THE ITALIAN KIN OF THE TOCCO DESPOT: SOME NOTES ABOUT THE RELATIVES OF CARLO I TOCCO*

This paper deals with a familial strategy of “using” kinsmen in keeping power and prominence as seen from the case of the family of the Tocco, the rulers of the Ionian islands (XIV–XV c.). A widely-known family narrative and some less-known documentary evidence reveal details on several Italian Tocco who were close to Carlo I (b. c. 1375–1429) in spatial terms, and who, more importantly, played a considerable role in securing useful political alliances for their mighty kinsman of the “Greek” family branch. In addition, regarding new information about one Italian Tocco (Gioanella, the daughter of Carluccio), the paper suggests some more definite conclusions about her genealogical position and conjugal affiliation.

The rule of the powerful Tocco family over the Ionian islands, Epirus and parts of the Peloponese during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries can be described from several different aspects as the rule of a minority.1 First, being of Italian origin and Catholic faith, the Tocco were a minority in a region where the majority of the population identified itself as Greek and orthodox.2 Second, in terms of numbers, the Greek

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2 My use of the term Italian to denote the Tocco is determined by the geographical realm of their origin, while in terms of their ethnic identity I prefer to use the term Frank/Latin. The term Greek used to denote this branch of the Tocco implies primarily their identification through the geographic realm they inhabited, and is used in order to distinguish them from their kinsmen in the Apennines. The term Greek used here to denote the majority of the regional population (referred to by the local sources as οἱ Ῥωμαίοι) implies their distinction from other ethnic groups also inhabiting Epirus. Regarding the relationship between the Latins and Greeks on the Peloponese, Ivan Đurić, Sunrak Vizantije: vreme Jovana VIII Paleologa 1392–1448 (The twilight of Byzantium: the epoch of John VII Palaiologos 1392–1448), Zagreb 1989, 352, pointed out that in some Byzantine territories the parallel habitation of Latins and Greeks functioned more like a symbiosis rather than a sharp division. Somewhat differently, David Jacoby noted the symbiosis in function alongside the “rupture” from Byzantium to Latin Romania.
branch of the Tocco, physically separated from their Italian kinsmen in the time of Leonardo I (fl. 1340s — d. c. 1375), was indeed a small familial group. Therefore the question how they managed to survive in gaining prominence in a foreign environment demands a more thorough consideration. In this paper I shall argue that during the time of their most powerful kinsman, Carlo I (b. c. 1374/5 — d. 1429), one of their methods of keeping their power and prominence was an appropriate “use” of their Italian relatives. Some of these kinsmen, like Leonardo Tocco, are well-known to the present-day scholars dealing with the region. Some, however, come to light from unpublished archival material and require an additional consideration before being regarded in the context of the alliances useful to the Tocco. For this reason, in the first part of my paper I shall deal with the questions of the identity of one such relative, while in the second part I shall demonstrate the most interesting examples of the Tocco strategy of using their Italian kin.

I

The verses of the third chapter of the Tocco Chronicle describe plans of Carlo Tocco, at that time yet-to-become the despot of Epirus, to ally with his neighbour, the Albanian stratiotic captain, Muriki Bua. According to the plan, the verses in-

3 As widely known, the first Tocco to appear in Greece was Leonardo's father Guillelmo, mentioned as the governor of Kerkyra 1328–1335. The beginning of their continuous habitation in Greece is, however, connected to Leonardo, who was given the county of Kephallonia and Zakynthos by Prince Robert — and titular Emperor of Constantinople — of Taranto for his military and diplomatic merits (primarily for Leonardo’s meditation on the occasion of the Prince’s liberation from his Hungarian captivity 1348–1352. The genealogical information on this branch in the Genealogical table of the Tocco, in D. Nicol, The Despotate of Epiros 1267–1479, Cambridge, MA 1984, 256 (= Nicol, Epiros). After the death of Guillelmo, this part of the family was further branched by his sons. Two of these branches became particularly prominent in the subsequent period: the branch of Pietro (residing in Naples, usually considered “Italian”) and the branch of Leonardo I (residing in the Greek realm, usually considered “Greek”), cf. Conte B. Candida Gonzaga, Memorie delle Famiglie nobili delle provincie Meridionali d’Italia, Naples 1875, 137. The most modern attempt to similarly depict this part of the large Tocco family as a group divided into the “Neapolitan” and “Greek” branches can be found in V. Del Vasto, Baroni nel tempo: i Tocco di Montemiletto dal XVI al XVIII secolo, Naples 1995.

4 An example of Carlo using his closest kin of the Greek branch to secure some of his political steps is found in the well-known wedding of his fraternal niece, Magdalena (Theodora) to Constantine Dragases (at that time yet-to-become the last Byzantine Emperor, 1449–1453), the report of which has remained in the writing of Sphrantzes, see Gregorii Sphrantzes Memorii 1401–1477, ed. V. Grecu, Bucarest 1966, 16, 1–3, 24, and 20, 9, 46–48.


form us, Carlo Tocco and the Bua chieftain were to become “inseparable friends, enemies of their enemies”, and this liaison, called by the Chronicle “the firm alliance and strong love”, was strengthened by marriage between one of Carlo’s relatives and the brother of Muriki. The verses further inform us that the couple was given as residence by Carlo the fortress of Riniasa, bought a short time before from the Ipikerne brothers. Given the fact that the fortress was an important strategic point for Carlo’s actions against the city of Arta, at that time held by his enemy Muriki Spata, it can be concluded that Carlo Tocco counted on this marriage on much broader basis than just a useful alliance.

Apart from these short notes about the marriage of an unnamed Tocco relative to a brother of Muriki Bua, the Chronicle gives no further hint about the identity of this couple. Based on these notes, the editor of the Tocco Chronicle, Giuseppe Schirò, has left the Tocco relative unidentified, though in her husband he recognised Dimo Bua, a figure mentioned by the Tocco Chronicle in some other chapters as truth-loving and wise, “most honourable archont of the Bua kindred”, and loyal to Carlo. The Chronicle also recorded that Dimo Bua was given by Carlo for his loyalty in military affairs the fortress of Angelocastron with its surroundings, as well as the places of Acheloi and Katohe. Schirò’s identification of Dimo Bua as the husband of the Tocco relative was also based upon the verses which mention a brother of Muriki Bua serving in Carlo’s army (“ὁμοίως καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ Μπούα τοῦ Μούρικη”).

Although at first sight convincing, such an identification still provokes some doubts. First, Dimo Bua was never directly identified in the Chronicle as the brother of Muriki Bua. Second, the account of the chronicle suggests that the Tocco-Bua wedding must have been concluded before Carlo donated Angelocastron and other

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7 CroToc, 3, 22, 1036: “νὰ εἶναι φίλοι ἀχρόστοι, ἔχθροι εἰς τοὺς ἔχθροὺς τοὺς”. As from the verses, the alliance was to be directed primarily against Carlo’s enemy Muriki Spata, which then also implied the union against Sgouros Bua Spata, as indicated in CroToc, 3, 14, 844, 282, and ibid., 3, 28, 1113–1120, 300. About the Tocco — Spata hostility, see CroToc, the entire chapter 3, 270–306. For documentary evidence about this hostility during 1410, see Acta Albaniae Veneta saeculorum XIV et XV, ed. J. Valentini, tome 2, fasciculum 6, Palermo 1967, no. 1530 (March 15, 1410) 23–27; ibid., no. 1600 (September 27, 1410) 86–89. The same documents are found in the earlier editions by C. N. Sathas, ΜΗΜΕΙΑ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗΣ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑΣ: Documents inédits relatifs à l’histoire de la Grèce au Moyen Âge, vols. 1 and 2, Paris 1880–1881, 34–37 (vol. 1) and 234–236 (vol. 2), and François Thiriet, Régestes des délibérations du Sénat de Venise concernant la Romanie, vol. 2 (1400–1430), Paris — La Haye 1959, nos. 1368 and 1392.

8 CroToc, 3, 22, 1039, 294: “Ὅρκους ἐκαμάν δυνατοὺς καὶ στερεὰν ἀγάπην”.


11 CroToc, 9, 6, 2289, 390: “ἄρχοντος ἑντιμοῦ πολλὰ ἐκ τὸ γένος τῶν Μπουάδιων”.

12 CroToc, 9, 6, 2286–2292, 390–392.

13 CroToc, 1, 16, 198, 234.
above-mentioned places to Dimo. Consequently, if Dimo had indeed been the husband of the unnamed Tocco relative, his marriage would have been mentioned by the chronicler together with his merits and qualities which he never forgot to stress about Dimo; apparently, he never did so. Moreover, Dimo was referred to only as “of the Bua kin”, which does not have to mean a priori the confirmation of the direct brotherly ties between Dimo and Muriki, not even any close tie between the two Bua. Third, from the verses about the participation of one brother of Muriki Bua in Carlo’s army, one can deduce with certainty only that one Bua brother was engaged as the Tocco soldier, but by no means that it was Dimo Bua, Carlo’s faithful man reported by the Chronicle, or the husband of the Tocco relative suggested by Schirò.

The information revealed by a pergamenon of the Tocco family archive, hitherto apparently unmentioned by modern researchers, might throw new light on the identity of the mysterious Tocco-Bua couple mentioned in the Chronicle, and further challenge Schirò’s suggestion for its identification. The pergamenon no. 178 (175) contains an instrumentum dated May 8, 1418 (of the eleventh indiction), from which we find out that one Tocco kinswoman from Naples lived in his Greek realm when the instrumentum was issued and that she was married to a local nobleman of the Bua kindred. The instrumentum revealed the given names of the couple — the lady was Gioanella, the daughter of Carluccio Tocco and the sister of Tubia Tocco of Naples, while her husband was identified as nobleman Johannes Bua.17

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14 For example, CroToc, 9, 6, 2291, 392: “Ἡγάπαν τὸν δεσπότην”.
15 The archive of this family was kept in private until 1949 when it was transferred to the Neapolitan State Archives. Its fond, mostly revealing the history of the Neapolitan Tocco between the thirteenth and the seventeenth, also keep documents referring to their relatives of the Greek branch (fourteenth to nineteenth century). This material is of considerable importance for the medieval history of the Greek Tocco branch because it substitutes the documents of the Angevin and Aragon archives of Naples destroyed by the Nazis in 1943. I am most grateful to the archivists of the Neapolitan State Archives for their kind help during my research there (Winter 2001/Spring 2002). The inventory of the archives is published, see Archivio privato di Tocco di Montemiletto, ed. A. Allocati, Publicazioni degli Archivi di Stato no. 97, Roma 1978.
16 Archivio di Stato di Napoli, Archivio privato di Tocco di Montemiletto, Pergamene: Atti notarili, busta 5, no. 178 (175) (May 8, 1418, of the eleventh indiction, issued in St. Maure on Leukas) (following the organisation of the archive, the references to its material henceforth cited as: ASN, ATM, name of fond, number of busta, number of document /folio/ with number in brackets denoting its previous inventory numeration, date, place if applicable). This document has also remained preserved in a paper copy of some later period (probably of the seventeenth century), see ASN, AST, Scrittura diverse, busta 41, fols. 304r–307r. Minor parts of the copied text differ from that of the original (e. g. casual omission of the prepositions, incorrect use of cases, interpretation of proper names, or the use of abbreviations).
17 ASN, ATM, Pergamene: Atti notarili, busta 5, no. 178 (175): “… tubiae fratris dictae domine Johannis Bue…” Also, “… voluntate dicti Johannis viri dictae domine Johannellae…”. As the document informs, Gioanella and Tubia were the children of Carluccio Tocco of Naples: “… quae bona fuerunt, atque possideret dum vixit in humanis quondam dominus carlucius de tocco, pater dictae Johannellae, ac quondam tubiae fratris dictae dominae Johannellae”. The fact that Carlo I communicated in 1411 with Tubia Tocco about some family matters (mentioned to have happened on March 17, 1411 of the fourth indiction [according to the style of Kephalonia] in ASN, ATM, Pergamene: Atti notarili, busta 5, no. 180 [177], dated November 30, 1421, of the fifteenth indiction) suggests that his and Gioanella’s father Carluccio was dead by that time. Carluccio Tocco of Naples was documented in ASN, ATM, Pergamene:
According to the *instrumentum*, written in Carlo’s residence in the fortress of St. Maure on the island of Leukas, Gioanella and one other Tocco lady\(^\text{18}\) had sold to their mighty kinsman Carlo, entitled as the despot of Romania (“Serenissimus dominus Karolus dei gratia despotus Romaniae”), all their immovable property in Naples and its surroundings.\(^\text{19}\) Gioanella’s husband was involved in the transaction not only by giving his consent, but also as the representative of both ladies during the issuance of the *instrumentum* which confirmed the transaction.\(^\text{20}\)

Could the marriage between Gioanella Tocco, daughter of Carluccio of Naples and Joannes Bua be the alliance mentioned by the Tocco Chronicle in his third chapter? There is no open documentary proof of the direct brotherly ties between Joannes Bua and Muriki Bua. However, there is more than one reason to suggest that this was the couple referred to by the Chronicle. Both the Tocco narrative and the *instrumentum* of 1418 refer to a female person who was the relative of Carlo I Tocco married to a kinsman of a local kindred. Likewise, the sources concur in considering the husband of this person to have been of the Bua kindred — had there been another

\(^{18}\) As from the *instrumentum* of 1418, the lady was Angela, the widow of Gioanella’s brother Tubia: “Angela relicta quondam tubiae de tocco”. Also, ibid., “… quae bona fuerunt atque possidet dum vixit in humanis quondam dominus carlucius de tocco, pater dictae Johanneliae, ac quondam tubiae fratris dictae dominae Johanneliae ac viri ipsius Angelae”. The copied version of the quoted part of the *instrumentum*, ASN, AST, Scritture diverse, busta 41, fol. 304r, “quae bona fuerunt, atque possidet dum vixit in humanis quondam Dominus Carlucius de Tocco Pater dictae Joanellae, ac quondam Tubiae fratris dictae Dominae Joanellae ac vir (sic) ipsius Angelae”, wrongly suggests that Angela was the widow of Gioanella’s father.

\(^{19}\) The *instrumentum* of 1418 informs us that they came into the possession of this property after Gioanella’s brother and Angela’s husband Tubia died in Naples: “… [bona] tubiae fratris dictae dominae Johanneliae ac viri ipsius Angelae et noviter devoluta sunt ad manus ipsarum mulierum Juridice per mortem ipsius quondam tubiae … absque liberis descedentis secundum usum et consuetudinem Principatus Achaye…”. As is obvious from the document, the property was located in Naples and its surroundings (“… omnia bona stabilita, actiones, census, et Jura, domos, terras, vineas, strangitas, nucellita, castellanea, massaria, arbores domesticas et siluestras, fontes et cursus aquarum sita et posita in tenimento seu territorie et intus in ciuitate Neapolis, et terra Ottaiani et terra laurei et palmeae, et ubicunque locorum sint … et signanter domum unam magnam cum loco ante ipsam, et retro ipsam sitam intus in ciuitate Neapolis in platea Capuana, prope domum gabellae Romanae, prope domum gabellae Romanae, et alios suos confines si qui sunt…”) which means that it was subject to the direct jurisdiction of the Kingdom of Naples. Despite this and the fact that Carlo Tocco was also the nominal vassal of the Kingdom of Naples, it is important to note that the transfer of the property in 1418 followed the customs of the Principality of Achaya and not the Angevin law enacted in Naples.

\(^{20}\) ASN, ATM, Pergamene: Atti notarili, busta 5, no. 178 (175): “… Et voluntate dicti Johannis viri dictae dominae Johanneliae, ibidem presentis, volentis et consentientis eidem coniugi suae, et auctoritatem sibi praestanti in subscripta venditione…”. Moreover, the attendance of Johannes Bua at the issuance of the *instrumentum* is attested by his signature: “Ego Johannes de bua praedicis in omnibus interfui et propria manu subscripsi”. That Gioanella and Angela had already sold the property before the *instrumentum* was issued is seen from “… videlicet pro ducatis de auro, octingenta iussi et boni ponderis de cunio Venetorum, quos ducatos dictae mulieres confessae fuerunt se recepisse et habuisse tam in auro quam in excambio certum rerum datarum eisdem mulieribus per dominum praefatum…”.  

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Atti notarili, busta 4, no. 163 (160) (January 21, 1382 of the fifth indiction in Naples). At this moment, I can not determine with precision his genealogical position to Carlo I. His absence from the family genealogies suggests that he was not of the Neapolitan branch (of Pietro) closest to the branch of the Tocco despots. Yet a hint which leads me to presume that Carluccio was in some closer relation to the branch of Pietro comes from the fact that he had a house on the Neapolitan “platea Capuana”, where the house of Pietro’s offspring was also recorded (for a further reference to this see above n. 16 and below n. 41).
female cousin of Carlo I similarly married in the same period into the Bua kindred, the narrator would have probably distinguished between these persons, just as he did with most other people closely affiliated to Carlo I Tocco. Finally, the events mentioned in the chronicle coincide in time with the documentary reference; the document dating 1418 refers to the existence of the marriage which might have been, as reported by the Chronicle, enacted around 1410. In sum, although the conclusive evidence does not exist, there is much to suggest that the unnamed couple which, according to the third chapter of the Tocco narrative, enabled an alliance between Carlo I Tocco and Muriki Bua were Joannes Bua and Gioanella Tocco.

II

Even if not the relative whose marriage enabled the Tocco-Bua agreement, Gioanella Tocco, the wife of Joannes Bua, remains an interesting subject from the aspect of another question, more important in terms of the family’s organisation. How did it happen that a kinswoman of a Tocco Neapolitan branch (apparently a side one) found herself in a distant land governed by her mighty relative? Logically, an answer should be sought in the kinship affection. There are indeed documentary references which attest that the links between the Italian and the Greek branch of the family did not loosen with their physical separation. For example, we know of some visits of the Italian relatives to Carlo’s court, and there are also indications about some exchange between the kinsmen of the Greek and Italian branches.

There are, however, several examples indicating that the kin affection was not the only reason of the presence of the Tocco Italian relatives in the region ruled by

21 For some examples of a more precise genealogical identification by the Chronicle, see CroToc, 3, 9, 787–78; 3, 15, 855, 282; 3, 17, 948, 288. G. Schirò, Prolegomena II, in Cronaca dei Tocco di Cefalonia di Anonimo, ed. with translation into Italian G. Schirò, Rome 1975, 137–139, perceived the Chronicle as an autograph text which must have been written before 1429 by a person close to Carlo Tocco (his serviceman or officer), suggesting thus that the occasional distortions of the Chronicle’s account, consequently of the perception of the characters mentioned there, were the result of the narrators subjectivity. A different assessment of the Chronicle by Elisabeth A. Zachariadou, Οι χάλιοι στοίχιοι στήν άρχη του Χρονικού των Τόκκω, Ηπειρωτικά χρόνικα 25 (1983) 158–181, according to which the Chronicle is a work by several authors, continuously expanded until the mid-fifteenth century, leads to a different explanation of the account’s distortions. If the Chronicle was indeed written by several authors in the period subsequent to Carlo I Tocco, then the distortion of the account could be the result of the different perception of the author(s), but also of the already existing distortion transmitted to them.

22 See above, n. 17.

23 E. Ricca, La nobiltà delle due Sicilie, vol. 3, Naples 1865, 275–276, quoted a document, lost in the 1943 destruction of the Neapolitan archives, of the Registrum Ladislaut ad ann. 1404, according to which Guillelmo de Tocco, the son of Pietro, visited his relatives Carlo and Leonardo during his mission to Cyprus. From ASN, ATM, Pergamene: Atti notarili, busta 4, no. 161 (158) (July 19, of the second indication i Naples), we know that Carlo’s father Leonardo donated some shops to his Neapolitan kinsman “Johannoto de Tocco ex Cicco di Tocco”. From ASN, ATM, busta 52, fasciculum 7: Scritture diverse, no. 22 (February 11, 1399 of the sixth indication), some people from Leonardo’s lands are found in Naples, related to Leonardo’s brother Pietro (“Anna de Kefalonia” receiving 1 ounce of silver from the executors of Pietro’s testament). For a reference on a document attesting the Tocco awareness of the kin affection (“affectione sanguinis”), see below, n. 38.
Carlo Tocco, and that this presence should be seen rather as a sign of a more structured relationship, that of the kin solidarity.\textsuperscript{24} The above-mentioned Gioanella is found among these examples. According to an edict issued on October 20, 1430\textsuperscript{25} by Carlo’s widow, Francesca Acciauoli, “Gioanella de Tocci de Neapolis” — apparently the same Gioanella mentioned by the \textit{instrumentum} of 1418 — was about to get married to a Jacob of Ariano.\textsuperscript{26} As the second wife of Ariano, Gioanella was mentioned on December 24, 1431 in another edict issued by Carlo’s legitimate heir, Carlo II (1429–1448). Significantly, this edict informs us that Jacob’s first wife had died, and that she also was one of the Tocco — her name was Angela, and she was identified by the edict as the sister of Carlo II.\textsuperscript{27} What lay behind the consent of the Tocco

\textsuperscript{24} By the term solidarity I do not mean the most common modern usage which denotes it as a voluntary expression of support, but rather its traditional definition as unity resulting from common interests. My consideration of the Tocco solidarity is based upon numerous medieval examples (e. g. Geoffroy de Villehardouin, Robert de Clari, ceux qui conquirent Constantinople: récits de la Quatrième Croisade, ed. N. Coullet, Paris 1966, 231 and 310). Useful information on some forms and functions of familial solidarity in the Kingdom of Naples is found in \textit{Gérard Delille}, Famille et propriété dans le Royaume de Naples (XV–XIX s.), Rome — Paris 1985, 42. Moreover, my consideration of this question is inevitably affected by several modern theoretical notions which seem to fit in understanding the medieval cases despite all the differences between the medieval and modern family. These notions are that of “mechanical solidarity” (Durkheim), of the orthodox British descent theory according to which a network of relations in the kin functioned at the level of domestic, interpersonal relationships which cross-cut descent groupings (Fortes), and also of the British neo-structuralist alliance theory according to which the forms of the exchange in society were adopted to political and economic circumstances (Leach).

\textsuperscript{25} The document, dated to the ninth indiction and issued in “nostro Palation Cefaloni”, was edited by P. Hiotes, \textit{Τιστορικά ἀπομνημονεύματα τῆς νήσου Ζακύνθου}, Kerkyra 1899, 624, no. 15:

“Francesca Dei gratia Vassilissa Romeorum che essendo stato congiunto in matrimonio il spettabile Jacobo de Ariano con la nobile donna Giovanna sive Gioanella de Tocchi”. Francesca’s edict was aimed at the arrangement of Gioanella’s second marriage. According to it’s conditions, in case of Gioanella and Ariano’s failure to produce male offspring, Gioanella was to be inherited by Ariano’s two sons (“così va dichiarando tutti i beni di detta donna Gioanella con dichiarazione e condizione che morendo detta Gioanella senza figliuoli et heredi maschi, restar debbano li beni di detto Ariano…”). The document specifies neither the age of Ariano’s sons at that time, nor whether they were of Ariano’s first marriage.

\textsuperscript{26} That she was the same Gioanella documented to have been the wife of Johannes Bua in 1418 is concluded from her identification. In both cases she was recognised as the daughter of Leonardo II, is not found among Leonardo’s children mentioned by Francesca Acciauoli in her letter to Nerio de Donato Acciauoli (1424), see \textit{J. A. C. Buchon}, Nouvelles recherches historiques sur la Principauté française de Morée et ses hautes Baronnies, vol. 2, Paris 1843, no. 63, 283. As from another document quoted by Typhaldos, 527–8 (edict issued by Carlo I on November 3, 1428 in Ioannina), Angela was married to Jacob Ariano whom the document thus entitled as “our most beloved nephew”. Another document issued by Carlo I on August 1, 1424 in Ioannina, as from Typhaldos, loc. cit., addresses Ariano with no reference to their family relationship, which leads to the conclusion

\textsuperscript{27} The quotation as from \textit{G. E. Typhaldos}, Εἰς ἀγνόστος σύγγαμπρος Κωνσταντίνου τοῦ Πολυπολίτου, Δέλτιον τῆς ἱστορικῆς καὶ ἑθνολογικῆς έταιρείας τῆς Θελάδος 9 (1926) 530–531 (= Typhaldos): “Tam concessis et obtenitis sibi ratione coniugii nostrae quondam dilecti sororis Angele, quam concessis ac detentis sibi ac promissis ratione alterius coniugii Reverendorissimae consanguinæe nostræ Dominae Joane alias Joanelle de Tocco…”. Angela, mentioned in this document as the sister of Carlo II Tocco, is that the daughter of Leonardo II, is not found among Leonardo’s children mentioned by Francesca Acciauoli in her letter to Nerio de Donato Acciauoli (1424), see \textit{J. A. C. Buchon}, Nouvelles recherches historiques sur la Principauté française de Morée et ses hautes Baronnies, vol. 2, Paris 1843, no. 63, 283. As from another document quoted by Typhaldos, 527–8 (edict issued by Carlo I on November 3, 1428 in Ioannina), Angela was married to Jacob Ariano whom the document thus entitled as “our most beloved nephew”. Another document issued by Carlo I on August 1, 1424 in Ioannina, as from Typhaldos, loc. cit., addresses Ariano with no reference to their family relationship, which leads to the conclusion
chieftain to Gioanella, a more distant relative of an Italian branch, concluding her second, incestuous marriage with the widower of the main Greek branch? The references to the quality of Jacob’s service and loyalty rendered to the family, mentioned on more than one occasion, suggest that the matter should not be understood as a provision of security for Gioanella, but rather an attempt to keep in the family an important person as Jacob of Ariano was.

Another example of the strategical usefulness of the Italian relatives comes from the Tocco narrative. Leonardo was the son of Guillelmo (who was the son of Pietro, chieftain of the Neapolitan Tocco), and according to the Chronicle, he was brought up at the court of Carlo I because at some point Carlo planned to make him his heir. His military involvement in Carlo’s army was also reported in the verses. The Tocco narrative gives one more suggestion about the role of Leonardo in ensuring Carlo’s political interests. According to the verses, Leonardo was married to the daughter of Nerata (Eudokia Bal'i), the wife of Muriki Spata. The marriage was

that Ariano’s first marriage was concluded after this edict was issued. Thus, the chronological indicators to Ariano’s first marriage would be the following: the terminus ante quem non for the conclusion of his marriage with Angela is August 1, 1424; the marriage was enacted on November 3, 1428; Angela must have died in the period between November 3, 1428, and October 20, 1430 when Jacob was directly mentioned as a widower.

As widely known, the medieval cannon law regulations forbade marriage until the seventh (theoretically, until the twelfth) degree of consanguinity. However, many examples reveal that these regulations were frequently violated (for an example close to the Tocco, see CroToc, 7, 12, 2021–2024, 370, and 3, 4, 712–718, 272, about Muriki Spata marrying his daughter to the son of Esau de Buondelmonti, who some time before that had married Muriki’s mother). The idea that Jacob’s second marriage was incestuous is supported by the fact that Carlo I perceived him a relative (as seen from Jacob’s identification 1428, obviously because of his marriage with Angela, he was referred to as “nephew”).

In Carlo’s edict issued on August 1, 1424, Ariano’s service to Carlo was explicitly mentioned (for this service Ariano was given by Carlo some property on Kephalonia); the same was done in the edict of November 3, 1428 (“our liege”). In addition, the edict of Carlo II, also mentioned him as important for the military affairs (“ob ... militis dignitatem”). For the use of the term ligius ("λιγιος") denoting a feudal tenant or a vassal in Frankish Greece, see The Chronicle of Morea: a history in political verse relating the establishment of feudalism in Greece by the Franks in the thirteenth century, ed. J. Schmitt, London 1904, 1869, and 2562.

Several documentary references suggest Ariano’s noble status. Carlo’s edict of 1428, entitled him “sebastos” and “knight”. The edict of Carlo II of 1431 referred to his rank as to one of “insignem nobilitatis”. Francesca’s edict of 1430 suggests the same with the term “il spettabile”. Yet none of these references confirms the highest level of nobility as suggested by Typaldos, 532–533, according to whom Jacob Ariano was the son of William of San-Superano, who, apart from being the prince of Achaya, was also important for his links with the famous Villehardouin family. Typaldos’ arguments, namely the transmission of the name of Jacob in the Sabrano (that is, according to Typaldos, San-Superano) family, as well as the “similarity” (as he sees it) between the references to the origin of Ariano and Sabrano, do not seem particularly convincing in linking Jacob of Ariano with the San-Superano family, and seem rather to have been grounded on Typaldos’ wish to stress the nobility of his own family, which he traced back to Ariano, and thus to the San-Superano.

CroToc, 9, 18, 2582, 410 — 2585, 412, for Leonardo’s role in Carlo’s plans. A reference about Leonardo’s military service to Carlo in CroToc, 9, 19, 2590–2592, 412. A document of the family archive, ASN, ATM, Pergamene: Atti notarili, busta 5, no. 173 (170) (July 14, 1408, of the first indiction, in Manfredonia) mentions “Nardo” as third in order among Guillelmo’s sons (the first-born Pietro was followed in mention by Algiasio, Nardo and their sister Cobella).

Nerata was the sister of George Balšić and the half-sister of Mrkša Žarković. On her see G. Schirò, Eudokia Balšić Vasilissa di Gianna, Zbornik radova Vizantološkog instituta 8/2 (Mélanges G.
concluded after Muriki died, and Nerata, unpopular among her subjects, was expelled from Arta; the *terminus post quem non* for the conclusion of this marriage seems to have been, as suggested by the Chronicle, the conquest of Arta by Carlo I (1416).33 There is no doubt that the marriage was a political act, because the conjugal alliance with the widow — even an expelled one — of the master of Arta, should have brought to Carlo the legitimacy of his claims to the city which was the symbolic capital of Epirus. However, all this information appears only in the narration of the Chronicle, and there is no documentary evidence to support it. A suspicion about the Chronicle’s accuracy in reporting the events with regard to Leonardo becomes particularly strong because it contains another version of the same events, according to which the bridegroom of Nerata’s daughter was not Leonardo but Carlo’s illegitimate son Ercole.34

The third example of the Tocco strategy of using their Italian kin — the one supported both by the documents and the family narrative — is connected to Leonardo’s brother Algiasio. The Tocco Chronicle mentioned his presence in Carlo’s lands as well as his participation in Carlo’s campaigns.35 The documents confirm it and, in addition, seem to suggest Carlo’s protection when Algiasio rebelled against the Neapolitan court.36 Moreover, a less known documentary evidence, attests to unu-

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33 CroToc, 7, 16, 2086, 374. As from CroToc, 9, 20, 2604, 412, Nerata found refuge on Corfu. CroToc, 9, 20–21, 2597–2628, 412–414, reporting that the wedding of Leonardo took place in the despotic palace of Ioannina, and thus further suggesting that it was concluded after Carlo was entitled despot by the Byzantine emperor in 1415, indicates a more precise time frame — its *terminus post quem* into 1415 and its *terminus post quem non* into 1416 (for a reference on a more precise date, see G. Schiron, Manuele II Paleologo incorona Carlo Tocco Despota di Giannina, Byzantion 29–30 (1959–1960) 223–227. Interestingly, just like the Tocco-Bua couple of the third chapter, Leonardo was also reported by the Chronicle to have resided in the fortress of Riniasa, CroToc, 9, 19, 2593–2596, 412 (in his case, though, the Chronicle specified that Leonardo had received the fortress before his marriage was concluded, not after like the Tocco-Bua couple). The importance of Riniasa becomes even greater, if we take into consideration the Chronicle’s reference to a third couple residing there. CroToc, 7, 8, 1982–1993, 368, tells about the brother of Muriki Spata, Carlo, who married one of Carlo’s illegitimate daughters. Nic, Epiros, 173, noted this frequent change and explained it with the fortress’ strategic importance. The Chronicle mentioned the inconstancy of the inhabitants of Riniasa (e.g. CroToc, 7, 8, 1991–1993, 368) which could also be the reason why Carlo donated it to the couples close to him, hoping thus to ensure the stability of the place.

34 CroToc, 9, 22, 2629–2641, 414. The author of this chapter does not reveal his sources of knowledge of the events, but from the fact that he can not distinguish the truth between two versions of the event, it is clear that he did not witness it himself.

35 CroToc, 6, 12, 1756, 350: “Τμήσαν τόν ἐλεγαν”.

36 The presumption that Algiasio’s apostasy from the Neapolitan court might have happened around 1418 comes from a hint documented in ASN, ATM, Pergamene: Privilegi, no. 46 (44) (October 29, 1420, of the thirteenth indiction, in Naples) where Queen Joanna invited Algiasio to “rejoice” with her in the greatness of the Kingdom. A more certain sign of Algiasio’s rebellion which must have fallen surely before 1425 is found in ASN, ATM, Pergamene: Privilegi, no. 47 (45) (July 20, 1425 of the third indiction, in Aversa), when Algiasio was pardoned by the Queen and restored to all of his honours, dignities and feudal possessions. Judging from a copy of another similar pardon, Algiasio, with his brother Leonardo, rebelled again against the Court some time between 1425 and 1434, see ASN, ATM, Scrittura diversa, busta 33, fols. 38r–39v (September 30, 1434, of the fourteenth indiction in Naples).
ually strong signs of Carlo’s attachment to Algiasio. A pergamenon of the family archives no. 179 (176) issued at Carlo’s court in Ioannina (œapud civitate Jalineœ) on June 21, 1418 (of the eleventh indiction),37 informs us that Algiasio was given the property in Naples and its surroundings which Carlo had previously bought from Gioanella and Angela in May 1418. Kin affection (œaffectione sanguinisœ) was mentioned among the motives for the donation, but also Algiasio’s service, further clarified as military, and other merits to Carlo.38 In other words, Carlo favoured Algiasio because of their kinship, but at the same time, he also paid Algiasio’s military engagement. Another reason to believe that Carlo was „buying“ the services of his kinsman Algiasio comes from a phrase in the donation document, according to which Algiasio, in return for the donated property, was to serve his relative in future and never to turn against him „neither in public nor in secret“.

As already mentioned, buying Algiasio’s services, Carlo gave him the property which he had acquired “for himself, and his posterity” from Gioanella and Angela a few weeks before. As all the property was concentrated in Naples and its surroundings,40 it seems that the future loyalty of Algiasio was supposed to surpass his military engagements in Carlo’s local campaigns in Greece and serve the Tocco despot on the Italian soil, that is in the Kingdom of Naples. This conclusion is further supported by the fact that on April 28, 1418, that is, less than two months before Carlo’s donation to Algiasio, Algiasio received some other property in the Apennines. This was, as „signs of love“ from his brother Leonardo, a part of their paternal inheritance, located — just like the property of Gioanella and Angela — in Naples and its surroundings.41 When this is added to the fact that some time after all this Algiasio

37 ASN, ATM, Pergamene: Atti notarili, busta 5, no. 179 (176). A copy of the document, found in ASN, ATM, Scritture diverse, busta 41, fols. 98r–100r, reads differently as “apud civitate Jalitie”. Another copy in ASN, ATM, busta 39, fol. 92r.
38 ASN, ATM, Pergamene: Atti notarili, busta 5, no. 179 (176): “… utilia, grata, et obsequita servitut praestita sibi et Impensa per… of AlgasiusŠ, nec minus alios donatura sibi [to Carlo by Algasius] merita…”.
39 Ibid.: “seruare, et custodire perpetuo, et numquam contra ipsum [Carlo] venire de Jure vel de facto, per se … publice vel oculte”.
40 Carlo’s donation to Algiasio, as well as the above mentioned instrumentum of 1418 which legalised Carlo’s acquisition of Gioanella’s property both mention these Neapolitan surroundings as having been “terra otayani et terra lauri et palmae”.
41 ASN, ATM, Pergamene: Atti notarili, busta 5, no. 177 (174) (April 28, 1418, of the eleventh indiction, in Arta): “… [Leonardo] donavit irrevocabiliter inter vivos, tradidit, et assignavit … in civitate Neapolis in platea capuana medietatem unius domus, quae fuit quondam prae alti homini Gugliellmi eorum generis propo artesanorum prope Ecclesiam… Neapolis prope viam publicam et alias confines. Item medietatem casalium seu casamentorum in dicta civitate Neapolis prope mariano et prope viam cariano [caviano?], item et omnia in dicta civitate Neapolis in vico seu in viario Sancti Georgij medietatem casalium seu casamentorum prope viam publicam et alias confines in omnibus Juribus, introitibus, et extractionibus”. Cobella, the sister of Algiasio and Leonardo, was mentioned as using a part of this property. The document remained also preserved in a copy, which, however, is problematically dated to 1428, see ASN, ATM, Scritture diverse, busta 41, fols. 244r–245r. The facts that Algiasio received, in less than two months, property in Naples from two different sources (from his closest family and from his more distant kinswomen), and that some parts of this property were close to each other (Gioanella’s house was on the Capuan square just like the
was mentioned to have restored to favour at the Angevin Court of Naples, it is not
difficult to presume that Carlo supported Algiasio because he wanted to secure a re-
liable connection at the Neapolitan court.

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To conclude, both the narrative and documentary evidence indicate that the
spatial distance between the Italian and the Greek Tocco branch was perceived a less
limiting factor than one might presume today. The cases of presence of the Neapoli-
tan relatives at the court of Carlo I Tocco, implying a certain degree of family affec-
tion and frequency of contacts, all demonstrate that these links in fact remained
strong despite the physical separation of the branches. In addition, the cases of
Gioanella, Leonardo and Algiasio also demonstrate that these contacts were seen in
terms of the most sophisticated kindred solidarity which satisfied both their personal
interests and the political interests of their powerful relative in Greece. As noted at
the beginning, the Greek Tocco were a small group of foreign origin in the Greek re-

gion they governed. There is no doubt that the lack of kin presented a difficulty for
them, particularly in the field of military affairs and diplomacy. From this aspect, the
engagement of their Italian relatives in useful marital alliances, loyal military service
and perhaps even in a medieval way of lobbying for the Tocco despot at the Neapoli-
tan court, seems an especially a pragmatic way of turning such a difficulty into an
advantage.
ма. Леонардо и Алђасио, синови Ћулијема Тока из Напуља, представљали су Карлу I, рођаку из породичног огранка који је владао јонским острвима и Епиром, ослонац у војним питањима, обезбеђивању корисних савезништава путем брака, а вероватно и у обезбеђивању политичке подршке на напуљском двору. Купопродажна трансакција везана за Ћованелу, ћерку Карlsruја Тока из Напуља, такође је један од примера обезбеђивања брачних савезништава корисних за Карла I, а вероватно му је обезбедила оданост другог италијанског рођака (горепоменутог Алђасија). Осим детаљних података о трансакцији, документ о овој купопродаци (1418) отвара и простор за нове претпоставке о идентитету и генеалошкој позицији Ћованеле и њеног првог мужа, Јована Буе. Степен доприноса напуљских рођака политици Карла I Тока свакако је потребно сагледати кроз чињеницу да је грчки огранак ове породице био малобројан и, у време Карла I али и касније, не нарочито популаран у највећем делу становништва области којима су владали.