

F. ZAZZARA - E. CERASANI



NOT A BOOK ABOUT HISTORY,
NOR ABOUT ARCHEOLOGY,
BUT HISTORY OF MAN,
VANQUISHED.

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TRANSLATION IN ENGLISH : L. L. CRANDALL

MARSI

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Dedicated to:
Franco (my grandfather)
Giuseppe (my uncle)
Antonio (my father)

2012

“from Marsian peoples came Umbro...”
Aeneid of Virgil, VII. Lines 750-756

INTRODUCTION

Marsica, this famous land, in a setting like an emerald, in the lush green heart of Central Italy and which each and every native-born bears within like an irremovable burden of their soul, rends unto us an admirable testimonial of its extraordinary culture. Testimonial of a populace as protagonist in History, where words, in the book by Franco Zazzara, are assumed as monumental stones, capable of breaking into the possibilities of an Other History, of a different visual prospective of Man within our native land.

“Words are stones.” This seems to be the sentiment which animates the Author. An on the same level of intuition with which Carlo Levi brought out the miseries of the people of Lucania (Basilicata Region, n. of tr.), in his “Christ stopped at Eboli” (*Cristo si è fermato a Eboli*), Franco Zazzara, opens up to a different cultural vision of the history of his people. His is an extremely interesting work of historical and philological research. An opera elaborated over a stock of documental sources which mare restructured indeed under the light of a possible, diverse prospective, but yet always based on the stock of many and sundry documental sources and not by-chance, exceptional coincidences in history.

Throughout this journey he lets himself be guided by the names the Marsians have etched in the history of his native land and in that of Italy as a whole, in capital letters. First among all Saint Berardo, then Pope Saint Boniface IV, afterwards Leone Marsicano, Ignazio Silone and on and on following the trail and the toils of the many literary men from his native land who, with excruciating passion for details about antique subjects, have shed many a tear of love imprisoning them within their words. Subtly fine themes of history recomposed based on words put in writing by the Author so as to lead us unto the roots of Greek, Roman and Oriental civilization. Culture which, since the very beginnings, have influenced, according to the Author, this populace which is among one of the most proud and self-confident in all of Italy.

The microscopic analysis of the written and spoken word is also the method of study which renders to Dr. Franco Zazzara an effortless accompaniment alongside his principle profession, that of medic. An accompaniment which finds confirmation in this work of his, realized with that methodic care that

makes him a scrupulous and attentive observer of the facts and protagonists of history. In this guise he can be included, with just reason, among the columns of prestigious and prolific medics dedicated to philosophic and anthropological literature: crucial disciplines for the analysis of the Mystery of Man which more than anything else aid us in the understanding of who we are, where we come from and above all where we wish to go.

Anthropological studies about philological paths of antique and modern-day words. And thus we find, for example, the formative crystals of the word “Marsi” taken from Mars, the God of War in Greek mythology. Then we go on to the word *Pedogna* coming down from Sumeric ‘Pyt-On’ (opening in the rock, or cavity of the serpent), the name for the natural gorge which is found near Lucus Angitiae, which swallowed the waters of Lake Fucino so as to return them to their natural springs in Valle Roveto, giving life to the sacred sources of the mythical *Potnia Feruna*, transformed into the Medieval word *Petron*, today’s Civitella Roveto ... And yet again the word “pizia” (oracle priestess), whose pigments in tubes are interpretable in the final activity of the agricultural cycle, consisting in the reworking of grains and, precisely, the preparation of the dough which in our towns is called “pittia” (pizza – n. of tr.). In the end the enchanter of serpents “Um-Ron” as the Lord of Shade, or rather, of the Soul ... and so many other phonemes that soar over the memory of civilization like the sacred nymphs who flitted barely over the surface of the waters of the artificially drained Lake Fucino, etched indelibly in the history and the memory of the Marsians.

The Author has taken a different look at official history, with instruments of derivation of the tongue freeing it from the strict prejudice of constrained language, of the free Word with its naked meaning, to give back to us a different picture of it, but with an enormous force of evocation and at the same time of simple beauty, along the antique intentions and the divination of the Ancients for all things Natural. And in this sense, we aren’t without suggestive linkups to the continuity and the weight of the Marsians in the history of civilization, even in the Medieval period. An Era in which, for example, the Author brings out the fact that thanks to the Marsian Pope, Boniface IV, still today we can admire the monumental beauty of the Pantheon in the center of Rome. Thanks to the purpose for which this Pope, born in the city of Valeria, or San Benedetto dei Marsi, dedicated it, the cult of Saint Mary of the Martyrs. And then the moments while recalling Pope Pascal II, Server amidst the Servants of the Lord, who held so much in consideration even the least of the children

of Marsica as take them into consideration during his pontifical organization, like Leone Marsicano and Saint Berardo of Marsia, of the noble lineage of the Counts of Marsia.

Particular attention from the Author goes to Saint Berardo who, in his intentions, covers a fundamental role in the history of the Marsians.

As a student under Bishop Pandolfo, Saint Berardo received from Pascal II the Pontific *Bulla* designed to unravel the turbulent spirits of the various Orders and to calm their disputing, in favor of the new regime of the Diocese of Marsia, to which he was nominated Bishop. A man of unequal virtues who had received his ordination as Vice-Deacon at a very early age. The tale is told that on December 16, 1117, Pope Pascal II, on the occasion of the inauguration of the Cathedral at Palestrina in Saint' Agapito, had invited to the celebration our Saint Berardo, together with the Bishops of Tivoli and Anagni. Having terminated the celebration and having set up the feast table, Pascal II invited our Berardo to have a seat near him. Among the other guests there was also that same Pietro Colonna who, in 1109, because of Saint Berardo's unyielding moral standards, after having him flogged, had imprisoned him in a water cistern for a long two months, but without obtaining any concessions from the Saint. Nonetheless our Saint Berardo did not disdain the invitation to take a seat beside him at the feast table, demonstrating yet again the power of a man capable, of course, of knowing how to pardon, but also to be above it all before him demonstrating that only the weak know not how to pardon, nor to punish while he, Saint Berardo, on the contrary, had already pardoned him both for the wounds and for the insults.

Notable interest also is raised by the founded thesis of our Author who proposes Saint Rosalia of Palermo as a relative of Saint Berard, Bishop of Marsia. A kinship, looked back on with accurate counterpart in the genealogy of the Patron Saint of Palermo in the Counts of Marsia lineage, going back even to Charlemagne according to which Sinibaldo, son of Teodino (Saint Berard's brother, Bishop of Marsia) should be the father of Saint Rosalia.

All this is conducted as an intriguing journey, tied to the chronology of history, yet also saturated with extraordinary and not casual coincidences, concrete ties, reasonable presuppositions and mysterious events that in the end set forth perturbing questions. Nothing ever happens by chance and nothing ever comes to us by chance. Mayhap not even the infinite project of mankind at the foundation of the universe as a thinking entity. An Entity which, who knows, may even have written the design of the life of every living being. A design that with our everyday actions we aid to reach our own destiny.

How many times are we astonished before apparent chance happenings? How many questions have we asked ourselves to which we are unable to give practical answers, solid beyond banal chance?

These are the questions the Author seems to continuously ask the reader, against a background scenery that sends us back to the condition of the Marsian peoples during the history of civilization and the various events that have linked it with invisible threads to the history of all civilizations.

While deciphering the tears of his people, trapped in the meanings of words, Franco Zazzara, provokes not only a thick and symbolic stoning of coincidences, apparently casual, but with a harmonious and efficient pen raises a monument to the history of the Marsicans. A monument more long-lasting than bronze. And with this he delights the reader with discussions and profound reflections about historic uses and literature of the Marsican people. All with rapid investigative examples on literary texts and with original language documents, which the Author renders in their original form, to capture the similarities with the linguistic and cultural characters of antique civilizations. With accurate ability of synthesis his journey through the history of the Marsican synthesizes, through a critical study of words, the interpretative coincidences which are the most believable, worthy of attention, of reflection so as to correctly link history to the great civilizations of the past who have fed on and contributed, all together, to create the roots of the *ethnos* of the Marsican people, with constant care for documentary sources, for a complete historical vision.

In the end he manages to establish even some relationship between truth and mystery in the diverse and possible hypotheses of real history. Truths generated by different cultures and persons in front of mystery beyond understanding. A relationship between truth and mystery that today shows itself in a so much more up to date way than in the past. And in this sense a cultural debate with precious hints for reflection opens, also for a better comprehension of our present.

The ancients, who well knew the vital force of Nature, source of every form of life, had, in fact, considered the sun, the wind, the rain ... subject of cults in every civilization. Natural elements risen up to mysterious divinities, to who one had to pray in order to survive, because of the power of life and death that they had over all living beings. And these natural events were not only admired, worshipped, but also narrated with the use of words, and it is exactly in the words that, according to the thesis we can agree upon of the Author,

mysterious designs are written and the words are testimony of the very history of mankind.

Well has he thus done, our friend Franco Zazzara, to send off to print the appraisable results of his research on this subject. And well shall he do to never lay down his pen, on this or other subjects, useful and necessary to complete a wonderful picture of knowledge, of history, of culture, of our people.

Mario Di Domenico

PRO – VOCATION

(A CALLING FOR...)

1. The book “Marsi” which has as cover design the logo of two PYTHON snakes (which are devouring each other starting from the tails, until they disappear), begins with a “PROLOGUE” which, beginning with a coincidence-intuition that the SUMERIC suffix ‘-ONE’, suggested to me by chance, has lead me to various words that, in the spoken tongue of Marsica, contain it: ...the river PIT-ONE, ARGATONE, SPERONE, CAFONE, SILONE, FALCONE, UMBRONE andORTYGIA-ORTUCCHIO.....,

2. It continues with a Chrono-history of the Confrontation – Affront between Rome and the Marsians, up until the *Lex Julia*, to the birth of Italy with Q. Pompeadius Silo (Silone) at Corfinius and with the river *Iuvenculus* (Giovenco River) son of the *Vitulia* (*Vacca*/Cow = Italy); it follows up with the description derived by Prof .E Cerasani for its chronologic simplicity, with the first Christians at Marruvium, during the draining of Lake Fucino (Saint Mark of Galilee in the year 46 B.C.). Then it tells about Saint Berardo and the struggle for the investiture, his refusal of might, his death in the Basilica at its dawn, at Saint Sabina of Valeria.

3. In the Final Pro-Vocation (as a Reconciling Call), according to the author, a connecting thread directly from the Spirit, starting with *Umbro* (Man of Defense), and up through Silo (*Silone*) Pompeadius (Man who protects), Saint Berardo (“Strong as a bear” - he protected and sustained the poor), Secondino Tranquilli (a.k.a. Ignazio Silone) with his Berardo Viola and the sacrifice of one’s own Being returns with Saint Berardo in CHRIST, binding Giants who refuse to use might for “diabolic” means, thus are all vanquished in the “flesh” and, with their yearning for freedom, their search for truth, and justice, since the dawn of time, they have been present in Marsica.

MARSI

The name 'Marsi' is derived from Mars, the God of War in Greek mythology, whom the ancient People of Abruzzi venerated.

According to the historian Febonio, around the 16th century B.C., migrating Greeks, going upstream along the course of the Aterno and Sangro rivers, came to the surroundings of the Lake of Fucino and settled near its shores, establishing their dwellings on the hills all around it dedicating their settling to Greek divinities: Circes (Cerchio), *Angizia* (Luco dei Marsi), *Marro* (Marso) in the bay of (*Archippe*) Arciprete, behind the island of *Ortygia* (Ortucchio). Other Osco-Umbrian populations, towards the 12th century before Christ, following the valley of the Salto River, inhabited the western region of the Lake. After the legendary submersion of the city of Archippe (Arciprete), the Fucino Port was moved to the North-East and the most important city of Marsia became *Marruvium* (today's San Benedetto dei Marsi). Other centers were *Milonia* (Rivoli in Ortona dei Marsi), *Plestinia* (Pescasseroli), *Fresilia* (Pescina), *Cerfennia* (Colle Armele) ed *Antino* (Civita d'Antino).

In the map included with "*Historia Marsorum libri tre*" by the Abbot Muzio Febonio, we can see that the vowel E indicates the site of *Marro* behind *Ortygia*, in the description of the ancient Oppidiums (fortified settlements).

The antique Marsians were talented with magic powers and were considered experts in herbal medicine, with which they cured the ill. They were also followers of the Goddess Cybel (Great Mother of the Universe), Goddess of Freedom.

Marro (Marso) used its magic to find snakes and serpents, enchant them and capture them.

Mr. Febonio describes the descent of the serpents from the mountains around *Lucus di Angizia* (Luco dei Marsi) towards the Lake of Fucino to drink of its waters and coil themselves up on the rocks under the sun, and "in his times (1670 after Christ) the priest of Bisegna cured the bites of the serpents with his saliva."

The celebration of the '*serpari*', (serpent folk) of Saint Domenico at Cocullo, on the first Thursday of May still commemorates the art of enchanting serpents.

This brief introduction brings me to the beginning of a journey which takes off in search of the clarification and the understanding of Words...

THE SUFFIX ‘-ONE’

From an essay by Ettore Berardo of some years ago, published in a magazine sent to me just a while ago, I had an inspiration that drove me to write this book.

Berardo had read and studied texts by authors who had been interested in the origins of the European culture (see Bibliography) and had specifically examined the meaning of the word Pharaoh (*Faraone*), commencing with the mystery of the curse of Tutankhamen. (*Tutankhamon-e*)

Using dictionaries and encyclopedias we can find that *faraone* (pharaoh) comes from the Egyptian PRA-O and PER-AA and means “great house” a title referring to the palace, the court, not to the king.

In a letter addressed to king AMENOPHIS IV (18th dynasty, 1570-1378 before Christ), ENATHON is the indication for SOVEREIGN.

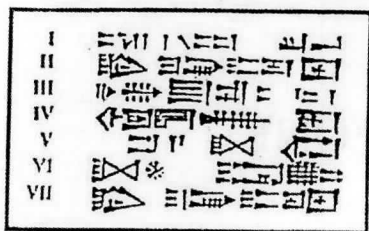
Setting aside the etymology of other words cited in the text, which end in ‘-ONE’ (*mattone*= brick, *cafone*=livestock farmer) and briefly following the history of the spoken tongue, we can admit the existence of many linguistic families. Those belonging to the Indo-European family are Greek, Latin, Anglo-Saxon in Europe and Sanskrit in India.

Parts of the Anglo-Saxon branch are English, German, Irish, and Dutch.

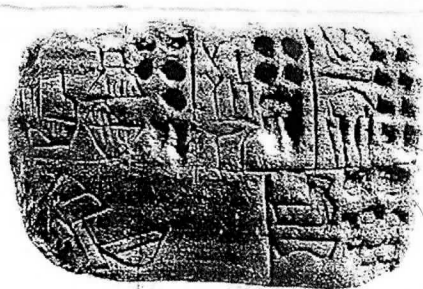
All the Romance languages (those of the lands conquered by the Roman Empire) are derived from Latin: Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Ladino and those few islets of Albanian language (Abruzzi, Molise, Calabria, Sicilia), along with the Greek ones in the Puglia region which are, for the greater part, dialects.

Sanskrit Indian was a refined language of literature and religion, while the “PRAKRITI” tongues (primeval material), without frills, natural, correspond to the various spoken tongues derived from Latin in Italy, France, Spain: these are the local dialects.

As for INDO-EUROPEAN, as a real language, there are no traces.



Tavoletta con traduzione dei caratteri sumerici



Reperto con la riproduzione della scrittura

The discovery of the library of Ebla in Syria (thousands of tablets written with cuneiform characters), in Sumeric and Acadian languages (see photo of tablet with cuneiform letters), mostly diffused around 2350 before Christ with the expansion of the Kingdom of ACCAD, by way of SARGON the Great, has been a real revolution in glottology and a revelation to Mr. Ettore Berardo and for me who writes this. The intellectual philologist G. Semerano was the first to ascertain that the languages of Europe and of ASIA have Semitic bases and come down from a single language.

This reflection brings on the consideration, for example, that in Acadian ECU means Lord, ANU is the God of the Sky: in Japan there are the AINU (Men), the Eskimos are the INU-IT (men of the sky).

At Lecce dei Marsi, (Mr. Berardo makes us reflect), ZI-ONE means THAT-SIR, that man.

Today's phonemes 'SA, SE', correspond to the Accadian SU, SA (English; THIS, THAT).

To go back to the word FARAONE (Pharaoh), the suffix -ONE means Sir/Lord, as in the noun ZI-ONE, which does not mean 'Great'¹ (Big) Zio (uncle), but 'That' Sir/Lord; therefore INU, ENU, ONE mean Sir/Lord, Chief, Man.

Words for antique populations were considered material things, as an omen or a prophecy, and had to do with the person. In the word FARA-ONE, the FARA - which in Semitic means Top, Highest point, and in Italic, with a consonant change (R becomes L), we have for example *Falterona* (height), *Falasca* (high grass). AMENOPHIS the 4TH, the heretic monotheist, was named ENATHON, because he instituted the cult of ATHON, the Disk of

¹ In Italian, the suffix '-one' is added to a word as an augmentive, thus *zio+one=>zione* would seem to mean a 'big' or 'great' uncle. (n. of tr.)

the Sun (RA) and also bestowed unto himself the title of Lord of the Sky (ANU=SKY), ON(ONE,ENU,INU=Lord).

FA – RA – ONE = THE LORD OF THE HIGH SUN.

In the word *Cafone* (oaf), then, the component ‘-ONE’ means Lord and KAPE (which in Greek means manger) derives from the Accadian QABU which means stall, which becomes *Cafu* in Marsican (FESTO), thus CAFU-ONE is the LORD OF THE STALL (of the livestock).

The name SILONE (*in Italian*) (Quintus Pompeidius Silo, Marsican general), commander of the *Lega Italica* (Italic League) in the Social War (years 91 - 89 b.c.), means PROTECTOR, from SILLU = protection, protective Shade. POPPEDIO = HIGH PRIEST, from POP = MINISTER of cult (cite Mr. POPE Russo). ONE = Lord. (THE LORD WHO PROTECTS).

The temples of the priests were constructed near a natural wellspring; (the family of the Silone lived along the Valley of the *Pitone* River).

-- At Pescina in Marsia, going from Piazza Mazzarino to get to the Sanctuary of the Madonna del Carmine, there is a road going uphill that also takes us to the Church of Saint Berardo, it's called “*Via Umbrone*” (“Shade Street”-n. of t.)). Some years ago an elderly man asked me: “Why is this road called *Via Umbrone*? There are no trees here that throw shade (‘*ombra*’).....

UMBRONE

“From Marsiaan Umbrian people came”.... These words have remained impressed in the mind of the young reader of the 7th book of the AENNEID.

The Etruscan Publius Virgilius Maro, in the Augustan elucidation of the birth of the Eternal City (Rome), does not disdain contrasting the predestined “*caput Mundi*” and the centre of Christianity, the heroic defeated native *Vicinors* who Turnus called in aid from *Latium* (open fields) to hinder and impede the settlement of his territory on the part of the new arrivals from Troy, descendants of Enea, with his son Ascanius (Julius).

The principal ally of Turnus was Mesentius, Etruscan King of Cerveteri, along with Clauso Prince of the Sabines, Ceculus and Messafros sons of Vulcan and Neptune, Ufente chief of the Equis, the Volsca Camille and UMBRONE leader of the Marsicans, known as the ENCHANTER of Serpents.

All these warriors came to be defeated and killed.

Thus where does “UMBR-ONE” = LORD OF SHADE (*OMBRA*), of defense, come from?! (Latin *Umbra* = Ghost, Defense, “Soul and from Sumeric *Ambar* = lago)?!

From grade school memories I knew that our (now small) *Giovenco* River had been labeled with another name by the ‘ancients’ ----- (*giovenco* = heifer, young cow - n. of t.)

PITONE

The Pitone River (see map), like a snake, springing from Mount Argatone, crossed the Valley (today’s Valley of the Giovenco) and barely touched the city of Milonia (Lord of the apples –*mele*, Rivoli of Ortona of Marsia), zig-zagging on to Lake Fucino, where it branched out into a delta, with one branch of the mouth towards the West of the future Marruvium and another branch to the East

of the Temple of Venus (Venere of Pescina). According to Plinius its light waters didn’t mix

themselves with the stiller and heavier waters of the Lake, but “gliding over the surface”, were

attracted to the other side, until they were sucked up and disappeared (similar to the future Loch

Ness monster) in the OS PYT-ON (PETOGNE), cavity (orifice, mouth) of the *Pitone* (python), a

natural gorge near Lucus Angitiaie, which carried the waters under and into the mountain.

Note: Pescina, for centuries calle Piscina, from the Sumeric, PI (t) (orifice, mouth)SA(that)INI/AIN(river) = that of the mouth of the river. (cfr. Innsbruck – Aniene)

Note: Pescara (PISCARA:PIT-SA-RA= Mouth, opening, THE ONE of THE SUN). (“That of found at the mouth of the light”).

From the Sumeric PITU = Opening in the rocks.

PIT-ONE. It has been necessary to dwell on the suffix ONE up to now, so that the story might be clearer.

If “-One” means Sir/Lord, *Pit-* is the Oracle, confronted with the feminine form *Pizia*, (prophetess – priestess of the oracle), thus THE LORD OF THE ORACLE. The river *Pit-one* welled up from Mount ARGAT-ONE (Lord of ARCADIA, mountain in Greece, where shepherds grazed their flocks and livestock). THE ARGATONE is part of the Great Mountain, in Abruzzi.

The river PIT-ONE dies in the gorge *Os Pitoni*, as in the crack of the oracle of Delos, killed by the god Apollo (God of Light) and goes back underground from where it came. It drinks its own waters in the perennial cycle of growth.

LIGHT –Darkness: Sun (Day) – Night; Apollo – Pitone: Truth – Falsity; Christ – Demon

the monthly magazine History of NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC which I have in front of me is open on the pages that describe the island of Delos.....

ORTYGGIA – ORTUCCHIO

In a Greek plate of the 6th century before Christ (see photo), preserved at the Louvre in Paris, there is a painting of the god Apollo who kills the serpent PITONE and receives in exchange the gift of prophecy.

Apollo is the god of the SUN, of Poesy, of Music, of Divination, of the very essence of freedom, for this reason, conceived by Zeus (DEUS) and Latona, he is born on the island of Ortygia, risen from the waters, still floating on those waters and not belonging to anybody (free), after these same waters drew back following the Creation and the birth of Earth, born together with his sister Diana. After giving birth, Latona in order to flee from Hera, assumed the semblance of a she-wolf and went to Lycia (country of wolves) to bathe her children in a spring.

PIT-ONE is born from the mire, from drying mud.



**Il dio Apollo uccide
il serpente Pitone
a Delfi e riceve in
cambio il dono della
profezia. VI secolo
a.C. Louvre, Parigi.**

Ortygia, ‘the isle of the cothurnics’, changed its name in Delos (Island suffused with Light, like the god Apollo, when he was born there) and became a very important place of cult around 1660–1000 Before Christ. (ORTYGIA was also the name of today’s Ortucchio).

Also Sicily and Sardinia were floating islands and were anchored to the sea-floor by chains.

In Sicily, in front of today’s Syracuse, there is the isle of ORTYGIA. In Sardinia there are the Nuraghes, similar to the mysterious Morroni’s of San Benedetto dei Marsi, who resemble the fangs of the river-serpent Pitone (Crandall L.L.). (Other double ruins of Morroni’s can be found in the place called “Fiumitte”.)

How can we avoid the comparison, even through and sent down by mythology, of this similarity of Greek colonies with the island of ORTYGIA (Ortucchio) in the FUCINO Lake which had behind it a city and a civilization now gone..... (MARRO?!, ARCHIPPE?!, ARCIPRETE?!.....Arciprete is still there....) and with Lecce of Marsia (Lycia) not far away?!

How could we not come to think that the valorous enchanter of serpents UMBR-ONE (LORD OF THE SHADE/SOUL) and his soldiers might have left to aid the Latian, Turnus, from the city behind ORTYGIA-ORTUCCHIO... almost as if it be a continuation of the War of TROY, in perennial contrast with the search for power and for justice, yet vice versa, considering that the Greeks were already settled in around the Lake of Fucino?!

The SUN King LOUIS THE 14TH, probably “SON” of Cardinal Mazzarino, very much later, as illuminated sovereign (Apollo god of the Light, the Sun, of Music and of Prophecy), tries to identify himself with the FA-RA-ONE (‘Pharoah’) (the LORD OF THE HIGH SUN).

Going along the path of the myth, confused betwixt stories and realities, I knew that.....

THE GIOVENCO

Around the 2nd century before Christ, the Pitone River changed its name and began to be called JUVENCULUS (today’s GIOVENCO), from the name of the son of the COW (VITULIA, later ITALIA). While the *Juvenculus* (“i vuteije” –dialect) grazed the grass on Mount Argat-one (Lord of

Arcadia), with her hooves she made the spring of the river well up and because of this the river was named after her, later, *Giovenco*. The calf (*Giovenco*) along with the young Samnitic bull, would later be the symbol of the Italic League of Corfinius, under whose command there was a certain Mar-sian General Quintus Pompaedius Silo (*Silone* in Italian).

In the following pages there is a list of a few words that 'come to my mind' for the reflections that will carry on to the final provocation...

REFLECTI-ON(E)S WORDS ARE STONES

UMBR – ONE = LORD OF SHADES, LORD OF THE SOUL

ZI – ONE = THAT LORD/SIR

PIT – ONE = LORD OF THE ORACLE (WHICH?!). THE *PIZIA* IS THE MISTRESS/PRIESTESS OF THE ORACLE.

FA – RA – ONE = HIGH + SUN + LORD, (LORD OF THE HIGH SUN)

SIL – ONE = LORD WHO PROTECTS

NER – ONE = LORD OF FIRE

MIL – ONIA = MISTRESS OF APPLES AND HONEY

SPER – ONE = LORD OF ESPERION (OF VESPER)

CAF – ONE = the MAN with the animal. (Note: *Cum BISIA* during Medieval times = the man with the animal. (*Cambise*.) Today this corresponds to “man who works”, with any type of tool other than his own hands.)

KONKULION = *conchiglia* = sea shell ... Even up to the 1600's, in the book of the baptized in the Diocese of Marsia at Pescina, some newborns were brought to be baptized from the town of “CONCUGLIO” or “Cuglio”, a term used to indicate today's Cocullo and, notice, not Cucullus (*Cocuzzolo* = hilltop).

PALINODIA = noisy confusion

ORTYGIA = ORTUCCHIO (ORTYGIA – SYRACUSE
ORTUCCHIO – MARRO)

MANDILE (woven cloth that covered fresh bread) = MANDILION (the
SINDONE which covered CHRIST).

CRESOMMELA (*large apricot n. of t.*)(with the vowel E as a schwa, as in
Abruzzese dialect) = GOLDEN APPLE (from CRUSOS, GOLD):

CRESTONDA (ROASTED BREAD, ‘GOLDEN (round)’ with OLIVE OIL,
GARIC and SALT), thus the name of TOAST in the Eastern part of Marsica
(PANONTA – ‘*oilbread*’, FETTUNTA – ‘*oilslice*’, in other regions) from

KRUSTOS = CHRISTO-UNTO (Christ-anointed), UNTO – OILED/
ANOINTED (PANUNTO)

A this point an intriguing question wedges itself in

HAVE GREEKS LIVED IN MARSICA?

1. When I translated and transcribed the *LIBER BAPTIZATORUM* (Book of the Baptized) of the Diocese of Marsi (years going from 1572 to 1671), the head site at Pescina from 1580 on, I noticed that some newborns and/or witnesses, when indicating their origin as the town of Cocullo (the town known for the celebration of the *serpari* → serpent-men/ -enchanters), wrote CUNCUGLIO and CUGLIO. In Marsican dialect the *cuncuglio* is the dry shell of walnuts and almonds, similar to seashells, therefore confronting the term with the Greek KONKULION came naturally. (Saint DOMENICO and the Serpents; *Pitone; Angizia*)

2. In the ‘60’s of the twentieth century, while we children were playing in the gutters along the streets, a lady bothered by our noisy rambunctiousness told us to stop making all that PALINODIA. I mentally took note of that term, which means NEW CHANT (PALIN-ODE) = confused noise, lots of sound.

3. The Shroud which wrapped the Body of Christ and now can be found in Turin, is called *Mandilion*. Our bread kneaded and just out of the oven, preserved in the cupboard in a kneading trough, was wrapped in the *Mandile* (with the ‘d’, not the ‘t’ of ‘mantle’); if the bread fell to the ground, and even before eating it, we had to kiss it, out of respect for the Body of Christ.

4. The other day I noticed a single fruit that had matured on a tree behind my home, a *cresommela*, dialect for apricot, as in the golden apple = CRUSOSMELA.

5. Among the various hors d'oeuvres at a dinner with friends a few evenings ago, there was the *Crestonda*, slices of toasted bread with olive oil, garlic and salt on it: linguistically Krustos + unto which would use the word 'oil' and 'anoint with oil', oiled bread, anointed by the Father, Christ . I question myself as to how these words have come down to us, only a simple mixing of spoken tongues?!

I put an end, here, with apparent discontinuity, to this prologue which may seem estranged from the 'Marsi' and with not much logos (logic) I shall now write about....

SPERONE

The uninhabited hamlet of Sperone, above the town of Gioia of Marsi, is quite interesting when

we separate the composition of its enigmatic name.

Now, given that the suffix '*ONE*' means Lord, for SPER I consulted an etymological dictionary

which brings it forth as a derivation of ESPERION which means Vesper.

Therefore, SPER – ONE would be THE LORD of VESPER, of the Evening.

In a clear unclouded night in the sky that can be seen from ORTUCCHIO (ORTYGIA) or from

Pescina, looking towards the Valley of Riofreddo – Santa Lucia and over Sperone, we can observe

the luminosity of the planet Venus (taken throughout many centuries as a star) which is the first

to light in the evening and the last to disappear in the morning. (Lucifer = bearer of light, Ra).

And again to reinforce this intuition, I take note that along the rocky cliffside of VENERE, part of the town of Pescina, there was a temple dedicated to the GODDESS (*Venere*=*Venus* - n. of tr.) (today the sanctuary of the Madonna of Wise Counsel).

It is probable that our forebears may have imagined, as in the Greek myth, that she from the froth on the waves of Lake Fucino which broke on the shores of Ortucchio on the side by Lecce dei Marsi, the goddess Venus could have been born, and that she would have 'ascended' to the skies, in the hour of vespers, above Sperone, and was venerated in the temple built on the rocky hillside over the lake.

From the precious *LIBER BAPTIZATORUM* more than once cited, I have discovered that the surnames *Spera* and *Falcone* appertain to persons who inhabited Sperone.

As for *Spera*, it is easy to liken the term to Vesper, Venus (*Venere*).

Regarding the surname *Falcone*, following the indications which by now have become certainties discovered in the paragraph about the suffix -ONE, we can break it up into FA - LC - ONE (italic L = Sumeric R) and we have FA -RA -ONE. THE LORD OF THE HIGH SUN who lived at SPERONE.



LEGEND OF THE MAP OF LAKE FUCINO

Marruvium – Valeria – San Benedetto dei Marsi

Pitonius – Juvenculus – Giovenco River

Cerfennia – Collis Armenis - Collaramele

Via Valeria: ended at Marruvium

The river figured as running from Alba Fucentia down to Reate (Rieti) is without a name; it could be the river that is found on the Map of Mr. Febonio, which goes by the name of ROSEA (indicated with the letter P), of the Valley of the Roses (see: Saint Rosalia).

HISTORY OF THE RELATIONSHIP – CONFLICT - ENCOUNTER BETWEEN ROME AND MARSICAN PEOPLE

Roman written history gives us the first news about the contrast between these two peoples.

In the year 408 before Christ the Volscians (who inhabited the Roveto Valley) were defeated by Romans who were expanding their territories towards the East, and the control of Fucino Lake was entrusted to the Consul Publius Cornelius and to his army.

For fear of being attacked, the Marsicans allied with the *Paeligni's*, the *Vestine's*, and the *Marrucine's* in a confederation.

THE MARSICAN PEOPLE IN THE 1ST SAMNITE WAR

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND HEROIC ACTS

In the long struggle between the Romans and the Samnites, the Marsians almost always found themselves busy reaffirming their own rights; even when these two nations, counting as among the greater nations of the Italian peninsula, although bound by a tie of allegiance renewed in 354 b. C., broke this tie in 340.

Thus the powerful neighbor, with a thirst for dominion, entered into conflict:

“The bellicose Samnites, of Sabellian origin, on the same level as the Marsians, coming down from the Apennine Mountains, had spread out in Campania occupying the capital, Capua (Santa Maria Capua Vetere), a city superior to Rome as regards to civilization, luxury and commerce, becoming the masters of the entire southern area.

Let us proceed by ‘annual ledgers.’

340 b.C. The inhabitants of Campania, defeated, asked for aid from the Roman Senate, invoking the protectorate of the Republic and declaring themselves its subjects. Rome, strong by way of its alliances, took the Samnites from the rear, who resisted anyway with extreme vigor. They were, however, defeated and constrained to leave there, on the battlefield, to the mercy of the adversary, a considerable booty of arms and banners. The indomitable Marsians, in this conflict, waged a great battle.

326 b.C. The second Samnitic War, lasted a good 22 years. We now find the Marsians allied with Rome and it marvels us to see the strong and valorous warriors combating side by side with the Romans, against the autonomous Samnites who were even defending those same rights which the Marsians had always jealously guarded, since they represented a sacred bond. In the same year 326, Romans and Marsians bonded a league against the Samnites who were roiling disorder, they sent aid to the Greek colony of *Neapolis*, this also rebellious, and sustained the insurgent peoples of Priverno. Even in this second phase of the war, the allies entered as invaders into Samnio, devastating their territory and weakening their defenses.

322 b. C. The Samnites try their fortune again in arms. During the first encounter, they constricted the Romans to retreat but, as the battle waxed stronger, the Samnites, equal in valor, had to succumb to adversaries because of the loss of their best chieftains and their most valorous warriors.

321 b. C. The indomitable Samnites reorganized themselves and engaged in a surprise war, attacking the places well known to them and fit for ambushes. In the clash that came about at Caudium, tricked by a stratagem, Romans and Marsians fell together, without being able to use their arms, in the hands of the Samnites who humiliated them with atrocious vengeance. Thus the most famous military contingencies of the era, naked and unarmed, passed under the Caudation Forks, insulted

and flogged with *flagellum* (whips).

319 b. C. Obviously the Romans awaited the right moment for vengeance and the right to return to Samnia, forcing their adversaries to a severe armistice.

315 - 311 b. C. The Samnites never asked to surrender. Even though they were devastated and humiliated, themselves, at this point, they took back the reins of the battle advancing into Latium and even up to the gates of Rome, invading and devastating the Marsian territory, too, where the fortified center of Plistiam, today's Pescasseroli, ended up in their hands for around eight years. The Marsians, trembling with scorn to see their territory exposed to sacking, lit up their anger towards that very same Rome. The missing aid, in absence of any defense, permitted burning and destruction all over the entire Marsica, and this as their sons were off as soldiers in the Legions, as flag-bearers, standard carriers, exposed, that is, to the severe risk of the first encounter. And thus a '*foedus iniquum*'! The bond that tied the Umbrian Sabellian peoples had not been broken, and the Marsians united themselves with their ancient allies; the Picenes, Frentanes, Marrucines, Vestines and Paeligni's or Ernices and the Equi's, with a bond ever stronger, through offers of assistance. Finally the truth had come out: the destiny of the Samnites was that of the Confederates.

The first fruit of this pact was the restitution of Plistiam to the Marsians.

308 b. C. The hate against Rome went on growing and around this year they put together ponderous forces able to compete with the powerful adversary. The pitched battle was even more violent, but the art of strategy won over the simple battling, the movements of large masses closed the rebels in a pinch, then forced to retreat, open the fortifications, and either to surrender or abandon them: they had no other choice than to ask for peace, concluding treaties of friendship based on clauses of apparent equality.

305 – 303 b. C. In such an era the Romans, to completely subjugate the tricky Equi's, sent a colony of 4000 men to Carsoli. The Marsians tried to impede this sort of settlement and occupying force in their territory, attacking Carsoli. The dictator M. Valerius Maximus pressed them back and forced them to retreat, until all of the inhabited towns had fallen into his hands. In the end Marruvium was taken after a tenacious resistance, and thus was the last of the Marsian cities to fall. Titus Livio affirms that the head city in particular was destroyed during these military operations. After this downfall, the Marsians sent delegates to Rome to be readmitted as friends on the condition that they be treated as allies. Rome re-admitted them, contemporarily sending to Alba a colony of two thousand men to preside its security.

295 b. C. The first Italic League. The Samnites knew by experience that the peace they had accepted was worse than a war, and so wanted to take up hostilities again, aided by the Celts and the Etruscans, equally disposed to take up arms again and try their fortune against Rome, the eternal enemy. The Marsians, the Umbrians and other peoples with Sabellian origins replied in full to the call sent them by the Samnites. There was a general flurry of support converging in strategic points.

294 b. C. There not being amongst the chieftains a single and concrete identification of perception of the events, the Romans, in this sort of circumstances, got the best over their adversaries, forcing them to flee after having left 25000 dead on the field and more than 8000 prisoners in their hands. Following such a disaster, the confederate army broke up. Only 5000 Samnites and a few Marsians surviving that massacre, with a forced march and infinite hardships, managed to find a safe haven after having crossed the entire enemy territory. At the same time, with a last-chance assault, the indomitable Samnites took on the camp, behind the trenches, of the Consul Attilio Regolo. In the meantime coming out from Rome, by will of the Senate, the other Consul L. Postumius arrived with fresh troops. Closed in and under siege at Milonia, the Samnites once again tried to fight, but their valor wasn't sufficient enough



RIVOLI of Ortona dei Marsi MILONIA – 3rd century B.C.

since, as soon as the fresh reinforcements got there, even this city was taken and put to sack. Between the Samnites and the Marsians, there were more than four thousand victims and, besides the fallen, as many others were made prisoner. No humiliating decision was taken against these last, who from then on behaved like loyal companions in arms and not like underlings in a forced alliance with Rome.

283 b. C. The Marsians, being allies of Rome, along with the Vestines, the Paeligni's, the Marruccines and the Frentanes, marched against the Gauls who, defeated at the first encounter, were chased back past Arezzo, where they had done serious damage to the agricultural areas. To avoid the complete undoing of the Senones, the Boeys from the North intervened, racing to their aid; but the Consul Domiziano trounced them, eased in this affair by the Marsian allies.

280 b. C. The Romans, having gathered together an army composed of various allies (but made up principally of Marsians), with a strength of 50,000 men, confronted the enemy along the shores of the Siri or Sinnus River, where the battle went back and forth in its outcome. The troops were on the march trying to chase back a tremendous invader: the King of Epirus. Pyrrhus brought on elephants; and this was the first time that in Italy these pachyderms had ever been seen. These animals provoked an enormous confusion amongst the rows of the legionaries, most of the time having been assailed by the Macedonian phalange, so much so that the whole contingent found safety in flight. But a great number of allies had already fallen in the hands of the enemy, so many that the news of the trouncing had already arrived at Rome and at Marvium, both in mourning.

276 b. C. What follows came about in this year. The situation was aggravated by the Lucanians who entered the fray on Pyrrhus's side. The Samnites, also, unexpectedly, came to life and came up to the gates of Rome, pushed on by the hope of having the Etruscans on their side, too. But the federal states, loyal to the League, closed the doors in their faces. Rome in the meantime prepared itself for its defense. Pyrrhus, knowing that he was fighting against a formidable foe, sent an ambassador to propose peace to the Romans; the answer was as follows: "If Pyrrhus wishes peace, first he must leave Italy." Thus battle became inevitable. The Romans with the Latians, the Volscians the Enrices, the Sabines, the Marsians, the Paeligni's, the Vestines, the Marrucines, the Umbrians, the Grentanes, and the Campanians, with an army of 70,000 combat warriors, moved war on the invaders over woodland terrain. The battle went on strenuously until into the night, with dubious success. In the end, Victory smiled on Pyrrhus, even though it cost him dear, because in this fight the cream of his army perished and he himself was wounded. Then a new Roman contingent, commanded by the Consuls G. Fabritius and Q. Emilius, replaced the destroyed one. Pyrrhus convinced himself, by means of extremely clever ambassadors, that it would be preferable to accept the proposals offered and, accept-

ing an honorable truce, gave orders to go assist Syracuse, setting off on ships with his army.

But Pyrrhus, not keeping faith to his promise, intervened in the war of Taranto. Rome moved in force against the foreigner, defeating him in a bloody and terrible battle during which elephants frightened by burning arrows, being wounded themselves in the encounter, turned against their own Epirote ranks, creating confusion and dispersing the formations. The Romans took advantage of the bewilderment of their adversaries, thus beating them and totally destroying them, remaining as possessors of the field and its rich booty. Pyrrhus had no other choice than to leave Italy, abandoning his men to the poor sort of becoming slaves. At Rome the victory was celebrated in general exultation.

ROME IN THE PUNIC WARS WITH THE MARSIAN S AND OTHER ITALIC PEOPLES

261 b.C. The first war against Carthage. Rome had measured itself against a great Mediterranean power and in that battle Sicily became the battle site. In the taking of Agrigento in the year 261 and the naval victory of Milazzo, to the north of Messina (259), the Marsians, under the command of Consul Rutilius, even more were partners of Rome, which had become a power at sea, giving proof of extreme valor and contributing efficiently to the well done success of the battle, and thus the same also in the following ones.

255 b.C. The Romans established that they would wage war on Carthage and prepared an expedition. The backbone of that contingent, dedicated to every possible event, was the Italic Armada: with a strength of 330 ships, divided into 100,000 men for the crew and 40,000 landing units, commanded by the Consuls Attilio Regolo and Lucius Manlius. The Romans sought out an immediate offensive encounter which came on with great violence, since the Carthaginians had 350 ships and the same number of men, mostly Numidian mercenaries. The Romans, galvanized by their preceding successes on the other side of the sea, brought about a clamorous victory and insisted on following the enemy's retreat. Having landed in Africa, they sought out the routed in woodlands

where, however, it wasn't possible to use the arms they had been given. The Punic army asked for peace, and they obtained it only under severe conditions, but more new and harder trials were underway.

254 b.C. In Spring of that year the Punics once more set out for battle and showed themselves, in various trials, to be of extreme courage, by way of the battle engaging system inaugurated by Pyrrhus, putting into the fray up to a hundred elephants to back the army. Fortune thus turned to favor the enemy and Consul Regolo was taken prisoner. The Romans didn't lose heart; they rigged up a new fleet of 350 ships, finally defeating the Punics who left in their hands a booty of 114 ships. Satisfied with the victories won and having weakened Punic power, the Romans sailed off towards Italy, but a tremendous storm sank the greater part of their ships.

250 b.C. The Italic peoples, commanded by G. Cecilius Metellus, finally brought on a decisive victory over the eternal enemy under the walls of Panormum, even capturing 120 elephants.

249 b.C. The Marsians and the Italians finally enjoyed true peace, which however proved brief. In the following ...

248 b.C. ... a fleet had sailed towards the coasts of Sicily to set up a presiding garrison, but was surprised near Trapani by rival ships, which went after them and captured them. The Senate wanted to reduce the marine armada and thus limited itself to the control of the flash fighting which was always alight in Sicily, aggravated by the incursions of the Mamertine pirates, who were favored and protected by Carthage. The Roman economy, being left without merchandise or grain markets, risked an extremely serious crisis and was able to rise again only thanks to free subscriptions in Rome, Marruvium and other allied chief centers. With such offers, not exactly voluntary, a new fleet was put together with over 100 ships with crews of 60,000 men better trained to marine military maneuvers.

240 b.C. In Spring of 24b.C. Consul Lutatius Catino headed off to Sicily putting it under siege both by land and by sea, thus taking by famine Carthage's garrisons stationed thereon. As soon as peace was requested, Rome was magnanimous in agreeing to it, in reality extending its dominion over the entire rebel island. Nor did this have to do with a pure and simple incursion; the permanent conquest provoked a reaction from the North, along those Alpine borders which had been left without manned garrisons.

228 b. C. The Celts pressed in, with a strength of 50,000 infantry and 20,000 cavalrymen concentrated in "*turmae*" which grew, as they rapidly descended along the Apennine side, adding other volunteers until they assumed the aspect of a real body of expedition. They were 200,000 menacing men anxious to devastate the cultivated plains. The preoccupying menace convinced many to sign up for the military in a hurry. A sort of gathered hither and thither army was pulled together with 43,000 Romans and 50,000 reserves, left at the garrison at Rome. The army, firm guardian of Italic liberty, was convinced to march towards over the Alps to Cisalpine Gaul, but the decisive encounter came along the road and precisely, in Etruria; after a ferocious and bloody battle, victory smiled on the Italics, who freed their country from the danger of invasion. Rome was still the leader and owner of all of Italy, including the Northern part, called *Transpadana Gaul*, up to the Alps.

MARSI ALLIES OF ROME AGAINST CARTHAGE

218 b. C. In December of the year 218 b. c. the Roman army clashed on the shores of the Ticino River with Hannibal's army. The Romans got the worst of it. Scipio, after a strategic withdrawal, bunkered into a well-armed fortress so then Hannibal was forced to stop there. In the meantime, under order of the Senate, the Consul Tiberius Sempronius, with his army, coming from Sicily joined up with Scipio still licking his battle wounds.

217 b. C. Snow was falling like an avalanche. The Numidians faked a retreat, going back across the Trebbia River. The inexperienced Sempronius followed them, but the freezing waters weakened the valorous Italics shivering with chilling winds and flusters of snow blowing into their faces. Hannibal, after having given orders to the army, entered into the fray. The legions held up against the enemy forming a sort of impassable wall. In the meantime, Mago, Hannibal's brother, at the command of a chosen group of combat engineers made up of two thousand men, set up an ambush, plummeted down on the Italics and dispersed them. The conflict was disastrous for both parts and the winner even lost the entirety of his elephants. Rome, on the announcement of the tragic downfall, went into mourning for a second time, while in Italy a dark future was looming on the horizon.

216 b. C. There were dark clouds on the horizon. As has been said, the blackest omens had already predicted that Italy would fall to the mercy of the enemy. The Roman Senate immediately affronted the peril, put together new forces, controlled that the allies of the Italics did the same, entrusted the new army to the Consuls Servilius and Flaminius who, after a forced march, arrived at Lake Trasimene where they moved against Hannibal. On the morning of the battle a thick fog came down over the field, so thick that even at a short distance it was impossible to recognize any place. Hannibal took advantage of the circumstances and attacked, from every side, the Italics, who proudly resisted; but the fight was so bitter and so tough that nobody even noticed a strong earthquake that in the meantime destroyed several cities. The defeat was tremendous; the Italic army underwent uncalculable ruin; there were more than 30,000 fallen in the end, only 10,000 men escaped from being surrounded. But for these there was an even greater devastation than death trying to seek safety.

216 b. C. Hannibal had therefore won once again, thanks to the spies and traitors who were active at Rome and in the ranks of the Italic army. The Punic leader had awakened the will of their own rebellion in the unquiet Samnites. Tactically the Carthaginian could by now manage a

confrontation. Hannibal was able to recognize the enemy plans through his famous scouts. Famous was the Punic cavalry, often placed as a link and bridge between the avant-garde and the wings. Although victorious, the Carthaginian leader knew perfectly well that he would never be able to tame Rome if he wasn't able to first undo the compact Italic Federation. Not being successful in breaking up such solidarity with promises, he began a long series of incursions in the Picene, Vestine, Frentane, Marrucine, Paeligni and Marsian areas without encountering any apparent resistance. The Italics hadn't given up, but were waiting for orders from Rome. During the wait, in Marsica, as in all the Italic territory, new levies were being enlisted. The dictator Q. Fabio Maximus organized and trained the new legions making larger quadrangles; then he moved them to Puglia where Hannibal had his summer camps.

215 b. C. On August 2, near Cannae, Varro, Consul whom history will later judge as inept and incapable, gave the signal for battle all by himself. Paul Emilio was forced to follow him in this decision. Hannibal immediately took advantage of the hurried decision. With an expert skill in tactics, after having examined the strategic formation of the Roman ranks from above, he moved in such a way as to attract them into a place without exit, moving to the back of the enemy and pushing it towards a Carthaginian nucleus that completely crushed them. Stun and pain were at their highest, but not even this time they were able to bend the will of Rome. On the contrary the allied cities gathered around her and their misfortune put an end to the squabbling between Patricians and Plebes. Soon a new army, 200,000 true warriors strong, was prepared and entrusted to more experienced leaders, making the concept of a single guide immediately prevail. The figure of *dictator* emerges. In the meantime, Hannibal, foreseeing that advancing on Rome would never reach useful results, chose to head off to Capua where he hoped to take possession of the ports of Campania and get into direct communication with Carthage from which he had been isolated.

211 b. c. The Romans then took on a siege at Capua. Hannibal, ever more audacious, with a clever and daring plan, marched towards Rome

crossing the Samno, devastating the fields and lands of Cerfinnia (today's Collarmele) and of Alba Fucente. Marruvium and the other fortified cities of Marsica, alarmed by such a diversionary attack, went into a state of alarm. But the leader, realizing that the plan had been discovered, was forced to back out, sketching up other plans; but he saw his dream of reaching the walls of Rome go up in smoke and went back to Campania.

204 b. C. The Romans, since Hannibal continued to wander around like the owner of Italic territory, decided to transfer their military maneuvers to Carthage, forcing Hannibal, with just as clever a move, to come back to his homeland. For such a landing operation, the first that is remembered in history, operations command was entrusted to P. Cornelius Scipio with 7000 men, almost all volunteers, among whom were several Etruscans, Umbrians, Marsians, Paelignae, and Marrucines, in addition to two legions who had survived the battle of Cannae. In February they set sail for the coasts of Africa. In the following year...

203 b. C. ...after various armed encounters during which the Numidian King Sifax fell prisoner, the Marsians lent remarkable support, and by themselves stopped the famous Numidian cavalry and succeeded in un-hoped for results.

Under the command of Scipio the Italics seriously damaged the Powerful Carthaginian naval forces. At Zama vengeance was taken for the humiliation. Having reached peace, the heroes all returned to their homelands, covered with glory and full of honors and riches. In such an era, the Marsians continued to fight side by side with Rome, sure of the success that by now was smiling on the Roman Eagles, thus contributing to that civil progress that was strengthening the legions weighed down with trophies, banners stripped from the losers, booty from Oriental Empires, defeated or crushed.

THE MARSIAANS WITH THE ROMANS OUT TO CONQUER THE WORLD

197 B. c. Having subjugated Carthage, the Romans, with the aid of the Marsians and other allies, in 197 began the occupation of Northern Italy up to the Alps, completely routing the Celts. In the same period of time several armed encounters ended in favor of the Italics in the Macedonian War, so much so that in...

196 b. C. ... The Consul T. Quintius Flaminius subjugated King Philip, opening the way towards Greece for Roman penetration. Fallen under control of the vanquisher, the Attic civilization itself grew strong and refined Italic uses and customs, once considered particularly rough and rude. Thus it was that, with the contribution of its allies, Rome subjugated and dominated the whole of Asia Minor, seat of refined Hellenistic realms, founded by the successors of Alexander the Great.

189 b. C. Under the leadership of P. Cornelius Scipio, the conqueror of Hannibal, the Romans, across Macedonia and Thrace, came to and passed Hellespont, just as Hannibal had passed the Alps. Antioch, King of Syria, tried to sue for peace but, not being able to accept the tough conditions imposed by the Romans, sought out safety in arms. Putting to practice this decision, instead of making a pact with a multi-ethnic army of 80,000 men, he came to blows with the Italics.

Antioch's army was almost entirely destroyed near Magnesia; 50,000 men were laid to the ground, while the Italics came out of it with only a few losses, securing for Rome the dominion of half of the then known world. And the Marsians were a glorious component in such an unhoped for accomplishment.

176 b. C. Perseus, only pretender to the Macedon throne, still held out against Rome trying to face up to it so as to arrest the advancing conquests. The Italic army, with its contingent of 40,000 men, was even more determined, permitting the Consul P. Licinius Crasso to invade Thessaly. Here, in a tough and decisive clash, the King of the Thracians was captured: This success was a good omen for further accomplishments.

167 b. C. Since the battle dragged on without decisive results because the rebel Perseus continued crossing the borders, the Consul L. Emilio Paulo was sent against him, with full decisional powers, and he drove his own army immediately up against that of Perseus. In the beginning, the Italic avant-garde was dispersed and a cohort formed by Marsians and Paeligni's was almost destroyed. But suddenly fortune changed because the enemies, terrified by an unforeseen and surprising solar eclipse, left the field prey to panic, being pursued, lost a good 20,000 men and in addition 11,000 prisoners. Such success as a result granted honor to the Italic arms that definitively assured to Rome an absolute dominion. In just two days, the entire Illyria was subjugated and its sovereigns, Perseus, King of Macedonia, and Gentian, King of Illyria, entered Rome in chains. Perseus was closed in the prisons of Alba Fucens where he died in 163.

148 b. C. The Roman Senate, with the pretext of a supposed violation of the preceding treaty stipulated with the restless Carthage, decreed its destruction and sent off an Italic contingent to put these orders into execution. The menace of seeing their Homeland cancelled once again lit up in the successors of Hannibal a noble and warlike fury, but the heroic resistance put up by those valorous warriors could nothing. Nobody impeded that the African metropolis, founded by pacific Phoenician merchants, disappeared in a salt-covered desert never again to be explored. Under the command of the Military Tribune Scipio Emilio, after various armed encounters in which once again the valor of the Italics shown out, the fate of the Punic city was woven. In fact Carthage was taken by assault, sacked and burnt. In the end it was razed to the ground.

145 b. C. Scipio Emilio, on his return to the homeland covered in glory, wanted to honor in person the Marruvium capital of Marsia, decorating it with those art works brought back in sign of victory. The victorious Tribune went himself to the place and in his forum raised up a monument of inestimable worth, dedicating a votive stone "to the Consenting Gods." Many masterpieces, statues and pictures of gods and illustrious men were brought to Marsica. The Marsians took part and offered them

to the gods together with gold and silver. In this era we can find the best Italic and Greek architects in Marsica, who were kept occupied, without caring about how much was spent, by the embellishments and enrichments of temples and altars of the region.

CAUSES OF THE CIVIL WAR OF MARSICA

As we have already been able to observe, the Marsians and the Italic allies had contributed to the success of the many wars they fought side by side with the Romans, together with them expanding the dominion of the Eternal City. But they found themselves excluded from effectively benefiting from those 'civil liberties' (today's political rights) long time promised and rightly due as compensation for all their valorous trials. The Marsians in particular were asking for a full right to express themselves with a vote which would have had expression in electoral seats, whereas to provide, in a direct way, for the local administrative necessities. But Rome was held up by rigidly conservative clans, who obstinately placed a firm refusal to every request, however much it may have it been legitimate, asserting that the reiterated demands would have mined the foundations of the sacrosanct institutions of the Republic which, if it were to have continued its reforms, would assuredly have lost its supremacy over the Italics. Although the apparent motivation seemed clear, the basic one appeared quite another thing: if the Italics were to have been allowed to enjoy full citizenship rights, these, the greater land owners, would have lost their large Italic estates, their famous properties, the *'praedia'*. And the fact that the greater part of the population suffered in the most extreme poverty certainly didn't drive the ruling class to better their conditions. To tell the truth the Tribunes of the Plebes and the defenders of democracy wanted an agrarian law that, for common well-being, could regulate the possession of rustic goods, since it wasn't acceptable that the agricultural extensions of land remained as exclusive property to only a privileged few. The ones to whom the land would be assigned had a legal formality on their side that legalized their social 'status', which otherwise according to them would

have led to chaos. In the midst of so many different interests, there was no other way to resolve the agricultural question than to redistribute the territories expropriated from the enemy equally and stably, including those territories in Africa or taken away from the Celts, based on the exercise of fundamental rights of residence or home “*pro capite*”. Nor was there a absence of knowledgeable men in Rome, animated by true patriotism, consecrated to the cause of justice, according to which the State had the duty to maintain its promises and agreements, not limiting itself to nurturing simple expectations.

133 b. C. Tiberius Gracco and Scipio Emilio, the most authoritative and popular characters in those times, foreseeing the sad consequences such discriminatory politics followed by the so-called ‘Optimated’ would have surely brought on, moving the spirits of the Italics to an uprising, in a violent way, from their abject conditions. Secret ambassadors in the meantime were being sent to Rome from the principal cities of Italy; the Silo (*Silone*) family was at the head of the movement and every decision was approved by them.

126 b. C. Following opportune agreements, Marsian s and Italics had flocked into Rome in great numbers so that their reasons might be heard and to try to obtain the hoped-for citizenship; but a law made by the Tribune M. Junius shoed them out of the Urb. At that point hate coiled throughout all, came to its height and became implacable.

124 b. C. The danger of major sufferings convinced part of the Senate to put itself to work to seek out a pacific solution to the conflict. The new Elect Consul, Q. Flavius Flacco, brought into discussion a law which broadened Roman citizenship; but the proposal failed and the edict was vetoed by the usual aristocratic expedients.

122 b. C. Things were heading towards an open out battle without limits. Through general consensus, the plebes elected as Tribune Caius Gracco, a candidate well-looked on by the humble disinherited, named for the sole purpose to again propose the law on equal conditions. But,

irritated by the usual conservatory excesses and treated as an adversary, he was killed during a revolt.

QUINTO POPPEDIO SILO AND THE BIRTH OF ITALY

100 b. C. The Tribunes C. Apuleius and M. Druse, also, proposed the law that granted citizenship to the Italics, gaining throughout the peninsula a vast echo of sympathy. The Assembly of Marruvium sent the illustrious orator Vezius Veziario, praised even by Cicero, to convince the conscript fathers, escorted by the leader Q. Poppedio Silo (*Silone*), highly esteemed by Druse whom the Italics loved and esteemed, as the only true 'hope of the people'. When the illustrious Tribune Druse fell ill, with every hope lost and setting aside all hesitation, the more belligerent Italics set off the hostilities. The Marsians called a convention on Mount Albano and, hiding the hand with the sword, resolutely planned to kill both the Consuls then in power. They established to carry out such a deed, under Poppedio's guidance, during the *Feriae Latinae* which came around every year during the month of August. Silo set off on the march towards Rome but, called back by his same friends, stopping halfway along the way, was convinced by the prayers of Gneus Domizio and by the authority of Druse, The latter having come to know about the criminal proposal managed to use his influence to convince him not to carry out his plan, promising him to be able to attain peacefully what they wanted to obtain using force. But when Druse, proposing the law once again, saw that the Senators, the Cavalry and even the very plebes were against him, tumults and violence perturbed the assembly; Druse was assassinated and by the law of Tribune Q. Vario, of Spanish descent, anyone who might dare to concede Roman citizenship to the Italics would be declared traitor of the fatherland. The Italics, having convened at Rome to sustain their reasons and their protector, went back home in disdain and, thirsting for vengeance, prepared themselves to take their rights on their own by way of arms because their rightful aspirations had been betrayed.

The genius who organized the tremendous fight was Poppaedi Silo, heroic leader of the Marsians. His family, loved and respected by the Marsians by way of having been appointed to high-placed offices, had a established seat in Marruvium and owned vacation villas in the area. Around these parts we

can come upon celebrative inscriptions, between the counties of “*Le Rosce*” (Ortona, San Sebastiano) and Castelrotto (Pescina, Venere).

Having been trained from infancy in the fine art of eloquence and wielding of arms, perfecting the skill, as was done in those times, in Greek studies at Athens, student of worthy teachers, he bonded himself by friendships with the nobler Roman youths, heirs of the wealthy aristocracy and of the Census, who were living together with him for educational reasons. Coming back to the homeland, he waited for the “*cursus honorum*” and, thus in career, reached such high-placed assignments as to make him worth the title of “*Princeps Marsorum*” (Prince of Marsia, n. of tr.) Poppaadius Silo was a man of great courage and highly fond of the freedom and prosperity of his homeland, enthusiastic and fervent, of a keen mind, energetic personality, quick to take pondered decisions. Following the example of his forebears, he was full of a fervent thirst for glory and a strong desire that stimulated him, irresistibly, to imitate the virtues of heroes and try to equal their deeds. Being a convinced asserter of healthy and honest moral principles, he kept himself far from luxury and intemperance; the only thing that appealed to him was his fatherland, to which he honorably dedicated his whole life, sustaining with his own energies aspirations for freedom. Given an agile and robust constitution, he exercised over the mountains and through the woods in extensive hunting trips, spurning all risks and perils. Under the command of Caius Mario and of other Consuls, he had fought courageously, leading the Marsians in the African battles. Even in Asia and Europe he had been pointed out for distinguished merits. At the death of Druse, putting aside the discussions and rancor, the heads of the League, under his leadership, established that an army of considerable size would be sent to the field. Poppaadius Marso animated the national movement; after having provided a fundamental statute to the League, he dictated a military plan. Now it had nothing to do with wringing citizenship out of Rome, but was about obtaining supremacy over Italy in view of the formation of a Confederation which would have its capital in the center of the peninsula. The Samnites, the most powerful ‘partners’ of the League, sacrificed to the ideal of a common homeland every ambition and, by agreement, Corfinio was established as central seat, and its name was changed to Italia. Such a seat for the Republican government merits a brief *excursus*. The term *Italia* (Italy) is of Oscan origin, deriving from the word “*Vitelii*”, a corrupt



Funereal slab:1st century b. C. - *"Poppaedia P. F. Secunda – Filiae Ossa Sita Eitae M.F.Matri Ossa.Sita"* – Found at the place called "Rosce"– Ortona dei Marsi

form of slang Italic Greek spoken by the colonists in Brutium, wherein it undergoes evident alteration with the disappearance of the consonant “v” which changes its meaning. (*Viteliu* = calf or young cow)

Among the antique authors the most varied opinions had taken shape about the origin of such a name; according Aristoteles it would even have derived from that Enotrian Prince named Italo, who had dominated the extreme South of our peninsula (*Politica*, I, VII, chap. 10). Others, from Timeo to Varro, linked ‘*Italia*’ with the Latin “*Vitulus*” ; but, according to a modern interpretation, the term shouldn’t have the meaning of ‘land of *vitelli*’ (calves), but would denote already in those times ‘land of the Italians’, with a precise referral to people who had as a symbolic totem a calf with a human head, especially one honored by the Sabines. Such a hypothesis is above all suggested by some medallions coined during the event defined as the “Social War”, even though next to the Oscan epigraph, with a border in retrospective, sometimes we find a sow or the Samnite bull that menaces a Capitoline she-wolf. *Yitelia*, *Vitalia* or even *Viteliud*, re-assumable in Latin with the final toponym *ITALIA*, can also be found by Stabone. However that may be, the name designates, since the 4th century b.C., the region between the Messina strait and Metaponte.

After this brief digression, let us go back again to the line of historic happenings.

The conspirators hardly being able to keep control of the fury of their fellow patriots, to whom they were united by solemn oaths, could barely wait for the right moment to answer a signal to reunite. In that era the material necessary to be ready for a battle campaign was directly supplied by the combating patriots; almost all the free men who owned a shield, a sword and some javelins. On the other hand the allied cities were obliged to equip their contingents and had to prepare and maintain military warehouses in the fortified cities under the protection of permanent garrisons manned by military. The administration of ordinary affairs was entrusted to a Senate composed of 500 members chosen from the most active conspirators, with no regard as to their riches or their importance, but only taking into consideration their capabilities in action. The only purpose was to shake off the yoke and assure a free existence to the community in which they could find once again those fundamental values which had been lost. All the allied cities, taking on as their own these promises, formed a League in which each and every one found an agree-

ment to resist even up to their own personal sacrifice against the tyrannical adversary, seen as an oppressor and an obstacle to the birth of a Nation. This ideal, although it was late in coming along, was eagerly awaited and sighed for. The Marsians were the first to join in, with extreme enthusiasm. They were fervent sustainers of the League; and along with them the Paeligni's, the Vestines, the Marrucines, and the Frentanes all joined in: all courageous and battle-ready, even though poorly equipped and not always able to hold up a front against the legions in "turtle" formation, in a real battle taken up in an open field. Thus it was a war of ambushes, of attack-and-flee... To this nucleus of fearless the neighboring Picenes, to the north joined up immediately; to the South the Samnites, then the Aprutines and the Lucanians, of common origins and like customs, even up to the Etruscans and Umbrians who closed the circle, until finally the Venusines and the Iripines joined in to close up in a crunch the very territory of lower Latium where Rome felt oppressed and surrounded. In a word, Italy found itself for the first time compact and willing to govern itself, with laws equal for all and according to justice. Even a Senate was constituted composed of representatives chosen from every city and two Consuls were elected in imitation of an ungrateful Rome which, as Ovidio testifies, "*timuit socia manus*": Q. Poppedio Silo Marso and C. Mutilus Samnite. For the first time the name of Italy resounded. The League was called by its allies SOCIAL, but more commonly was defined MARSICA because of the evident greater contribution by its promoters. Strabone, about the "*bellum marsicum*", says that it lasted over two years, and precisely from 91 to 89 b. C., unforgettable dates to impress into our consciousness.

In the meantime at Rome the wiser and more prudent men, knowing the spirit of Silo, suggested moderation with generous concessions and proposals. No more simple un-activated promises then! On both sides there had been capable chiefs; generally the way of doing things had been liberal; the successes obtained resulted honorable. However not even such circumstances of extreme uncertainty and tremendous anguish astounded Rome, which didn't contradict its well known firmness, at the moment that, with a clever move, the Consul Lucius Caesar emanated the "*Lex Julia*"; through a senatorial consultation the "*jus migrandi*" was conceded and full citizenship granted to the bellicose who would lay down their arms. Such disintegrating politics were no surprise. At first the Etruscans and the Umbrians surrendered, followed by the Picenes, while the Samnites and the Lucans continued to

maintain the pact with the intent of obtaining, until the very end, better conditions to whom the Marsian leader offered unconditioned support and he even renewed with pride the oath, what's more, strengthened by the betrayal, he upheld, with sword unsheathed, the common cause mercilessly even to his own death. The few contingents of veterans sought out refuge in the Ascoli area, where Gneus Pompeio surprised them, while Silla took on and cut down the last embers with the tried and true system of proscription, indictment, and decimation: being found carrying arms was considered a terrible crime. The yearnings of the populace were considered acts of violence. But, in the opinion of some neutral observers, that same repression was a criminal act. Rome had undoubtedly won; but the sacrifice had not been in vain. If today we enjoy civil rights, the triumph of social justice is the merit of the Marsian who left a footprint of indelible memory, not linked to a monument, but equally carved into a material harder than bronze:

EXEGI MONUMENTUM AERE PERENNIUS
(I HAVE RAISED A MONUMENT MORE
LASTING THAN BRONZE)

Still today in the territory of Fucino over the generations they pass down these episodes, of peace and of war, which we have tried to narrate, seeking out the feelings of hate and of love, keeping in mind that Pop-paedio, like Enea or like Romulus, disappeared in a dark and stormy night...

Emilio Cerasani "Marruvium e S. Sabina – memorie storiche di due civiltà" (Marruvium and St. Sabina- historic memories of two civilizations")

IN MARSICA, WALKING ALONG THE PATH, WITH THE CHURCH OF ST. SABINA

From Mr. Di Pietro's catalogue of the Bishop of the Diocese of Marsia and from Mons. Alessandro Paoluzzi from Tagliacozzo, we come to know that St. Mark from Galilee, in the year of the Lord 46, went to the neighboring Atina to evangelize those populations which fell, mostly, within the Roman province of Valeria. After St. Mark from Galilee, the cathedral of Atina was occupied by Bishop Fulgenzio upon whom the Marsian people continued to depend up until the year 235. With the elevation to pontificate pulpit of St. Pontiane, the Marsians had their diocese become independent from that of Atina, with St. Rufino sent as head, first Bishop of the Church of St. Sabina, known matrix of all the Churches of Marsica, raised to Bishop Chair.

Even with the change of times, because of foreign dominators, the head of the diocese has always remained with the name of "Bishop of Marsica". This news that we offer first-hand requires, obviously, further investigation because of the significantly missing information around it. Up until the year 553 ad, date of the 2nd Constantinopolitan Council, in which the Bishop of Marsica named Quinto could finally be present, among the followers of Pope Virgil. Often during those important events it could be heard that the city of Marsia, in the 4th century, was still bustling and present and highly praised by the people. Restless days followed; those were restless times, but in the end a light "showed through, shining in a splendid sky, gem in this soulful land that bequeathed new life to the Church. Pope Boniface IV donated to the Marsians, so that great riches be brought to the people eager for peace: he wiped the tears of martyrs, to the Virgin he opened the Pantheon as the first Christian temple of Rome, illuminating sign of a one of the greatest works to come down from the heavens to shine evermore from the 1600's on!"

SAINT BONIFACE IV

The first Pope of Abruzzi, St. Boniface IV, is of Marsian origins, from the city of VALERIA, antique capital of Marsia. (*Bonifatius, de civitate VALERIA. Quartus, natione Marsorum. Ex Joanne patre medico...*” LIBER PONTIFICALIS), today’s San Benedetto dei Marsi.

His father Giovanni, a medic, noticing in the young Boniface sensibility, intelligence, quick wit, and generosity, sent him to the Benedictine monks, whose monasteries were situated between Subiaco and Montecassino, to obtain a cultural formation adequate to his personality, as was the custom in noble families of those times.

Here, he embraced the *Regula Benedicti* ORA ET LABORA (the Benedictine canon ‘pray and work’ - n. of tr.), and became a monk.

In the Year of the Lord 590, Pope Gregory (St. Gregory Magnus) strode over the papal threshold and, being Benedictine himself, wanted him by his side as Pontifical Deacon, entrusting to his care various diplomatic offices, among which that of Apocrisary (Apostolic Announcer, ambassador) at the Court of Byzantine Constantinople.

On the death of Pope Gregory (604 ad), after a brief transitional reign of two Popes, Sabiniano I and Boniface III, he was called back to Rome and declared Pope by the populace and by the clergy, becoming POPE BONIFACE IV.

After his election, he asked, and obtained from the Emperor of the Orient, Niceforo Foca, permission to sanctify the PANTHEON, a pagan temple dedicated to all the gods, saving it from sure ruin. From Cybele, goddess of fertility, wife of Saturn, mother of all the gods, the PANTHEON thus passed on to the Madonna, mother of all martyrs, and was named SANTA MARIA AD MARTIRES. Thus the dogma of MARY QUEEN OF MARTYRS was instituted; and what’s more the festivity of All Martyrs became the FESTIVITY OF ALL SAINTS, falling on the first day of November, later placed together with the FESTIVITY OF ALL HOLY SOULS OF PURGATORY, falling the second day of November.

In the month of March in the year 610 a.d., he called the first great COUNCIL OF ROME, whose canonic priests constituted the ROMAN or GREGORIAN LITHURGY.

During this council, it was established that the *Regula Benedicti* ORA ET LABORA, would be adopted by all the European monasteries. Thus the basis for the CHRISTIAN UNIFICATION OF EUROPE was thrown down (Christian European roots).

He completed the conversion to Christianity of the LUMBARDS and other Celtic peoples, among which there were the ANGLOS.

He wove diplomatic relationships with the sovereigns of Europe. He admonished and instructed Bishops and Abbots keeping them all united with Papal Rome.

He resolved problems of filosofhic-Christiologic nature, which had caused the *Schism of Aquileia* or that of the *Three Chapters*.

He donated to the Benedictine monks, his paternal household: "...*Hic domum suam monasterium fecit...*" (LIBER PONTIFICALIS), which became a monastery dedicated to St. Benedict from Norcia. The *Civitas Valeria*, thus Christianized, became San Benedetto dei Marsi.

At his death, May 8, 615, he was acclaimed SAINT BONIFACE IV, POPE.

Crucial centuries have never been wanting nor long years of extreme tension for invasions, dominations and wars, upsetting vast populations of the earth. But the unchained violence of the Saracen hordes was blood-freezing when they swept down on undefended inhabitants, like horrid falcons, sowing massacre and terror, killing without discrimination, setting fire to and destroying homes, churches and convents; terrified the people fled...



Site of *Sante Marcucce* (Saint Mark) where, according to the tradition, the first Christians reunited.
1st century a.d – San Benedetto dei Marsi (Marruvium)

916 a.d. At Pescina, in the county of Apinianic (Apamea), rose a flourishing monastery, dependent on St. Vincent of Volturno: there, not even the walls remained after the devastations of those ferocious barbarians. The few who had escaped death found refuge in the well-furnished castles and nearby fortresses.

Along the Saracen Ridge, North of Cocullo, in front of Goriano Sicoli, caught in a pinching crunch, that ‘blind rage’ of the Marsians and Paeligni’s was utterly obliterated. The few who managed to flee from the massacre, running as fast as they could, along the mountain tops, sought refuge in the Castle of St. Angiolo of Barreggio (Barrea), where, with no way out, they died prey to the flames. But in the intent to follow these historic events as they came about, let us remember that, even before the *Bulla* of Stefano IX, of 1057, addressed to Pandolfo, Bishop of Marsi, in this diocese important juridical edicts (*placiti cassinesi*) were kept which we cite in their chronological order:

970 ad. : judgment held to recover some estates of Forcona, situated in Marsian territory ‘*in campo Caistri, ad ipsam civitatem Marsian am.*’

979 ad. : Another judiciary action to recover ‘*quo recuperatur quaedam*’ *res de Marsi* in Marsian territory, *infra ipsos muros de ipsa civitate Marsian a.*

981 ad. : a quarrel was brought about, in Marsian territory –*in ipso campo Cedici* – to give the investiture to the Casaurian Abbot Adam of a few lands situated in Amiterno, Forcona, Marsia and Valva.

1028 ad. : yet another judgment, in Marsian territory, ‘*in locum qui nominator intus, in ipso episcopio sanctae savinae, quae vocatur Milvia*’.

We can come to the conclusion, from the preceding information, that the city of Marsia-Valeria, in the 10th – 11th centuries, had a primary role of prestige, being a real center of spiritual attraction for all the populations of the Region. Nunzio Faraglia, a historian from Sulmona, in his “*Saggio di corografia abruzzese a medievale*” (Essay on Abruzzese

medieval choreography) , adds that the Marsian diocese extended from the source of the Sangro River to Ovindoli and Rovere, from Carrito to Carsoli. Because of such a prominent position, Pascal II endowed it with dominion and tutorship over the churches of St. Paul at Pescasseroli, of Our Lady at Campomizzo, of St. Mary's at Ortucchio, of St. Peter's at Venere, and of other places of worship profusely listed in the *Bulla*. As time passed by, the cathedral and the very Bishops' palace, exposed to invasions, to roguery by bandits, to floodings by the waters of Fucino Lake, which overflowed because of the streams that flowed into it, went to ruin to such a point that it was impossible for the Bishop to reside there.

1580 ad. For such reasons Matteo Colli asked and obtained from Gregory XIII the authorization to transfer the religious community of St. Sabine to the new cathedral of St. Mary of the Graces in Pescina, until the city and his cathedral were reconstructed "*donec Civita et illius cathedralis restauretur*". As a consequence of the transfer of the Chair to Pescina, the Marsian city and its cathedral fell even more to ruin losing their antique splendor, so much so that few but so venerable traces remain, however profoundly rooted, such as to make a soul shake! Having closed the chapter of the Saint of Aventino in our midst, the liturgical ceremonies which were celebrated in her honor on August 29 went lost, a circumstance which had offered occasion for a flourishing fair in a frame of intense festivities on the part of the merry populace.

Emilio Cerasani, *Dio non ci lascia mai soli*, Sulmona, Aq – 1988

ORIGINS OF THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. SABIN AT SAN BENEDETTO DEI MARSI

About the origins of the Cathedral of St. Sabin, in San Benedetto dei Marsi, there are few and fragmentary reports. It is held, however, that the temple may have been risen as a private oratory, over a sepulcher or next to a crypt, where Christians secretly congregated for their devotions and cults.

313 ad. Only after the Edict of Constantine could it have been built, as can be reconstructed through the Roman Synods from which, what's more, it is not possible to prove the participation of the Bishop of Marsica because of the continuous raging of barbarians who trampled with ruthless violence across our counties.

533 ad. At any rate, the first Bishop of Marsica, historically ascertained, through the Vatican Library, was called Quinto, and was present at the Council of Constantinople II amidst the entourage of Pope Virgil. Only after this era, with St. Elpidio, and by way of the work of the community of neophytes, can it be determined that the construction of the cathedral of St Sabin had begun, as well as the chapel, in the Arestine county, dedicated to the aforementioned saint and to St. Eutichio, where for several centuries their mortal remains were venerated.

968 ad. Speaking of this, we are obliged to remember that the body of St. Eutichio was donated by Alberico Bishop of Marsi, to the Emperor Ottone I.

969 ad. Also that of St. Elpidio was given to Teodoro, Bishop of Metz, relative of the Emperor. The Cathedral of St. Sabin, as it is actually restored, at least for what regards the anterior façade, belongs to the 10th – 11th centuries. It was embellished by the Counts of Celano, and in particular by Berardo.

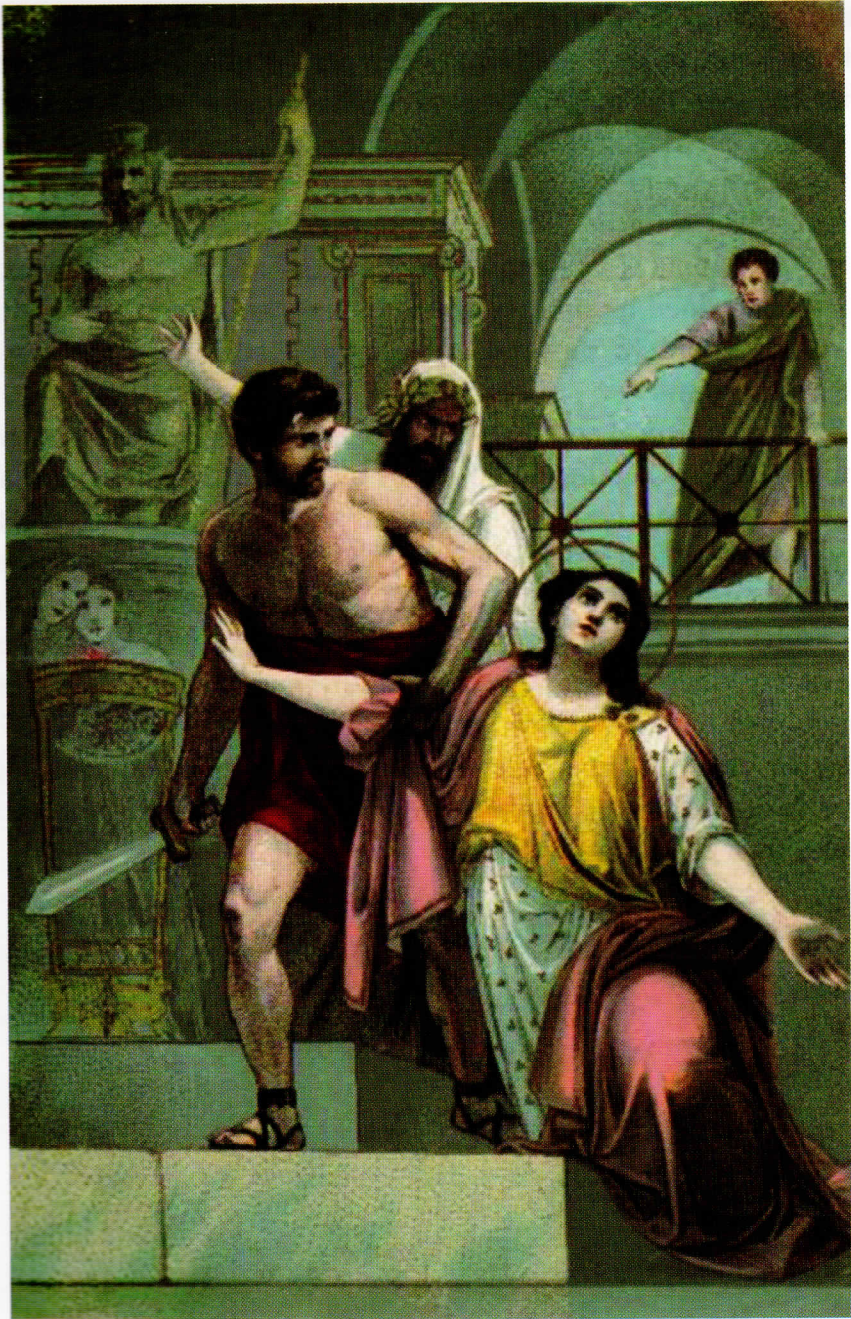
From the testimony of Febonio², historian of Marsia, there are news that

² Muzio Febonio was born at Avezzano on July 13, 1567, and died at Pescina on January 3, 1663. He wrote "*Historia Marsorum*" in 3 tomes, published in Naples in 1678.

“The church was of three naves, supported by columns with capitals of marble, adorned by bas-reliefs and paintings in Greek styles. The women’s gallery was preserved only until a certain era. The central apsidal was supported by pillars of stone with a square base forming connected arches. Its semicircular complex was formed by smooth stones even in the external structure. The portal of vary-colored marble had its spaces illustrated most probably with many animals, enriched by three lesser columns of cylindrical form, on both sides, as a guide to the icons. The architraves were constructed in various modes; above they were sustained by black and white marble.”

1099 – 1118 ad.: We know for sure that the cathedral was built on the ruins of *Capitolium*, next to the antique temple of Jupiter in honor of the martyr Sabin as results from a *Bulla* of Pascal II which recites: *Antigua cathedralis in ipsa civitate Valeria, primum constructa fuit sub invocationem sanctae Sabinae*.ⁱ The vocation and the origin of the saint merit a brief mention. “Sabina was a Roman matron in the full sense of the word, which has her descend from the ancient inhabitants of Latium whose women were kidnapped by Romulus’s companions. Daughter of Herod, adept at the extraction of metals and wife of Valentine, both of noble extraction and rich with terrain goods. Having been widowed she renounced to every comfort offered to her by her social position, elevated and prestigious. In the house of the saint many Christians found refuge. She underwent martyrdom because she left idolatry and devoted herself to God. The people admired this and in particular the bordering Marsians, who were the first to raise a monument for her on the dawn of her martyrdom. This is explained the birth of a cult so vast and lasting in the bordering neighbor! Here Pope Boniface IV was born, he who held the Templar complex, according to the Benedictine rule.

As time went on the Basilica became a great temple adorned with noteworthy works of art and was motive of admiration and praise by many authors. The Bishop’s residence was there, as can be comprehended through the *Bulla* of Stephan IX sent to Pandolfo: “*Ecclesiae Sanctae Sabinae antique civitate marsorum episcopalem sedem largimur*”.



St. Sabina martyr in 122 ad

Because of its position of remarkable prestige, Pascal II attributed to it dominium and control over all the churches of the Diocese. Therein were buried many Bishops among whom St. Berardo, who was head of the Marsian church from 1110 to 1130, with immense merits! And even though it only be a mention, let us leave to the pen of Mr. E. Agostinone the enchantment he felt looking over the cathedral in his "*Italia artistic*": "St. Sabina is a triumph of lights and shadows with a harmony of colors determined by time: it is a solemn architectonic composition and an ornate sculpture, thus rendering her imposing and elegant in the antique Marruvium!" –

After this, the cathedral and the very Bishops' palace, exposed to invasions, to roguery by bandits, to floodings by the waters of Fucino Lake, which overflowed because of the streams that flowed into it, went to ruin to such a point that it was impossible for the Bishop to reside there, so much so that for such reasons Matteo Colli asked and obtained from Gregory XIII (1580) the authorization to transfer the religious community of St. Sabine to the new cathedral of St. Mary of the Graces in Pescina, where the precious relics of St Sabine and, later, those of St. Berardo, our venerated protector, luminous example of humility, goodness and love, gift of the Lord, were welcomed and cared for, as we have more than once referred.

-THE BISHOPS WHO GOVERNED THE ANTIQUE CATHEDRAL OF ST. SABIN UNTIL 1580

We mentioned at the beginning of this piece that St. Sabina underwent martyrdom in 122 ad.; we know as well that in the year 46 of the Christian Era the presence of St. Mark from Galilee has been indicated when preaching the new faith among the Marsians, although clearly the founding of that church could not be made to go back to those years since the Catholic religion was still at its dawning and St. Sabina wasn't even born yet. Nor can other bishops be numbered with the exception of St. Rufino and Cesidio, who came among us to preach the Vangel. Therefore, during the first centuries of the church, the Marsians couldn't have their own bishops for fear of the persecutions which ceased, as is known, in the year 313 ad. with the Edict of Milan, with which, as is notorious, Emperor Constantine conceded the right to Christians to freely profess their cult.

Excluding St. Mark of Galilee by way of the aforementioned reasons, we find St. Rufino, Bishop of Marsia, who was martyred around 237 ad. Then there is a vacancy of more than two and a half centuries, until we come to the Roman Synods held in the years: 499, 501, and 502, under the Pope Simmacus (498 – 514), in which some Abruzzese bishops participated and even underwrote the Acts, among whom we remember *Palladius episcopus Sulmontinus*, *Valentinus episcopus Ecclesiae Aminterninae*, *Valerius* (or *Vaticanus?*), *episcopus Ecclesiae Calenae* or of the *oppidum ceneliensis* (Celano) where around the end of the 5th century, if not already before then, it is not improbable that he moved to there from Marruvium, momentarily, as the residence of the Bishop of Marsia. (cite: *La Cattedrale Basilica di Valva*, Library of the Diocese of Sulmona.)

LIST OF THE SUCCESSION OF BISHOPS IN MARSIA

After Bishop Quintus, already mentioned, we find:

2) Luminous who intervened at the Lateran Council in 649 and after an empty period of almost two centuries we have:

3) Leodrisio (Lidueritus) who was at the Council of Pope Leon IV towards the middle of the 9th century. This bishop underwrote the Roman Synod held by Leon IV and the one held in the year 861 by Nicolas I;

4) Rotarius (962) witness in 968 during a judgment by the Emperor Ottone I in favor of the Church of Saint Mary of Apinianici at Pescina. He was persecuted by the Counts of Marsia because he took the part of the legal Pope, but, on the death of the Anti-Pope, was donated the city of Marsia by Ottone I;

5) Alberico (970) son of Berardo III, Count of Marsia; he did not leave a good remembrance of himself;

6) Quinigi (Quinisius) (994) dragged through his days in continued bitterness and ended his life tragically;

7) Attius (Attone) Bishop of Chieti, who came to this Chair in 1056;

8) Pandolfo (1057) successor of Attius, after only one year;

9) Andrea (1089) governed until 1096:

10) Sigenufio Bishop who was an intruder in Marsia in the year 1097;

SAINT BERARDO

11) St. Berardo: in 1110 we have St. Berardo of the Counts of Marsia, elected Bishop by Pope Pascal II. Because of his virtue he merited being decorated with the Sacred Purple entitled to St. Angelo of Peschiera, and later to St. Grisogono.

A global *bull* of the Pope, which begins;”*Sicut iniusta...*” confirmed in 1115 ad the borders, the properties, the rights of his Diocese, enumerating, one by one, all the churches under him. In this period the clergy of St. Sabine went about sustaining serious quarrels against the clergy

of St. John the Baptist's in Celano, who maintained that they had the right to powers not much less than Episcopalian: but Pope Eugene III sentenced decidedly in favor of those of the Cathedral. Up until 1130 we have memory of Bishop Berardo, but after him, as consequences of those quarrels, no successor can be found before 1147. The deeds of his life can be read in Mr. Ughelli's writings, thus we shall briefly reassume: "St. Berardo, Bishop of Marsia and of the Cathedral of St. Sabine, was born at Colle di Montebove, a Marsian castle, near Carsoli, son of Berardo III and Teodosia, Counts of Marsia, in the year 1079. He was educated in Christianity by his parents and entrusted to further education at the Chapter of St. Sabine in the city of Marsia, under the direction of Bishop Pandolfo who cared for him as fellow monk. After this, following the advice of the above mentioned bishop, he was lead by his father to the Monastery of Montecassino, where under the schooling of those monks, distinguished for their holiness and doctrine, he carried out a preparation in all the ecclesiastic sciences, so much so that, in difficult questions and controversies, they would go to him for his profound and just judgment.

Pope Pascal II, come to know that more than being talented with so many virtues, St. Berardo possessed a character pronouncedly charitable towards his own kind, consecrated him as bishop, entrusting unto him the Marsian diocese, where despite his innate humbleness, he took on with courage the labor of restoration by ending simony (a sin whereby one concedes spiritual well-being through payment), renewing discipline in the clergy, which had been side-tracked by the powerful vassals, and aiding and protecting the poor.

When setting in motion these reforms, he often went against resistance on the part of the Barons and the lesser tyrants, supporting rumors and lies of every kind, and for this reason he was forced to flee from probable death, at times because of organized stoning, at times avoiding poisoned food prepared just for this purpose by sacrilegious hands. Despite his soul being highly charitable towards his neighbor and his enemies, he made sure that his persecutors, repenting for every error they had made, pleaded pardon in tears for their guilty actions. For this and



QUI S. BERARDO
PUNTO DEI MARI
CON LA GAMBA
SULLA SPALLE
L'ANNO 1105 E' RIPOSO
LASCANDO LE SUE ORME
MERAVIGLIOSAMENTE
SU UNA PIETRA
DISPERSA
DURANTE I LAVORI
NEL 1977
DEL SOTTOPASSAGGIO
A RICORDO
IL POPOLO CELANESE
NEL 5 CENTEN. SIG
DELLA SUA NASCITA
POSE

Statue of St. Berardo – Celano

"HERE ST. BERARDO
PATRON OF MARSIA
WITH THE BELL
ON HIS SHOULDERS
IN THE YEAR 1108 RESTED
LEAVING HIS FOOTPRINTS
MIRACULOUSLY
ON A STONE
LOST
DURING THE CONSTRUCTION WORK
IN 1977
FOR AN UNDERPASS
IN MEMORY
THE PEOPLE OF CELANO
DURING THE 9TH CENTURY CELEBRATIONS
OF HIS BIRTH
PLACED THIS."

other merits he was awarded by God with special prodigies which came about during his lifetime. In his episcopate there was always a table set up with food for the poor and also aid sent to the neediest was quick to arrive. His life was a splendid example of patience, goodness and love lived out with the sweetest humbleness. On the 29th day of August, 1130, consecrated to the Saintly Martyr Sabine, St. Berardo celebrated his last papal mass in his cathedral, in the presence of the chapter and of almost all the parishioners of the diocese. In the homily that he pronounced he described the frailness of life, predicted his own death, repeating more than once that from that altar he would not have been able to offer the delicate sacrifice any more since in the few days left to him by the Lord, he would have to visit the diocese, to bring to completion his highly important mission. After having settled those things that he hadn't finished yet, he took on his last visit to the diocese: the eighth day of the month of September he arrived in Celano, where he had an attack of lancing pains caused by the hepatitis which often tormented him. He stayed there for many days during which he continued to send out orders for the well-being of that Church of St. John and of the other churches of Celano and of his subjects. Feeling the arrival of death upon him, despite the fact that the medics did their best possible to delay his departure, given the serious state of his illness, he went back to the Chair of the diocese, after having thanked the Celanese people for all the care they had taken of him.

Five days before his death, he predicted to all the brothers reunited around his bedside, speaking with the following moving discourse as his last will and testament: "Brothers you who have always been my glory, my praise, my honor, my crown, soul, victory and health of mine, you who very well know that for me the last hour is almost come, in which I must present myself to render justification for what I have done in life to the Highest Lord, you who remember what I have accomplished following your wise advice for this church of Marsica, you who well know that what I consumed was used to feed the poor, the gold and silver, not to mention the wealth left me by my forebears as my patrimony, or given to me by the Church to sustain me, I used to allevi-

ate the begging poor and to donate worthy efforts which raise up these works to their the sublime and have kept for me only the accumulation of the virtues which shall accompany me to Heaven.” After having given this and other splendid examples of patience and virtue, he died on the morning of Monday the 3rd of November at the age of 51.

His funeral was celebrated in the Cathedral of St. Sabine in the presence of an immense crowd come to bitterly weep the loss of their Pastor. Thus, because by his intercession some who had been possessed recovered and some who were ill had been healed, he was buried in a place prepared for him in the right-hand nave of that church. During the following days there was such an intense gathering of the faithful that the Prevost Stefan was forced to keep the cathedral open from morning until evening to avoid the crowding at the entrance of the sacred temple. In those days it came about that a blind woman from Lecce regained her sight.

The Benedictines who at the time lived not far from there, in the monastery dedicated to St. Benedict and to St. Anastasio, began venerating St. Berardo with solemn and devout processions and they saw uncountable prodigies brought about by the hand of the Almighty which thus manifested the sublime place that St. Berardo had taken in Heaven. Mr. G. Signino, already referred to in this work, eye witness in the college of St. Sabine, cites the name and place of origin of those many who obtained miracles from the Saint, now venerated as Patron of Pescina, where all Marsica comes, with vivid devotion, to the solemn celebrations, in his honor, the first and second day of May each year.

After his death, during a period of 17 years, no other bishop is known of, because of the quarrels which rose up regarding the orders of the consecration of the ‘Holy Ointments’ betwixt the canonic priests of St. Sabine and the clergy of Celano. For this reason only starting in 1147 can we register the count of the Bishops of Marsica:

12) Benedict (1147) who surely was extremely patient in carrying out the delicate and difficult summit between the two contending churches in those heated years:

13) Brother Berardo was Bishop of Marsia in the year 1155;

14) Zachary, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1170, was present at the Third Lateran Council, celebrated by Alexander III, in which 300 bishops intervened, and he underwrote the Council Act with this signature: “ZAC-CARIA MARSUS”

15) Eliano, Bishop of Marsia in 1188, was ignored both by Mr. Ughelli and by the Marsian historians Febonius and Mr. Còrsignani. He is remembered as a tough defender of the rights of Marsian Church against the Monastery of Montecassino for some unsubstantial pretenses. Under him, with the *Bulla* of Clemente III, the borders of the diocese of Marsica were defined.

16) Ingeamo Bishop of Marsia in 1198:

17) Tommaso Bishop of Marsia in 1209:

18) Anselmo Bishop of Marsia in 1210; he wrote on a round wheel the prophecies of the Popes from Boniface IX up to Pius III; these were printed at Venice in 1600, and signed with the signature “*Anselmo Marsicano*”;

19) Berardo; Bishop of Marsia in the year 1221. Under this bishop and precisely in 1223, the city of Marsia was sacked by Count Tommaso, who, after putting to flight and imprisoning the imperial soldiers, began to supply himself with goods necessary for sustaining a siege which he inevitably would have had to undergo in his castle in Celano;

20) Giovanni: Bishop of Marsia in 1230;

21) Oderisio: Bishop of Marsia in 1236, indicated with a letter N by Mr. Ughelli and by the two Marsian historians. He was born at Sulmona where he was a canonic clergyman of St. Panfilo, Dean of the benefices of St. Mary of the Frascherie, at Frascati (near Introdacqua);

22) Cesario or Cesare: Bishop of Marsia in 1254. Of him we know only that Bishop Cesario died at Rome the same year of his consecration.

23) Nicola or Nicolò; Bishop of Marsia in that same year (1254) in which Bishop Cesario died. He was born at Celano, where he had the church of St Francis built in the new part of the town. He was present at the consecration of the church of the convent at Castelvecchio.

PESCINA dopo il terremoto del 13 Gennaio 1915
Panorama col Castello e principio d'incendio



PESCINA after the earthquake of January 13, 1915. Panorama with the Castle and the beginnings of a fire.
The church of Saint Berardo is intact.

After the death of Bishop Nicholas, the canonic clergy of St. Sabine elected Jacopo, canonic priest of the cathedral, without previous authorization from those of Celano, who retained that their equal cathedric right should be recognized to their church, since the Prelate who had been the motivation of the controversy had been elected Prevost of that Collegiate.

Ten years of quarrels passed by before Jacopo could obtain the Papal confirmation that was conceded to him, after a thorough examination, by Pope Honorius IV with the declaration, however, that in the future the legitimate Title of the Chapter of Celano not be denied, thus implicitly recognizing its right to be a part of it. But not even after this gentle completion of the event did the contrasts between the canonic priests of the Cathedral of St. Sabine and those of Celano cease. "Following such a state of events, Marsia underwent a period of come-back and thus the inhabitants scattered a bit everywhere returned and with them labors on new constructions started up again: buildings flourished and bulwarks were erected off towards Venere, while the Cathedral of St. Sabine readied itself to welcome Pope Honorius IV, so as to seal the newfound peace.";

24) Stefano or Sylvester; Bishop of Marsia in the year 1275;

25) Jacopo from Venere: Bishop of Marsia in 1286. He accepted along with his chapter the donation of the waters of the Giovenco River. He obtained for his Bishopric the monastery that the Benedictines had in the town of Cese, assuming the title of Abbot of that town;

26) Brother Iacopo Biscimensis ex Puccia, Dominican, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1295: he made himself known also as promoter of public works, having the canal built which channeled the waters of the Giovenco River, so as to set in motion the mills of the church, for which he concluded the transaction with Ugone del Balzo, obtaining Royal Consensus;

27) Pietro Ferri, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1327;

28) Tommaso Valignani, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1336;

- 29) Tommaso, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1348;
- 30) Bartolomeo , Bishop of Marsia in the year 1349;
- 31) Tommaso Pucci, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1353;
- 32) Giacomo De Mutis (Militibus?), Bishop of Marsia in the year 1363;
- 33) Berardo, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1365; He obtained from Gregory XI the letter for the restitution of the usurped rights of the Church of Marsia;
- 34) Pietro Albertini, , Bishop of Marsia in the year 1380;
- 35) Giacomo Romano, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1384;
- 36) Gentile of Aielli, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1387;
- 37) Filippo, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1398;
- 38) Salvato Maccasani of Pereto, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1418;
- 39) Tommaso Maccasani of Pereto, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1420;
- 40) Saba Dei Cartoni, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1430;
- 41) Angelo Maccasani of Pereto, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1446;
- 42) Francesco Maccasani, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1470: he took possession of the Cathedral of St. Sabine in the destroyed city of Marsia. He died at Pescina, after a long illness, in 1471;
- 43) Ludovico Sienese, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1472;
- 44) Gabriele Maccasani of Pereto, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1481;
- 45) Giacomo Maccasani of Pereto, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1511; while this bishop governed the church of Marsia, in the midst of the ruins, the antique statue of the Madonna of Victory was found, to whom a temple was raised over the fortress of Scurcola which later was enlarged and rebuilt by the devout inhabitants of that town;
- 46) Dionigi Maccasani of Pereto, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1520;
- 47) Marcello Crescenti, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1533; of Rome originally, he was bestowed, nine years later, with Cardinal red;

48) Michele Franzino, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1546;

49) Nicola De Virgiliis, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1548;

50) Giambattista Milanese, Bishop of Marsia in the year 1562; Florentine, he was among the fathers of the Council of Trent, he founded the Seminary of the diocese, and called the first Synod of the diocese;

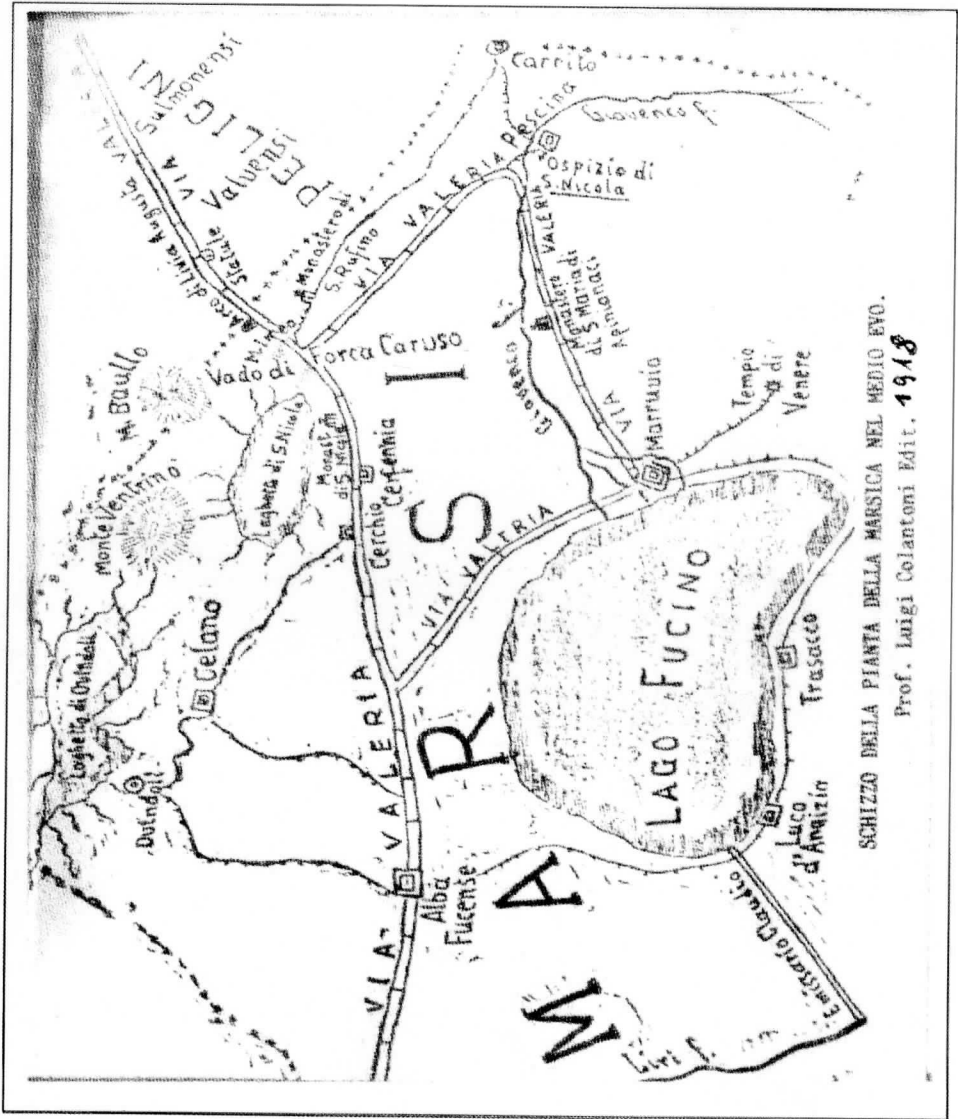
51) Matteo Colli (1536/1596) , Bishop of Marsia in the year 1579.

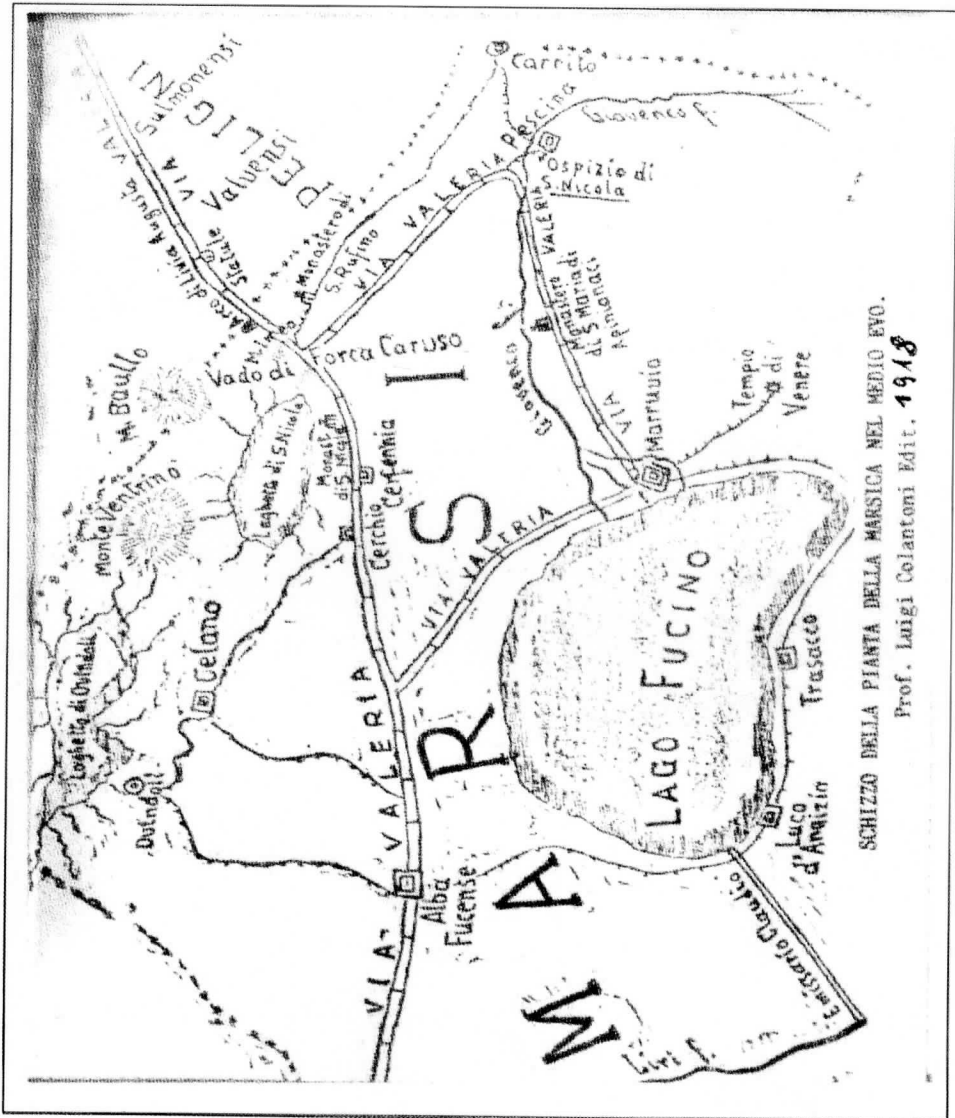
Napoletano, last Bishop of the Cathedral of St. Sabine because the following year, that is in 1580, for reasons which we have explained elsewhere in these writings, transferred the Cathedral and the residence of the diocese to Pescina, where he had begun the construction of the new Cathedral, a toil which, however, was brought to completion in the years immediately following. He developed the plan for the bell tower of the Annunziata in Sulmona, also having a degree in Engineering.

He died at Rome in 1596, where he was buried in the Church of St. Lawrence in Lucina with an epigraph of honor. He seems to be inhumed also at Pescina in the Church of St. Mary of the Graces, as is observed on a headstone in memory, inside that same church (...).

(News given us by Prof. Arch. A. Pecilli 1897/1980. Honorary Inspector of monuments and collaborator with the Abruzzese Representatives of The Historic Fatherland).

Emilio Cerasani "Marruvium e S. Sabina memorie storiche di due civiltà" (Marruvium and St. Sabine historic memories of two civilizations)





LEGEND of the Map of "Medieval Marsica" by Prof. I. Colantoni

The Valeria Road was built by Consul P. Valerius to be able to go from Rome to Milonia and around it.

Marruvium is the *caput Marsorum* since the 4th century before Christ (today's San Benedetto dei Marsi).

Temple of Venus : This rose over a rocky cliff above today's part of Pescina, the village of Venere, it is today's Sanctuary - Church of the Madonna of Wise Counsel.

Monastery of Saint Nicola: This was found near the Pass of Forca Ferrato (today called Forca Caruso), on the plains before one reaches the pass, after Cerfennia of antique times, today's Colle Armele. It was an orphanage which depended on the Hospital at Rome called Saintly Spirit of the Saxons.

Arch of Livia Augusta: This was found right at the Pass of Forca Caruso, signaling the border before the Paeligni's. Livia Augusta was Commodus's sister, daughter of Mark Aurelius.

Monastery of Saint Rufino: Dedicated to the Bishop of Marsia, martyr in the year 237 after Christ, it could be found at the beginning of the road (now impossible to transit), which descends from Forca Caruso to Pescina, passing under the "Ponte della Valle" (Valley Bridge).

Monastery of Saint Mary of APignanici (At Pescina): In the year 916 after Christ it was destroyed by the Saracens, (in Apamea); on that same site there was a head statue dedicated to the god Fucino.

Carrito: Here Giovanni Canale "Artusi", called 'from Pescina', was born, sculptor, bronze foundry man, first collaborator to Mr. Bernini at Rome. (He founded the bronze, following Bernini's project, of the "Baldacchino" ("the Canopy Bed") in Saint Peter's in Rome.)

Statule: from Latin, station, it is today's Goriano Sicoli.

Claudio's Emissary: made Lake Fucino's waters flow into the Liri River.

LEGEND OF THE GENEALOGICAL TREE
of Saint Rosalia and Saint Berardo of the Family
of the COUNTS of MARSICA - the BERARDO family

- A) Santa Rosalia descends by direct bloodline from Charlemagne.
- B) From Berardo Francesco (the Frank) Count of Marsica there are two branches which divide and lead to the County of Celano and to Saint Berardo Abbot of Teramo.
- C) Saint Rosalia's great grandfather, Berardo IV Count of Marsica, at Carsoli, (Chair of half the Marsian Diocese) with Bishop Sigenufo, Year 1097, the other half had stayed in Valeria (San Benedetto dei Marsi) in the Castle of Colli di Monte Bove, and is Teodino's and St. Berardo's father, St. Berardo being the Cardinal Father Bishop who reunited the Marsian Diocese.
- D) Teodino is Sinibaldo's father, from the County of the Roses, who built the castle of Rocca Sinibalda in the Rieti area.
- E) Sinibaldo is Saint Rosalia's father, she is the patron saint of Palermo and Sicily.

Library of the Monastery of the Benedictine Virgins – Monreale – Palermo

Tornamira (1674) – translated into current Italian by F. Zazzara (2009).

THE COUNTY OF MARSICA – THE BERARDI FAMILY OF CELANO

Year 816 after Christ: GERARDO (Berardo) (first Count)

Year 890: Countess Doda

Year 910: Countess Doda marries the grandson of Charlemagne, Laudano (also called Luidon or Leon):

Berardo Francesco is born, fore-father of the Berardo family.

Year 1079 – 1130: Saint Berardo (Berardi)

Year 1115: Bulla by Pope Pascal II (where the borders of Marsica are defined, still the same today)

- Berardo Count of Celano

- Rainaldo Count of Celano

- Berardo Count of Celano

Year 1120: Count Crescenzo, Berardo's son, writes an Act of Donation for the lands of Trasacco.

Year 1198: Pietro I Berardi

Year 1212: Count Riccardo, Pietro I's brother

Year 1223: Pietro II of the Berardi (LAST ONE)

OTHER MEMBERS of the BERARDI FAMILY

- DE SANGRO - SANSEVERO

- BORRELLO

- BARILE

HISTORIC NOTES ON THE MARSICA

FROM THE SARACENS TO THE MIDDLE AGES

Saracens – Counts Berardo – Swabians

Normands – Middle Ages

Because of the geographical position of the region, situated between the Adriatic and the Tyrrhenian Seas, at the height of about 700 meters above sea level, surrounded by natural bulwarks, it has had an extremely important strategical role during the Italic Wars. The Marsica, known in antique times as the Valerian Province because of the Consular road that crossed it, almost never had clearly assigned borders. Its fate, during the Middle ages, is submerged in an inextricable mystery. When the Lombards took possession of the antique Roman towns, Marsica became a Gestalt, the “*Castaldatus Marsorum*”, in which besides Marsi or Marsia, as the city had begun to be called since the first years of Christianity, there were also Alba, Celano, Trasacco and Luco. Under the Emperor Honorius our region was called Valeria, it included Tivoli, Carsoli, Furcona, Amiterno, Norcia and Rieti and had as its borders the Samnio River, the Picene River and Umbria (Lugini, “*Memorie storiche della regione Equicola*”; p. 88).

Valentinian I, in 364ad, to repress the plague of bandits which infested the county, had prohibited the carrying of arms or to go by horse across the region. Odoacre, in 476, wisely governed the entire territory of the region. Under Theodoric, in 493, the conditions of Marsica worsened because of the quarrels and religious persecutions. With Belisarius and Narsete the territory underwent torments of every kind even though, after the Greek-Gothic dominion, under Narsete, it managed to re-acquire a sort of tranquility. With the invasion by Totila, who crossed the region in the years 543-548 intent on the pursuit of John the Bloodthirsty who held the city of Alba, the situation became even more serious, especially in 554, when Marsica was run across by the Leutarius and Buccellixus, Germanics who, called in by the Goths, came down to Italy

with 75,000 men and like a human flood, poured upon our counties, leaving behind them nothing but ashes and cadavers (Procopius of Caesarea, "Gothic Wars"). Under the Lombard dominion, in 591, Marsica was included as a part of the Duchy of Spoleto, which took in Sabines, Equicoles, Vestines, Paeligni's and Picenes (*Regesto Farfense*, n. 55, 57, 79, 94). Using this document it can be demonstrated that, at the distance of a century and a half after its first occupation, the Duchy affirmed itself in our county, while, in the meantime, the populations were administered by bishops and by Benedictine monasteries which rose up in great numbers just about everywhere. This religious order introduced into the Lombard religion a sort of ecclesiastic monk feudalism which survived that same civil rule. Thus there were the courts and the masses which depended on the great monasteries for all their public and administrative acts. At the beginning of the 7th century, Marsia, at the same time called Valeria, confusing the name of the supposed capital of that province and that of the road, was the Episcopalian city of the Marsian region. The death of King Desiderius put an end, in 774, to the Lombard domination; and, with Charlemagne, began the era of the Franks' dominion. With the new masters the Gestalt became an important County, at the head of which there were the Counts which began to govern the region starting with Ludwig II. Under the Franks Marsica was raised up as an autonomous province under the name of Province of Marsica, becoming a part of the Abruzzi, from the northernmost territory, *in finibus Aprutiis*. However Marsica, to tell the truth, remained divided between the counties of Alba and of Celano which were insolubly bound by the play of inheritance amongst the Swabians, Angioines and Papal State as we shall shortly see. With Charlemagne, in the Gestalt of Marsica, a new form of feudalism was introduced which contemplated, in its regulations, homage, oath of faithfulness, investiture, rights and duties of the vassals and of the Lords., the duels, the Holy Truce, feudal hunting, chivalry and tournaments. Charlemagne provided even public instruction, placing in their own Chapters the institution of schools at the monasteries, in the episcopes and the parishes, institutes which lasted until the abolition of the Feuds (1806). In the following centuries, the Counts who affirmed to be direct descendants of Charlemagne's clan

became along with Trasmondo, Berardo and Oderisi, a clan particularly imposing in the region.

THE SARACENS

These Muslim people, enemies of Christians, having landed near Rome in 846, not being able to take the city, took to sacking the Basilicas of St. Peter's and St. Paul's which were outside of the city walls. Immediately following these events, Pope Leon IV had a wall circle constructed, called by him 'Leonine', which served to keep back other attempts of those barbarians in the year 849. In the meantime Ildebert, first Count of Marsica, was succeeded by Gherard, still depending on the Duchy of Spoleto. Leon Ostiensis (*Chronicon*, book I. chap. 35), narrates that, in that same year, the Saracen King Seodan, master of Bari, having got a large booty at Capua, on his return to Bari was assailed by Gestalts, the Telesian Maielpot, the Bovian Guandelberto, Lamberto Duke of Spoleto and by Gherard Count of Marsica. It was summer, and our troops, even though they were tired from the continuous forced marches, at the sight of the Saracens, pushed on by great zeal, swooped down on them in disarray, ending up sourly defeated. After that the Emperor Ludwig II set out on a crusade against the Saracens, putting Bari under siege until it finally fell into his possession. In the following year 881, at the death of the Emperor Ludwig II, the Saracens, after reorganizing themselves, assaulted the Monastery of St. Vincent at Volturmo and, after having utterly destroyed the monks, invaded Marsica, bringing with them misery and death wherever they went, so much so that the fields, for lack of working hands, ended up covered by only wild briars and weeds. In the same year they destroyed not only the Monastery of Apinianic at Pescina, but their destructive fury blew over all the Marsian communities, and thus, in the entire region, the monastic Courts disappeared along with the villas and the churches; the monks were for the greater part killed, while the populations fled terrorized, seeking protection and refuge in the castles and fortresses of the diocese that still resist today against the weathering of time, such as Roccavecchia (Pescina), Rocca

di Botte, Rocca di Mezzo, Rocca di Cambio, Castellafiume, Castel di Ieri, Castelvechio and in many other places.

The Saracens' devastation made a profound impression in Christian souls, so much so that Guido II, Duke of Spoleto, in 886, called all his subjects to arms, including those of the Marsian community, and moved against the enemy which he put to flight on the Garigliano, after having exterminated those who opposed him with desperate resistance.

However, in 888 the Saracens renewed once again their roguery, taking advantage of the absence of Guido II, still at war along the Trebbia against Berengarius who wanted to subtract from the former the Crown of Italy; some years later (891), we find them once again in the Valeria Province, where they made easy play the unarmed and defenseless populations, sacking, burning down and preying on the cities, villages and fields.

In 916 Pope John X sent out a call to every Christian prince to annihilate the Saracens. He himself headed the expedition in which the new Duke of Spoleto, Alberico, took part. The expedition was quite fortunate, so much so that the Saracens were completely annihilated and those which sought refuge in the castle of St. Angelo of Barrea there remained burnt up as prey of the flames.

THE BERARDI COUNTS IN MARSICA

Leon Ostiensis narrates the when, in 926, Count Hugo of Provence, descendent on his maternal side of Charlemagne, came to our peninsula to be crowned King of Italy, along with him came Count Attone his relative, and maternal uncle of Berard called "*Franciscus*". By way of this family bond the Counts Berardo, similar to the Franks, used to under-sign various legal acts with the formula : *Comites Marsorum ex natione Francorum*. Exactly when the care of the extremely vast dominion of the Province of Valeria had been assigned to our Berardo, called "Franciscus", doesn't clearly show up but it is certain that this did not come about before 926 because only then Count Attone, his uncle, came to Italy with Count Hugo of Provence. In 937 he captained

an armed clash against the Hungarians, a Finnic people who as barbarians and nomads had invaded the Marsica. In that occasion the Marsians and the Paeligni's, captained by Berardo "Franciscus", massacred the enemy. The glorious armed conflict achieved by said Count Berardo against the Hungarians gained him great fame and merited honors, as Mr. Brogi refers in the cited work about Marsica. Mr. Brogi refers also that a Berardo II, Count of Marsica, son of Berardo "Franciscus", was the father of that Berard III who had as sons not only Alberico, Bishop of Marsia in 970, but also Rainaldo, Teodino, Oderisio, Berardo, Gualtiero, Gualdo and Romano.

MARSICA UNDER THE DOMINION OF THE SAXONS FROM 962 UNTIL 1138

The province of Valeria, of which the Marsica was an integral part, continued to stay under the Duchy of Spoleto even with the advent of the Saxons. In fact, in 981, by way of a public juridical edict held there, it can be seen that the Emperor Ottone II was present in the camp of Cedici, at Marsia, with Counts Rainaldo, Teodino and Berardo III, who welcomed him with great celebrations in a home built just for that purpose (*Chron, casauriense*, col. 973); during his brief sojourn there were great festivities put forth in honor of the Emperor, with solemn religious functions, rich banquets, hunting parties, tournaments, folkloristic celebrations and illuminations within the charming view of Lake Fucino with its fishermen from Luco, on flat boats, dressed in sheepskins, that same Fucino which, in full Medieval times, harassed by so many dire happenings, had gone back to invading the luxurious harvesting lands, the grassy fields and the surrounding vineyards with its waters.

RINALDO I (1000 – 1010)

With Rinaldo I (o Rainaldo) begins the dominion of the Berardo's in the Marsica. In those ever so sad times in which Italy had become a real and true field of battle, of violence, of factions and of great misery,

Marsica enjoyed a certain tranquility, both because Rinaldo I of the family of the Berardo Counts was feared and beloved, and because in his county many Benedictine monasteries had risen up, the latter, despite the widespread oppressions and immorality, managed to administer justice as best they could, avoiding famine, thanks to the dedication those good monks put into cultivation of the fields and in all the craftsmen activities, in which they turned out to be excellent masters of art, with illustrious works and untiring workers. It was around the year 1000 and many, believing the end of the world to be near, to be assured that they might save their souls, bestowed inheritances with acts of prodigal magnificence to the monastic orders. In the meantime Rinaldo I married Gervisa, widow of Count Lando of Teano, from whom he had Oderisio who set his home in the Sangritain region, while Berardo III assured descendents to the dynasty of the Marsian Counts, establishing himself in the main city, where in the year 1020 he was witness to a famous public judgment in front of the Church of St. Sabine, held by the Marquis Hugo of Spoleto, during that occasion the latter had obtained the restitution of many objects of wealth to the monastery of Casauria. Berardo III had four children: Siginulfo, Rainaldo, Pometta and Gerardo IV; The latter, on his part, had three children, of which Berardo V was the father of St. Berardo (Gattola, "*Historia Cassinese*").

THE NORMANDS IN THE MARSICA

When the Normands entered into the Marsica, the various feuds and vast monastic possessions underwent enormous changes: the latter could barely keep their kiosks and all the rest was divided into small fiefs. To keep around our areas, we shall say that Count Rainaldo owned at that time, besides the estate of Celano, Foce, Ayello, Pescina, Venere, Vico in Marsia, Goriano Sicco, Aschi and Ortona, also the feuds of St. Sebastian, Cocullo, Secinaro and Molina, subject to military services, while the Counts Berardo and Ruggero held dominion over Alba, Castelnuovo, Paterno, Pietraquaria, Trasacco, Luco, Pescocanale and some other lands. He also had the authority over use of the Valley of

Sora, Civita D'Antino, Roccaviva, Civitella, Morino, Collelongo and other places. Now Rainaldo, Berardo and Ruggero, being descendants of the Great Counts of Marsia, were the only Feudal Lords of Marsica, which means they had major sovereignty and administered goods, but were loyal to the King. With the Normands things changed: deprived of the greater part of their feuds, even burdened with military service obligations, they lost the denomination of *Comites Marsorum* and took on that of the castles where they abode. The Normand dynasty extinguished itself in 1198 with the death of Queen Constance, widow of Henry Hohenstuafen of Germany, son of Emperor Fredrick. Constance as her testament left the kingdom to her son Fredrick, barely three years old, and delegating tutorship to Pope Innocence III, who for his part entrusted the pupil to the care of Cardinal Cenci, who later became Pope under the name of Honorius III.

THE SWABIAN PERIOD IN MARSICA

Fredrick II, crowned King of Sicily towards the end of 1198, soon found himself under the control of the feudal lords who quarreled amongst themselves for the political influence over the kingdom. Only in 1206 Innocence III, having proclaimed Fredrick of age, permitted that he go to Germany where he could be elected King, in 1212, at Frankfurt, thus becoming the undisputed master of the Crown of Germany. Reorganizing the affairs of his country, he promised to the new pope Honorius III to conduct a crusade against the infidels and assuring that he would administer Sicily separately from the Empire, donned the Imperial Crown in St. Peter's on November 22, 1220, at which ceremony Richard of Celano presented him homage, together with other barons, with arms and war horses, called *destrieres (dextari)*. But such generosity was shown to be vain because of the sudden turnabout, and as a consequence the County of Celano was arbitrarily occupied, without investiture, by Thomas, Count of Molise and Celano, believed by Mr. Febonio to be Innocence III's brother and by Mr. Gattinara Honorius III's. Quite soon in the county of Celano a series of resistances arose

against the Swabian. Despite the silent as well as desperate fight by the Count for the possession of the castle of Ovindoli and the fortress of Boviano, Celano was forced to surrender and razed to the ground, in such a way that only the Church of St. John was saved. The Celanese were deported; some to Malta and some to Sicily, some to Calabria.

Only in 1227, by intercession of Pope Honorius III, Frederick permitted the exiles to return to their homeland, where they quickly built up a new city at the foot of Mount Tino naming it Cesarea (*Caesa*, destroyed; *rea*, guilty, held guilty), the name by which it went until the death of the Emperor. Tommaso, deprived of the lordship of Molise and of Celano, set out to put his services to reign of the Holy Seat, under Gregory IX. In 1229 Frederick II finally decided to take on the crusade to the Holy Lands, which he had promised to the pope to do several times. Being judged a liar, even though for reasons of State, when he came back he found the Valley of Sora and the whole Marsica occupied by Tommaso, Ruggero of the Aquila, another exile, and by Pandolfo Savelli from Anagni, all chancellors assigned. Two hundred soldiers were enough for Frederick to bring back and to maintain order inside the Marsica and along the borders of the State. To assure a lasting peace to his subjects, Frederick II, in 1230, emanated a law on Castling, in which all the castles, townships, villas, and cities would have to unite into a confederation with a common set of statutes. Each castle had one or more parishes which formed a sort of civil and religious neighborhood. The castle was entrusted to the *Magister militum*, a dignitary with a lower status than a Baron or a Count, but not depending on them. To the baron or the count each township or manned castle would have to have a contingent of soldiers and tithes of grain were due to the *Magister militum* in order to maintain the soldiers and an annual load of wood for the barracks and housing. Excise taxes and portal duty taxes, owed for the guard service at the gates, were introduced; the state properties were reserved for civic uses, such as livestock grazing, wood gathering, wild fruit gathering, acorns and hay not to mention the water rights and fishing rights.

Frederick II named unto himself the advocacy of the entire jurisdiction, before then left to the barons of the area. He entrusted civil judgments to just persons called Chamber men, chosen from outside the province, assisted

by a King's Notary and by an assessor, all paid by the king. The headsmen did their job for free and were under the supreme court, which saw to an annual control of the provinces through dominion justices. A precursor of future civil liberties, he lessened the services, prohibited feuds between private individuals, regulated the carrying of arms, impeded succession by female inheritance in the feuds, as also the exercise of judging and gathering of tributes on the part of ecclesiastics. Educated, he protected the arts; in 1224 he founded a free General Study in Naples, incentivized the translation and divulgement of works of great value which brought a prestigious contribution to the studies of Philosophy and of Medicine, following the footsteps of Emperor Charlemagne who, before him, had entrusted education and instruction to the religious institutes and clergy who represented the only cultural and spiritual gymnasium for youth. Though his secretary, Pier delle Vigne, he undertook a new opening of the Claudian Overflow Canal, obstructed during the invasions, entrusting the realization of the works to the Justices of Abruzzi, getting however scarce results.

Frederick II moved against the Lombards, against which our military had been called to combat, as well as against the Swabians. After having beaten the League of Lombard Communes at Cortenova, along the edges of the Oglio River, Frederick gave orders to Boemond that the prisoners not be left without food and to take better care of them he entrusted them to the barons of the region. In 1241 the Emperor, in the Battle of Meloria, had captured and held hostage several Cardinals, so as to impede them to take part in the Conclave from which, later, ended up elected Innocence IV as Gregory IX's successor. And, just because of the open war and the obstinate quarrel which he led against the Church, he was excommunicated and destituted by this new Pope. Thus the fight went widespread and long; in Germany the adversaries of Frederick II raised Corrado, son of the Swab, to the throne, who energetically sustained the war in Italy; all the cities took part in the harsh conflict with unbelievable flare, and the cries of "*Guelfo*" and "*Ghibellino*" were repeated everywhere with a charge of unharnessed participation.

In 1247 Frederick II decided to take Parma and raze it to the ground if he were to have conquered it, as his grandfather Frederick Redbeard had done against Milan; but he couldn't because of the heroism of the inhab-

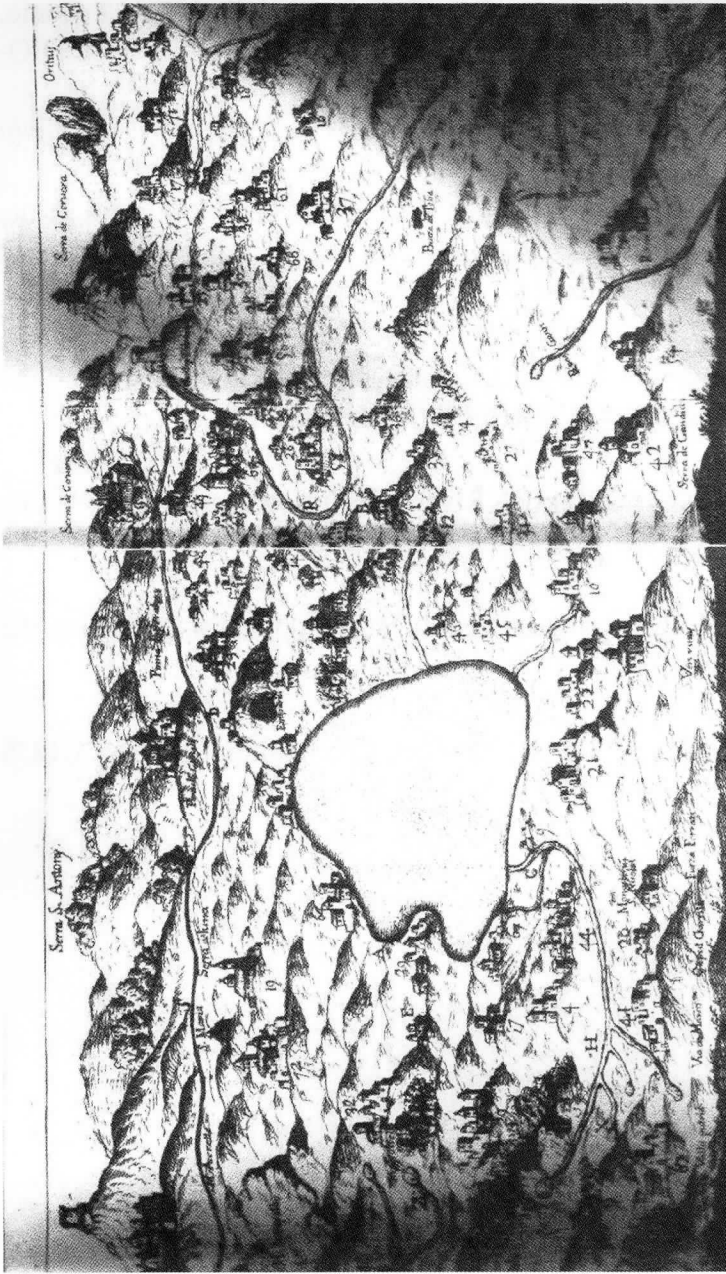
itants. Discouraged by the defeat and also for the sorrowful ill fate that fallen to his son Enzo, prisoner of the Bolognese and kept mercilessly by them in prison for life, he ended his days in Puglia. It was December 13, 1250, the day of St. Lucia. Frederick II's successor was his son Corrado, who tried to get back into the graces of the Pope by obtaining from him once again the investiture of the Kingdom of Naples, and Sicily, without counting the inheritance of the Empire; but Innocence showed himself as inflexible, declaring him fallen in disgrace without of any hope to sovereignty, and even more, riling up against him bishops and barons, not to mention all the peoples of Germany and the inhabitants of Sicily and Puglia. At this point Corrado, full of disdain, set out to overcome all his opposers, managing, after various events, to subjugate the entire Kingdom. At the death of Corrado, in 1252, his son Corradino, being yet a minor, could not step up to the throne, thus control was taken by his uncle Manfredi. The latter, under the title of Prince of Taranto and Viceroy of his nephew Corradino, took on the reins of government and held them until 1258 when, news being spread that Corradino was dead, the government passed definitively into the hands of his uncle. In the month of October 1264, on the death of Urban IV, Clement IV succeeded him, and, nurturing good intentions towards Charles of Angiò, convinced him to come to Italy where he was welcomed with many celebrations in 1265. The conflict between Manfredi and Charles of Angiò was inevitable and came about at Benevento, where they fought bitterly on both sides; Manfredi, betrayed by many of his own, ended up killed. The defeat of Manfredi made Corradino decide to try to recuperate the Kingdom. Thus having come to Italy with an army of around 10,000 men expert in arms, he encountered, on August 23, 1268 in the Palentine Fields at Scurcola, the Angioine army made up of barely 6,000 men. The fate of the battle, in the beginning, smiled on Corradino, whose armed forces, because of the euphoria of the moment, let themselves go to unharnessed demonstrations of joy; of the misstep of the Germanic army Carlo of Angiò took advantage and broke into the camp with 800 pikers on horse who, penetrating the flank of the enemy formation, defeated the enemy, so harshly that the echoes

of that terrible day were heard for a long time, so much that there are moving sentiments, even today, on the part of any solitary passerby who lingers to look over that sad theatre of war which signed, with the death of Corradino, the end of the Swabs in Italy. As can easily be seen, in a country like ours, oppressed first by incursions of the barbarians, then by invasions of foreign princes who quarrel for our beautiful counties, we couldn't miss out on the proud fights between the two powerful families of the Roman campaigns; the Orsini and the Colonna who swooped down like falcons, over the cheery counties of the Marsica, setting them to fire and sword with their cruel squabbles which became almost legendary.

In such a situation which saw even the most elementary human rights trod upon, roguery and banditry were not late in showing, which did nothing else if not aggravate the already unsustainable situation with criminal actions often aimed at harming the oppressed rather than the oppressors. In that era Marsica was divided between the two counties of Alba and Celano, indissolubly bound to the play of successions between Swabs, Angioines and the Papal State. But, following this, it fell into the hands of the powerful families of the Orsini's and the Colonna's. Later the Colonna's, overcoming the rival clan, governed the two cities with the title of Dukes of Tagliacozzo and then that of Dukes of Marsia. Following this, with changes in the political situation, other relationships were established and the Orsini came into possession of the region of the Lake of Fucino. Towards the end of the 12th century they got, from Charles I of Angiò, the counties of Tagliacozzo and of Alba. To say the truth, since then, Alba never rose again even though the county, royal feud of Countess Filippa, continued to hold onto its name for more than a century. But the invincible Colonna's, not being able to tolerate such a situation, were already preparing their arms, when Martin V (Ottone Colonna, 1360-1431), with a clever choice of timing, avoided an armed conflict, conceding the county of Celano to the members of his family. However, following the wars of possession (1420 – 1442), there must have been an alternative to this government between the Colonna's, the State Estates, the Orsini's and the Caldora's if, at the

end of the hostilities, the power of authority remained in the hands of John Anthony Orsini, who was also Count of Tagliacozzo (Mr. Brogi, *Gli Statuti antichi di Avezzano*, p. 96).

In 1457, under Aragon dominion, the authority went back to the State, but in 1461 the entire area was once again a feud of the Orsini's, while the lands of Celano and some others in Abruzzi, in 1463, became dominion of the Piccolomini's by decree of King Ferdinand. After 1480 the county was alternately in the possession of the Colonna's and the Orsini's but, in 1499, it became definitively Colonna dominion, together with Tagliacozzo and the Baronies of Carsoli and of Civitella Roveto. However Celano, starting from 1591, went back to the Piccolomini's, and precisely to Anthony, descendent of Pio *II(?)* then passed on to the clan of Camilla Peretti, Sisto V's sister, following this, to the Savelli's, to the Cesarini's, to the Cesarini Sforza's and in the end to the Sforza Botavilla's, who already had control of the Barony of Pescina which extended its *longa manus* ('long hand,' n. of tr.) over that which was the noble and most antique Capital, that is *Civitas Marsiae* or Marruvium. The abolition of the feuds put an end not only to the dominion of the Colonna's over Marsica, but also to the abuses by the other clans; from that era on the historic events of this marvelous county of Italy followed the fate of the rest of Abruzzi.



NOMINA CIVITATUM IN OMNIBUS ET IN INDIVIDUIS MARSOR	
11 Curcomeli	28 Capistrallium
12 Castrium vicinum	29 Castrium Fiammas
13 Cappelle	30 Castrium Fiammasianum
14 Casy	31 S. Derian Villa
15 Cappadox	32 Fornia
16 Castrium tertius	33 Cellium
17 Colle	34 Loge
18 Cascenium	35 Collis longus
19 Corn' car'	36 Collis Anzani
20 Corn' car'	37 S. Jone
21 Collis Anzani	38 Grombas
22 Grombas	
23 Villa	
24 Villa	
25 Villa	
26 Villa	
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LEGEND OF THE MAP OF MARSICA, from the book by Muzio Febonio,
with Lake FUCINO and the NAMES OF THE *OPPIDUMS* OF THE DIO-
CESE OF MARSICA – 1678 (PESCINA)

(The map should be read taking into consideration that the upper part is the South)

- 1) Under the caption of “*Nomi delle antiche città dei Marsi*” (Names of the antique cities of Marsica), using the vowel “E”, Marro is positioned behind ORTYGIA (today’s Ortucchio).
- 2) The letter “C” indicates VALERIA, (San benedetto dei Marsi), and the vowel “A” is for the site of ARCHIPPE (Arciprete).
- 3) The letter “P” indicates the ROSEA River, which flows towards the Valley of the Roses. (*Ruber=Rovere. Rosciolum = Rosciolo*)
- 4) The “Foro” (tunnel) appears quite visible in the mountain, indicating the Culvert of Claudius.
- 5) The letter “I” indicated the PITONIUS River, alias JUVENCULUS (Giovenco), with the letter “H”.

MARSICA

Avvenimenti
e
Personaggi
principali

De Mida

Figli:

Marro (Marruvium)
Angris (Luro)
Cris (Ercoblo)
Tedi (Ghedi)

Grotte:
Maritza, Irondi,
Cicco Felice,
Continenza

Milonia
(Ortona)
Umbione dei Marsi
(Enelbe)

Veio Veziano
(Castelrotto)
Poppedio Stone
Corfinio
(Lega Italica)

Claudio
Cunicoli emissario
lago Fucino
Primi cristiani a
Marruvium
(Marco Galileo)

S. Rufino
S. Cesidio
Trasacco

Bonifacio IV
(Papa della
città Valeria),
S. Francesco
Palermo

Tommaso da
Celano primo
biografo di
S. Francesco

Celanesi
deportati
a Malta e
Palermo

Battaglia di
Scurcola-
Tagliacozzo
Spoglie di
S. Bernardo
de Lillo
Orucchio
Paolo
Marsio



ANNI

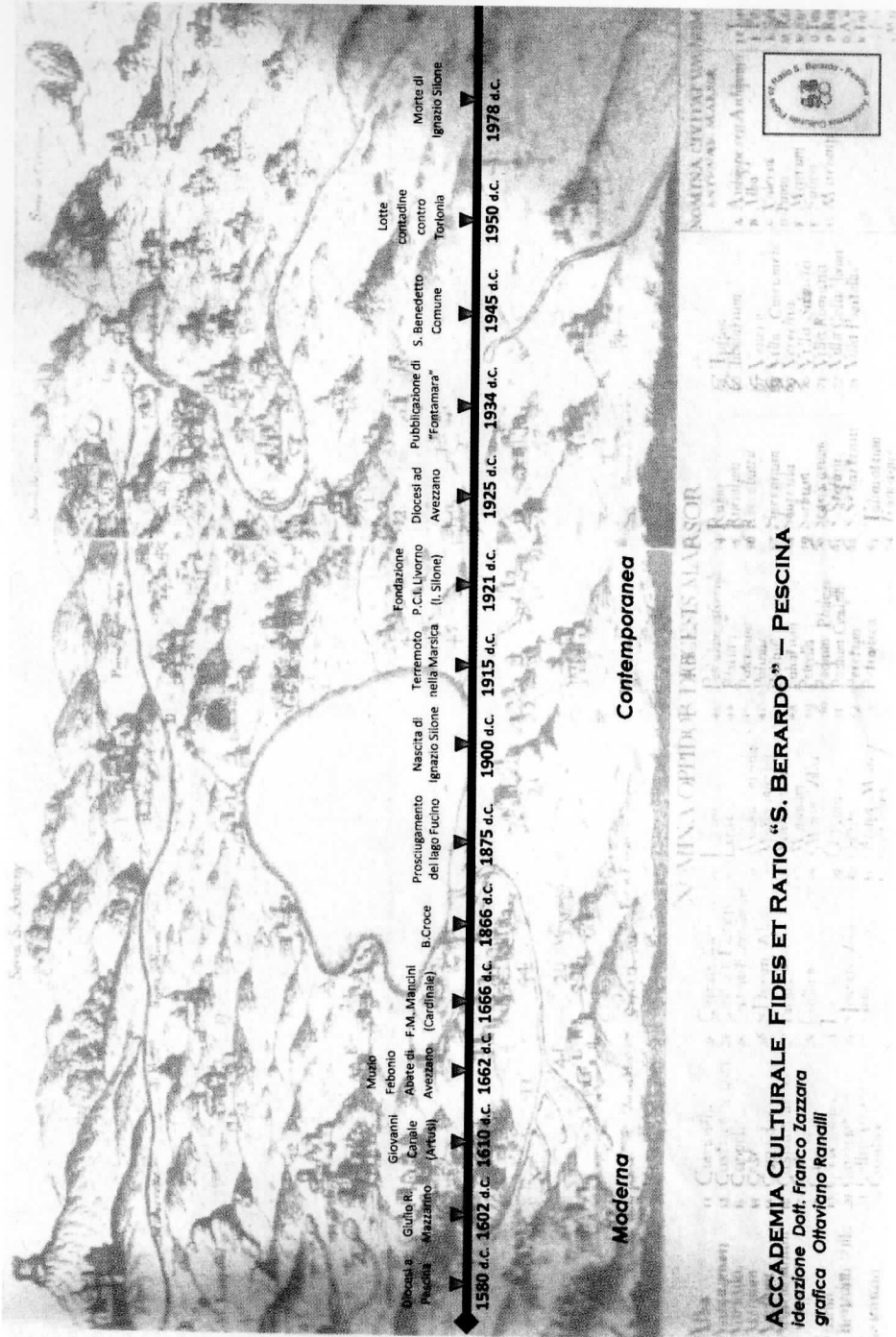
Anno 0

ETA' Il Mito Preistoria Preitalica Romana

Medievale

ANNA I OPERIOR D'ERESIS MARSOR

ANNO	AVVENIMENTI	PERSONAGGI
1440	1440	1440
1431	1431	1431
1361	1361	1361
1268	1268	1268
1225	1225	1225
1079-1130	1079-1130	1079-1130
600	600	600
237	237	237
46	46	46
91	91	91
216	216	216



1580 d.c. 1602 d.c. 1610 d.c. 1662 d.c. 1666 d.c. 1875 d.c. 1900 d.c. 1915 d.c. 1921 d.c. 1925 d.c. 1934 d.c. 1945 d.c. 1950 d.c. 1978 d.c.

Diodati e
Fucina -
Mazzano
Giovanni
Capiale
(Arbus)
Mugio
Febonio
Albare di
F.M. Mancini
(Cardinale)
Avezano
B.Croce

Prosciugamento
del lago Fucino
Nascita di
Ignazio Silone

Fondazione
P.C.I. Livorno
(I. Silone)

Diocesi ad
Avezano
"Fontamara"
Comune

Lotta
Contadine
contro
Torlonia
Morte di
Ignazio Silone

Moderna

Contemporanea

ACCADEMIA CULTURALE FIDES ET RATIO "S. BERARDO" – PESCINA
 ideazione Dott. Franco Iazzara
 grafica Ottaviano Ranalli



LEGEND OF THE MAP of MARSICA
PRINCIPLE EVENTS AND CHARACTERS

- From mythology we have learned the settlements along the East of Lake Fucino were Greek colonies (Konkulation, Circe, Angizia, Marro...)
- The presence of grottos situated around it, go back to about 10,000 years ago (Maritza, Tronci, Ciccio Felice, Continenza...)
- About the Enchanter of serpents UMBRONE, we have information from Virgil in the Aeneid, and this should have been around the year 1000 b. c. - 800 b.c.
- As for the “Principle Events and Characters”, I suggest consulting and READING the following texts, obviously simple and incomplete, but easily traceable.

- A) Saint Boniface IV
- B) “Saint Berardo”: V. Amendola, UGHELLI,
- C) “Saint Berardo Vescovo dei Marsi”, Di Giardini, tipogr. Polla, 2001
- D) “E là da Tagliacozzo dove senz’armi...”, A. Cantelmi, lith. Paolini, 1975
- E) Andrea De Litio. Mastrostefano Roberto
- F) Tommaso da Celano biografo di San Francesco – Atti Convegno, Celano, ed. Di Censo, Nov. 1982
- G) St. Orante from Ortucchio
- H) “Paolo Marso”, L. Colantoni
- I) “Giulio R. Mazzarino”, V. Amendola
- J) “Giovanni Canale Artusi”, L. Colantoni
- K) I. Silone, V. Esposito
- L) I.Silone: V.Esposito
- M) Benedetto Croce.
- N) Muzio Febonio *Historia Marsorum* three books

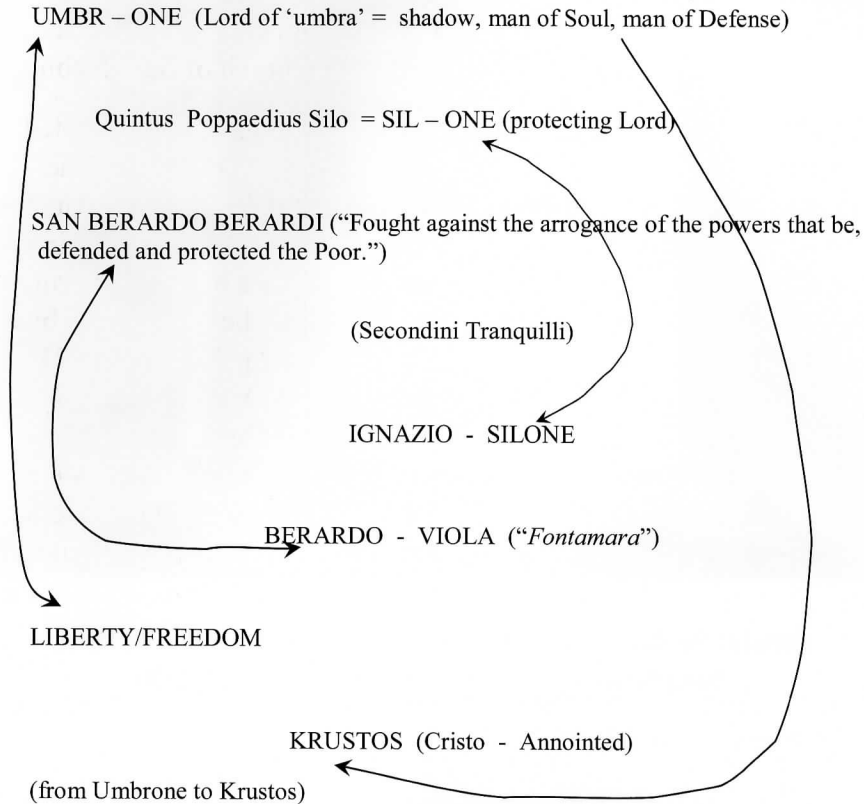
PRO-VOCATION

- The Pitone River (Giovenco) no longer ‘drinks’ its own waters near Luco of Angizia (in the place calle ‘Petogne’), for not much later its well source was subtracted from it to carry water to other territories.
- Lake Fucino is no more.
- Venus (*Venere*), the planet still illuminates the limpid night skies, in the heavens above Sperone (the “lord of the vespers, of the evening”), the valley fo the Pitone/Giovenco River depopulated by the descendents of those “people of Marsia.”
- Umbrone (the “lord of defense”) still abides in the Aeneid of Virgil and in the extracted denomination of a street at Pescina in Marsia.
- From the leader Quintus Poppaadius Silo (*Silone*) who dreamed of a free Italy, after two thousand years, Secondino Tranquilli (Ignazio Silone, writer) has taken the name, in the fight against Might, during the 20th century.
- The martyr in the 2nd century after Christ, Saint Sabina, is a veiled memory, but still present in the monumental portal of her Basilica in San Benedetto dei Marsi and her relics are preserved in the Co-cathedral of Pescina.
- Saint Berardo “cradles” the two Silone’s (Quintus Poppaadius and Secondino Tranquilli) under his bell tower, dreaming of a true equal dignity amongst all mankind.



Portal of the Basilica of Saint Sabina Martyr (San Benedetto dei Marsi).
Saint Berardo died here on Monday November 3, 1130.

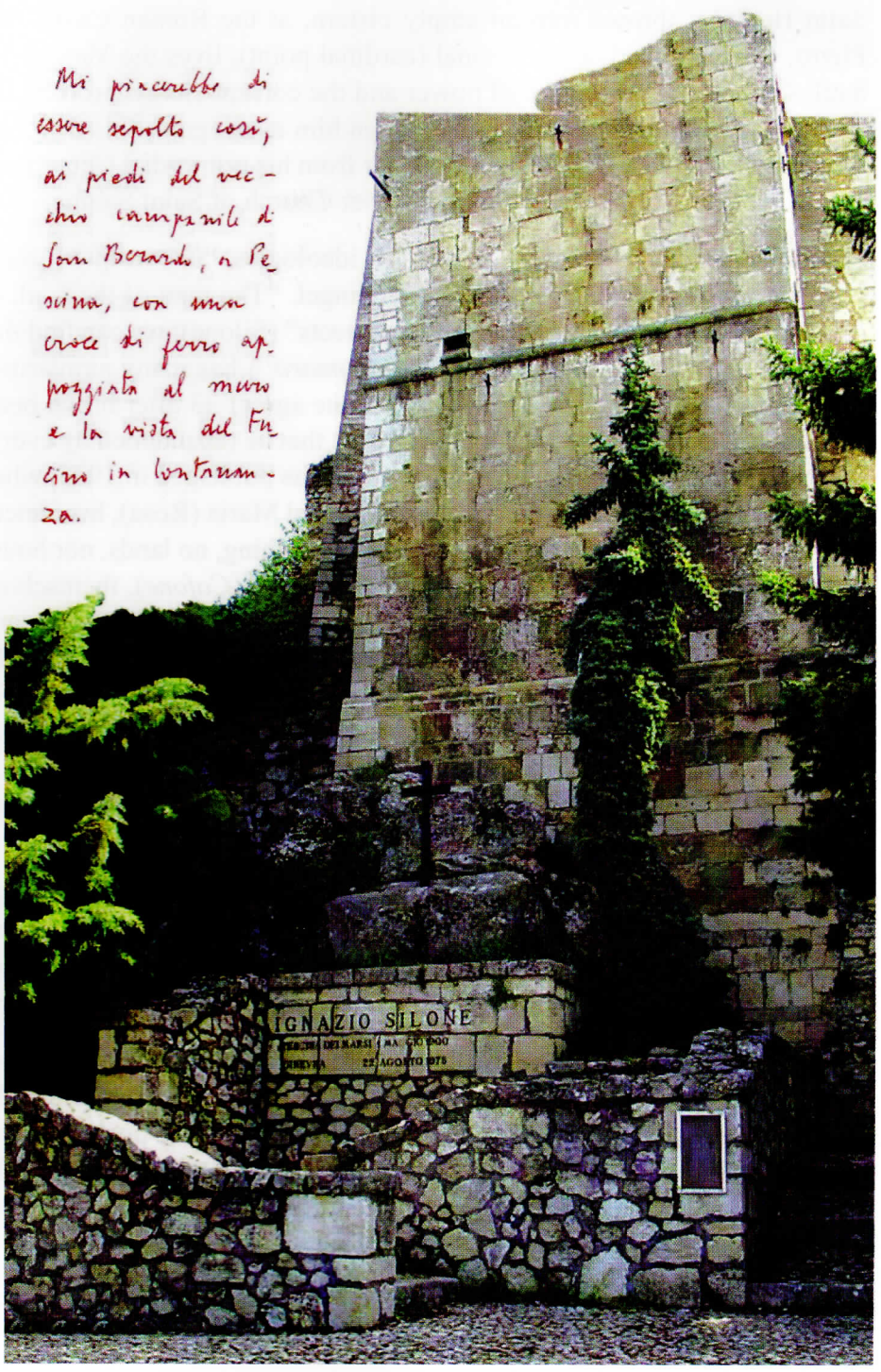
FINAL PROVOCATION



- *Umbrone* (Lord of the soul) – dies in battle because he went to the aid of another man against the oppression of those escaped from the War of Troy, companions of Enea..., killed by Enea, father of Julius.
- Quintus Poppaadius Silo (*Silone*) - dies fighting against the power of Rome to obtain Civil (Human) Rights and the *Lex Julia* ... (There are surnames, even today, that are memories of Julianella=annulus Juliae -Ano, close, relative of the *Gens Julia*, Julian people) ... "*Nè contro i Marsi nè senza I Marsi*" = "Neither against the Marsian s nor without the Marsian's".

- Saint Berardo: thrown into an empty cistern, at the Roman Castel San Pietro, was freed and, as a Cardinal (cardinal point), lives the Vangel: He battles against the arrogance of power and the corrupt clergy, protects the Poor, sustains them, using the power given him even against his own corrupt family members. He refuses to die far from his primordial Church and that of the poor, that is, far from the Mother Church of Saint Sabine.
- Secondino Tranquilli refuses all kinds of ideologies, “uncorrupted soul”, he writes on the same page, that of the Vangel. “The man of the soul, of defense, (Umbrone) and the Lord who protects” (Silone); we can find this also in himself. His Berardo Viola (“*Fontamara*”) has many similarities with Christ (the anointed): he dies around the age of 33 after brutal beatings undergone in jail inflicted by the powers that be (abandoned by everybody) as in the Passion of Christ. (The book was published in 1933, when he, himself, was 33.) Berardo’s mother is named Maria (Rosa), his fiancée is called Elvira (El Vira – the woman). He has nothing, no lands, nor house nor even love anymore. The “lords of the livestock” (*Cafone*), themselves, too, abandoned by “All”, ask him for help in every difficult occasion, and he shies away, at the beginning, (“spare me this bitter cup”), but after the sacrifice of his Being giving his life for the Utopist (communism) and/or Christian cause.
- Berardo descends from the heights of the mountain with a scarce load of wood (the spark of the fire that shall burn).
- Secondini Tranquilli can be found in the history of man as one who indignant, not resigned, decides to be like Umbrone, like Silone, as did Christ, like the “Anointed” (oiled) gladiators, thus to be able to slip and free themselves from the bit of Power intended as Evil and to aid the weaker.
- Secondino Tranquilli–Silone–Umbrone: are buried under the bell tower of the Church of Saint Berardo, Cardinal Bishop, (who did not refuse the powers entrusted to him by Pope Pascal II and protected the poor), but was abandoned by the authorities of Mankind and by the mechanisms of the Church (which he had fought against), under the Cross.

Mi piacerebbe di
essere sepolto così,
ai piedi del vec-
chio campanile di
San Bernardo, a Pe-
sina, con una
croce di ferro ap-
poggiata al muro
e la vista del Fu-
cino in lontananza.



“My wish is to be buried like this, at the feet of Saint Berardo’s old bell tower, at Pescina, with an iron cross leaning against the wall and a view of Fucino in the distance.”

I. Silone

**IGNAZIO
SILONE**

PESCINA DEI MARSI – MAY 1, 1900

GENEVRE – AUGUST 22, 1978

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*Ex Oriente lux! Civilization, like the light, arrives from the Orient, the East, just like Mankind after having left Africa. There were still two thousand years to go by before the foundation of Rome. “You Greeks are ever youths; you have absolutely no antique opinion that comes down to you from antique traditions”, remembered Solon, the Egyptian priest of Sais, when throughout the territory of the Fertile Half-moon civilization had already flourished. Sargon of Accad (2340 – 2284) extended the borders of his Empire up to the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Accadian spread throughout the Occidental area, on to the Atlantic Ocean, on to the Basque Countries; along the roads taken by amber it arrived to the shores of the Baltic Sea; it became the official language for diplomatic relations and remained such up until the 9th century b.C., when Aramaic took over. For the Ancients, words were the objects themselves, they coincided with reality. The name was intrinsic to the person, it gave them consistency, it was their essence. “The name is covered by the being and is the pure expression of that same being” (Der Name dekt sich mit dem Wesen und ist die Offengbarung des Wesens. – Wilhelm Schulze). In Accadian: **su, sa**, demonstrative pronouns, **this, that**, come back to live in the Aramaic **zī**, in the Sardinian **su**, in the **ze** from Pescasseroli: ‘il’ = ‘the’. In Accadian **ZARù** is ‘author, producer, generator, sower.’ **Zara-tustra** ‘author of writings’. Literally,*

ZAZZARA = THE PROCREATOR THE SOWER, THE AUTHOR

Source: Giovanni Semerano “Le origini della cultura europea”

Leo S. Olshki – Editor Firenze. 2 volumes, 4 tomes pages LXIX + 955

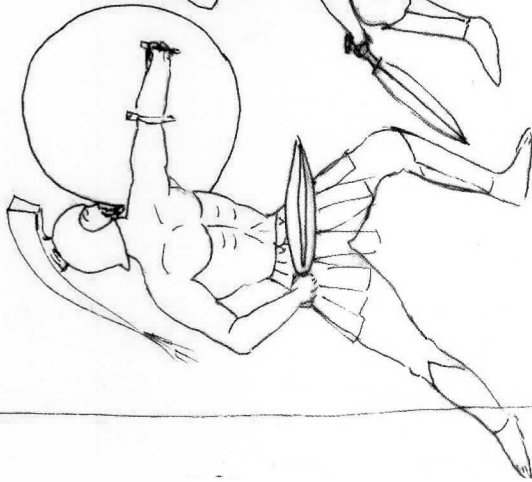
Dizionari etimologici della lingua greca, della lingua latina e di voci moderne
pages IC+715

(Etymologic Dictionaries of the Greek tongue, of the Latin tongue and of modern words)

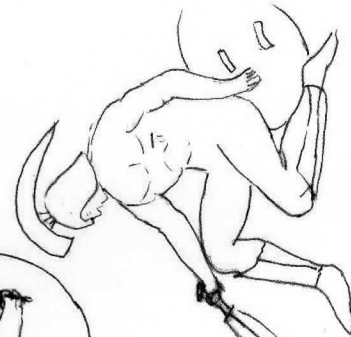
* Expression from the 18th century, excerpt from the Municipal building plan of Lecce in 1754.

**MARSI
ARCHEOLOGICAL FINDS**

ENEA R4

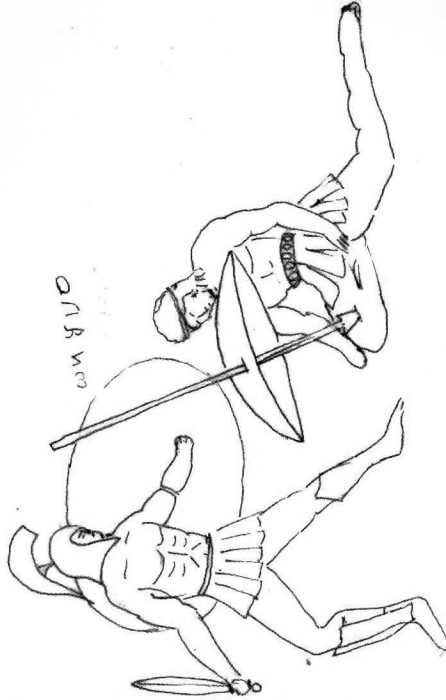


UMBRONE



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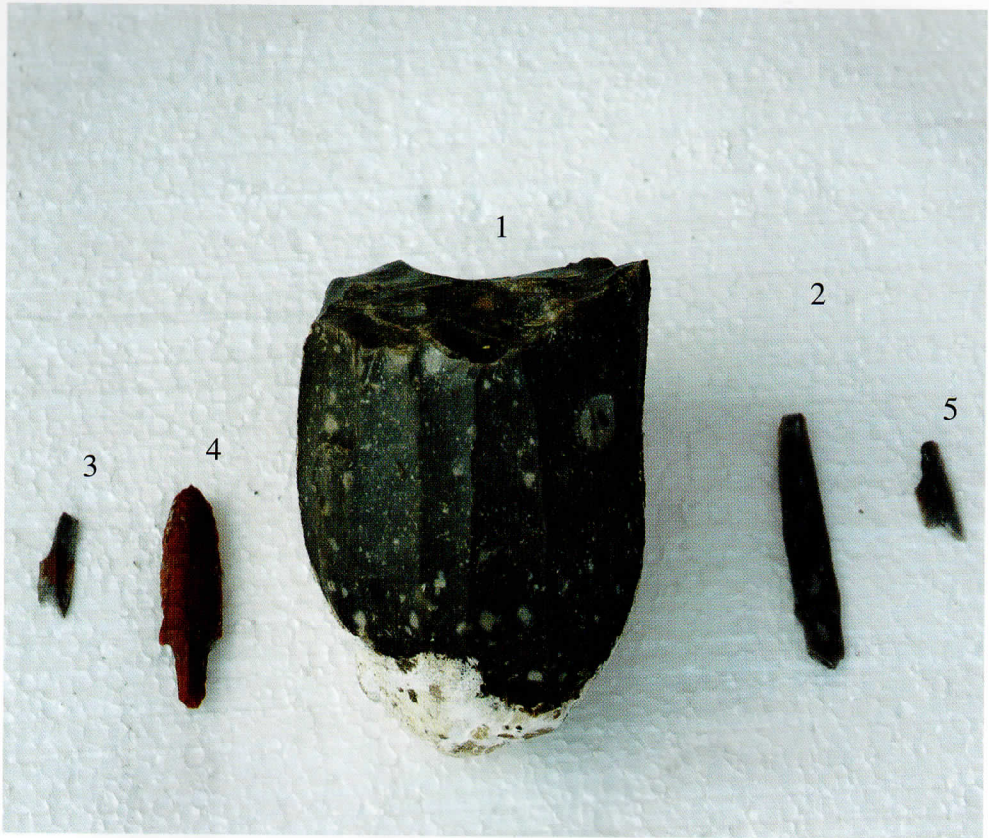
ENEA



UMBRONE



Tools from the Upper Paleolithic Era: around 12,000 B.C
1 – Scraper
2 – Scraper with handle made from deer horn
3 – Awl of bone
4 – Tiny axe mad of green stone (Neolithic)
around 4,000 B:C: (Ortygia-Ortucchio)



NEOLITHIC – Stone-age Industry – around 4,000 B.C.

1 – Core with blade unattached

2 – Blade not attached

3 – 4 Deltoids – Elements of a scythe

5 – Arrow point (EneoLithic)

Culture of Ortygia (Otucchio) – around 2350 B.C.



END OF THE BRONZE AGE – Ortucchio – ‘Strada 24’ – around 1150 B.C.

- 1 – Small dagger
- 2 – Axe with lips
- 3 – Lance point
- 4 – Knife from Ortucchio
- 5 – Pin

GREEK PERIOD



Necklace: End of the Bronze Age – around 1150 B.C.
Vases in glass and terracotta blend, amber and Pendant shaped like a boat in terracotta.

(Ortygia) Ortucchio

GREEK PERIOD



Latch from the last part of the Bronze Age with the shape of a serpent – around 1150 B.C.

(Ortygia-Ortucchio. 'Strada 27')

GREEK PERIOD



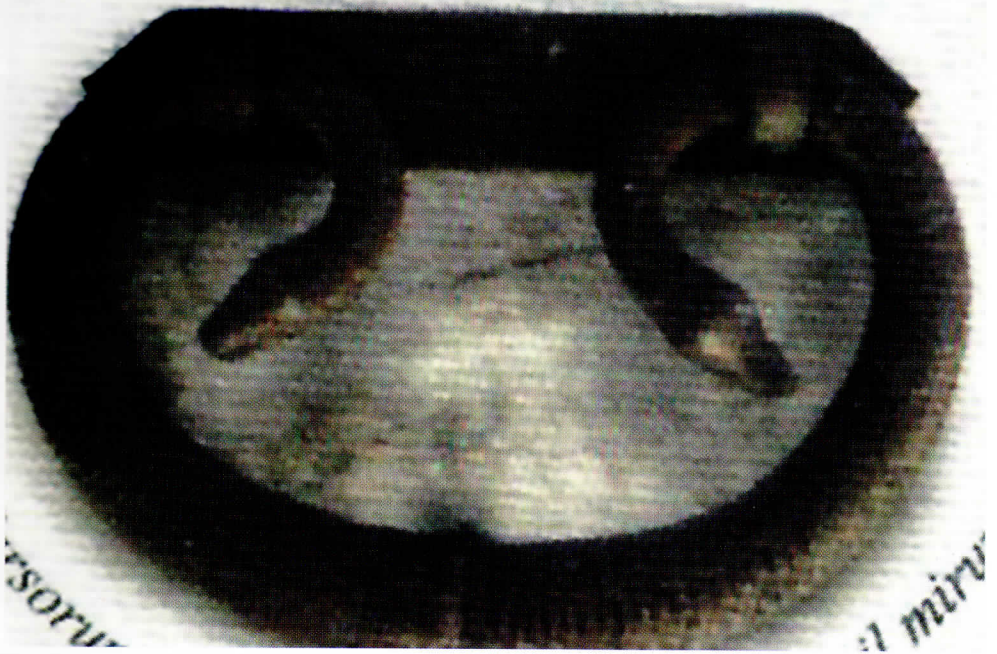
Funereal objects from Ortygia (Ortucchio)
Bronze Age – around 1150 B.C.



Circular foundation of a column and a capitel in Corinthian style
from the antique temple raised to the Goddess Venus (Venere)
Venere di Pescina



VARIOUS SLINGSHOT in lead which had been slung by the Mar-
sian s against the Romans
Social or Italic War, 100 B.C – Aschi Alto



Door knocker in Ortona dei Marsi

*My thanks to:
Mario Di Domenico
Ventura Orante
Ettore Berardo
Trinchini Pierino
Raglione Giuseppe*

*And a special Thank You to
my wife Vilma Rita Iulianella
and my son Christian Emanuele*

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FRANCO FRANCESCO ZAZZARA

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EMILIO CERASANI

Nato a San Benedetto dei Marsi nel 1914 e morto a Sulmona il 18 ottobre 2003. Laureato in lingue, letterature ed Istituzioni europee, è stato professore alle Scuole superiori di Sulmona, vicepresidente dell'Accademia degli Agghiacciati.

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