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ÍNDICE

P. YANNOPOULOS, Jean, disciple de Grégoire le Décapolite	9
S. KYRIAKIDIS, The battle exhortation in Byzantine historiography (10th-12th centuries)	19
D. KRAUSMÜLLER, Aristotle in Cappadocian Garb: the Trinitarian Speculation of Nicetas Stethatos and Leo of Calchedon	37
V. GERHOLD, Empereur, Église et aristocratie laïque : les enjeux politiques dans la consolidation dynastique des Comnènes	55
J. M. FLORISTÁN, Sociedad, economía y religión en las comunidades griega y albanesa de Nápoles y Sicilia: nuevos documentos inéditos	127
K. GIAKOURIS, Self-identifications by Himarriots, 16 th to 19 th Centuries . . .	205
M. CURNIS, La <i>Politica</i> di Aristotele tra Michele Efesio e Demetrio Petrizzopulo	247
E. AYENSA, Una canción popular griega traducida al español por Juan Valera .	301
H. GONZÁLEZ-VAQUERIZO, <i>Geranos</i> : danza y muerte en la <i>Odisea</i> de Nikos Kazantzakis	319
M. Γ. ΒΑΡΒΟΥΝΗΣ, Η «Επιτροπή Ποντιακών Μελετών» και οι τοπικές σπουδές στην Ελλάδα	341

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Self-identifications by Himarriots, 16th to 19th Centuries

Konstantinos GIAKOURIS*
University of New York Tirana
kgiakouris@unyt.edu.al

ABSTRACT: In this study I utilize 16th century to 19th century sources written by inhabitants of the wider Himarra region, in which traces of self-identification (territoriality, position, in-group, out-group, enemies, language and common history) could be found and contextualize them with relevant ethnocultural and geographical accounts. Findings are examined through the intergroup communication perspective and relational models of group identification and are interpreted in the wider western Balkan context of the archdiocese of Ohrid. The analysis of sources demonstrates the volatility and pragmatic shifts and adaptations of the anyhow multifaceted local and regional identity of the fiercely idiosyncratic region of Himarra, as manifested in diverse communication frames.

KEYWORDS: Himarra, Himarriots, Albania, Epiros, Ohrid archdiocese, Ottoman Empire, regional identities, intergroup communication theory, relational group identification models.

RESUMEN: En este estudio empleo fuentes de los siglos XVI-XIX escritas por los habitantes de Chimarra *lato sensu* en las que se pueden encontrar huellas de auto-identificación (territorialidad, posición, pertenencia al grupo o no, enemigos, lengua e historia común) y las relaciones con informes etnoculturales y geográficos. Los resultados, examinados a la luz de la teoría de la comunicación intergrupos y de los modelos relacionales de identificación grupal, son interpretados en el contexto balcánico occidental más amplio del arzobispado de Acrida. El análisis de las fuentes demuestra la

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volatilidad, los cambios pragmáticos y las adaptaciones de la identidad local y regional, polifacética de cualquier modo, de la región de Chimarra, fuertemente idiosincrásica, según se manifiesta en diversos contextos de comunicación.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Chimarra, chimarrotes, Albania, Epiro, arzobispado de Acrida, Imperio Otomano, identidades regionales, teoría de la comunicación intergrupos, modelos relacionales de identificación de grupo.

1.- INTRODUCTION

A fair number of older and recent publications stereotypically interpreted the Himarriots' rapprochement of the papacy in the 16th and 17th century as an "endeavour to preserve their ethnic identity", allegedly challenged by Muslim Turks and Orthodox Greeks (e.g. Memushaj 2015; cf. Memushaj 2004). Such views are neither exceptional nor new. In her literature review on the matters of contested space and negotiated identities in Dhërmi, Nataša Gregorič-Bon (2008: 113-22; cf. Gregorič-Bonn 2011) reviewed as many as 24 monographs of Himarra (or Cheimarra; Gk. Χειμάρα, Χιμάρα or Χιμάρα) and its region, all written exclusively or not in Albania(n) between 2000 and 2008 (*ibid.* 115). In her classification, these monographs' authors either follow national positions (pro-Albanian or pro-Greek) or portray «local positions based on the idea of establishing a distinct locality of Himarë / Himara area» (*ibid.* 116-7). The critical reader observes virtually no endeavour to provide multiple and nuanced perspectives even in such authoritative publications as the book from the Albanian Academy of Sciences (Nasi 2004) or the monograph of the prominent Albanian historian, the late Kristo Frashëri.

Nationalist biases on matters of self-identifications of the Himarra region's inhabitants are based on unilateral selection and superficial interpretation of historical sources. The August 2015 destruction of the church of Saint Athanasios at Dhërmi by state authorities and alleged plans for the construction of a uniate church on its spot are the latest episode related to the contested identification of the Himarriots. The matter of self-identification of the Himarriots in their correspondence with pope Gregory XIII (papacy 1572-1585) and, later, in the third quarter of the 17th century, in the correspondence of the uniate mission of the papal *Propaganda Fide* with pope Alexander VII (papacy

1655-1667) has hitherto been dealt with from a mere local viewpoint, detached from its wider context and isolated from its supra-regional dimensions. This drove existing literature to misleading conclusions which were widely instrumentalized in the course of nationalist debates.

To address the matter of self-identifications of Himarriots in its full dimensions, I shall revisit a number of 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th century primary sources written by Himarriots, in which they express or manifest multiple facets of their own identity, not limited to topography as in the very important work of Peter Bartl. The matter at hand is tightly linked with identities. Identity, after J. Weeks (1990: 88), «is about belonging, about what you have in common with some people and what differentiates you from others». As an individual property experienced in a group setting, considering the impossibility of getting to know all of the members of the group one does or does not feel belonging, the perception of the in-group and the out-group, i.e. the “imagined community”, to speak with B. Anderson’s term, is of paramount significance to identification and group formation. In his seminal work on the modes of group identification, Thomas Hylland Eriksen (1995), building up on the understanding that identities are created, maintained and strengthened through the enactment of contrasts with others, distinguishes between a *We*-mode and an *Us*-mode of group identification; whereby the former refers to a symbolic representation system viewed from within, without reference to the Other, while the latter implies cohesion through the interference of an external agent and results in an expansion of relevant system boundaries. As intergroup communication theories maintain, contacts and interactions with out-groups often result in identification reconfigurations and shifts over time (Tajfel 1978; Giles & Watson 2008).

As constituent elements of identification I took notions of Himarra’s and Himarriots’ territoriality, perceived position, in-group and out-group identifications, their perception of common history, language and religious tradition. By “territoriality” I mean the physical boundaries of the Himarra region. “Position” refers to the wider territory in which the Himarra region is (perceived by its people to be) part of (Gregorič-Bonn 2015: 22-6). As “in-group” I define a group of people sharing symbolical representations, norms and practices, i.e. some perception of cultural commonality leading to some sort of solidarity, especially when this community or its members are contacted, confronted or contrasted by outsiders, non-members of the in-group, i.e. a

perceived “out-group”, in the sense that identity formation is *par excellence* relational; hence, defined in relation to other identities or groups. By “common history” reference is made to past events, developments, trends or people remembered by the in-group as reference points to their commonality in rapport with significant out-groups. “Common language” has to do with the language reported to be spoken at home and other languages spoken on account of class or relation to various out-groups. Last but not least, as “common religious traditions” I refer to the name and jurisdiction to which Himarriots report their relation.

In terms of periodization, our sources can be divided in six distinct periods. The first period refers to the correspondence in which the Himarriots engaged with the kingdom of Naples and the king of Spain through Fernando, the marquis of Alarcón, in 1530-1533 (Floristán 1990-1). The second period from which documents were utilized is the second period of the correspondence between the Himarriots and the kingdom of Naples (1566-1577) (Floristán 1992), which also coincides with the correspondence of Himarriots with pope Gregory XIII and the Catholic archbishop of Otranto (Laurent 2013). We have selected a single source dating 1608, i.e. from the third phase of contacts between the Himarriots and the kingdom of Naples (Floristán 1992). The fourth period of our sources is between 1660 and 1665, when the Himarriots pursued a correspondence with pope Alexander VII, also in the frame of the presence of uniate missionaries in Himarra (Floristán 2014). A number of brief chronicles from the *menaia* of the monastery of Kamena, copied ca. 1860 by archimandrite Agathangelos, describe various events from 1750s (Agathangelos): this is the fifth period of our sources, together with a letter of the Himarriots addressed to the Russian government (Ars 2007: 40-4). Last but not least, a number of 19th century inscriptions (Popa 1998: 316) and notes by locals on various events of the period 1830-1858 (Agathangelos) are classified in the sixth period of our sources.

Besides periodization, the sources consulted for the purpose of this paper should also be approached from two additional perspectives: their authors’ social class and viewpoints, and their target audiences. The Himarriots’ letters to the kingdom of Naples, to popes Gregory XIII and Alexander VII and to the Russian government were recorded by secretaries recording minutes of meetings and deliberations by the elders of Himarra and the villages of the region. Such sources are, therefore, evidence of the viewpoints of the highest,

ruling social class of Himarra's provincial setting. As such, one cannot categorically affirm that the way of own identification revealed in their correspondence is necessarily representing the ways in which the lower strata of Himarra's provincial society would identify themselves, even though the elders of the time, as, comparatively speaking, people of age, better knowledge and more experience overall enjoyed rather widespread recognition. The darkness of representation of lower social classes in the type of sources mentioned above is considerably mitigated by the brief chronicles and the inscription. Such sources offer more nuanced bottom-up approaches (the worm's eyes' view), as they are not the outcome of collective decisions like the previous sources; yet, the very ability of the chroniclers to write, at times of widespread illiteracy, and their audacity to use church liturgical books to record their memories certainly points to some other elites, perhaps ecclesiastical, yet, they are certainly not representative of the lower strata of the local society, whose identification ways, regrettably, I must admit we are unable to decipher, given the nature and the kinds of sources preserved to date on the matter in question.

I am approaching these sources by way of applying critical theory in literary studies (Habermas 1971: 301-17). Critical theory involves hermeneutics, i.e. knowledge acquired through interpretation to understand the meaning of human texts and symbolic expressions. I am arguing that, in their self-identifications, Himarriots firmly projected a volatile, local identity, whose ethnic, cultural, social and religious interfaces were manifested by different circumstances at the time of their expression and that this local identity was more often negotiated from both within and from without than agreed and in relation to the significant Others (Eriksen 1995: 427-36).

2.- THE WESTERNMOST PART OF *VIA EGNATIA* AND THE WEST

It is impossible to properly understand the 16th century rapprochement of the Himarriots to western powers and the papacy without relating it to its wider context. The Ottoman advance and consolidation in 15th century Balkans found the westernmost parts of *Via Egnatia*, which they used to advance to the region (Jacques 1995: 134-64), and its ecclesiastical centre, the archdiocese of Ohrid, in the midst of power reconfigurations. Especially the conquest of

Veliko Turnovo and the abolition of the Bulgarian patriarchate (1393), as well as the definitive submission of Serbia under the Ottoman Turks (1459) as well as the stabilization of the Ottoman rule in the region, pursuant the Ottoman consolidation in Bosnia (1463), central and northern Albania after the siege of Shkodra (1478) and Herzegovina (1481), marked the return of a number of provinces to and the strengthening of the archdiocese of Ohrid, while the Danubian principalities –Moldavia once under the jurisdiction or influence of the archdiocese of Ohrid (Péchéayre 1936: 187-8, 291-2; Drakopoulou 2014: 141-2, 149-50; Pantos 2009)– accepted Ottoman overlordship. At the centre of such developments, the archdiocese of Ohrid managed to survive with enhanced strength and jurisdiction (Tarnanidis 2002).

This compelled the archdiocese, as a well-organized Christian unit, to undertake a dual role, an ecclesiastical role as an autocephalous ecclesiastical authority with a multi-ethnic flock, in part extending to border territories of the Ottoman Empire, but also as an agent of political structures and initiatives which developed within its territories (Lacko 1957: 135-8; Delikari 2014: 236-53; Drakopoulou 2012: 183-4; 2015: 141-44). In spite of the serious political turbulences and power reconfigurations in the Balkans during the last decades of the 14th century, which continued in the 15th century, the influence of the archdiocese of Ohrid throughout the Balkans was enhanced even at such distant provinces, like Moldavia and Wallachia (Péchéayre 1936: 187-8; Gelzer 1902: 21-2; Delikari 2014: 247-8). By 1400s the archdiocese's jurisdiction extended to Kratovo and Kyustendil. By 1500 as many as 17 ecclesiastical provinces had been set under the jurisdiction of the archdiocese, extending in territories currently in the states of Albania, Greece, Macedonia, Serbia and Bulgaria, whose communication in such times without borders was facilitated by the *Via Egnatia* (Zachariadou 1996). Durrës and Vlora were the starting points of this major way that led to Constantinople (Istanbul). This major road artery had several perpendicular branches. One of these linked Vlora, Durrës and Ragusa (Dubrovnik; Necipoğlu 2014: 333, 340-4) with Elbasan, Berat, Kastoria and Ohrid, thereby facilitating commercial transactions and artistic relations (Giakouris 2015: 14-7). The strong state interest in the maintenance of this network indicates its value (Popović 2012; Moustakas 1998). In the course of the Ottoman rule new road networks were established serving newly emerging needs for commercial transactions and military expeditions. Such was the *Via Macedonia* which linked various cities with major knots of *Via*

Egnatia like Thessaloniki, Kastoria, Bitola and Ohrid (Moustakas 1998), as well as the old commercial road linking Elbasan with Berat and Vlora (Giakoumis 2015: 14-7).

In the course of the turbulent first decades of the Ottoman rule, the archdiocese of Ohrid managed to delicately maintain a nexus of relations with such contending forces as the Ottoman rulers, the European Great Powers, the papacy, the rulers of Danubian principalities and the ecumenical patriarchate. During the second quarter of the 16th century the archdiocese of Ohrid was led by the ambitious and active personality of Prochoros (1525-1550; cf. Péchayre 1936: 188, 192-3, 197; Pantos 2009), who as of 1548 corresponded with pope Paul III and on the same year ordained bishop Paphnoutios (Péchayre 1936: 197) to pastorally care for the Orthodox flock from his archdiocese who had migrated to southern Italy, in an explicit movement of rapprochement with the West. In doing so, Prochoros initiated a political approach aimed at negotiating better living conditions which was to continue until the late 17th century (Péchayre 1936: 281).

His successors, Neophytos and, most notably, Paisios, also communicated regularly with the West, while Paisios further dispatched bishops in southern Italy (Peri 1982) with the task of pastoral care for the Orthodox flocks who migrated from Epiros and Albania in southern Italy, with the obligation of commemorating the name of the pope and adding the *Filioque* in the Creed in the course of church services (Péchayre 1936: 281-6; Lacko 1957: 137-8). The roles of archbishops Makarios, Gabriel and Athanasios I regarding the archdiocese's rapprochement with the papacy and other western powers are well-known (V. Mystakidis 1931; Péchayre 1936: 288-90; 1937: 405-22; 1939; Drakopoulou 2012: 183; 2014: 142-3), while their relationship to the Spanish authorities of Naples has been extensively studied from the documentary sources of the Simancas archives (Floristán 1988: 423-453). Such contacts, with the hope of forming alliances which could potentially overthrow the Ottoman rule, continued into the 17th and a good part of the 18th century (Péchayre 1936: 292-300; 1937: 435-9; 1938), highlighting, as in the case of archbishop Gabriel (Péchayre 1939: 44-5), with Athanasios II, «the principal protagonist of the unity of his see with Rome» (Murzaku 2009: 63; cf. Péchayre 1939: 296-8; Lacko 1957: 137; Laurent 1945).

Himarra's relation with the archdiocese of Ohrid was idiosyncratic and cannot be separated from the overall theme of the contacts between Hi-

marriots with various western states. In spite of Himarra's being ecclesiastical or administrative province of Ohrid only for a short period of time, it has regularly maintained relations with its authorities, which used the revolutionary proclivities and potential of the Himarriots every time they attempted a deal with western powers. At the time of Justinian, Himarra is mentioned among the new castles of *Epirus Vetus*, whose location extended as far to the East as lake Ohrid, though the city of Lychnis (Ohrid) was not included (Soustal-Koder 1981: 136). As a diocese Himarra was established shortly before its mention in a *notitia* dating at the end of the 10th century (972-976), under the canonical jurisdiction of the metropolis of Nikopolis and Naupaktos (Veikou 2007: 34; Veikou 2012: 47). In 1020 Basil II detached the diocese of Himarra from the metropolis of Naupaktos and subordinated it to the archdiocese of Ohrid (Soustal-Koder 1981: 136; Delikari 2014: 159-60), a short-lived subjugation, since from the middle of the 11th century the diocese once again figures as suffragan to the metropolis of Naupaktos (Soustal-Koder 1981: 136). From the end of the 13th century the diocese must have been subjugated to the Latin Church (Veikou 2007: 280). In a chrysobull awarded by Andronikos III Palaiologos to the *prokathemenos* (commander) of the city of Ioannina, dated 1321, the diocese of Himarra appears already to be a territory within the theme of Ioannina (Nicol 1984: 87); I assume this reflected the canonical jurisdiction of the diocese, although in 1360 or 1363 it returns back to the Orthodox Church (Miklosich-Müller 2012: 411-2). In 1431 the province of Delvina is attached to the diocese, which now acquires the name "Diocese of Himarra and Delvina" (Soustal-Koder 1981: 136). It remained under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the metropolis of Ioannina until July 1832, when the diocese of Himarra and Delvina united with the diocese of Dryinoupolis and Gjirokastra, which acquired the name "Diocese of Dryinoupolis, Delvina and Himarra" (Germanos 97-9).

Himarra's political history was no less turbulent. Already since 1280 the Angevin attack made the entire region from Himarra to Vagenetia (Delvino and Saranda) property of Charles I of Anjou. In 1338-1339 Himarra rose against Andronikos III Palaiologos and in 1358 it was recorded as property of the despot Ioannis Komnenos Asan (Soustal-Koder 1981: 139). In 1386 Himarra's lord, Hermolaos Lombardo, requests the help of Venetians to fight against the Turks; help from the *Serenissima* was also solicited later (1395-1396) (Soustal-Koder 1981: 139-40). Venice was not the sole power from which help was asked

for; forced to capitulate to the Turks and being the centre of a *nabiye* with 117 households since 1431, in 1451 they asked assistance to overthrow the Ottomans from king Alfonso V of Aragon and Naples, who sent them Catalan troops in 1456 (Soustal-Koder 1981: 139-140). In 1473 Himarra cedes from the Ottoman Empire and is annexed to Venice, but the 1479 Venetian-Turkish Treaty brings Himarra back to Ottoman control (Giakoumis 2004: 281). Requests for help were reciprocated by diverse western states every time that a western power felt the Ottoman threat necessitated subversive movements, like the 1481 campaign of Mehmed II to Otranto and Apulia (Giakoumis 2004: 289-95), or every time western forces planned to challenge or undermine the Ottoman rule in its western frontiers, as is the case in the sources to be examined further below.

It is not an exaggeration to conclude that most revolutionary plans brewed in the wider region of the western Balkans included Himarra and its region, for its strategic position and its subversive potential to the security of the westernmost ports of *Via Egnatia*. To quote the words of the eminent Ohrid scholar of the interwar period: «Un seul point de la côte restait accessible à des secours de l'étranger, et nous verrons qu'il a été utilisé, c'est le pays de la Chimara, région montagneuse et même assez abrupte au sud de Valona» (Pécharre 1937: 403). To mention only two, yet very significant examples as evidence thereof, I shall bring up the cases of the two homonym archbishops of Ohrid, Athanasios I Risea (1595-1615) and Athanasios II (1653-1660). Upon succession to the archbishopric throne, Athanasios I, perhaps utilizing the same network which his predecessor Joachim implicated and which also fomented revolutionary movements in Himarra shortly after the Lepanto naval battle (1571) (Chasiotis 1964; Korres 2015: 161-6), engaged into a correspondence with the papacy, as well as Venice, aiming at securing their aid in fighting against the Turks; he appeared not only to be aware of Himarra's contacts with the kingdom of Naples, but also playing the card of an imminent Himarriot revolt which eventually broke in 1596, with firearms and ammunition supplied by Philip II, the king of Naples and Sicily (Frashëri 2005: 65; Murzaku 2009: 63; Pécharre 1937: 409-22; Floristán 1992: 57 ff.) In the sixth decade of the 17th century, archbishop Athanasios II of Ohrid was involved in similar movements. As an "ardent supporter of the anti-Ottoman resistance" and "the principal protagonist of the unity of his see with Rome", he actively solicited «collaboration with the Himarriots to fight their common enemy, the Ottoman» (Murzaku 2009: 63; Lacko 1957: 137; Pécharre 1936: 296-8). After his resignation

and the election of his successor, Athanasios II retired in Himarra in fear of the Turks; it was there that he got acquainted with the basilian missionaries for the first time (Murzaku 2009: 63; Lacko 1957: 137; Péchayre 1936: 297).

In this section I tried to demonstrate that Himarra's contacts with the kingdom of Naples, the papacy and other western states were not isolated from wider unionist or anti-Ottoman movements in the entire territory of the archdiocese of Ohrid, in spite of Himarra's special privileges awarded by the Ottoman state in the 16th century (Winnifrieth 2002: 104). This was, although from the standpoints of public administration and church hierarchy Himarra was not always dependent, suffragan or otherwise related to Ohrid. The Himarra region always remained an important territory of strategic importance to the south of Vlora, the principal port of *Via Egnatia*, whose important station Ohrid was. Its unruly and inexpugnable population often made temporal deals with western rulers, to whose armies they often offered mercenary services (for an 18th century example, see Kallivretakis 2003: 226). A particularly multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-lingual province inhabited by heterogeneous peoples with volatile and resilient interests, the archdiocese of Ohrid could hardly share any of the local interests allegedly borne by Himarriots in their correspondence with various western states acquiring power at different periods of time, unless such interests were framed in wider similar movements, as I suggested was the case.

3.- CULTURAL-GEOGRAPHIC ACCOUNTS ON HIMARRA AND ITS TERRITORY (16TH-19TH CENTURIES)

Having outlined that identities are created, maintained, strengthened and expressed differently in case there is interference of an external agent and differently in case identity is manifested without the involvement of any Other (Eriksen 1995), it is imperative that we outline what various geographers and travellers wrote vis-à-vis Himarra's territoriality and where they classified it, before delving into how Himarriots identified themselves in terms of territoriality in diverse inter-group communications or in memories written in a "We-mode". To check how Himarra was perceived, I looked at a number of writings by 16th to 19th century scholars from the Ottoman world (Piri Re'is), the Venetian dominions of the Dalmatian coast (*Anonymous of Kotor*), papal

delegates from the region (Pjetër Budi), other western scholars (Bruzen de la Martinière) as well as scholars from the wider region (Athanasios Psalidas, teacher Chariton and Nikolaos Mystakidis). While no exhaustive such research was the pursuit of this paper, as shall be demonstrated, there is no standard concept as to the extent of Himarra's region and its belonging and this seems to have been subject to developments across time. Some authors preserve the territoriality concept of ancient Macedonia; others view Himarra as a border territory and classify its region in Epiros, or –for others– in Albania, geographical terms that, to others, were, on occasion, used simultaneously. Many of the authors provide interesting details in their accounts on cultural aspects of the inhabitants of the region, which, I think, are useful to the point I am making in this paper.

Upon the fall of Albania and Epiros into the hands of the Ottomans, Himarra and its region (with few exceptions of unruly coastal zones) was set under the newly founded sandjak of the Arvanids (Albanians) and the first land register for taxation purposes was conducted in 1431/32. Less than a century thereafter, in his major work entitled *Kitab-i Babriye*, dedicated to sultan Selim I in 1521 and later to Suleiman the Magnificent in 1525, the notable Ottoman navigator Piri Reis devotes chapters 55 and 56 on the Ionian and Adriatic coastline (Elsie 2003: 56-8). A corsair and later admiral of the Ottoman fleet, Piri Reis is widely known as an authoritative cartographer, whose work is a portolan atlas that incorporates sailing directions accompanied by hundreds of charts of most parts of the Mediterranean. As an Ottoman official and addressing to a limited, Ottoman target group, Piri Reis defines Himarra as “a castle belonging to the sandjak of Ioannina”, its coastal region “beginning beyond the Cape of Himarra” to Vlora (Elsie 2003: 56).

In an early 16th century narrative source on the feats of Mercurius Bua, written by Tzanes Koronaïos in 1519, currently kept in Torino's Biblioteca Reale (*Taurinensis*, Bibl. Regia, Var. 101), Albanians, regardless of their place of domicile, are collectively called Macedonians. After Koronaïos, Macedonia in some occasions is defined as “Arta and Angelokastron, Ioannina and Albania” (Sathas 1867: 4; cf. Sathas 1885: 68), while as Albanians are implied some of the inhabitants of Macedonia: “He [i.e. Mercurius] recruited by him from the Macedonians 300 selected brave Albanians” (Sathas 1867: 123; cf. Sathas 1885: 68). Such geographical terms, however, were certainly neither consistent nor

standardized, as elsewhere Macedonia is placed by Koronaios in continental Greece (Sathas 1885: 68).

The *Anonymous of Kotor*, whose 1570 description of Albania provides details of the entire region, was probably one of the Venetian proveditors of Kotor (Elsie 2003: 59). After him, «[t]he country of Albania is that which ancient authors called Macedonia, i.e. only a part of Macedonia since the latter contains a number many lands and regions which are not Albanian» (Elsie 2003: 59). In his account, the *Anonymous of Kotor* places Himarra at Albania's southernmost border: «this province of Albania, which begins in Ulcinj, extends down to the coast of the Adriatic Sea to Vlora and to the so-called Cimariotti mountains, known in ancient times as Acroceraunia» (Elsie 2003: 59). Where exactly the "province" of Albania ends is not very clear, as elsewhere the same author related that «[a]s Karaburun belongs to the land of the Himariots, Albania comes to an end here at the water's edge» (Elsie 2003: 61). The anonymous Venetian proveditor of Kotor also records the lingual diversity of the region, as well as the cultural or functional multilingualism of some of its inhabitants, who spoke Albanian, as well as other languages, some named, others not: «The peoples there differ in their languages, since from Bar up to Istria they speak the Slavic language, whereas from Ulqinj down to Vallona and the region thereof, they also speak the Greek language» (Elsie 2003: 59).

Pjetër Budi (1566-1622) was bishop of Sapa and Sarda in northern Albania and in a letter addressed to cardinal Gozzadino regarding his plan to foment an armed uprising in Albania he reveals some interesting geographical details regarding Albania's territoriality. After him, «[t]he province of Albania is situated in the most distant region of Macedonia, having to its West the Adriatic Sea. To its East it is bordered by Greece and to the North by the Serbs and Bulgarians» (Elsie 2003: 170-1). Albania is thus called a province of the region of Macedonia. While reference is most likely made to ancient Macedonia, another passage calling Ohrid, Elbasan and Vlora as "provinces" indicates that the use of the term "province" is not standardized; hence, one may not draw safe conclusions on subordination or territoriality on account of the use of the term province. It is interesting that these "provinces" are placed, after Pjetër Budi, "in Epiros" (Elsie 2003: 177). There is no indication, however, as to whether Epiros was considered to be a region or something else. While it goes without saying that one should not consider as authoritative any account with geographical information written by a bishop, Pjetër Budi's account helps

point to the fact that confusion and no agreed territoriality with regard to the wider region in which Himarra was, was still the case at the beginning of the 17th century.

The French polymath Antoine-Augustine Bruzen de la Martinière (1683-1746) in his monumental 10-volume work *Le Grande Dictionnaire Geographique et Critique*, based on secondary literature, is no less confusing on this matter. In Bruzen's entry, Albania is defined as a province known in antiquity as part of Macedonia (Bruzen 1726: 188), statement that echoes the name of the army unit comprised of Himarriot and other *stradioti* in service of the kings of Naples until the late 18th century: *regimento dei Macedoni* (Sathas 1885: 68; cf. Bartl 1991: 352 and Pappas 1981: 35-59). Travelling in 1835 in the Himarra region, William Martin Leake records that «[t]here are about 100 pensioners of the King of Naples in the town, officers included» (Leake 1967: 12). Albania's extent is defined as starting from Antivari (Bar) in the North extending in the hinterland as far as the Dibra mountains and lake Ohrid, passing from the Himarra mountains. After him «Kanina, Himarra, Arta and Akarnania are provinces of Albania» (*ibid.*: 188). His accounts, however, are neither consistent nor accurately pointing to alternate geographical delineations; in other words, he falls into the confusion he mentions of others when he writes: «The medieval chroniclers and historians often confuse the names Epiros and Albania, often meaning the one instead of the other» (Bruzen 1768: 787). In another entry, Bruzen defines ancient Epiros as «abutting Illyria, starting from the [Akro] Ceraunian Mounts, today of Himarra, extending to Arachthos River and the Ambracian Gulf» (Bruzen 1768: 786). New Epiros, after him, «is a part of Turkey in Europe: it has Albania in the North, Thessaly in the Levant (South), Achaia in the middle and the sea of Greece in the West. It is divided in two: Himarra or Kanina in the North and Arta in the middle. Its principal cities include Arta, Butrint, Canina (Kanina), Chimera (Himarra), Joanina (Ioannina) the capital, Perga (Parga) and Prevesa (Preveza)» (Bruzen 1768: 787). Still, in his entry on Himarra, Bruzen mentions that «this place is presently a city which preserves its old name; and it gives it to the neighbouring mountains, which are the Acroceraunia Mountains. Chimera is at the beginning of a small Riviera close to Porto Palermo in Albania's Canina province» (Bruzen 1730: 576).

Bruzen's geographical delimitations of Epiros and Albania were also encountered in other 18th century scholars. Metropolitan Meletios of Athens (1728), from Ioannina, who copies earlier authors, includes Gjirokastra, Delvina,

Saranda and Himarra in Epiros, while Vlora, Berat, Elbasan, Korça belong to Albania, a delimitation followed by Daniel Philippides and Gregory Konstantas (1791) and later by François Pouqueville (in Kallivretakis 1993: 26-7).

Athanasios Psalidas, the author of another geographical account I consulted, written between 1817 and 1822, and a renowned thinker and author of the Hellenic Enlightenment, also recorded the alternate use of Epiros and Albania, the former being part of the latter. He was born and raised in Ioannina and was therefore well acquainted with the geography and customs of the region. According to him, Albania is the ninth province of the Ottoman state, «which in the old times was comprised of two provinces, the Illyricum and Epiros». Albania's territory extended from Bosnia and Serbia in the North to the Ambracian Gulf in the South, as far to the East as Macedonia and Thessaly. Northern Albania was once called Illyricum, while southern Albania was called Epiros (Psalidas 1931: 57-8). «Epiros has the following provinces: Ioannina, Konitsa, Old Pogoniani, Argyrokastron (Gjirokastër), Delvina, Parakalamos, Paramythia, Margariti, Liapouria (Labëria) which is called Arbër, Aulona (Vlora), Toskëria [...] Illyricum has the following: Ohër, Upper and Lower Dibra, Tomorica, Elbasan, Berat, Tirana, Kavaja, Durrës, Kruja...» (Psalidas 1931: 58-9). The validity of Psalidas' reference to Labëria as Arbër is confirmed by several documents from the archive of Ali Pasha dating from 1802 to 1820 (Panagiotopoulos *et al.* 2007: doc. 135, vol. 1, pp. 257-60; doc. 204, pp. 392-5; doc. 550, vol. 2, pp. 168-70; doc. 807, pp. 597-600; doc. 1319, vol. 3, pp. 464-5; doc. 1355, pp. 528-30), narrative sources, such as Hadji Shehreti's *Alipashiada* (Sathas 1870: *passim*, e.g. 130, 141 and 338), as well as studies on the local folklore (Veizi 1998: 202-3). After Psalidas, Epiros was once colonized by Greeks, while Greeks, after him, live in cities and villages in Delvina, Paramythia, Himarra, Dhërmi, Palasa, Finiq, Plesevitsa, Sayada, Giromeri, Parga and other principal villages (Psalidas 1931: 59-60). The metropolitan city of Lower Albania, also called Epiros, is Ioannina. Delvina is a small city with a diocese suffragan to the metropolis of Ioannina, as is Himarra, which has many villages with Christian Romans (Psalidas 1931: 60-3). The delimitations of Epiros or southern Albania appear to follow *grosso modo* the Roman divisions *Epirus Vetus* and *Epirus Nova*, well-known to 19th century scholars like P. Aravantinos (in Kallivretakis 1993: 28), and to lesser scholars like N. Mystakidis and Chariton.

As is usual in many 19th century amateur historians, Nikolaos Mystakidis is not consistent in his geographical works. His ethno-cultural accounts, however,

do display the idiosyncratic cultural complexity of the region; hence, they are worth to be summarized here. Writing in 1904, he claims that «Himarra is the capital of the homonym province [...] This province is divided in two parts, the first of which is called Bregdet and the other Kurvelesh» (N. Mystakidis 1904: 272). Himarra in most parts of the 19th century belonged to the *kaza* of Delvina, in the sandjak of Gjirokastra (Kallivretakis 2003: 224); Himarra was a see of a *kaymakam* (provincial governor), while in Kurvelesh there was a see of a *mudir* (provincial administrator) in Progonat (N. Mystakidis 1905: 1). In 1895, though, Kurvelesh had been elevated to a *kaza* with its center at Progonat, while Himarra figured as a *nahiye* (Kokolakis 2003: 252, 288). Gregorič-Bonn has further argued that Himarra's erosive and seismic area contributed to its continuous movements and volatility of geo-administrative and social boundaries (Gregorič-Bonn 2008: 43-63; cf. Koçi 2006, Pano 2008, Sala *et al.* 2006). Himarra's regional significance has also remained in folklore, whereby Himarra is called "the flower of the vilayet" (Rrapaj-Shehu 1991: 1005; Veizi 1998: 473). In another account, Mystakidis considers Kurvelesh, Himarra or Bregdet and Delvina as parts of a single province, which in this case do coincide with the borders of the *kaza* of Delvina (N. Mystakidis 1905). Kurvelesh, after him, is inhabited by "brave Turkish (i.e. Muslim) Albanians" (N. Mystakidis 1904: 272). All Bregdet villages speak Albanian, while «in Himarra, Dhërmi and Palasa Greek has always been spoken, although Albanian is also common language» (N. Mystakidis 1904: 272; cf. N. Mystakidis 1905: 9; Lear 1988: 144; Hammond 1967: 125). N. Mystakidis also adds that the language of folk lamenting songs in these villages was not Greek (1904: 272), although he does, in fact, record a folk song (1904: 273). The historiographical problems associated with ethno-cultural categories have already been discussed by Leonidas Kallivretakis, whose account is supporting the point I am making in this paper (Kallivretakis 1995: 31-6).

It seems that the Islamization of the Kurvelesh region gradually turned to a remarkable factor of identification shift between it and the region of Himarra. «The inhabitants of Kurvelesh were Christian and came to terms with those of Himarra, until the time of Ali Pasha when they Islamized», writes N. Mystakidis (1905: 2). The Islamization of the Kurvelesh region, however, is reported to have taken place much earlier, starting from the 17th century, as evidenced by Borshi, which in 1661 contained a mixed population from a religious standpoint and by 1787 had been completely Islamized (Bartl 1991:

323), and continuing in 1730-1750 (Aravantinos 1856: 245-6 and n. 1; Pappa 2009: 51-2). Such differentiation, as I shall demonstrate, also reflects in the sources taken under consideration.

4.- HIMARRIOT SELF-IDENTIFICATION TRACES

Key to unlocking how the Himarriots viewed their region and what they thought their region was part of is a letter sent by Himarra's *protonotarios*, elders and archons to Don Alfonso, marquis de Atripalda. The source was published in Italian translation of the original Greek (Floristán 1991: 133-4) and, though directed to a functionary of Charles V of Spain, is to be classified as in-group communication. Don Alfonso Granai Castriota, the marquis of Atripalda (close to modern-day Avellino in southern Italy), was related to George Castriota Scanderbeg, whose exiled family received land and titles in Apulia after Scanderbeg's death (Aubin 1992: 469). He was the second son of Bernardo, an Albanian *condottiero* who, together with George Castriota's widow, had escaped to the kingdom of Naples, for which reason his family claimed kindred to the legendary symbol of Albanian resistance against the Ottoman advance. In 1512 he paid 25,000 ducats to acquire the wider Atripalda county with inheritance rights and in 1513 he turned it to a marquisate. In 1519 he capitalized his loyalty to Charles V (r. 1519-1556) of Spain's ancestors with an appointment as governor of the land of Bari and Otranto, one of the most sensitive provinces facing the mighty Ottoman Empire in its golden age, a position which he held until 1532 (Varriale 2011; 2014; 2015). After the Ottoman victories in Rhodes (1522) and Mohács (1526) Don Alfonso was commissioned by the Neapolitans to develop a network of spies which, especially since 1532, together with the other spying network set up by Fernando de Alarcón (Floristán 1990-91: p. 116, n. 23), was to supply intelligence (Couto 2013: 303-12) on whose basis Habsburg policies towards the Ottoman Empire were drafted.

The network engaged a significant number of Greek and Albanian spies (Malcolm 2015: 76-99; Mendella 1973). Hence, there is no doubt that, when addressing to Don Alfonso Granai Castriota, the Himarriots were fully conscious he was fully aware of the region, its ground and populations, as well as had the possibilities of alternative sources of information; he was therefore a member of the in-group. Their letter informing him about the number of

troops they could recruit to fight against the Ottomans provides details on the geography and territoriality of Himarra comprehensible only by a member of the in-group. It should be borne in mind that neither was this letter written as a geographical account of the Himarriot terrain, nor can it be considered exhaustive of the region's villages. The letter provided a list of places and the number of soldiers that the Himarriots were certain could be recruited to fight at their side against the Ottomans; hence, it is almost certain that there were villages not included in the list either because their inhabitants would not side with the Himarriots or with whom deals had not been reached by the time the letter was drafted, such as the littoral villages of the Delvina and Saranda regions. Still, the territorialization of the Himarra region with its geographical provinces helps us understand not only why the sandjakbey of Vlora writing to the Himarriots in 1532 presents himself as master «of the standard-bearer of Vlora and Albanians and littoral inhabitants (i.e. inhabitants of the Bregdeti littoral region) and of the rest» (Floristán 1991: 131), but it also provides perceptive lenses through which several other manifestations of territorial self-identifications of the Himarriots can be understood. The villages mentioned therein (Floristán 1991: 133-4; cf. Floristán 1992), structured in four provinces, are as follows (Table 1):

Himarra Province	Villages of Albania over the Mountain (Kurvelesh)	At Another Part (Upper Labëria)	The Vlora Part (Lower Labëria)
1. Himarra Castle	1. Crisilei (?)	1. Cangnerati (?)	1. Prates (Brataj)
2. Vonu (Vuno)	2. Innovozi (Nivica Bubari)	2. Dukat	2. Pancritis (?)
3. Sanlites (Ilias)	3. Ovognotis (?)	3. Cozzii (Kuçi?)	3. Pirgotte (?)
4. Dhërmi (Drymades)	4. Progonates (Progonat)	4. Polinirei (Piluri?)	4. Cattuna (?)
5. Palasa	5. Insulati (Zhulat)		5. Aprolechi (?)
6. Candesaliti (Kudhësi)	6. Tornichei (?)		
7. Claperis (Qiparo)	7. Erasia (?)		
	8. Valcheri (?)		
	9. Cernachei (Çorraç?)		
	10. Efterna (Fterë)		

TABLE 1: The Himarriot Villages Ready to Rise Against the Ottomans after a 1532 Account of the Himarriot Elders to Don Alfonso, Marquis of Atripalda.

The distinction between an Albanian province and three other provinces is all-probably based on geographical grounds, rather than ethnic or cultural. While this distinction justifies the very disagreement of early geographers and scholars regarding Himarra's position in Epiros or Albania, the 19th century account of Athanasios Psalidas, whereby Labëria was called Arbër, may suggest what Meyer attributed to a metastasis from "Labëri" to "Arbëri" (cited in Çabej 1976: 61, 68). As the eminent Eqrem Çabej has demonstrated, the territoriality of the name "Arbër" has changed significantly over time, especially pursuant its expansion after the 14th and 15th century, when Arbër's space was delineated as far south as Ioannina and Arta, as, for example, in the *Chronicle of Tocco* (cf. Çabej 1976: 61-9). Be this as it may, the classification above provides a frame in which we can understand identification ways of the region's archons as "elders of Himarra and all Albania" (Appendices 1-4, 6, 11) in the course of the 16th century, a formulation implying that Himarra is part of the province called Albania. Given the predominant opinion of western geographers and scholars that Himarra region is part of Albania, one may suggest that the use of such geographical specimens by Himarra's elders was more comprehensible by their target groups, although in the 19th century a Himarriot complained that the old name of the region as "Arbër" and "Arbëria" had been forgotten (Hahn 2013: 366). The territoriality of Himarra's region appears to expand later, including southern littoral villages of the Delvina and Saranda regions, as appears to be implied in several dating 17th century (Appendix 15), 18th century (Appendices 16, 17) and 19th century (Appendices 19-23). This line (Rrapaj-Shehu 1991: 788, 835-6; Veizi 1998: 263) or an even more extended one, from Igoumenitsa to Vlora (Rrapaj-Shehu 1991: 772; Veizi 1998: 3-4) is also recorded in the folklore.

When target audiences, however, were either considered as members of the in-group, such as Don Alfonso, the marquis of Atripalda, or as very familiar with the in-group, such as pope Gregory XIII in 1578, Himarriots in the sources consulted appear to draw elsewhere only regionally manifested distinctions between themselves, as one analytical category, and the Albanians, as another analytical category. For example, in a 11.11.1532 letter of the Himarriots to Don Alfonso (Appendix 5), in which they outline the attack of the Ottoman fleet to Himarra, they refer to "others of ours and other villages of Albanians" as victims of the attack when the galley "put into the land and thus surprised the Albanian elders and our Himarriots", the context of Albanian elders pointing to Dukat and other villages of Upper (mountainous) Labëria. In spite of the

aforementioned distinction, the “Albanians” of the Himarra region in other sources are still portrayed as members of the Himarriot in-group as is evidenced by the use of the expression “our Arvanids” with reference to the inhabitants of Zhulat (Appendix 10). The Albanians of the Himarra region being considered as members of the inner-group, however, should be viewed as a volatile identification, as evidenced by enmities in 1662 (Appendix 13), skirmishes in 1750-3 (Appendix 16), raids in 1839 (Appendix 20) or threats of war in 1810 (Panagiotopoulos *et al.* 2007: doc. 550, vol. 2, pp. 168-70) and 1854 (Appendix 24). Such evidence, in my view, enhances the suggestion that the name Albania and its adjective was meant strictly in geographical terms even after the 18th century, when mass Islamization of the Kurvelesh province added a religious differentiator on the top of the geographical one (*cf.* Appendices 16, 20 and 24), thereby ending the solidarity in which the Himarriots appear before pope Gregory XIII in 1577, displayed in the expression “πᾶσα ἡ ἡμετέρα Δημοκρατεία” (our entire Republic, Appendix 7).

Although Himarra and the Himarriots in their in-group communications as well as in their identity manifestations towards various out-groups clearly projected an idiosyncratic local identity, as the sources quoted above have already demonstrated, the whereabouts of their region are portrayed in ways deemed expedient on the basis of the “Us-Mode” communication needs, which, in their turn, played some role in the manifest self-identifications of Himarriots. Hence, in their communication with recipients in the West, more (Don Alfonso, marquis of Atripalda, 1532, Appendix 4; Don Juan, 1573, Appendix 6) or less (pope Gregory XIII, 1577, Appendix 7) familiar with their territory, they make reference to their position in Albania (Appendix 4) or Epiros of the Albanians (Appendix 7). It can further be argued that the positioning of their region was similar when selected members of their group were in contact with the West, as is implied by the identification of the Albanian soldiers from Lukovo, in whose memory the bell of the monastery of Krorës was donated (Appendix 18). Even in such occasions, though, there is lack of consistency, as in a later letter addressed to pope Gregory XIII (Appendix 8) the Himarriots posited their region in Epiros, as they also did before 1759 in their communications with the Russian government under empress Elizabeth of Russia (Appendix 17), when the Islamization of several parts of Albania did not fit the needs of the Himarriots to emphasize their Orthodox Christian identity to fellow-Orthodox. The flexibility in which the Himarriots could adjust their

whereabouts to various communication settings is, perhaps, better displayed in their correspondence with pope Alexander VII in August 6, 1660, when, in their attempt to flatter the pope by way of a parallelism of his name to that of Alexander the Great, whose memory remained strongly impressed in popular memory throughout Palaeologan times thereafter (Karathanasis 2002; Fyssas 2015), so that they solicit his protection, they do not hesitate to allude that Himarra region's position was in Macedonia (Appendix 12). The inclusion of Himarra in Macedonia is also mentioned in a letter of Andrea de Lazzari "dalla Provincia Cimarra Macedona" addressed to the Prussian emperor Joseph II, in which he offered the assistance of Himarriots in the implementation of the emperor's eastern plan, which involved far wider regions than modern-day Albania; hence, the inclusion of Himarra in the wider region of Macedonia would be beneficial in the Himarriots' aim to cede from the Ottoman Empire. In this case the letter is announced as: "Nota de tutti i villaggi della Provincia di Cimarra in Macedonia" (Bartl 1991: 312, 351-2).

Another identity facet impacted by the We-mode or Us-mode communication is what the in-group consists in. While the generic attribute of being a Himarriot, as for example in the statement *nos igitur omnes Chimarae provinciae cum caeteris circumvicinis locis* (Appendix 15), is to be found in all sources, the greater interest is in the variants of this attribute, or in what the in-group is not. The 1532 expression "banda nostra de l'Albania" (Appendix 4) is aligned to the identifier of "Albanians from Epiros" used in 1577 (Appendix 7). Elsewhere, however, the name "Albanian" is used as an identifier of otherness; for instance, in the November 11, 1532 letter of the Himarriots to Don Alfonso, the in-group name "our Himarriots" is juxtaposed to the identifier "Albanian elders" (Appendix 5). This distinction becomes increasingly more evident after the Islamization of Kurvelesh by 1750s, as evidenced by various sources from 1750 to 1854, all written by Christians somehow related to the Orthodox Church (Appendices 16 and 19-24).

One should not rush to hasty conclusions, however, because the dynamic character of such self-identifications is manifested when the very Arvanids (Albanians) who were juxtaposed to the in-group in 1532 (Appendix 5) and actually the very inhabitants of Zhulat who in 1750s are identified as adversaries (Appendix 16), in 1578 are clearly called ours ("οί ἐδική μας οί Ἀρβανίταις οί λεγόμενοι Ζουλάτες", Appendix 10), when countering the Turks as a common enemy. In this case, the possessive adjective "our" indicates the very regional identity of

Himarriots, while the geographical identifier “Albanians” is only understood through its binary concept of “non-Albanians”. Hence, the very phrase “ours, the Albanians”, in its very lexical environment, indicates, I suggest, two things: first, that there were Albanians who were not Himarriot, otherwise the adjective “our” would make no sense. Second, and vice-versa, that there were Himarriots that were not called Albanian, as, else, the identifier “Albanians” would have been unnecessary. Christianity as an identifier of the Himarriots, in juxtaposition to the Muslim, already appears since 1578 (Appendix 10), but intensifies after the Islamization of Kurvelesh, as evidenced in Appendices 20 and 24.

Still, in spite of the religious diversification caused by Islamization and the partition of the Himarra region to different administrative units, as late as in 1810 it is evident that the inhabitants of the region were conscious of their common regional identity, as evidenced by a very interesting document (Panagiotopoulos *et al.* 2007: doc. 550, vol. 2, pp. 168-70). The source is a letter of the inhabitants of Arbër (Αρβανο) to the notables of Himarra, Vuno, Dhërmi (Drymades) and Palasa, threatening them that, in case they ally with Ali Pasha, they will turn the entire Arbër against them; hence, it is clearly of the We-mode communication type. The letter begins with the exclamation “Ηγαπημένη μας γιτόνη προεστή...” (Dear neighbours, notables of...), a statement repeated once again in the form of “you will turn all of your neighbours to enemies” (“θέλη κάμετε έχρους όλους τούς γιτόνους”). A similar differentiation in the self-identification of a Himarriot as being neither Tosk nor a Lab is recorded by Johan Georg von Hahn (Hahn 2013: 365-6).

Evidently, in such communications within the wider regional in-group, a very local identification based on the already small unit of a village, or the even smaller unit of a clan or a microtoponym is manifested, as a number of documents from the archive of Ali Pasha demonstrate. The aforementioned letter was addressed by all the inhabitants of Kuçi, the Labs of Gjirokastra and Kardhiq, Dukat and Tragjat (“Κουτζιότες: Λιοπησηότες Ἀργιρόκαστρο καί Καρδήκη Ντουκάτες Τραγγιά ὅλη πέρα πέρα”). Other examples demonstrate village identities like “the inhabitants of Borshi” (‘Ἐμῆς, οἱ Πορσοῦτες...»; Panagiotopoulos *et al.* 2007: doc. 249, vol. 1, pp. 462-5), in which very local, clan or microtoponymic identities are also manifested in the form of “Xhikates, Xharrates, Sinandonates, Gjokanikates and Mesargiotes” («τζηκατες, τζαρατες, σηναντονατες, γηοκανηκατες, μεσαργητες»); “the Himarriot notables” («προεστή Χημαρηότες»; *op.cit.*: doc. 657, vol. 2, pp. 339-40), or “the inhabitants of Qeparo...

Piluri... Kudhës” («κιπαργηότες... πηλουργηότες... κουδησηότες»; *op.cit.*: doc. 1302, vol. 3, 437-8).

The Himarriots are characterized by cultural multi-lingualism, which was very common to the region and the period (*cf.* Stasinopoulou 2015). They write in the Greek dialect of their region, in their We-mode in-group communication, mixed with Albanian, Turkish, Italian and some Arabic words. Kyriazis’ remarkable works on the lingual idiom of the region have demonstrated the diachronic presence of Greek, tracking the indigenous roots of the local idiom (Kyriazis 2006), as well as its lingual stratification with the appropriate historical background (Qirjazi 2015). After all, Greek was one of the regional languages of learning and commerce at the time, in their communication with the pope, in which they identify themselves as persistent to the Catholic faith (e.g. Appendix 13), and other representatives of western crowns, such as Don Juan, to whom they present themselves as “your Himarriot slaves” (Appendix 6). The reference of Himarriots addressing to the Catholic archbishop of Otranto (Appendix 9), that “in our place we have no notaries, courtiers or potentates; we are the notaries, the republic, the courtiers and the chancellors of each other”, clearly indicates that their preference to writing in Greek was conscious and not imposed by any conditions or a secretariat; they use a translator when they conduct correspondence in Italian, but they sign in Greek with Greek conferments of their names (e.g. Appendices 13-14). It is also in Greek that they address to the Russian government before 1759 stating, this time, their persistence to the Orthodox faith and the ecumenical patriarchate of Constantinople; yet, they write: «We speak the Albanian language, the same [language spoken] at neighbouring Albania and Bosnia. Yet, in many areas all learned speak Greek; noble families also speak Italian, due to the many officers serving foreign states and the young people studying at the Padova and Napoli theological seminaries» (Appendix 17).

Equally interesting to the constitution and language of the in-group is the identification of the enemy, key to the consolidation of the in-group’s coherence. In most sources presented herein (Appendices 1-13, 17, 19 and 24) and addressed to out-groups, the Turks are presented as enemies of the in-group. In few other sources (Appendices 16, 20 and 24), all dating after the extensive Islamizations in parts of the Himarra region (1730-1750), the “Albanians”, either as a geographical concept corresponding with the Kurvelesh province, or as an identifier of the Islamized Himarriots, again

concentrated in the Kurvelesh province, are portrayed as adversaries. Such positions, in my view, reflect We-mode identifications and identification shifts, while in Us-mode identification shifts and at few occasions the metropolitan of Ioannina and the patriarch of Constantinople are also stated as enemies (Floristán 2014: 483), while local inhabitants with conflicting interests were also portrayed as adversaries or traitors, such as Spyros Kokas and his clan (Floristán 2014: 484, 485).

As last but not least facet of identity we are lucky enough to dispose three sources, in which the Himarriots identify key historical events and figures. The most cited figure with which the Himarriots proud themselves through their past is George Castriota Scanderbeg, Albania's prominent figure of resistance against the Ottoman advance, in whose battles the Himarriots justifiably claimed some share (Giakoumis 2004). Interestingly enough, Scanderbeg was not mentioned in the Himarriot correspondence with Don Alfonso Granai Castriota, the marquis of Atripalda, as apparently this was within first to second generation memory, hence, well-known and unnecessary as a statement. Almost half a century thereafter, however, in a letter to pope Gregory XIII dated July 12, 1577, the Himarriots pay tribute to George Castriota Scanderbeg, "their king", whose legacy of fierce resistance to submission they claimed: «after the travel to God of the most strong and serene Scanderbeg, who was once our king surnamed Kastriotis, nobody else was capable to subdue us, not even the enemy of Christ's faith, the infidel Turk with his brutal force and power never made it to subdue us under him» (Appendix 7). His mention, as evidenced by another mention before 1759 addressed to the Russian court (Appendix 17), appears to be not circumstantial, as seems to be their reference to king Pyrrhus in the same source, in their attempt to link their position with that of ancient Epiros, or the reference to Alexander the Great, in whose kingdom again they posited their region in a letter dated August 6, 1660 addressed to pope Alexander VII (Appendix 12). It is therefore evident that Alexander the Great, Pyrrhus of Epiros and George Castriota Scanderbeg were considered to be the most illustrious historical figures and periods with which the Himarriots formed identitarian historical memory, as they later did with the figure of Spyros Spyromilios (Kondis 1976: 93).

5.- CONCLUSIONS

In this study I utilized a variety of 16th to 19th century primary sources written by Himarriots, i.e. inhabitants of the wider Himarra region, in which traces of self-identification could be found and tried to juxtapose them with a number of other ethnocultural and geographical accounts on Himarra and its region. Identification facets that were thus explored included: Himarra region's territoriality and position; the constitution of the in-group in rapport with its various out-groups; the identification of the enemy; their language as manifestation of the Himarriot identity, as well as common history. Findings were examined with such theoretical *apparati* as the intergroup communication perspective and relational models of group identification and were contextualized in the wider web of relations of the western Balkan provinces of the territories of the archdiocese of Ohrid with the western world to avoid misleading and narrow interpretations of the historical past.

In my analysis I tried to demonstrate the volatility and pragmatic shifts or adaptations of the anyhow multi-faceted identity of the fiercely idiosyncratic region of Himarra, as manifested in diverse communication frames. The comparison of some of the findings with similar research in other Balkan regions indicates significant similarities that should be attributed to common historical circumstances. We are therefore dealing with complex and dynamic identifications of the sort that the broad Roman identity permitted in the territories of the Roman Empire and its successor Empires, accompanied by pragmatic identification shifts. All in all, it is fair to say that, although Himarriots did not bother to appear as identifying themselves in the ways others wanted them to, they maintained a deeply idiosyncratic, dynamic and volatile local, regional identity that was so much contested in the course of their modern history.

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APPENDICES

1) Letter of the Himarriots to a certain Christopharo, Himarra, March 26, 1530.

Original: AGS E1006 F95 [Floristán 1990-91: 127].

<p>... Il Presbiteri et vecchi dela Cimara et de tutta la Albania subditi del sanctissimo Imperator de Hispania...</p>	<p>... The priests and elders of Himarra and all Albania subject themselves to the most holy emperor of Spain...</p>
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2) Letter of the Himarriots to the Marquis of Atripalda, Himarra, July 03, 1531.

Original: AGS E1012 F191 [Floristán 1990-91: 128].

<p>...γέροι της Χειμάρας και Ἀλβανητίας...</p>	<p>...the elders of Himarra and Albania...</p>
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3) Letter of the Himarriots to Fernando of Alarcón, general of the kingdom of Apulia, Himarra, May 09, 1532.

Original: AGS E1010 F33 [Floristán 1990-91: 129].

<p>... ecclesiastici et mundani de Chimara et lo reduto deli Albanesi...</p>	<p>... clergymen and laymen of Himarra and stronghold of the Albanians...</p>
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4) Letter of the Himarriots to the marquis of Atripalda, Himarra, August 14, 1532.

Original: AGS E1011 F208 [Floristán 1990-91: 133-4].

<p>Alto et grande signor capitano de la Cimarra et Albania... vostro servitor prothonotaro et de li Previti et vecchi de la Cimarra et Albania... la vostra lettere havemo receputo, et ne scrive et comanda che mandamo resposta in che intencion sta el paese et l'Albania. Pero ho mandamo in ogni terra de l'Albania, et tutti sonno con animo et core che siano armigeri de Vostra Signoria perche li havemo facto cognoscere como la Signoria Vostra è albanese... scrivo altra lettere quanti casali se trovano alla banda nostra de l'Albania...</p>	<p>High and grand Sir, the captain of Himarra and Albania... your servant the <i>protonotarios</i>, the elders and archons of Himarra and Albania... We confirm receipt of your letter, in which you write and command us to reveal the intentions of the country and Albania. For that reason we sent it (i.e. the letter) to every land of Albania, and all are prepared, in soul and heart, to be arms-bearers of Your Lordship, because we let them (i.e. the land of Albania) know that Your Lordship is Albanian... I write in another letter how many villages are to be found in our band of Albania...</p>
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5) Letter of the Himarriots to the marquis of Atripalda, Himarra, November 11, 1532.

Original: AGS E1011 F228 [Floristán 1990-91: 135-6].

...altri de li nostri, et altri casali d'albanesi... ..e cosi venne la galea soto la Cimarra e ponbartigo la terra et cosi se asombraro li vechy albanesi et nuy cimaroti...	...others of ours and other villages of Albanians... and thus came the galley to Himarra and bombarded the land and so the Albanian elders and our Himarriots were amazed...
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6) Letter of Alexios, priest and protonotarios of Himarra to Lord Don Juan, Himarra, August 11, 1573.

Original: AGS E1011 F228 [Floristán 1992: 82].

...noi inchiniamo tutti la testa vostri schiavi Cimarioti et tutta l'Albania...	... We all bow [our] head, your slaves the Himarriots and all Albania...
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7) Letter of the Himarriots to pope Gregory XIII, Himarra, July 12, 1577.

Original: Vat. gr. 2124, n. 2. Latin translation in *Bessarione*, XVII (1913) 180-1 [Laurent 2013: 12-3].

... ἔκπαλαι καὶ παλαιόθεν μετὰ τὴν πρὸς Θεὸν ἀποδημίαν τοῦ εὐτονωτάτου καὶ γαληνωτάτου Σκανδρεμπέκου τοῦ ποτὲ ἡμετέρου ῥηγὸς τὸ ἐπὶ κλην αὐτοῦ Καστριώτης οὐδεὶς ἄλλος ἐδυνήθη ὑποτάξει ἡμᾶς, οὔτε ὁ ἐχθρὸς τῆς τοῦ Χριστοῦ πίστεως ὁ τύραννος καὶ ἀσεβῆς Τοῦρκος μετὰ πάσης τῆς μιαρᾶς αὐτοῦ δυνάμεως καὶ ἰσχύος οὐδέπω ἴσχυσε καθ' ἡμῶν τοῦ ὑποτάξει ἡμᾶς ὑπ' αὐτόν.	Once and since very old times, after the travel to God of the most strong and serene Scanderbeg, who was once our king surnamed Kastriotis, nobody else was capable to subdue us, not even the enemy of Christ's faith, the infidel Turk with his brutal force and power never made it to subdue us under him.
Ἐκ Χειμάρρης ἦτοι Ἡπειρίας τῶν Ἀλβανιτῶν τῆ ἰβ' ἰουλίου ἀφοζ'	From Himarra, i.e. Epiros of the Arvanids, on July 12 th 1577.
οἱ ἐξ Ἡπειρίας Ἀλβανίται πρεσβύτεροι, ἱερωμένοι τε καὶ λαϊκοὶ καὶ πᾶσα ἡ ἡμετέρα Δημοκρατεία.	The Arvanid elders, priests, laymen and our entire Republic from Epiros.

8) Letter of the Himarriots to pope Gregory XIII, Himarra, November 20, 1577.

Original: Vatic. Gr. 2124, n. 18 [Laurent 2013: 14].

ἡ τοῖς Ἑπειρίας ἦτοι τῆς Χειμάρρας γερουσία καὶ ἅπαντες ἱερομένοι τε καὶ λαοικοὶ	The senate and all clergymen and laymen of Epiros, that is of Himarra.
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9) Letter of the Himarriots to the archbishop of Otranto, Himarra, November 8, 1577.

Original: Vat. gr. 2124, n. 167 [Laurent 2013: 16].

... εἰς τὸν τόπον μας δὲν ἔχωμαι νοτάριους ἢ κουρτες ἢ ποτεστάδες μόνον· ἐμοῖς ἤμενσταν οἱ νοτάρι συναλλοῖλος, ἡ ρεμπόμπλικα καὶ οἱ κουρτοι καὶ οἱ κατζοιλέροι.	... in our place we have no notaries, courtiers or potentates; we are the notaries, the republic, the courtiers and the chancellors of each other.
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10) Letter of the Himarriots to pope Gregory XIII, Himarra, September 28, 1578.

Original: Vat. gr. 2124, n. 17 [Laurent 2013: 18].

† Καὶ ἐπολέμησαν οἱ ἐδική μας οἱ Ἀρβανίταις οἱ λεγόμενοι Ζουλάτες με τρεῖς φλαμπουραρέους καὶ ἐγύνη αἷμα μέγαλον εἰς τοὺς Τούρκους καὶ σεμᾶς τοὺς Χριστιανοὺς καὶ με τὴν δόξαν τοῦ Χριστοῦ περισσότεροι Τούρκοι ἐσκοτώθησαν παρά Χριστιανοί.	† And ours, the Albanians (Arvanids), those called Zhulats, fought against three banner-holders and a great massacre occurred for both Turks and us, the Christians. And with the glory of Christ more Turks were killed than Christians.
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11) Letter of various villages of Himarra to the count of Benavente, viceroy of Naples, Himarra, May 1, 1608.

Original: AGS E1105 F54 [Floristán 1992: 85].

...per portar fede a che tutta questa Albania voleno suggettarse al detto Re di Spagna...	... To bring faith (i.e. to make sure) that this whole Albania wants to become subject of the aforementioned king of Spain...
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12) Letter of the Himarriots to pope Alexander VII, Himarra, August 6, 1660.

Original: APF SOCG 299 fs. 100r/v + 101v [Floristán 2014: 463-4].

<p>Speramo per sempre la protezione di Vostra Beatitudine, poich� questo luogo era di Alessandro il Grande macedone: quale dunque lo puo proteggere se non le benedizioni del nuovo Alessandro settimo?...</p>	<p>We always hope to [enjoy the] protection of Your Beatitude, because this place was Alexander the Great, the Macedonian's; hence, who can protect it, if not the benediction of the new Alexander VII?</p>
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13) Letter of the Himarriots to pope Alexander VII, Himarra, January 20, 1662.

Original: APF SOCG 299 fs. 174v + 177r [Floristán 2014: 472-3]; partly repeated at APF SOCG 299 fs. 173v + 178r [*ibid.* 475-7].

<p>... ἀσπασθήκαμεν καὶ τὸ ἀκριβέστατον δῶρον ὅπου μᾶς ἔστειλε, τὸν πανιερώτατον μητροπολίτην Δυρραχίου, ὁ ὁποῖος τὴν καθημέραν δὲν ἔλειψεν χωρὶς νὰ μᾶς κηρύξη τὴν θεϊκὴν ἀλήθειαν, νὰ μᾶς βάλλῃ εἰς ὀρθὴν δόδον τῆς σωτηρίας μας, νὰ εἰρηνεύσῃ τὰ χωρία τοῦ Ἀρβάνου, νὰ παύσῃ τὰς ἔχθρητές μας, νὰ μᾶς φέρῃ εἰς τὸν φόβον τοῦ Θεοῦ, νὰ μᾶς ἐπανορθᾷ εἰς τὴν δούλευσιν τοῦ Ὑψίστου, νὰ λύσῃ τὰς παρανομίες μας, ἐκεῖ ὅπου πρωτύτερα διὰ κάθε μικρὰν αἰτίαν ἐσκοτωνόμεσθα ἀνάμεσόν μας, ἐδιδόμεσθα εἰς τὰς ἀρπαγὰς τῶν ἀλλοτριῶν καὶ σπιτικῶν πραγμάτων.</p>	<p>We embraced the most precious present you sent us, the all-hole metropolitan of Durr�s, who every daily did not cease preaching the godly truth to us, so that he sets us at the right path of our salvation, to pacify the villages of Arbanon, to put an end to our enmities, to bring us to the fear of God, to correct us in the service of the Highest, to resolve our unlawfulness at a time when for every little case we used to kill each other or engage in plundering the household things of the others.</p> <p>...</p>
<p>... καὶ μᾶς ἔπεμψεν ἓνα φοβερώτατον σεισμόν εἰς τὴν ταλαίπωρον χώραν ἐτούτην τῆς Χειμάρρας, καὶ ἐγκρέμνισε τὸ περισσότερον μέρος, μήτε ἔπαυσεν ὡς ἐδῶ ὁ θυμὸς τοῦ Κυρίου, ἀλλ' ἔσυγχώρησε νὰ ἔλθῃ τὸ ἀσεβέστατον ἔθνος τῶν τούρκων μὲ δεκατέσσερις χιλιάδες λαόν.</p>	<p>And He sent us a terrible earthquake at this poor region of Himarra and it demolished most of the places. The wrath of God did not seize at this point, but He permitted the most infidel nation of the Turks to come with an army of 14,000.</p>
<p>... ... διὰ σημάδι τῆς ἡμετέρας ἐνότητος πρὸς τὴν καθολικὴν καὶ ῥωμαϊκὴν πίστιν καὶ διὰ νὰ εἶναι μεσίτης μας ἀκόμη.</p> <p>...</p>	<p>... [We would like to send someone at the Greek College] as a token of our unity to the Roman Catholic faith and also for him to be our intermediary.</p> <p>...</p>

<p>Καίσαρης Δημήτριος, δούλος τῆς μακαριότη<ς> σου. Δούκας Καίσαρης, δούλος τῆς μακαριότητά<ς> σου. Ἡλίας Ἀλέξης ἔξαρχος Χιμάρρας, δούλος τῆς μακαριότητός σου. Δημη Πρίφτης λογοθέτης, δούλος τῆς μακαριότη<ς> σου. Ἐγὼ ὁ Γκι<ν> Κόντης γέρο<ν>τας τῆς Χιμάρρας, δούλος τῆς μακαριότη<ς> σου. Ἐγὼ ὁ Γιόγκη<ς> Κόντης εἰς ὄνομα ὄλων τῶν γερόντων καὶ κυβερνητάδων, δούλος τῆς μακαριότητός σου. Ἐγὼ ὁ Γιώργος Κόκας καὶ πρωτονοτάριος Χειμάρρας, δούλος τῆς μακαριότη<ς> σου. Πρωτοπαπᾶς Χειμάρρας, δούλος τῆς μακαριότητός σου. Παπᾶ<ς> Ἀλέξης, σακελᾶριος καὶ ἐφημέριος τῶν ἁγίων Ἰωάννου καὶ Δημητρίου, δούλος τῆς μακαριότητός σου. Ἀκάκιος ἡγούμενος τῆς Παναγίας, δούλος τῆς μακαριότητός σου. Παπᾶ<ς> Ἡλίας με ὄλους τοὺς κληρικούς, δούλος τῆς μακαριότητός σου.</p>	<p>Caesaris Dimitrios, servant of your Beautitude. Doukas Caesaris, servant of your Beautitude. Elias Alexis, exarch of Himarra, servant of your Beautitude. Dimi Priftis <i>logothetes</i>, servant of your Beautitude. I, Ghin Kondis, Himarra's elder, servant of your Beautitude. I, Ghioghis Kondis in the name of all elders, governors, servant of your Beautitude. I, Giorgos Kokas and <i>protonotarios</i> of Himarra, servant of your Beautitude. The <i>protopapas</i> of Himarra, servant of your Beautitude. Father Alexis, <i>sakellarios</i> and parish priest of Saints John and Demetrios, servant of your Beautitude. Abbot Akakios of the Virgin [Monastery], servant of your Beautitude. Father Elias with all creliers, servant of your Beautitude.</p>
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14) Letter of the Himarriot governors in favour of Simon Lascaris, Himarra, August 14, 1662.

Original: APF SOCG 300 fs. 308r-309v [Floristán 2014: 478-80].

<p>Ego <i>dominus</i> Athanasius Constantius sacerdos Graecus interpretabam a Graeco originali in hoc Latinum, in cuius fidem etc. scripsi manu propria ac subscribo, 1662 Octobris 23 <i>salutis nostrae. dominus</i> Athanasius Constantius.</p>	<p>I, the Greek priest Sir Athanasios Constantios, translated [this letter] from the original Greek into Latin in faith, etc. I have written in my own hand and undersigned it on October 23, 1662 of our salvation. Sir Athanasios Constantios.</p>
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15) Letter of the Vuno inhabitants in favour of Simon Lascaris, Vuno, August 14, 1662.

Original: APF SOCG 300 fs. 308r-309v [Floristán 2014, 481-3].

<p>... nos igitur omnes Chimarae provinciae cum caeteris circumvicinis locis...</p>	<p>... We, all Himarra province with the rest of the surrounding places...</p>
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16) Brief chronicle in a *Menaion* of Saint Basil's Monastery in the homonym village, Shën Vasil, 1750-1753.

Original: Collection of archimandrite Agathangelos, abbot of the Holy Monastery of Kamena, 19th century, vellum, found in Spyromilios' archive, dossier "Miscellanea Unclassified 1910-1914", kept in the Historical and Ethnological Association of Greece, Athens, pp. 2-3.

Σημείωσις Α'. Τῷ 1750 μ.Χ. ἔτος φανερόν
ὁ ὑποφαινόμενος ὅπου ἐπολεμίσαμεν μέ
τούς Ἀρβανίταις δηλ. μέ τούς Ζουλιάτες
Γκολέμι καί Τατεζάτες ἡμεῖς οἱ Ἁγιοβα-
σιλίτες καί ὁ πόλεμος οὗτος διήρκεσε
τρεῖς χρόνους. Εἰς δὲ τὰ 1753 ἐκάμαμεν
ἀγάπην καί ἔμεινεν ὁ καθεὶς εἰς τὸ
σύνορόν του. Ἐδώσαμεν διὰ τὴν ἀγάπην
ὅπου ἐκάμαμεν τῶν Ζουλιατῶν τὸ ξεχει-
μαδιὸ λειβάδι τῆς Κοκκινόβας...

...εὐρέθησαν σκοτωμένοι ἀπὸ τὰ δύο μέρη
105 ἄνθρωποι· δηλ. ἰδικοὶ μας Ἁγιοβα-
σιλίται 10· Νιβιτζιώται (Μπούμπαρι) 16·
οἱ Καλασιῶτες ὅπου ἐγύρησαν μὲ ἡμᾶς
ἐσκοτώθηκαν 15. ... Ἀπὸ δὲ τούς ἐναν-
τίους μας ἐφρονεύθησαν 30 Ζουλιᾶται· 18
Γκολέμιδες· 13 Τατεζᾶται· 3 Δελβινιώται...

... + ὁ ἡγούμενος τοῦ Μοναστηρίου ἀγίου
Βασιλείου Στέφανος ἱερομόναχος.

Note 1. In the year 1750 A.D. the undersigned I attest that we, the inhabitants of Shën Vasil, waged war against the Arvanids, i.e. the Zhulates, the Golemis and the Tatëzates and this war lasted for three years. And in 1753 we made pact and each remained at own border. We gave out the winter meadow of Kokkinova to the Zhulats in return for the peace...

...105 people were found dead from both parties, i.e. 10 Hagiovasilitai (inhabitants of Shën Vasil); 16 Nivicotes (Bubari); 15 Kalashates, who turned with our side. ... From our enemies, 30 Zhulates, 18 Golemis, 13 Tatëzates and 3 Delviniotes were killed...

...+ The abbot of Saint Basil's Monastery, priest-monk Stephanos.

17) Description of Himarra by its representatives addressed to Russia's government, Himarra, ante 1759.

Original: Russian Empire's Foreign Policy Archive, Russian-Montenegrin Relations, Catalogue 95/1.1759, Dossier 35, f. 5-8, Russian translation from Italian, contemporary to the original [Ars 2007: 40-4].

"Dokumente të Pabotuara mbi Marrëdhëniet e Popullit Shqiptar me Rusinë në shek. XVIII," *Bulletin për Shkencat Shoqërore* 2 (1955), 158-9.

Known today as Himarra with the Himarriot peoples, the province corresponds to the ancient western Epiros, also known with the name Chaonia with the chaonic peoples, who became known for Dodona's oracle and for their wars against the neighbouring Molossians. Its borders today are the Adriatic Sea and Albania to the West, the Ioanian Sea to the South,

	<p>the East and with Thessaly, which almost surrounds it to the North. ...</p> <p>The people are ready for war... Their common action with the famous king Pyrrhus and the recently glorified Scanderbeg are not mentioned – stories praising their courage...</p> <p>We only add that our faith is Orthodox, we are led by a Bishop; we are spiritually subjugated to the Patriarch of Constantinople. We speak the Albanian language, the same [language spoken] at neighbouring Albania and Bosnia. Yet, in many areas all learned speak Greek; noble families also speak Italian, due to the many officers serving foreign states and the young people studying at the Padova and Napoli theological seminaries.</p>
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18) Relief inscription on a bell of the monastery of the Nativity of the Virgin at Krorëz, Bregdet, close to Saranda, 1813.

Reference: Popa, 316 (Inscription No. 865).

<p>ΙΣ ΜΝΙΜΟΣΙΝΩΝ ΕΟΝΙΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΕΘΕ- Λ(Ο)ΥΣΙΩΝ ΣΤΡΑΤΙΟΤΩΝ ΑΛΒΑΝΙΤΩΝ Τ(Ο)Υ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΤΟΝ ΔΙΟ ΣΙΚΕΛΙΩΝ ΑΠΟ ΧΟΡΙΩΝ Α(Ο)ΥΚΟΒΟ, ΜΙΣΙΝΑ 1813. ΔΙ ΕΓΩ (;) ΡΑΠΟΝΖΙΟ</p>	<p>In perennial memory of the volunteering Albanian <i>stradioti</i> of the king of Two Sicilies from the villager of Lukova, Mesina 1813. Through me, Raponzio.</p>
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19) Brief chronicle in a *Menaion* of Saint Basil's monastery in the homonym village, Shën Vasil, September 5, 1830.

Original: Collection of archimandrite Agathangelos, abbot of the Holy Monastery of Kamena, 19th century, vellum, found in Spyromilios' archive, dossier "Miscellanea Unclassified 1910-1914", kept in the Historical and Ethnological Association of Greece, Athens, p. 7.

<p>Σημείωσις Ε'. Τῷ 1830 Σεπτεμβρίου 5 ἔστειλεν ὁ Σουλτάνος Μαχμουῦτης τὸν Σαδὲρ Ἡξέμης εἰς Ἰωάννινα καὶ ἔκαμεν ζάπη ὅλην τὴν Ἀρβανιτιὰν καὶ εἰς τὰ χωρία μας ἔρριξε τζερεμὲν ὅτι δῆθεν μᾶς ἔξεσκλάβωσε ἀπὸ τὸ τρίτον ὅπου μᾶς ἔπερνεν ὁ Ἀλήπασας... Σπύρο Πρίφτης τὰ γράφω δι' ἐνθύμησιν.</p>	<p>Note 5. In September 5, 1830 sultan Mahmud (II) sent Sader Yiksemi to Ioannina and occupied all of Albania and imposed a penalty to our villages with the pretext that he liberated us from the third [i.e. tax] which Ali Pasha levied from us. I, Spiro Prifti, am writing these in memory thereof.</p>
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20) Brief chronicle in a *Menaion* of Saint Basil's monastery in the homonym village, Shën Vasil, December 6, 1839.

Original: Collection of archimandrite Agathangelos, abbot of the Holy Monastery of Kamena, 19th century, vellum, found in Spyromilios' archive, dossier "Miscellanea Unclassified 1910-1914", kept in the Historical and Ethnological Association of Greece, Athens, p. 18.

Σημείωσις Β'. Τὸ ἔτος 1839 Δεκεμβρίου 6 ὁ Τζέλιο Πιτσάρης μετὰ τὸν Κουρβελέσι καὶ ποτάμι τῆς Αὐλώνας ἐχάλασε τὰ τιφλίκια Δελβίνου τοὺς ἔκαμε ῥεμοῦλα (ἀρπαγὴν) τοὺς ἐπῆρε τὸ βιὸν καὶ τὰ ζῶα τοὺς καὶ τοὺς ἄφησε γυμνοὺς ἐβγήκαν οἱ δυστυχισμένοι χριστιανοὶ ζητῶντες ἐλεημοσύνην, ἐνῶ αὐτὸν τὸν χρόνον ἔτυχε μεγάλη ἀκρίβεια ὅπου δὲν εἶχε φθάσει ποτὲ ἐκατήντησεν ὁ ἀραβόσιτος πρὸς 80 γρόσια τὸ ταγάρι ... εἰς δὲ τὴν ἀρβανιτικὴν Αὐλώνα καὶ Μπεράτι καὶ Κοριτσᾶν ἐπῆγε 120 ἕως 150 γρόσια τὸ ταγάρι... Σπύρο Πρίφτης Ἀγιοβασιλείτης γράφω δι' ἐνθύμησιν.

Note 2. In December 6 of the year 1839 Xhelio Picari together with Kurvelesh and Vlora's river destroyed the çiftliks of Delvina; he made great robbery and stealing and stripping them off their property and animals; the poor Christians went out asking for mercy. On the same year unprecedented high prices were observed. Corn came to cost 80 kuruş per sack ... while in the Albanian Vlora and Berat and Korça reached 120 to 150 kuruş per sack... Spiro Prifti from Shën Vasil, I am writing in memory thereof.

21) Brief chronicle in a *Menaion* of Saint Basil's monastery in the homonym village, Shën Vasil, December 20, 1845.

Original: Collection of archimandrite Agathangelos, abbot of the Holy Monastery of Kamena, 19th century, vellum, found in Spyromilios' archive, dossier "Miscellanea Unclassified 1910-1914", kept in the Historical and Ethnological Association of Greece, Athens, p. 19.

Σημείωσις ΣΤ'. Τὸ ἔτος 1845 Δεκεμβρίου κ' ἐπροσκύνησαν οἱ Ἀλβανοὶ τὸν Βασιλέα δόσαντες καὶ στρατιῶτας τὰ τέκνα τῶν οἴτινες κατετάχθησαν εἰς τὸν τακτικὸν στρατὸν (νηζάμι) εἰς κάθε τέσσερα ὀσπῆτια ἕναν νέον. ... Ἀρχιμανδρίτης Ἀγαθάγγελος.

Note 6. In December 20 of the year 1845 the Albanians submitted to the sultan and also provided their children as soldiers; these were recruited in the regular army (nizam army), one young for every four households... Archimandrite Agathangelos.

22) Brief chronicle in a *Menaion* of Saint Basil's monastery in the homonym village, Shën Vasil, May 1, 1847.

Original: Collection of archimandrite Agathangelos, abbot of the Holy Monastery of Kamena, 19th century, vellum, found in Spyromilios' archive, dossier "Miscellanea Unclassified 1910-1914", kept in the Historical and Ethnological Association of Greece, Athens, p. 20.

Σημείωσις Ζ'. Τὸ ἔτος 1847 Μαΐου ἄ' ἔκαμαν συμβούλιον οἱ Ἄλβανοὶ καὶ ἐπαναστάτησαν κατὰ τοῦ Βασιλέως ἔχοντες ἀρχηγόν των τὸν Γκιολέκαν (Γκιωνη Λέκαν) ἀπὸ τὸ χωρίον Κοῦτζι, καὶ τὸν Χότον ἀπὸ Νιβίτσα Λιόπεσι... ἕως 15 Σεπτεμβρίου ἐπολέμισαν με βασιλικούς πασιάδες ... ἔπειτα ἤλθεν ὁ Μουσήρ Πασίας ... καὶ ἔκαυσε δύο χωριά καὶ τὸ Κοῦτζι ... καὶ ἐπροσκύνησαν οἱ Ἄλβανοί... Ἀρχιμανδρίτης Ἀγαθάγγελος.

Note 7. In May 1 of the year 1847 the Albanians gathered in council and revolted against the sultan with Gjoleka (Gjon Leka) from the village of Kuçi, Hoto from Nivica Lopësi... as their heads. They fought against the sultan's pashas until September 15 ... Then Musir Pasha came ... burnt two villages as well as Kuçi ... and the Albanians submitted ... Archimandrite Agathangelos.

23) Brief chronicle in a *Menaion* of Saint Basil's monastery in the homonym village, Shën Vasil, 1848.

Original: Collection of archimandrite Agathangelos, abbot of the Holy Monastery of Kamena, 19th century, vellum, found in Spyromilios' archive, dossier "Miscellanea Unclassified 1910-1914", kept in the Historical and Ethnological Association of Greece, Athens, pp. 21-22.

Σημείωσις Θ'. Τὸ ἔτος 1848 ὁ Γκιώνη Λέκκας φθάσας εἰς Κωνσταντινούπολιν ἔλαβεν ἀμνηστειαν τοῦ σφάλατός του, καὶ τοῦ ἔδωκεν ὁ Βασιλεὺς ὀφφίκια, τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους προκρίτους τῶν Ἄλβανῶν ὅπου εἶχεν εἰς τὰς φυλακὰς τοὺς ἀπέλυσεν... Ὁ Ἀρχιμανδρίτης Ἀγαθάγγελος.

Note 9. In the year 1848 Gjon Leka reached Istanbul, got amnesty of his misdoing and the sultan gave him offices; while he released the other elders of the Albanians whom he had imprisoned... The archimandrite Agathangelos.

24) Brief chronicle in a *Menaion* of Saint Basil's monastery in the homonym village, Shën Vasil, February 1854.

Original: Collection of archimandrite Agathangelos, abbot of the Holy Monastery of Kamena, 19th century, vellum, found in Spyromilios' archive, dossier "Miscellanea Unclassified 1910-1914", kept in the Historical and Ethnological Association of Greece, Athens, pp. 24-25.

Σημείωσις Θ'. Τὸ ἔτος 1854 ... εἰς τὰς 20 τοῦ Φεβρουαρίου συνηθροίσθησαν εἰς Δέλβινον διὰ τοῦ Σουλεϊμάμπεη ὅλον τὸ Κουρβελέσι (ἢ Λιαμπουριά) καὶ ζητοῦν ἀπὸ Χειμάρρα καὶ Ῥιζώματα τοὺς Χριστιανοὺς νὰ στρατολογηθοῦν καὶ αὐτοὶ διὰ πόλεμον, ἂν δὲ τούναντίον παρακούσουν καὶ δὲν πηγαίνουν κατὰ τῶν ἐχθρῶν τῆς Βασιλείας θέλουσιν φονεύσουσιν ὅλους ... Ὁ Ἀρχιμανδρίτης Ἀγαθάγγελος.

Note 9. In the year 1854, on February the 20th the entire Kurvelesh (Labëria) gathered in Delvina by Suleyman bey and demanded from the Christians of Himarra and Rizomata to enlist for war, too. On the contrary, if they disobey and do not side themselves against the enemies of the Kingdom, they will kill them all... The archimandrite Agathan-gelos.

Discusiones y reseñas

- S. VALENTE, *The Antiatticist. Introduction and Critical Edition* (por J. M. FLORISTÁN), 357.- M.^a P. GARCÍA RUIZ-A. J. QUIROGA PUERTAS (EDS.), *Praising the Otherness. Linguistic and Cultural Alterity in the Roman Empire: Historiography and Panegyrics* (por J. M. FLORISTÁN), 361.- *Theodori Scutariotae Chronica*. Editio princeps, recensuit et indicibus instruxit Raimondo Tocci (por J. M. FLORISTÁN), 364.- Chr. GASTGEBER-O. KRESTEN, *Das Chartular des Paulus-Klosters am Berge Latros*. Kritische Edition, Übersetzung, Kommentar und Indices (por J. M. FLORISTÁN), 368.- M. BECKER, *Porphyrios, Contra christianos. Neue Sammlung der Fragmente, Testimonien und Dubia mit Einleitung, Übersetzung und Anmerkungen* (por M. CABALLERO) - M. ALONSO VENERO, *La crítica del paganismo en la literatura apologética cristiana (s. II-IV)* (por M. CABALLERO), 373.- Ch. ABENSTEIN, *Die Basilus-Übersetzung des Georg von Trapezunt in ihrem historischen Kontext* (por M. CABALLERO), 376.- V. KONTOUMA, *John of Damascus. New Studies on his Life and Works* (por M. BELTRÁN), 380.- F. MEUNIER, *Théodore Prodrome. Crime et châtiment chez les souris* (por P. BÁDENAS DE LA PEÑA), 385.- M. MORCILLO, *Los judíos de Menorca durante la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII a través de los protocolos notariales de Mahón (1751-1802)* (por P. BÁDENAS DE LA PEÑA), 388.- M. MORCILLO, *Documentos del Archivo del Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores español. Período de Jorge I de Grecia, 1863-1913* (por P. BÁDENAS DE LA PEÑA), 395.- T. MARTÍNEZ MANZANO, *Historia del fondo manuscrito griego de la Universidad de Salamanca* (por J. ÁNGEL ESPINÓS), 398.- M. FEATHERSTONE-J.-M. SPIESER-G. TANMAN-U. WULF-RHEIDT (EDS.), *The Emperor's House. Palaces from Augustus to the Age of Absolutism* (por M. CORTÉS ARRESE), 402.- *Byzance en Suisse*. Catálogo de la exposición (Genève, Musées d'Art et d'Histoire de Genève, 4 décembre 2015-13 mars 2016) (por M. CORTÉS ARRESE), 405.- M. CORTÉS ARRESE, *Nostalgia del porvenir. Navegando hacia Bizancio con El Greco de Toledo* (S. MORALES CANO), 407.- J. NADAL CAÑELLAS, *La butlla d'or de Manuel Paleòleg a la catedral de Mallorca* (por J. R. DEL CANTO NIETO), 411.- K. PALAMÁS, *La tumba*, ed. bilingüe y trad. de Juan A. Pérez, Juan Fco. Reyes y José M. Ruiz, coord. y pról. de Fco. Javier Ortolá Salas (por J. R. DEL CANTO NIETO), 412.- María BELMONTE, *Peregrinos de la belleza* (por J. R. DEL CANTO NIETO), 417.- C. P. CAVAFIS, *Poesía completa*, prólogo y notas de J. M. Macías, epílogo de V. Fernández González (por L. A. DE CUENCA), 421.- Το μεταφραστικό έργο του Παντελή Πρεβελάκη. Φιλολογική και ιστορική προσέγγιση. Επιμέλεια κειμένων, εισαγωγή και κατάλογος Χρύσα Δαμιανάκη (por E. AYENSA), 424.- A. BRAVO GARCÍA, *Viajes por Bizancio y Occidente*, recopilación de estudios editada por A. Guzmán Guerra, I. Pérez Martín y J. Signes Codoñer (por Á. CANCELA CILLERUELO), 431.-

Noticias

El monasterio bizantino de Cabrera (por J. R. DEL CANTO NIETO), 439.-

Obituario

Dimitri en el recuerdo (por P. BÁDENAS DE LA PEÑA), 441.-