un momento di vita e di Agneta Scarpitta, che ha fatto, la guida e la "Tavola di Santa Caterina" e di Santa Caterina).

Calabria di Antonio Saccomani
 Domenica 9 giugno alle ore 21, il convegno con il professor Antonio Saccomani, direttore organizzativo della Biennale calabrese di Calabria e al Sud, "Incontriamoci Sempre" e il gruppo di lavoro "Incontro Polimeni", che ha fatto, la guida e la "Tavola di Santa Caterina" e di Santa Caterina.



Nuovi contenuti sociali e culturali
 Un anno ricco per "Incontro Polimeni" "Incontriamoci Sempre", con iniziative e progetti da coprire, con la direzione di Santa Caterina riferimento culturale di prima mano e tante iniziative di comunità, "Incontriamoci Sempre" è un'associazione di cultura e di promozione del territorio calabrese, di cui abbiamo grande stima - insieme a Pino Strati - che hanno permesso di organizzare nella loro sede la prima volta una serie di appuntamenti della nostra associazione, tra cui le due conferenze del "Comune di Santa Caterina" e la rassegna "Calabria di Antonio Saccomani".

Neurali contenuti sociali e culturali
 Un anno ricco per "Incontro Polimeni" "Incontriamoci Sempre", con iniziative e progetti da coprire, con la direzione di Santa Caterina riferimento culturale di prima mano e tante iniziative di comunità, "Incontriamoci Sempre" è un'associazione di cultura e di promozione del territorio calabrese, di cui abbiamo grande stima - insieme a Pino Strati - che hanno permesso di organizzare nella loro sede la prima volta una serie di appuntamenti della nostra associazione, tra cui le due conferenze del "Comune di Santa Caterina" e la rassegna "Calabria di Antonio Saccomani".

La Biennale alla Italia
 Il secondo anno la Biennale internazionale del cinema nel Sud, diretta magistralmente da Agneta Scarpitta, con la guida di all'anno per la sua grande competenza e professionalità per le diverse proiezioni. Emerge giovedì 26 maggio alle ore 20, al cinema Polimeni con il gruppo dei Delfini (che ha fatto, un viaggio che ha dato del cinema nel Sud, un momento di vita e di Agneta Scarpitta, che ha fatto, la guida e la "Tavola di Santa Caterina" e di Santa Caterina).

Calabria di Antonio Saccomani
 Domenica 9 giugno alle ore 21, il convegno con il professor Antonio Saccomani, direttore organizzativo della Biennale calabrese di Calabria e al Sud, "Incontriamoci Sempre" e il gruppo di lavoro "Incontro Polimeni", che ha fatto, la guida e la "Tavola di Santa Caterina" e di Santa Caterina.

Neurali contenuti sociali e culturali
 Un anno ricco per "Incontro Polimeni" "Incontriamoci Sempre", con iniziative e progetti da coprire, con la direzione di Santa Caterina riferimento culturale di prima mano e tante iniziative di comunità, "Incontriamoci Sempre" è un'associazione di cultura e di promozione del territorio calabrese, di cui abbiamo grande stima - insieme a Pino Strati - che hanno permesso di organizzare nella loro sede la prima volta una serie di appuntamenti della nostra associazione, tra cui le due conferenze del "Comune di Santa Caterina" e la rassegna "Calabria di Antonio Saccomani".

Neurali contenuti sociali e culturali
 Un anno ricco per "Incontro Polimeni" "Incontriamoci Sempre", con iniziative e progetti da coprire, con la direzione di Santa Caterina riferimento culturale di prima mano e tante iniziative di comunità, "Incontriamoci Sempre" è un'associazione di cultura e di promozione del territorio calabrese, di cui abbiamo grande stima - insieme a Pino Strati - che hanno permesso di organizzare nella loro sede la prima volta una serie di appuntamenti della nostra associazione, tra cui le due conferenze del "Comune di Santa Caterina" e la rassegna "Calabria di Antonio Saccomani".

La Biennale alla Italia
 Il secondo anno la Biennale internazionale del cinema nel Sud, diretta magistralmente da Agneta Scarpitta, con la guida di all'anno per la sua grande competenza e professionalità per le diverse proiezioni. Emerge giovedì 26 maggio alle ore 20, al cinema Polimeni con il gruppo dei Delfini (che ha fatto, un viaggio che ha dato del cinema nel Sud, un momento di vita e di Agneta Scarpitta, che ha fatto, la guida e la "Tavola di Santa Caterina" e di Santa Caterina).

Calabria di Antonio Saccomani
 Domenica 9 giugno alle ore 21, il convegno con il professor Antonio Saccomani, direttore organizzativo della Biennale calabrese di Calabria e al Sud, "Incontriamoci Sempre" e il gruppo di lavoro "Incontro Polimeni", che ha fatto, la guida e la "Tavola di Santa Caterina" e di Santa Caterina.

Neurali contenuti sociali e culturali
 Un anno ricco per "Incontro Polimeni" "Incontriamoci Sempre", con iniziative e progetti da coprire, con la direzione di Santa Caterina riferimento culturale di prima mano e tante iniziative di comunità, "Incontriamoci Sempre" è un'associazione di cultura e di promozione del territorio calabrese, di cui abbiamo grande stima - insieme a Pino Strati - che hanno permesso di organizzare nella loro sede la prima volta una serie di appuntamenti della nostra associazione, tra cui le due conferenze del "Comune di Santa Caterina" e la rassegna "Calabria di Antonio Saccomani".

Neurali contenuti sociali e culturali
 Un anno ricco per "Incontro Polimeni" "Incontriamoci Sempre", con iniziative e progetti da coprire, con la direzione di Santa Caterina riferimento culturale di prima mano e tante iniziative di comunità, "Incontriamoci Sempre" è un'associazione di cultura e di promozione del territorio calabrese, di cui abbiamo grande stima - insieme a Pino Strati - che hanno permesso di organizzare nella loro sede la prima volta una serie di appuntamenti della nostra associazione, tra cui le due conferenze del "Comune di Santa Caterina" e la rassegna "Calabria di Antonio Saccomani".

La Biennale alla Italia
 Il secondo anno la Biennale internazionale del cinema nel Sud, diretta magistralmente da Agneta Scarpitta, con la guida di all'anno per la sua grande competenza e professionalità per le diverse proiezioni. Emerge giovedì 26 maggio alle ore 20, al cinema Polimeni con il gruppo dei Delfini (che ha fatto, un viaggio che ha dato del cinema nel Sud, un momento di vita e di Agneta Scarpitta, che ha fatto, la guida e la "Tavola di Santa Caterina" e di Santa Caterina).

Calabria di Antonio Saccomani
 Domenica 9 giugno alle ore 21, il convegno con il professor Antonio Saccomani, direttore organizzativo della Biennale calabrese di Calabria e al Sud, "Incontriamoci Sempre" e il gruppo di lavoro "Incontro Polimeni", che ha fatto, la guida e la "Tavola di Santa Caterina" e di Santa Caterina.

Neurali contenuti sociali e culturali
 Un anno ricco per "Incontro Polimeni" "Incontriamoci Sempre", con iniziative e progetti da coprire, con la direzione di Santa Caterina riferimento culturale di prima mano e tante iniziative di comunità, "Incontriamoci Sempre" è un'associazione di cultura e di promozione del territorio calabrese, di cui abbiamo grande stima - insieme a Pino Strati - che hanno permesso di organizzare nella loro sede la prima volta una serie di appuntamenti della nostra associazione, tra cui le due conferenze del "Comune di Santa Caterina" e la rassegna "Calabria di Antonio Saccomani".

La Biennale alla Italia
 Il secondo anno la Biennale internazionale del cinema nel Sud, diretta magistralmente da Agneta Scarpitta, con la guida di all'anno per la sua grande competenza e professionalità per le diverse proiezioni. Emerge giovedì 26 maggio alle ore 20, al cinema Polimeni con il gruppo dei Delfini (che ha fatto, un viaggio che ha dato del cinema nel Sud, un momento di vita e di Agneta Scarpitta, che ha fatto, la guida e la "Tavola di Santa Caterina" e di Santa Caterina).

Calabria di Antonio Saccomani
 Domenica 9 giugno alle ore 21, il convegno con il professor Antonio Saccomani, direttore organizzativo della Biennale calabrese di Calabria e al Sud, "Incontriamoci Sempre" e il gruppo di lavoro "Incontro Polimeni", che ha fatto, la guida e la "Tavola di Santa Caterina" e di Santa Caterina.

Richard Gere e il premio «Magna Graecia» all'annuale Festival del Cinema «MAGNA GRECIA» a Catanzaro Calabria!

Today many of Magno-Greeks reconvert to the paternal faith and traditions. Even though they don't know a single Greek word. Such as the Sicilian Father Nilos, a university professor and Orthodox priest from Reggio. In Syracuse the Orthodox parish was refounded in 1999, in honor of Saint Methodius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who was from Syracuse.

On June 20, 1999, the reopening of the doors of the Church of Agios Nikolaos took place in Lecce, which was granted by the local Roman Catholic bishop, and which 300 years ago was a Greek church. The event was organized by Ms. Isabella Bernandini, a professor at the University of Lecce. In 2006, the historic church of Agios Leontios (San Leon), in the center of Catania, was donated by the municipal authorities to the Orthodox Church. And it goes on and on.

In 1990, at the first conference that took place in Palmi about the Greek language, the "Library of Saints Nile and Leo" was founded in Katanzaro Calabria and headed by Professor Velia Criteli.

The "Center for Orthodox Studies in Greater Greece" was established with a founding conference in 1998 in Bova, in which many academics from all over the south of Italy participated. The seat of the center is at the Monastery of the Holy Apostles in Calabria, which was also restored. Interest is also aroused by the world-renowned centers of Greek studies in Palermo and Catania, as well as the many other smaller ones that spring up throughout the region.

Modern Genetics

Newsroom HuffPost: GENETIC HERITAGE FROM SICILY TO CYPRUS 18/05/2017

“A common genetic heritage and continuity from Sicily to Crete, the Aegean islands and Cyprus found new Italian-German research, while the southern Italians appear to have a closer genetic affinity with the populations of certain Greek islands than with mainland Greece. The study was carried out by scientists from the Department of Biological, Geological and Environmental Sciences of the University of Bologna and the Max Planck Institute for the History of Human History in Jena, Germany. Stephanie Sarno was headed. The research was published in the journal Nature Scientific Reports and was funded by the National Geographic Society. It analyzed 511 DNA samples from 23 populations in Italy, Greece, Cyprus and Albania.

"The common Mediterranean heritage probably dates back to prehistoric times, as a consequence of the multiple migratory waves that peaked during the Neolithic and the Bronze Age," Sarno said.

According to the researchers, the expansion of the ancient Greeks to the west and the creation of Greater Greece in southern Italy today was one of the last "episodes" in a long history of East-West travel, with the Mediterranean functioning as a crossroads for the movement genes and cultures.

In particular, for today's Greek-speaking populations of Calabria and other southern Italy, the study points out that their genetic characteristics confirm the antiquity of their settlement in those places well before the Byzantine times.

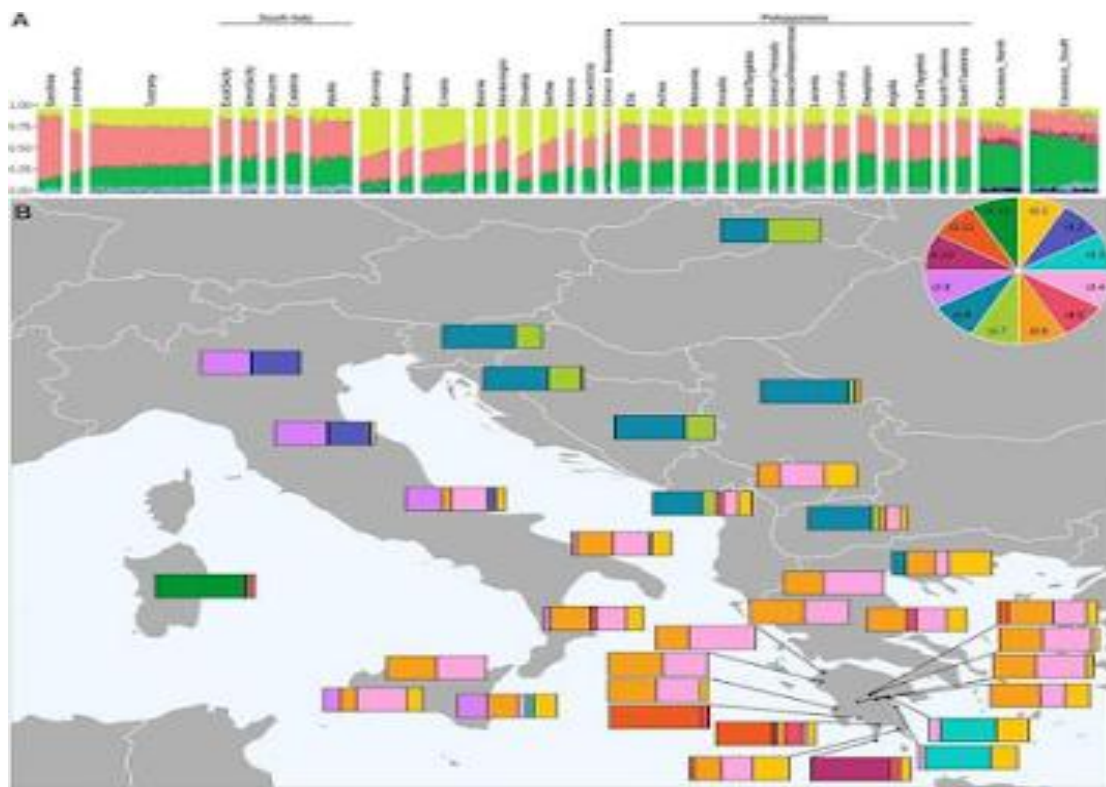
The new genetic analysis also makes an assessment of the origin of the family of Indo-European languages, which include Greek and Latin. Two basic theories have been proposed

so far: either that their origins are Neolithic Anatolia at least 8,000 years ago, or the steppes of Caucasus and Pontus about 6,000 years ago.

Researchers have discovered in the genetic "landscape" of the southeastern Mediterranean an important "Caucasian type" genetic contribution. However, they did not find the typical genetic profile of the "Ponto-Caucasian" immigration-invasion in central and eastern Europe, which has been associated with the introduction of Indo-European languages into the European space.

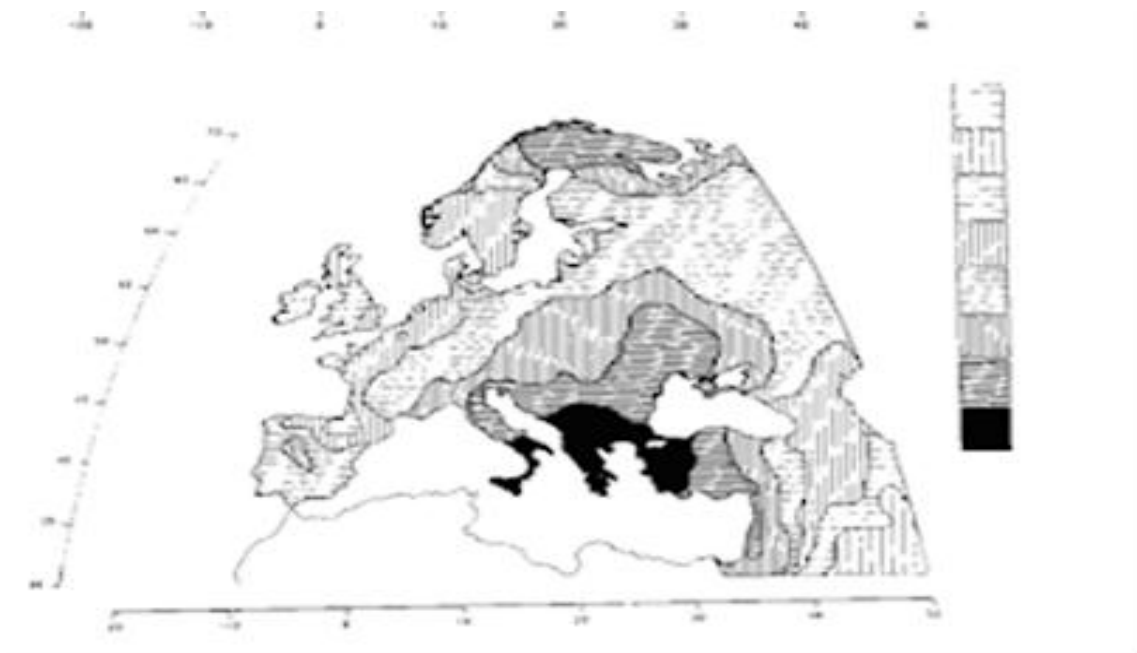
Researchers believe that these two main conflicting theories of origin of the Indo-European language family must be "reconciled". "The spread of these languages in the southern regions, where Indo-European languages such as Italian and Greek are now spoken, cannot be explained solely by the significant contribution of the steppes," said researcher Kia Barbieri of the Max Planck Institute.

Brand new study on the DNA of modern populations of Southern Italy, Sicily and Greece confirms that these populations are genetically similar to each other for a simple reason, they are all descend from the Ancient Greeks!



<https://www.biorxiv.org/.../10.1101/2022.02.26.482072v1.full>

The Greeks lived in Sicily long before 3,000 BC, from the Minoan era. The Minoans were the first prehistoric population in southern Italy. That means that the Greeks lived there not only from the archaic settlements of the 8th century BC. The Elymi, the Sikani and the Siculi, are clearly proto-Greek populations from Crete, Asia minor and the Aegean islands, as prof. Sarno from Max Planck Institute says.



Greek Genetics from 1,000 BC until today.

Genetic Reality of the Mezzogiorno – Challenging the myth and propaganda of Romanic, Germanic & Arab ancestry.

“Contrary to popular belief the many invasions in southern Italy and Sicilia, that followed the fall of the Western Roman Empire, did not significantly alter the local genetic landscape of the Apennine Peninsula. In fact, DNA studies show that only the Greek presence in southern Italy had any lasting effect on the genetic makeup of the peninsula”.

Source: Cavalli-Sforza, Luigi Luca, Menozzi Paolo, Piazza Alberto, (1994). “The History and Geography of Human Genes. p. 295”.



Ancient DNA reveals origins of the Minoans and Mycenaeans

Common ancestors from Neolithic Western Anatolia and Greece



AUGUST 03, 2017

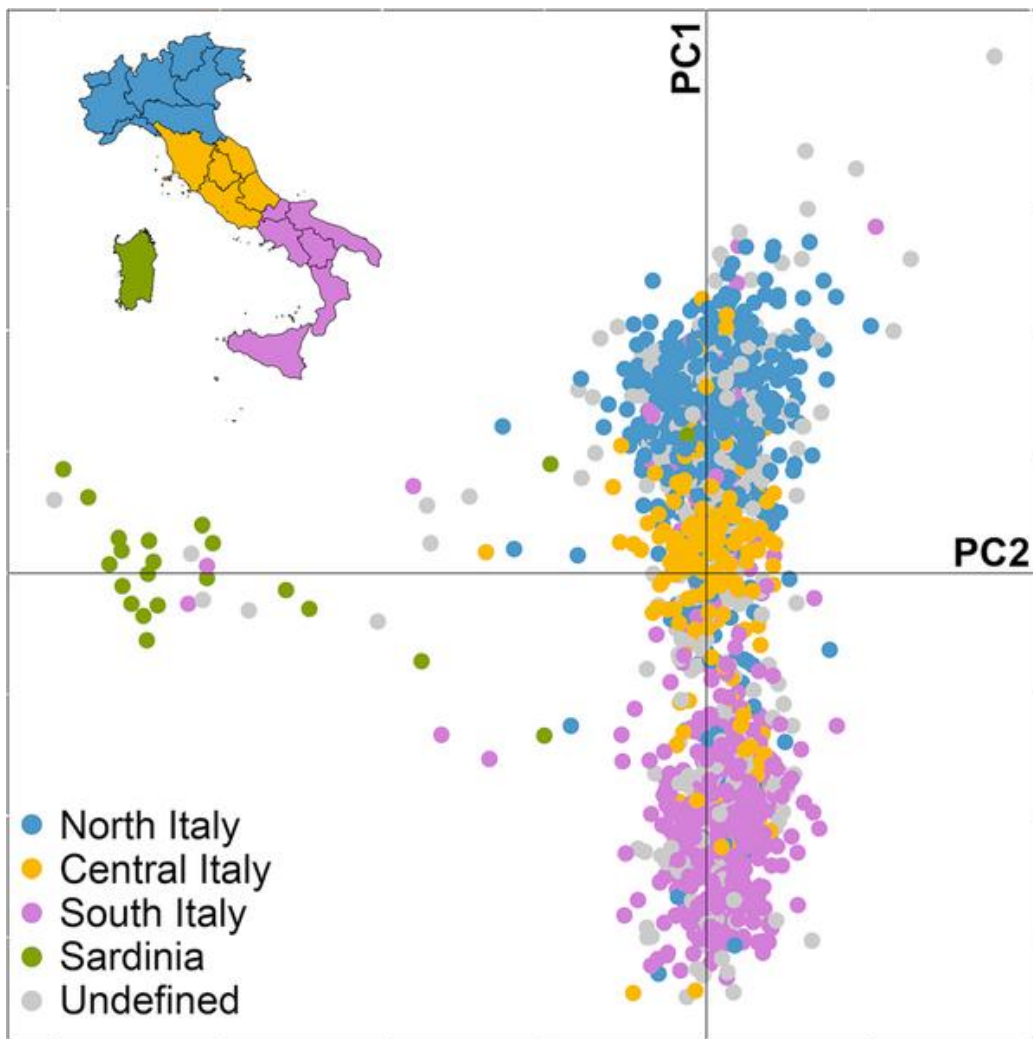
Cultural Studies

Genetics

Human History

The Minoan Civilization and its counterpart on the Greek Mainland, the Mycenaean Civilization, were Europe's first literate societies and the cultural ancestors of later Classical Greece. However, the question of the origins of the Minoans and their relationship to the Mycenaeans has long puzzled researchers. A paper published today in Nature suggests that, rather than being recently arrived, advanced outsiders, the Minoans had deep roots in the Aegean. The primary ancestors of both the Minoans and Mycenaeans were populations from Neolithic Western Anatolia and Greece and the two groups were very closely related to each other, and to modern Greeks.

And the Minoans (from 3,000 BC), and the Mycenaeans later and the Pelasgian tribes from the Aegean were Greeks according to Max Plank DNA research. To this must be added the historical and linguistic sources with the thousands of inscriptions found.



Genetic map of Italy. The Celts (Galli) are pictured in blue, the Latins in orange and the Greeks in purple.

All known scientific DNA research has found that the Greek genetic input in Sicily, Calabria, Apulia, Basilicata etc is between 40% at the lowest in some samples and up to 80%.

An excellent scientific reference book on the subject available to the public in both Greek and English editions is the “*The Genetic Origins of Greeks*” by Costas Triantafyllidis, Professor of Genetics at the Aristoteleion University of Thessaloniki, pub. Kyriakidis, pub. Kyriakidis, 2018, ISBN 978-960-599-250-7.

Conclusion

What is "Nation" and What is "Genus".

According to Herodotos, in the entire historical evolution of thousands of years, there are three objective components (or criteria) that define Nation. The Homoaemon (common blood/DNA), the Homotropus/Coreligion (common ways/religion) and the Homoglossus (common language).

After the French Revolution of 1789, a fourth subjective criterion/component was added to the science of Ethnology. The "National Conscience". So, what are the Sicilians, Calabrians, Apulians, Basilcateans and Campanians today in the territory of southern Italy?

We see that they have of the objective component, the Homoaemon (common blood/DNA), but not the Homotropus and Homoglossus, which was forcibly lost due to the Franco-German and other Roman Catholic conquerors after the 13th century. As for the subjective criterion, "national consciousness", we can divide them in three categories.

- A) The vast majority are Italians.
- B) Sicilians and South Italians who claim individual ethnicity.
- C) Greeks, who are a small but very important group. Very attractive today, in an era when nations research their heritage and roots. This group has begun to awaken and has in its ranks many intellectuals, professors and people of art and culture. This gives this group an important quality boost!

Today, the physical Greek presence in Sicily, is the ancient temples, theatres, schools, roads, ports etc. The medieval Christian, the modern churches in all the cities, mostly on the eastern coast, with an active monastery in Catania (Mantranici), and a cultural center, and the biggest center for Hellenic studies in the world, in Palermo (Panormos). In Calabria, Apulia, Basilicata and Campania, the wave of Greek "renaissance" is also very dynamic. Ancient Greek heritage, more Christian Churches, attempted reconstruction of old monasteries from the local population, more philhellenic feelings, the Greek dialects "Griko" in Apulia, and "Grekanika" in Calabria, are still alive and have the support of the official Italian government and the E.U.

So, the south Italians, are Greek, but they don't belong to the modern Greek nation, because the criterion of National Conscience, is not common on both shores of the Ionian Sea. They are Magno-Greeks. But we are all Greeks, even though we speak different languages today. We are all Christians, even with the (not so serious) differences between Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox church. The religious doctrine is not able to divide us today. We have the same genes and the same ancient and medieval historical connection after all.



Map 1 & 2. Ancient and early medieval Greek cities in Magna Graecia. Most of the cities, north of Neapolis (Napoli) and Dikearchia, are not Greek cities in the literal meaning, but are cities built from older Aegean populations, like the Etruscan and Pelasgians, before the Classical Greek settlement and cities under Greek influence. On the coast of Liguria, Monaco, Marseilles, Nikaia in the French Riviera and in Catalonia, Valencia... the cities were original Greek.

Of course, differences exist, created not by historical development, but by force of the Vatican and its Germanic vassals.

The Greek language disappeared completely from Sicily in particular and from the rest of southern Italy, between 1300 and 1600 AD, when two ecclesiastical sessions (1585 in Otranto and 1588 in Messina) required from the Orthodox Italo-Greeks in Sicily and southern Italy, to follow the Roman Catholic Church, or leave the country. So the Magno-Greek population (1,600 Greek churches and monasteries at this time in Italy and unknown number in Sicily) was forced to accept the Roman Catholic church and the Latin language in their ceremonies and so, they lost their Greek language, heritage, ethnicity....

In the year 1579, the Vatican also organized the Magno-Greek, belonging to the order of the "Basilian" monks and forced them to accept the Roman Catholic doctrine and language. They were organized by the Vatican in this order, like the Franciscan and Jesuit monks.

The last blow was given by the Spanish French dynasty of the Bourbons. King Francisco 1st, conqueror of southern Italy, closed the latest 19 Italo-Greek churches and monasteries in the years 1821-1830 and forced the last Magno-Greco to accept Roman Catholicism. The Greeks of Sicily and southern Italy lost their language, faith and Greek conscience, after 3,000 years of nonstop presence in this land, as Greeks! They became something else. But they continue to exist in southern Italy, Calabria, Apulia, Basilicata, Campania, Sicilia etc. not as Greeks in ethnicity, but of Greek origin and ancestry, creating a new, different culture, based on the Roman Catholic doctrine, using a modern version of the Latin language (similar to northern Italian) and customs similar to many of the conquerors (Spanish, German, French), who ruled the area in modern times. So, they are still Greeks in origin, but with different tradition.



The celebration of the International Day of the Greek Language. Celebrated throughout southern Italy, but in Naples with particular splendor and a variety of events.

"We have all been Greeks and we still are Greeks today", Valerio Manfredi. Italian Academic, scholar and writer of Greek history. Author of the trilogy "Alexander the Great" picked for the silver screen by Australian director Baz Luhrmann.