

CAVA “ROYAL CITY”: AN “UNIQUE PRIVILEGE” IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY, BETWEEN THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE MODERN AGE. A RESEARCH APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

In the Europe of the XV century, the administrative rules do not concern only in the cities. There are many lands, which can practice these functions. They are usually called “the other cities”, and they can either obtain or lose this identity-condition. Therefore, whichever instrument is necessary to construct and conserve them. The history of Cava, a middle town in the Kingdom of Naples (XV century), can show this by one of its most important privilege: the “White Paper”, which Ferdinando I of Aragon gave to the citizen who returned it without changes. What were the reasons? Analysing what happened in Cava’s society during the medieval (XV) and modern (XVII) age, this paper should both rebuild the historical motivations about this document and show how the role of white paper changes in relation to the construction of citizens’ identity depending on the timeline.

Keywords: Center and Periphery; Early Modern History; Medieval History; Privilege and Identity.

JEL Classification: Y40

1. INTRODUCTION

During the middle of XV century, the Kingdom of Naples was the theatre of inheritance war between Ferdinand I, the son of the king of Naples (Alphonse The Fifth), a member of the Aragon family, and John, a member of the Anjou family and the son of Renato Duke of Anjou. The war began after the Magnanimous’ death when many barons were disloyal to Ferdinand and they aligned with John’s side in order to regain their independence. In fact, the reforms of the Aragon’s King both reduced the baron’s independence and reinforced the king’s control over them. On the other hand, Francesco Sforza the Duke of Milan, the Pope and many state-owned cities of the Kingdom, like Cava, supported Ferdinand. The history and the legend about this city during the XV century are connected with a specific moment of the battle of Sarno (7th July 1460) and the events that occurred right after. At the end of the battle the Anjous, who joined the forces with the bigger barons of the Kingdom (like the Orsini of Taranto), won and allowed King Ferdinand to escape to Naples. Many authors have different opinions about this event, but they agree that if Ferdinand had waited, he would have won the battle and maybe he would have also won the war.

However, the son of Alfonso V was obligated to engage in battle because the men who fought for him were becoming nervous due to the resources they were receiving were not enough. The supremacy of Aragon’s army in numbers and weapons was too powerful in comparison to the small borgo (villages) such as Sarno, and subsequently, the King lost the battle (Squitieri, 2011: 15-41). After the fight, John of Anjou and his allies called an

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assembly session to decide what to do: do they send the soldiers to Naples in order to surround the city or go through the provinces of the kingdom and allow those who were still loyal to Ferdinand to join John's side. (Summonte, 1601-1602: 291-296). They chose the second option and this decision of the assembly introduced Cava into the dynamic war and the city became a momentary protagonist of the realm's destiny. These facts established the base of Sarno's legend that was created during the Modern Age.

This article has a similar name to previous one presented at the Mediterranean Conference at the University of Salerno last year to introduce an ongoing PhD investigation (Siani, 2016: 83-90). Now, after a year, the speech both is concentrated on the results of that research and completes the previous one (Siani, 2017). Depart from the historical background, this study will analyse the events occurred during the middle of XV century with some intrusion into XVIII. The task wants to read the construction of Citizens of Cava's identity from a different point of view.

2. SOCIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE TRANSFORMATION OF A MEDITERRANEAN CITY BETWEEN MIDDLE AND MODERN AGE

The city of Cava soon fought against the rebels that arrived with the army in front of the walls of Cava at the end of August. The Anjous' soldiers arrived at Cava (20th of August) and John Cossa, the general of the army who fought to Alphonse in the past, made them an offer: either they could take an oath, giving themselves to John or suffer the "guasto" (the destruction of the lands around the city in order to break the citizen's resistance).

"Inimici erano andati ad campo (located in Castellamare) alla Cava, dove se credeva fariano poco volendose li homini de quella terra tenere et difendersi [...] essi inimci stati alcuni dì acampati al dicto luoco, larghi però da la terra circa trea miglia, la quale (the City of Cava) de si sto et de mura è foritssima, Giohane Cossa, secudno refferisse Bartolomeo da Rechanati (He was a secretary and an Ambassador of King Ferdinando), quale era dentro, [...] cum molte exhortatione de parole et larghissime proferte et poi cum minacce de farli el guasto, se ingiegnò de deviare essi homini da la devotione et fidelità del singor re, cum dirli fra l'altre cose che non volessero fare el contrario de quello che hanno facto tanti singori et baroni de questo reame, che se son reducti alla fidelità de re Ranero (Renato d'Angiò, Duke of Lorena and Father of John) et che non volessero lassarse guastare li arbori, maxime che pur infine haverano ad pigliare el partito cum la maiestà de esso re Ranero [...]" (Senatore, 1998: 270-271).

Against the offer of John Cossa, citizens

"[...] resposero molte parole, ma queste fra le altre: che non intendevano pigliare exempio da chi ha facto male et havuto poca consideratione al'honore suo in essersi deviati da la fidelità de la mestà del singore Ferrando (King Ferdinando), loro iusto er vero signore et re, in la cui fidelità erano disposti a preservare, nè se credesse che bone parole nè minace che'l sapesse usare havessero a dare quella terra, che erano disposti a patire ogni exterminio, onno che aspectare guasto d'arbori, et che, se essi inimici non erano sufficienti ad fare dicto guasto, volendo el duca Johanne (John) assecurare trecento homini de li loro, gli mndariano cum acete per aiutare ad farlo loro più presto per cavarli de oppinione che per timore de guasto volessero mancare del debito et fidelità loro verso chi sonno tenuti. Vedento questo esso Johanne Cossa, seguirono essi inimici a dare el guasto [...]" (Senatore, 1998: 270-271).

A letter was written by Antonio da Trezzo on the 29th of August 1460 according to our resources. Da Trezzo was the Ambassador of Francesco Sforza duke of Milan and ally of Ferdinand and he was impressed by those words and he wrote to his duke:

“Grande commendatione et laude se hanno acquistati li homini de la Cava che se dice hanno vergognato tuti li signori del reame, li quai se sonno accordati inante habiano veduto la fronte de inimici, ad li quali, se ve pare, laudaria che vostra signora scrivesse una bona lettera comendandoli de la costante fede loro verso la maiestà del re, che non dubito el scrivere vostro gli serà molto grato et accenderà ancora più li animi loro in ogni simile caso potesse accadere un'altra volta” (Senatore, 1998: 271).

The siege lasted one week. Despite the “guasto” (damage), the city refused to change sides and to betray Ferdinand. They put up a strong opposition and caused many losses among their enemies. The rebels were obligated to stop the siege due to the resistance of Cava's citizens and because the army of the Aragon was arriving (Senatore, 2012: 23, 26). After the siege, on the 4th of September, the delegation of Cava's citizens went to Naples. They received a completely blank document from Ferdinando. By doing this, the king gave the citizens the possibility to write on this white document every kind of request they could have possibly desired, but they returned it to Ferdinando with no requests. This is the reason why it is called “the white parchment” or even better “privilege in white”, suggested by Francesco Senatore (Senatore, 2012: 10). There are different opinions concerning these events. One part of local history is certain that the privilege was recompense to city's rescue. In fact, it was thought that five hundred men of Cava, commanded by Giosuè and Marino Longo, assisted the king during the battle of Sarno and they helped Ferdinando to escape to Naples. By the intervention of Cava's hundred men, the king could reorganise his army and later won the war.

“Ferdinando I d' Aragona successe ad Alfonso; il suo governo sin dai primordi fu pieno di turbolenze e disordini; il suo carattere faceva tutti diffidenti, ed il suo procedere aspro e corrivo alle punizioni, occasionò una terribile congiura che fu ordita dai principali signori del Regno, alla testa de' quali stavano i principi di Rossano e di Taranto suoi parenti: rifiutato il trono esibito a suo zio Giovanni, fu poi accettata l' offerta dall' altro Giovanni d' Angiò figlio di Renato: datosi quindi costui all'impresa coll'ajuto de' ribelli, molto prosperò: gli affari di Ferdinando volgevano in male, ed era quasi pervenuto al punto di soccombere: attaccata la battaglia nelle pianure di Sarno, i suoi soldati, per la piupparte posti fuori combattimento, erano ridotti nello stato di non poterla più sostenere, e la vittoria era per i suoi nemici; ma mentre le cose stavano in questo stato, dalla via del monte che sovrasta Sarno discesero 500 uomini che volontariamente dalla Cava si erano mossi ad oste contro gli Angioini in difesa del Re guidati da Giosuè e Marino Longo, ed avendo subito preso parte all' azione, col lor menar d'armi fecero sì che la pugna cambiasse subito di aspettato, perciocchè i vincitori rimasero vinti. Il Re ritornato in Napoli fu sollecito di manifestare ai Cavesi i suoi sentimenti di gratitudine, e di là a poco loro spedi un diploma in bianco colla facoltà di potervi scrivere qualunque siasi grazia con un' affettuosa lettera concepita in questi termini”. (Adinolfi, 1846: 272-273).

Recently, Francesco Senatore has demonstrated that this episode about Sarno's history, is nothing more than mythology (Senatore, 1998: 259-271). However, it is undeniable that this “White Privilege” document does indeed exist and is a valid legal document. It was

solemnitate that is it has all the signs to be legal: the king's signature; the annotations of the royal chancellor's offices and the royal seal. (Senatore, 2012: 15-16).

The citizens of Cava never supported Ferdinand during the battle of Sarno. There is a lot of evidence to support this explanation. According to the Italian sources: the chronicles of John Pontano and John Simonetta and the letter of Da Trezzo, which were sent to Francesco Sforza, discussed the events of Sarno and Cava's siege, but never mentioned anything about their rescue (Senatore, 1994: 67-68). This theory can also be supported by looking at foreign sources, for example, the Chronicle of Zurrita does not talk about Cava's intervention (Zurita, 1578). The real reason for the Privilege in White was Cava's resistance to the siege (from 20th to 29th of August, in 1460) and the loyalty showed to the crown (Senatore, 2012).

Several different historical documents demonstrate it. One of them is the letter that went with the parchment. There, it is said:

“Honofrio Scannapecu vostro citatino et Sindico è venuta ad la Maestà nostra, quanto ni ha dicto da parte de questa fidelissima cità nostra havimo pienamente inteso [...] la integra ed immacolata fede nostra verso nui et stato nostro [...] considerata tanta constantia fidelità et affectione vostra verso nui, che per non vi maculare er perseverare in lo debito et honore vostro non avete curato ne estimado dapni, ne interessi, vi facciano nostri nemici, ante quelli haviti postponuto come meritatamente se deve fare [...]” (Milano, 1988: 85-86).

Or for example, in a letter of Ferdinando's in 1463, the king ordered a tax collector (the official who withdrawer the tax) to didn't molest the citizens while obtaining the colletta because

“[...] Nui (the king) havendo rispetto et consideratione alla sicera costantia et fidelità della dicta Università et homini verso nui e lo stato nostro et a li continui boni servitii ne hanno fatti et continuamente ne fanno et li danni che per nostro Stato et sevizio hanno di bonissimo animo comportato, li havemo gratiosamente remessa et relassata la detta pena [...]” (Milano, 1988: 87).

These quotations speak about the siege and the resistance that took place in August (for example, the expression a li continui boni servitii ne hanno fatti et continuamente ne fanno et li danni che per nostro Stato appears as a reference to August's siege).

The privileges given to Cava by Aragon talked about the city's respectable actions but they never mentioned the support of Cava's citizens to the King during Sarno's clash. Nowadays, an important discovery surrenders this explanation. The miscellaneous book from 1690 written by Grimaldi has implemented the number of Aragon's documents preserved at the historical archives of Cava (Grimaldi, 1690).

In addition, there is no information about the support of Cava's men in medieval sources. The question is, when should this second version of the battle be created? Perhaps, it was probably a product of the Modern Age, made around the XVII century.

During the sixteen hundreds, some important families of Cava wished to give an important ancestor to their descendants in order to improve and reinforce their position or rehabilitate their name in the local society (Bizzocchi, 1995). In this case, the Longo's family could be the protagonist. In fact, this family maybe took part in some blameworthy actions during the last medieval centuries. For these reasons, they would have commissioned somebody to create a version of the battle where Longo's brothers helped the king. It is also important to remember how some members of Longo's family fought for the Aragon's. (Mazzoleni, 1957: 101, 123, 134). Probably the myth of Sarno bore when Ottavio Beltrano mixed the real facts with fiction in his work titled *Breve Descrittione del Regno di Napoli* (1640) but this event

disappeared in the new edition of the *Descrittione* (Senatore, 1994: 68-69; Senatore, 1998: 265-266; Senatore, 2012: 41).

The myth of the surrender was present for the first time into local history in XVIII century in *Descrizione istorica della città fedelissima della Cava* by Agnello Polverino's, first book (Polverino, 1716: 3), probably due to the crisis that the Spanish crown had endured in that period. During the middle of XVII century, Cava actually risked to losing its state own condition. The sovereign was selling its territories to take the money in order to stop the financial and political crisis and Cava had many lords interested in buying it. For these reasons, the city decided to put together the money and paid the crown to preserve its state own condition. Practically Cava sold its state-own condition from the Spanish's crown (Foscari, 2000: 275-291; Senatore, 2012: 41-45). In addition, abreast the payment they needed to show at Spain's king what kinds of services the city had given to that crown in past. Therefore, for this reason, the rescue given to the king could appear most important than a siege's resistance. This should be one of the roles of this unique privilege to build the identity of Cava's citizens during the modern and contemporary ages, out of the context of who produced it.

Pass to analyse the background where the paper in white was produced and the effects of this one, the reasons why the citizens returned the paper to Ferdinando without requests are still unclear.

First, it is not probable that the citizens of Cava should not have had something to ask after the damage occurred during the siege of August. However, the documents only permits to make some assumptions in order to explain what was happened.

One point to analyse could be the political ideology of these participants (King and citizens) and their roles in that situation. An example about it is contained in the letter that accompanied the paper.

“Honofrio non ni ha cercato cosa alcuna per parte di questa università, onde a nui ha parso dovere fare verso vui alcuna demonstratione [...] concedendovi uno privilegio in bianco [...] che in quello dicto privilegio ci faczate scrivere ad vostra voluntate tucte quelle gratie che per uno Re gratissimo se potessero concedere ad soy vassalli fidelissimi [...] certissimi non potete metterencene tante che basteno ad satisfare vostri meriti” (Milano, 1988: 85-86).

In this case, Ferdinand called the citizens *vassalli fedelissimi*. The king's words give the impression that Ferdinand expected a behaviour like this from the citizens. Practically, both king and citizens knew their roles, respected them and each other's and they recited their part in order to show themselves like the other expected. A consequence of this constant interaction was that king and citizens were able to predict very often the conduct of their partner involved. Paraphrasing Mineo's words: this is an effect of the dynamic of privilege (Mineo, 2003: 597-610).

Some events happened in during the 1460 and 1461 are still unknown. For example, why did the citizens decide to leave the parchment in white? How did they take this decision? Did all the citizens agree? What did facts happen between the delivering and the restitution?

Even though these unsolved questions, a source permitted to start an early reconstruction of what happened in that period inside the city.

This document concerns the decision of the *universitas* of Cava to reform the administrative structure of the city in 1461. (Abignente, 1886: XXIV-XXVII, appendix). Before to go on it could be useful give a briefly definition of *universitas* as suggested by Francesco Senatore:

“*universitas* indica comunemente uno specifico ente collettivo (specify a collective group): la *universitas civium* o *universitas loci*, che si autogoverna entro certi ambiti e con determinati poteri tradizionali, in dipendenza da un'autorità superiore di

varia natura con la quale contratta in occasioni ordinarie o straordinarie sia la propria costituzione sia le modalità, talvolta anche la consistenza, delle proprie contribuzioni in denaro e in servizi". (Senatore, 2009: 447-456).

Practically, universitas was able to self-government itself but only in a specific setting because it was subdued to senior authority that recognised it.

The administrative reform of 1461 could demonstrate the role that the paper in white should have inside citizens' decision and into its background.

It also represents the first noted piece of evidence about Cava's local administration and shows two types of the citizen's government: one that worked before 1461 and one that took the place of it from that date. Some examples of Cava's first administration that worked until 1461 are:

"quod olim in principio guerrarum vigentium de presentis, Universitatis et homines ipsius volentes Statum Regium, in quantum ad eis spectabat, pro conservatione ligi homagii et fidelitatis, aliter per eis praesestitate Sacre Regiae Majestatis; nec non et bonum regimen civitatis hujus, posse procurare, ut procuratum est – for these reasons – ordinaverunt, legitimos et solictos eorum Electos, Sindicum et Conservatores Regii Status et boni publici hujus civitatis, nonnullos homines ipsius" (Abignente, 1886: XXIV-XXVII, appendix).

Exist also a proof about the actions of this local administration. It is a "regesto" (a summary of a document) of Gennaro Senatore (the archivist of the historical archive of Cava at the beginning of the XX)

"il 4 settembre 1461, gli eletti dell'università, per l'ordinario giurato fanno pubblicare il Bando per l'affitto delle gabelle norite impositas et ordinatas". (Practically the local government ordered the publication of the announcement around the rent of indirect tax). (Senatore, 1831-1910)

Therefore, Cava evolved from an administration, which consisted of viginti quatuor, vel circa elects to one of the fourteen elements, which should govern the city between the ages 1461-1482. There were effectively nine elected representatives, two for all the provinces or districts (except for Corpo di Cave that had three reps probably due to the extension of its territory).

"Et sic oportet eos alios de novo eligere in minori numero, cum potestatibus et facultatibus necessariis et opportunis quo Status Regius illaesus prout supra, et bonum regimen eorum agueatur; sed id ex numero misurantes, ut dixerunt, onus eorum ne propter confusione vacaret; quia ubi moltitudo ibi confusio, deliberaverunt velle ordinare certos alios electos ex homines dictae Universitatis, utique congitos et approbatos a dicta Universitate, qui habeant ad rem praedictam vocare, et interesse temporibus et viis debitis et oportunis. Ex id ex anno Christi noviter intrante, universitas et homine privinciam Mitiliani, coram nobis eligerunt magnificus Angelum Longum praesbyterum, et notarium Guarinum Costa; provincia Sancti Adjutoris notarium Patritium de Alferio et Lucanulum de Monica, provincia Passiani iudicem Pacificum de Curti iuris peritum, et Catherinellum de Arminando, Corpus Cavae et membra Trasbonea, Citara, Raiti, et Arboli, Ioannem Paulum Camberlingum, magnificum Christophorum de Simone et Vitum Cellium de Campanara, praesetes cum omnia qua decet plenitude potestatis et facultatis, et cum pleno libero ac generali mandato vigore praesentis electionis instrumenti [...]" (Abignente, 1886: XXIV-XXVII, appendix).

These provinces were the semi-autonomous parts that constituted Cava. They were four (S. Adiutore, Passiano, Mitiliano and Copo di Cava) and they did not have the same dimension or number of inhabitants. In addition, these provinces were not compact; on the contrary, they were composed of many small sub-districts. This structure gave Cava a federation arrangement (Senatore, 2016; Siani, 2017).

This is the decision that the universitas took in 1461. In 1482 The King changed the local administration with the *Prammatica noviter editam per Sacram Regiam Maiestatem*. The representatives had to choose another seven or eight people among the citizen who lived in their province to have forty representatives in total. They were the new local government

“[...] debeant eligere per totum diem crastinum, decimum praesentis mensis, (Jennaury) quadriginta homines de civibus Cavensis, juxta formam, scripturam et tenorem dictae Prammaticae. Et inter eos volent eligi tam sindaus, quam officiales ordinandi secundum formam Pragmaticae supradictae. Quod propterea volentes Regiis et dicti Capitanei obedire mandantis, praefata universitas post propositionem viri nobilis Nicolantoni sindaci Cavensis factam per eum de intelligentia et aliis causis, et deposito per eum officio sindacatus, elegit infrascriptos homines dicta universitas, praesente dicto domino capitaneo, videlicet: Leonildum Jovene et Gregorium de Curte pro Passiano, not. Patritium et Judicem Ursinum pro Sancto Adjutorio, Dominum Jentilem Longum et notarium Petrumpaulum pro Metelliano, Andrea Perrellis, magnificum Marcum Antonium Punzum et notarium Blasium Jenoynum pro Corpore et membris [...] cum potestate per eos electos eligendi reliquos ad complendum quadraginta sub hac lege, quod ipsi electi et per eos elegendi nullo modo possint, neque valeant recusare electionem de eis factam, sed quod quilibet ipsorum teneantur et debeant acceptare et sequi formam dictae Pragmaticae, hoc est, quod Metelianum debeat eligere suos praefatos electos octo ad complendum decem; Sancto Adjtor octo alios; Passianum octo alios, et Corpus cum membri septem; quibus dandam plenariam potestatem et omnimodam facultatem eligendi sindacum et alios officiales intra dictum numerum quadriginta [...]” (Abignente, 1886: XXVIII-XXIX, appendix).

Come to the decision of 1461, the reasons for the change in Cava’s administration were not clear. It appears to have been a decision of the universitas. The document of 1461 speaks about the confusion provoked by the big number of functionaries: “onus eorum ne propter confusione vacaret; quia ubi multitudo ibi confusio” (Abignente, 1886: XXIV-XXVII, appendix). Nonetheless, this remains only a general explanation. However, it is possible to imagine that the outgoing administration made the decision to leave the paper in white. This possibility could be suggested for two reasons: the dates of the events (the privilege delivery and reformation of the administration) are very close; the decision to change the local government was a local choice (different from the decision took by King Ferdinand to define all local administrations into the realm by the *Prammatica noviter* (1482). Moreover, there is not any connection between the members of the embassy who went to Naples in 1460 and the representatives who were ruling in 1461 and the members that took part in the city’s administration in 1482. So, it is possible to speculate that the transformation of the local organization could be a consequence of the decision to give back the paper in white.

It shows also that in Cava there were factions or groups, like also in the other cities (Vitolo, 2007: 41-69). One of these factions maybe wanted to give back the privilege without requests, but it is also possible that there were citizens, who were interested in obtaining something.

To support this hypothesis, it is a necessary review, and maybe correct, the previous thesis produced by a part of local historiography around the men of Cava like a compact group when the decision regarded the destiny of the city. As a result, Cava builds its identity during the XV century through a unique privilege, but it is necessary to review the effects, the elements and finally the results involved during that process.

Like in the other parts of Europe, in the late medieval and early modern period, a few family groups tried to monopolise the community and they did this by manipulating powerful people to make decisions in their favour.

Even though this process occurred also in Cava, it did take place without clashes similar to ones that happened in other cities of the Kingdom, such as Salerno and Nocera, close to Cava (Orlando, 1886; Carucci 1945; Siani, 2017). In other words, the conflicts did not lack in that universitas but they were directed against the abbey of SS Trinità due to the conduct of some of its abbots.

Despite the theory of a part of local historiography, (they describe the relation between abbey and city almost as a permanent contrast), the Trinità had an important role in the creation of the city's identity and until today, it has not been completely understood.

Even though the relationship between the abbey and city was sometimes turbulent, the research has illustrated how the monastic institution represented, besides the crown, a possibility for these men (and maybe sometimes women) to improve their social conditions. In fact, the presence of Trinità gave the inhabitants of Cava three alternatives: monastic career: a vassal of the abbot by an oath, employee (using a modern word) into the local administration by the abbey's offices. So, the men of Cava could occupy the civil or the monastic offices of their city (Siani, 2017). The opportunity of the transition from civil to the monastic offices was more frequent between the end of the XIII century, during the XIV and appear to decrease during the XV century. The opinion about the relations between the city and the Trinità should be corrected. Abbey and citizens share the same territory, condition (they are both periphery into the realm and centre into the province) and partners (crown and pope). Consequently, Cava and abbey lived in complementary conditions. So, it is normal to assume that they weren't only in contrast with each other (Siani, 2017).

Some majestic privileges support this hypothesis. Normally, royal rules were made by the negotiation between the crown and city, but if we analyse some of these rules during the time we discover some arguments of mentioned rules that were contracted between the monastery and homines of Cava. An example that can help to clarify this point. In 1154, the Normann king William, in a privilege that he gave to the monastery, commanded

“Mandamus insuper ut homines de casali Cavę qui per nomina in quodam alio privilegio preŕfati ducis eo quod erant regio fisco ac personale servitium ascripti continentur necnon et alii qui nunc morantur sive moraturi sunt in pertinentiis et tenimento eiusdem casalis à flumine Sileris usque Schifatum/Sclafatum et in ducatu Amalfię plateaticum non solvant, sed idem sacrum cęnobium ab omni pedagio, aquatico atque quolibet fidagio per totum iam dictum nostrum Sicilię regnum, totaliter sit immune” (Archivio storico della SS. Trinità, Arca H, n.14).

This privilege will be renewed in 1444, 1450, 1456 and 1458 (Archivio storico della SS. Trinità Arca P, n. 31, 37, 40, e Arca Q, n. 3bis). In these circumstances, the Trinity or its bishop required the renewal. The norm mentioned above is presented also in the royal documents. They are granted by Johanna II (last Angevin's queen of Naples' Kingdom) in 1419 (2nd of November) and Alonso V (first Aragon's king of Naples' Kingdom) in 1443 (24th of March) (Grimaldi, 1690).

This is only an example; there are many cases like this where royal and monastic regulations are mixed into the city legislation, for instance, where the curia (courthouse)

should be located or the roles of certain officials (as the *mastro portulano*). To conclude this bracket around the abbey's role, we must remember that the connection between the city and the ecclesiastic power remained constant. It passed through different forms such as monastic's dominion or bishop authority, but the relation wasn't broken. Also, in this case, an example can give a clear explanation. On the 8th of February 1476, *universitas Cava* decided that «per la esazione e pagamento dei censi dovuti dai cittadini al monastero della Trinità si osservi il sistema antico e solito» (Senatore, 1831-1910). In 1498, even though Cava and Trinità were in a bad period because of the Carafa's decision (put together the benedictine congregations of Cava and S. Giustina (from Padova), city and abbot negotiated a new privilege (Senatore, 1831-1910). Finally, the bishop and the city stipulated a new privilege (29th of May 1520), two years after the royal one (1518) (Senatore, 1831-1910).

After thirty years, when Ferdinando died, the kingdom of Naples was passed to the French crown of Carlo VIII (the eighth) (1494-1495). Cava, loyal to Ferdinando of Aragon based on local history, sent an embassy to the palace of Naples to take an oath of loyalty to King Carlo, asking to remain state-owned, like the Anjou's predecessor (Johanna II, the second) promised them (Abignente, 1886: 112). A year later (1496-1497), when Federico, the second son of Ferdinando, reconquered the kingdom, the loyal's city of Cava both returned to Aragon side and became the base to the siege of Salerno' castle, brought by Federico the Aragon, as Gennaro Senatore wrote: 10 Ottobre 1496,

“Ricevute e pubblicate le lettere regie perla nuova ordinazione del Re Federico, l'Università nomina una Commissione di cittadini per prestare il debito onore ed omaggio al Re e di domandare la conferma delle grazie concesse dal passato Sovrano” (Senatore, 1831-1910).

To insist on the adjective loyal want to prove that Cava was loyal, but its loyalty was directed toward the monarchy (not dynasty) For this reason, during the writing of PhD thesis it was adopted the analytic expression “loyalty to the monarchy without the sign”, to indicate that the city was devoted to the idea of monarchy without royal dynasty. It was necessary if Cava wanted to decrease and equalise the control of the abbey into the city. In my opinion, this particular devotion lasted until the XVI century, when the city decided to side with the Spanish against the French. In addition, the King Ferdinando II (son of Alfonso Duke of Calabria, the eldest/firstborn of Ferdinando) was sent to Cava Pietro di Pagano as viceroy (like an administrator chosen by the king). The viceroy had to begin the process against those who had supported the King of France (Abignete, 1886: 121).

This information demonstrates again: Cava's society was not a cohesive group as much as local history believed; in that society, there could be conflicts between different families or groups of them, like it happened in other cities. In order to occupy the director's position into Cava city's administration, during the French government (1494-1495), clashes could occur between families who were not in command's position against the others that occupied them in the Cava's local government. It was a normal dynamic during a change of dynasty. A few examples of this are the events around the Longo and Gagliardi's, two of the most important families in the city. Some members of those families accused and proceeded betrayal. Again, Gennaro Senatore, 7th of October, 1495,

“i tre accusati (accuseds) di sospetto di sedizione (sedition): M. Antonio Gagliardi, Pietro Antonio Longo ed Alessandro Longo, innanzi al Regio Capitano ed alla presenza del Sindaco ed Eletti fanno le loro proteste e dichiarano la loro fede nella Casa d'Aragona, il loro servizio per Re Ferrante e la loro devozione all'Università (declare your fidelity and loyalty to the Aragon's royal house), che era falsa accusa e calunnia di alcuni figli d'iniquità contro di esse. (and the accusations were untrue) Domandano le prove del tradimento e chiedono la restituzione di

quanto loro era stato tolto e, sotto la protezione del Re e della Giustizia chiedono la rifazione di tutti i danni, perché le loro case erano state saccheggiate, le terre devastate e gli alberi estirpati per opera di malviventi i quali, per scusare il loro delitto avevano inventata la calunnia. Chiedono urgentemente che sia fatta la luce per non rimanere con nota d'infamia" (Senatore, 1831-1910).

The fact that the most important families of Cava could have been opposed by the other groups of citizens is a real possibility. Even though it does not have, at this moment, sufficient testimonials to confirm it, some events of those years can represent an important starting point around the presence of divisions into Cava.

The last series of events that happened during the end of Federico's rule are very interesting to analyse. The kings of Spain and France in accordance with the agreement of Granada (11th of November 1500) divided Italy, and the kingdom fell into France's hands (Benzoni, 1995).

While Aragon was organizing resistance and preparing to fight, Cava showed its "double face" again at close distance. Despite the pact between Ferdinando I (the first) (called the Catholic, King of Spain) and the new king of France (Luigi), Federico was still the legitimate king of Naples. Nevertheless, Cava waved the flag of France.

"Et est notandum et tenementi quod Dominus nostre Rex Federicus de Aragona [...] in bello et in discordia cum domino Rege Fraciae et Rege Yspaniae, ac quod cum omnibus aliis boronibus et dominus huius Regni, et Dominus Ferrandus pariter cum Theuclis et in Apulia sunt, ubi est exercitus ductud ditorum Regis Fraciae et Yspaniae, in partibus Romae et Sancti Germani sicut ditorum cum aliis baronibus et dominis" (Senatore, 1831-1910).

Our source is the notary of Cava Mangrella, who started the new pages enumerated 217.97 with these words "Regnorum Domini nostri Loisii, Regis Francorum etc. Anno primo, die XVIII. praesentis mensis Iunii, Regis huius: et eodem die fuerunt alzate eius bandiere in hoc civitate Cavae pro eius parte et nomine (1499-1500)" (Senatore, 1831-1910). After a few days, the university decided to give the military tax to support Federico (1501). The opposition showed by these events expresses the possibility that Cava's citizens maybe were not a unified group, like local history thought, but there were some groups in the city ready to take advantage of every change.

3. CONCLUSION

In spite of the evidences value, we must notice that history and myth have a role in the process of identity building. The unique privilege has been important in different ways during the Middle, Modern and Contemporary periods. It is possible suppose that it has been changing and increasing its meaning during the Modern age becoming more important than it was in the past. In fact, the event on 4th September 1460 seemed quite normal during those centuries. Proof of this is the fact that help was given to Ferdinando by Cava's citizens at Sarno was present only into the local sources from the middle of XVII century. Before the text of Beltrano we didn't know anything about the interview of Cava's men at Sarno. For example, into the second king's privilege (22nd of September 1460) there were not any cross-references about the action of Longo's brothers (Abignente, 1886: II-IX, appendix). In addition, the same is possible to note looking at all the other privileges of the Aragon's kings. The absence of information about the Longo's intervention underline the possibility that the help never happened. Vice versa, at the same time, we have cross-references around the siege

and the damage (guasto) that Cava suffered. Cross-references about the decision to return in white the privilege did not found into the documents used to edit the thesis. However, Cava citizens' behaviour could be normal in that society; in the sense that both men who wanted to give back the parchment in white and men who wanted to obtain something from that privilege were two common kinds of late Middle Age's people. The white paper gave a real contribution to Cava's identity but it is necessary to understand what it was. It made visible the importance of the relation between city and monarchy, between a right king, who was able to recognise and be grateful in respect to the loyalty of his subjects, and that subjects who were ready to show their fidelity to the sovereign. However, the abbey of Trinità's role into the process to construct the identity of Cava cannot be left out. In fact, previously it has been noted that the relation between universities and monastery was not a local and constant conflict.

The connection among the crown, monastery and university-city and their specific prerogatives, rights or functions produced a composite and stratified society and identity in that city. In fact, Abignete told about the hybrid character of Cava (Abignente, 1886). In the city's identity, our unique privilege took place during the centuries XVII and XVIII while it appears like a normal document with a different meaning if we study it into the context that had produced it.

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