

Call for Papers: First joint symposium of the ICTM Study Group on Mediterranean Music Studies and the International Musicological Society

"Musicians in the Mediterranean: Narratives of Movement"

[Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale"](#) and Conservatorio di Musica San Pietro a Majella. Naples, Italy.

Dates: 21-26 June 2016

Greek Byzantine Liturgical songs from the church of Santa Maria Assunta in Villa Badessa, Rosciano (Pescara, IT)

Domenico Di Virgilio¹, Giancarlo Ranalli²

¹Archivio EtnoLinguistico Musicale Abruzzese

²Associazione culturale Villa Badessa, Rosciano (Pe, Italy) www.villabadessa.it

The research work we are going to present is some kind of a journey through time and space and through the memories and cultural roots of a small community: Villa Badessa in Rosciano (Pescara, Italy). But it is also a report of a successful meeting between the two sides of the Ionian Sea.

It is the attempt to understand how the repertoire of the Greek Byzantine liturgical rite has accompanied this community from its arrival in Italy, in 1743, up to now.

The origins of this community are traced back to 18 families who came from southern Epirus, on the border between Albania and Greece. They arrived in Italy in 1743 and were granted some lands from Carlo III di Borbone. They were few people and so the original Tosk language and traditions soon vanished; but the community preserved the Greek Byzantine rite. And so nowadays Villa Badessa is the northernmost arbëresh community of mainland Italy, and the farthest from Lungro (Cosenza), the see of Eparchia.

The religious dimension is the most important evidence of the origins of the community, together with an important collections of icons (dated XVII to XIX century) that we find in the church of Santa Maria Assunta. This is what makes the residents of Villa Badessa consider themselves as 'Greek Byzantine Catholics' distinct from the 'Roman Catholics'.

In June 2014 a group from Villa Badessa visited Lukovë, a small town supposed to be the place where the founders of Villa Badessa came from; there is a town-twinning project going on with Rosciano. In Lukovë we also visited the monastery which hosted the icon of Santa Maria Odigitria (the One who shows us the way) which is now worshipped in Villa Badessa.

The people attending the journey were looking for their own memories, family and cultural relationships, things that have not been possible to recover, we realized, if

not for some minor details and few stories shared by both the communities. Other historical events have been too influential..

But at the same time in Villa Badessa the Greek Byzantine liturgical rite has offered, for years, a different perception of the time-space dimension. At the beginning of its story the community, with its isolation, was able to avoid becoming a 'Roman Catholic' community, as happened for the Albanians of Molise. Later, around the second half of the 20th century, changes have sped up with the adoption of neo-byzantine music, especially the production of Joannes Sakellarides (1853-1938), and the translation of some texts from the Greek to Italian.

Nowadays the repertoire we can hear in Villa Badessa is that for: la Divina Liturgia di San Giovanni Crisostomo, la Divina Liturgia di San Basilio, la Grande e Santa Settimana. This repertoire is performed by a choir of mixed voices. Both our associations are carrying on a work of collection and analysis of this repertoire, and a first result is the production of a case containing a DVD and a CD: (D. Di Virgilio (edited by), *Badhesa, canti liturgici dall'oriente cristiano*, Menabò, Ortona 2012).

Work partially supported by Fondazione Banco di Napoli.

Requirements: video-audio equipment for power point presentation