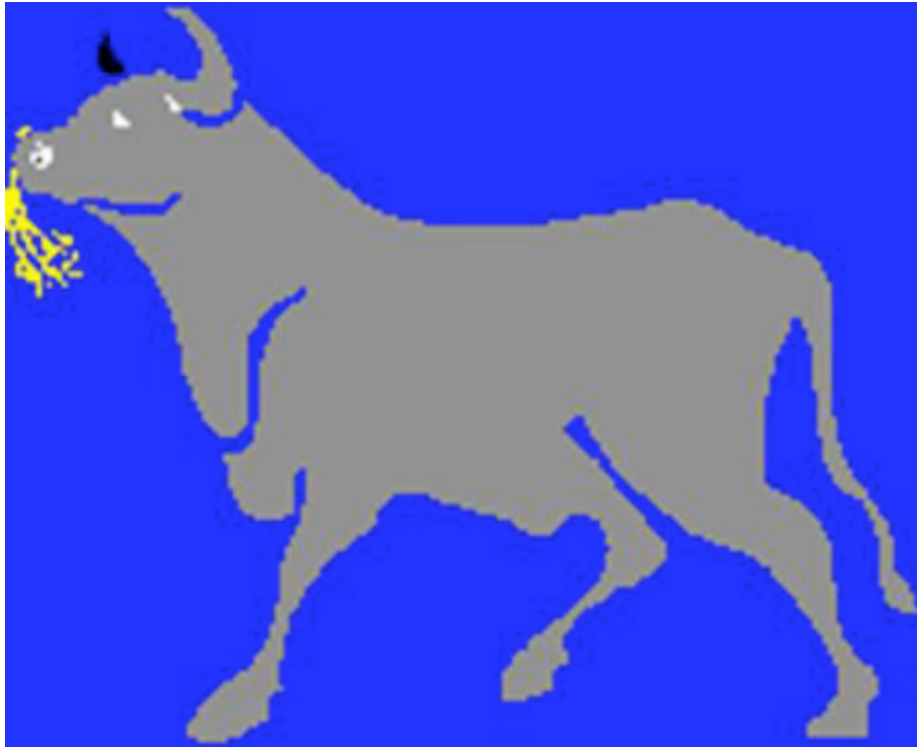


# From Camarda to Bernalda: short historical annotations of the homeland

[Google translation reinterpreted by L.F. Dell'Osso]



## **The COAT OF ARMS / EMBLEM:**

*"Blue with a silver ox bearing the mouth of the ears of gold, and surmounted by three stars of the same, arranged in bundles. But the latter have taken the place of the sun, even gold, which was the emblem of Bernauda "[1].*

In fact, originally, the coat of arms (emblem) filed, in place of the stars and sun, and before them, a lily, clear legacy of the Angevin period and the oldest feudal lords, while the ox (or calf) topped three mountains, it is possible, even today, to observe, carved in stone, on a tombstone of the sixteenth century. It is under the old clock tower situated in the Corso Italia, near the no longer existing chapel dedicated to Our Lady of Graces and overlooking the, also disappeared, public square.

Camarda, then, at least from about 1300, perhaps even boasts its own civic emblem (coat of arms), we shall see below from whom, it was presumably borrowed.

The detail seems important, could mean an explicit call to some form of institutional presence in the historical period marked by the dynasty beyond the Alps, who settled in the

Kingdom of Naples by Charles of Anjou, and leaving, therefore, room for 'hypothesis' [2] that Camarda, civic organizations were already during the fourteenth century; in the presence of a civic emblem it seems logical to be able to connect the presence of a civic institution.

To be clearer: in the emblem (coat of arms), over time, the following heraldic pieces have been distinguished:

- 1) the **silver ox**, the original piece, the most ancient and unchanged over time, which is the true civic emblem, topped, overcoming or alongside the other pieces of different meaning;
- 2) the **ears of gold** (ie, yellow), indicating that Camarda, then Bernalda, insisted on the territory of ancient Metaponto;
- 3) a **lily** (memory or even probable Angevin period of the previous Norman-Swabian period, we think, for example, then **that's Guaimar Camarda** that you will refer below);
- 4) the **three mountains** at the foot of the silver ox, indicating that the territory of Camarda include other fiefs (**Avena, and Appius Avinella / Accio**). This piece should be added to the **1470**, when Camarda, on the initiative of the Leap Pirro, were certainly conveyed the families from these rustic centers;
- 5) the **gold** (yellow) **sun** of the House of **de Bernaudo (or de Bernardo)**, from which even the **blue** 'background'. The sun rises above the ox, taking the place (1497) of the lily, signifying that it has a succession of feudal lineage from a previous Bernaudo;
- 6) the **three stars of the same color** (yellow) of recent times, replacing the symbols of feudal houses disappeared, keeping the memory and the significance of the three mountains.

The emblem is, therefore, a "speaking" emblem. Each of these heraldic symbols, as we have seen, is a carrier of a particular and well-defined meaning, so that the ears are meant to recall a tradition that is Metapontino perpetuating the memory of belonging to that ancient land Metaponto, the three mountains instead indicate more than one territory or jurisdiction over estates, and the sun and lily, in turn, camping in the emblem's head [3], respectively, lorded over by the time Bernardo de Camarda and the baronial houses of the previous period (Beaumont, etc. ...).

Finally, the ox or calf: it is the authentic, original landmark house (I doubt that the ears can be the result of some scholarly Renaissance pretensions, but the state can not be said with certainty) and was borrowed, as well as for Matera and Tricarico, from the troops quartered there, and Byzantine authority in the second half of the tenth century, at the time that is the theme of Italy, whose border runs, in the province of Matera, roughly along the areas between the Bradano and the Basento, and whose emblem was precisely the ox or calf bred *podolica* (hence the white-silver), from which the Italian peninsula in ancient times was named [4].

Ultimately, it is clear, I also believe to the reader, that what with the municipal coat of arms,

wrongly or reasonably, you want to pass is the camardese community tradition that, at least since the second half of the thirteenth century, unlike what happened to the rustic manor, kept its own civic emblem, which is distinct from that of the feudal lord, which also from time to time he rubbed, and therefore could not have, correspondingly, its own civic organization, governed by its representatives, according the laws and customs of the time.

## The Byzantine period

But what was the Camarda Byzantine Theme of Italy? Where was it located? And above all, premised the extreme difficulty of finding documents or documented news, what do we have that tests, at least circumstantially, its existence?

The place name:

**Camarda:** "The name alludes to greek-byzantine appropriations: for the last camardan which meant a sort of tent-shaped, curved, (Ducange, Gloss. Inf Lat. Camaradum to see) and to an extent as to contain a lot of people, if we argue English 'Camera' which resulted from that. - Other Camarda is at Ofanto, in that of Melfi, not far from the valley of Catapano: Comparisons of no contemptible grecism local. Other near Catanzaro, where he was well along hotel Byzantine troops. - Another from Apricena. - All these names indicate there **stations, or cantonments stable** Byzantine troops."[5]

That said, the writer, currency, given the nature, composition and habits of the Byzantine army, consisting mainly of mercenaries recruited in various provinces of the empire moved with his entourage of wives and children, who had the room or Byzantine Camarda, in the tenth century, largely populated by those people [6] and therefore had primarily greek-byzantine characteristics, customs and language.

The settlement certainly fortified, was definitely located there where it was necessary that it was, that it is, given the nature (military) same as the Byzantine citadel, near the stronghold (the actual castle), in a strong, dominating the valley Basento, to guard itself and mostly the first two passages, from the coast, the river itself: the one known as the "core of Sant'Angelo" and that, very important at the time, near "Tower Accio," where there was a stone bridge [7], who was the first to cross the Basento near the coastline (The strategic importance was precisely this: the armies that have walked these lands for centuries or direct from Calabria , to or from Apulia, where they had not been able or have not had time to build themselves on the speedy and safe crossing points of the river (*it is clear that can not be ferried thousands of troops, a few at a time, with one or more hull (rafts) from one bank of a river without exposing the army to sudden and deadly enemy attacks!*) were forced through the Basento crossing the bridge closest to the coastline and then in area "Torre Accio" on the road then continue to the Castle of St. Basil, to Policoro, etc. ...). [8]

Do not be misled, about the location of Camerata-Camarda, the tradition that the village

should arise in S. Donato: this country, in fact, has always maintained the characteristics of the rural area and the fact that there certainly has been allocated over the centuries, one or more farms, which certainly relate some few ruins and in whose inhabitants (of various ages) inherent in some tombs and a few other archaeological finds, or the fact that on the spot may, for some time, he found escape and precarious settlements, including -the proximity of the wells "Torrone," the population of surviving Camarda, as we shall see below, the earthquake of 1466, or, again, that there may have found accommodation, provided for the convenience of the wells, part of the Byzantine troops [9], or rather its aftermath, based in Camarda, do not provide evidence or support a thesis used exhaustively even maliciously, by some authors or by the same Defenders of the University of Bernalda in various litigation incurred against the University (Town) of Montescaglioso Abbey of St. Michele Arcangelo Montescaglioso.

Research sources (some):

For the writer, the first and oldest mention about a village in the name **Camerata** is given, the truth is so critical, by PD Alessandro De Meo, who, starting to turn a news handed down by Francis Lombardi in "Always Molfetta," AC 988, in his monumental and unparalleled Opera [10] (verbatim wrote: <<Salerno adds the chronicler, who this year," Cosenza was taken from 'Saracen el'Oppido Monte Pylos [11 ] (Irsina) remained almost everything burned, but Prince John once redid it, and Posel in a state better than before. "Therefore Monte Pylos was in the Principality of Salerno. In this year have been taken Cosenza, Salerno Romuald says it still. Wolf writes Protospatharius. An.988. Ind. I. Depopulaverunt Saracens Vicos Baresnes and virus diseases in ac mulieres siciliamia captivos duxerunt. **Francis Lombardi in the news of Molfetta, without other witnesses**, note that in this year remain to be 'distressed Saracens countries *Rivella*, near Molfetta, *Morigino*, *S. Ismo* in the street that goes to Quarata [12], and then later they were desolate *tower Villotta or Villola* in the way of Terlizzi, *S. Leucio in desert* relevance of Molfetta in road that goes to Bitonto; *S. Quirico* in the streets of Ruvo, **Urassano** [13] in the way of Bitonto, *Sagina*, *St. Stephen*, *St. Andrew*, *Cirignano* [14], *Zappino*, *Janus*, *Priragnano*, *S. Nicola*, and **Salandra** Di Bisceglie territory, and parts of Conversano *Castellone* [15], *Frassineto*, *Cimena*, *Casabolo*, *Barsento*, *iamorra*, *sex*, and *Agnano*. *Ventacero* Near Acquaviva, and relevance of Bari **Camerata (ie Camarda)** *Balsignano*, *Butorrito* [ 16], *Casabattula* and *Casalnuovo*. But these days at least many of these countries had no existence in the imagination of some. ...>>.

As you can see, Di Meo is somewhat skeptical about the news handed down by the Lombards, but perhaps for once does not elaborate on his par, drawing the conviction simply from the fact that it would not give the Lombards countries above those then existing but not support in any way their claim.

Instead, the news, while not taking into account the locations mentioned and dubious, coincides with and fits perfectly in the context of events described by other reporters and even provides can not be considered separately from these, a reasonable reading of the warlike facts of the period as well as ideas for further analysis and insights around some issues, such as the administrative organization of the theme of Italy and its boundaries near the south-eastern Basilicata [17].

We know in fact that, around 985, and after the stagnation of 982 [18] and resumed a vigorous, demanding and sustained Saracen offensive in Southern Italy, which follows that

undertaken twenty years ago, which lasted almost until arrival of the Normans, aimed at the conquest and control of Calabria (**Saracens**, always starting from the coast, both ionic Tyrrhenian attack and buying, in turn, Reggio (985), Catanzaro (986), Cosenza (988), etc. ...);

The strategy is the same: the offensive is integrated and protected to the north by a formidable and intelligent pincer movement designed to isolate the Calabria itself, preventing the arrival of reinforcements and supplies and thus taking away from this main goal scope of the bulk of the opposing army (the Lombard North-West and the Byzantine Empire to the North-East), which in fact are almost always committed outside the region, Campania, Basilicata, and Puglia.

The Saracen maneuver has two converging lines of attack into the heart of Basilicata, in the north of the massif of Pollino, genuine natural fortress to defend the region of Calabria, and on a third line of attack that, starting from the coasts of Metaponto, aims to Bari region north to the Pugliesi Adriatic ports and the same Bari.

The first director sees as a place of landing the coast of the Gulf of Policastro penetrate the Principality of Salerno in the Northeast, to Rivello and Planula (later Saracen Castle);

The second guideline, however, expected to land on the Ionian coast of Basilicata, where, as early as 976, the Saracens have any bases, and consequent penetration, along the valleys of Sinni, dell'Agri of Cavone of Basento and Bradano, north-west, and the success of this pincer movement is aimed at ensuring, as mentioned, the control of the massif of Pollino and hence the absolute control of all land access routes to Calabria.

Regarding the third line of attack (direction North North-East, in Apulia), in the valley of the situation remains turbulent Bradano: along the river and its tributary Basentello, beyond the imaginary line Matera-Tricarico [19], runs, roughly, the boundary between the territory of the Byzantine and the Principality of Salerno. Here, the **Saracens** take long engaged the **Salernitani** [a Gravina (in 976), in Venosa (from 985), Matera (994), in Montescaglioso (1003), Monte Pylos (1010),...] and here engaged, on murgia Matera, even the Byzantine army which, since 982, with certainty, know they are not able to face them in open field [20]; Byzantine army retreating to defend the major strongholds, leaving them free rein to the outskirts of Bari (988 - 1002).

But back room / Camarda, which, of course, along with *APIs*, *Urassano*, *Calandra*, etc ... could not but be affected by such events: it was therefore, at the time, handed the Lombardi as his consistent if not evidence tale in "relevance of Bari."

Greek-byzantine of this town and its customs, camardesi-bernallesi the sixteenth century were certainly proud memory store, where they laid at the entrance of their Camarda-Bernauda, at the Porta Maggiore [21], the following inscription:

O friends passengers since you got here,  
Blonde Camarda Greek and festive,  
Find if hasten the pace and go longer innante [22],  
The walls of my mother's broken and spoiled "[23]

where, precisely, the walls smashed and broken are those of the old Byzantine Camarda (certainly not those of the distant Metaponto).

## Normans

The first mention of the existence of a Camarda, however, is found in the transcript of a document, Montescaglioso County farmhouse, dating back to last decade of the eleventh century., We actually have news of such a "Gualmario of Camarda" maybe lord of the place, in **1099** [24].

The hamlet of Camarda is subsequently quoted in the documents of the twelfth century [25] and sec. XIII [26].

Again, Camarda and Mantua in "Catalogum Baronum" (**1178?**) And among the "Scrolls of Matera" [27] there is some concern that, among these, one, dated **12 June 1320**, relates to the sale of house.

Focatiche of **1277** and in the taxation of **1320**, the Casale commit gross weight, respectively, 76 and 69 fires [28].

From the above, briefly stated, is certain of being able to promptly conclude, however, faced with a presence, historically documented, the Hamlet of Camarda, defaulted in the continuity, from the eleventh to the fourteenth century. At the end of which, as passed by Tansi (op. cit.), the farmhouse in question was destroyed and uninhabited (in practice, **in the second half of 1300**), following an act of war.

Perhaps destroyed, but also empty?

The doubt is legitimate and not secondary importance for the thesis that here we are exposing.

The local historiography, the story that goes back to Tansi, takes for granted this dubious assertion together with the reconstruction of the Roadhouse in a different site and at a distance of about a century (as the story goes, after **1470**), but these allegations, for their clear legal purposes, are definitely to disprove and not just because of the obvious partisanship of Tansi (remember that the Tansi has a definite interest to defend the interests of the Abbey of St. Michael the Archangel Montescaglioso against claims of various universities, including Camarda).

Indeed, we know that in **1466** a strong earthquake raged on Camarda [29] and now, you do not understand and did not explain how, from documents and chronicles, it can be passed on an event of this kind, if the same had not concerned not a center already deserted, on which no damage could cause worthy of remembrance, but rather, a place, if

you do not live and is vital, and at least, yet "inhabited".

It 'true that taxation focatica Camarda does not appear in **1447**, but it is equally true that many other towns, also, in that taxation does not appear, not only that, but it should be noted that, in the area between the towns nearby, only Pisticci is the most heavily taxed than the previous taxation, while Metaponto Pomarico and Montescaglioso, as well Scanzano, Policoro and Matera, suffer a significant decrease.

Disappear completely and forever, the country houses of **Oats, Avenell and Appia**.

The entire area, therefore, not only **Camarda**, following a natural disaster or war, had to be privileged or, in any event, enjoyed tax cuts.

Camarda, therefore, the same Camarda already Byzantine, Norman and Angevin and Aragonese after, suffered the consequences of the seismic event, by the will of Pirro del Balzo, Earl of Montescaglioso at that moment engaged in a policy of strengthening, even from the point of Militarily, their estates (dating, for example, those same years the construction of the new and mighty castle of Venosa and the urban renewal and defense of that city), was "immediately" rebuilt and reestablished substantial defensive works along the lines of a "Foundation City," possibly in compliance with the remnants of an earlier and similar urban layout.

The del Balzo, therefore, around **1470**, revitalized the center convoy "about a thousand families of settlers" [30] (If the figure of a thousand settler families is accurate, we can deduce that the new center was designed to contain not less of four to five thousand inhabitants), presumably from the hamlets of Oats, Avenell and Appia, and equipping it, along the urban perimeter, were already naturally protected by surrounding him (and around) for almost all of an enhanced and substantial wall, equipped with towers, ramparts and buttresses, rebuilding, and still present the characteristic urban structure "**unique in its kind in Southern Italy**" [31], just four years by the said earthquake of 1466, with the aim of strengthening its function, strategic-military, controlling the valley Basento of some ancient natural way cross penetration (Canala ditch, ditch Avenell) and, especially, control of important transit director: Calabria Policoro San Basilio ( Sant'Angelo hull [32] or Tower Bridge Accio) Camarda Pomarico or Montescaglioso Matera Gravina and Altamura Puglia circuit routes to Bari - Barletta - Foggia - The Vulture;

On the death of Pirro del Balzo,, which followed the famous "conspiracy of the Barons," the goods and possessions thereof, detected by the Crown of Aragon was assigned to Frederick, then Prince of Taranto: with them the feud Camarda.

In 1497, Frederick, King from previous years, checks, and ceded the fief of Camarda to Don Bernardino de Bernardo (Bernauda), his secretary and loyal, leading figure in the Aragonese Diplomacy of those years.

The incident was not random, but is included in the draft policy, pursued by the Crown, relief, control of the territory of the old nobility, recalcitrant and pro-French, with a new, largely middle-class home, faithful to the Aragonese rulers and therewith by major economic interests above all.

In particular, cities or towns of a certain size strategically were assigned and /or yielded by Frederick of Aragon in *feudo* to the most faithful dignitaries of the Court.

And so for Camarda and, in the area, Matera and other centers.

In 1501 or 1503 (or 1528?), Following a clash between troops of Spain and France during the wars in those years clouded the Kingdom of Naples [33] and culminating first exile of Frederick, with the followed the partition of the Kingdom of the Kings of France and Spain, and then the expulsion of the French, with the consequent downgrading of the Kingdom of Naples to the Spanish viceroy, Camarda was sacked and razed to the ground again.

Baron Bernardino de Bernardo (or his successor Consalvo?) had, therefore, to oversee the reconstruction of the nth village, which he began to be called "**Rocca Bernarda or Bernauda**."

The urban layout of the streets "large" and longitudinal paths "narrow" cross-boundary rectangular blocks having side relation to each other in constant proportion, and the site, of course, remained the same, as evidenced by the medieval ruins are still visible today, which always appear aligned with the main roads: the original layout of the castle (XI century?), some ruins next to the "Mother Church" (whose façade seems that it was originally facing south), the fourteenth century (from news at the time furnished to me verbally by prof. Salfi A.) palace Fischetti.

The descendants of Bernardo de (and Figoli de Anna, his noble Neapolitan wife) lorded over Bernauda until 1634 (the last one was Beatrice, wife of a "Conte di Loreto").

The duchy of Bernalda was then purchased by D. Maria Chiara Pench, Genoese noblewoman, for 44,000 ducats, and after the death of the son of this woman intervened in 1670, was acquired by the Royal Treasury and sold in 1687 to the Marquis of Laterza D. Nicolas Navarrete, whose descendants kept it until the abolition of feudalism.

In the eighteenth century found Bernalda yet included and quoted in papers and documents of interest to both civilian and military related, evidently, to a somewhat enduring importance of the site: perhaps this is the reason why **Charles III of Bourbon (1735)**, bound for Sicily, who conferred the title of "city" (F. Ambrosio: op. cit.), and **Cardinal Ruffo (1799)** with his followers, coming from Calabria and directed to Altamura, made a stop.

The title of duke of Bernalda in the first decades of the 1900s, was the prerogative of the family Rossi Doria branch of Brienza.

## Bibliography

In addition to the above (in the footnotes and in the text):

G. Racioppi: "History of the people of Lucania and Basilicata;

T. Pedio "various works"

D. D'Angella: "History of Camarda and Bernalda"

F. Armento "Bernalda: churches and clergy in the eighteenth century .-



## . Bernalda, May 10, 1989 Nunzio Dibiase

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- [1] CG kitten weapons de 'Municipalities of the Province of Basilicata.
- [2] there are indeed other evidence.
- [3] Or the spread.
- [4] (Italy: from En (calf), land of calves (according to many ancient authors), the Byzantines were quite attentive to all the classical tradition and, in particular, those Roman, they called themselves 'Romans!').
- [5] G. Racioppi: History of the people of Lucania and Basilicata.
- [6] (Hungarians, Bulgarians, Armenians, etc ...).
- [7] The first documented reference to the existence of this article is for the truth of 1489 (Inventory of County Montescaglioso drawn by order of Frederick of Aragon notary Caposanto of Andria), but it is easy to argue that the same had to be Construction coeval or earlier than the "Tower Accio" (circa sec. X), whose function is precisely linked to the control of river crossing.
- [8] We think that impresses the emperor Otto II, in his expedition of 982, after giving his army camp in the district that today is still called Campo Imperatore, had to cross the Basento directed in Calabria, via one or both these steps, not without having to deal with the Byzantine garrison of room (but this is only a hypothesis, however, based on labilissimi elements, all to be verified).
- [9] to avoid trouble and inconvenience to people, always the bulk of military garrisons had made camp out outside the towns.
- [10] critical-diplomats Annals of Naples on the mizzen age.
- [11] Irsina
- [12] Corato
- [13] fat?
- [14] Cirigliano?
- [15] Castellana Grotte
- [16] Bitritto
- [17] ... Uggiano (ie Ferrandina) in the land of Bari again ...
- [18] The coming of Otto II, common enemy, to face which are allied in quell'anno Mori and Byzantines.
- [19] Above and below this ideal line, the boundary moves toward the Basento and Cavone.
- [20] In 982 the Saracens and Byzantines have been working together against the army of Otto II: they were therefore unable to fully assess the efficiency and operational capacity;
- [21] Facing the present Piazza Garibaldi.
- [22] That is: "if you go into town"
- [23] (A. Jordan: Historical origins and vicissitudes of Bernalda olim Camarda - c / o Municipal Archives Bernalda - from thesis of Christmas Lauriola: Economic and social life in Bernalda in the first decade of the second half of the '700 through the deeds drawn up by the notary Filippo Dell'Osso in the three years 1759/61)
- [24] (PA De Meo: Annals of the Kingdom of Naples).
- [25] (PS Tansi: Chronological History Monasterii S. Michaelis Archangel Montis Caveoso)
- [26] (N. Cianci Sanseverino: public fields of some castles of the Middle Ages in Basilicata).
- [27] (G. Fortunato: Badie, Feudi and Barons Vitalba Valley, edited by T. Pedio)
- [28] (T. Pedio, G. Sebastiani).
- [29] T. Pedio, G. Sebastiani
- [30] PS Tansi: op. cit.
- [31] Prof. A. Restuccia: Report to the detailed plan of the Historical Center of Bernalda.
- [32] Note that the hull of S. Angelo, a similar control function, but more directly, was conducted by the grange of St. Angelo Avena, the bridge of Appius Basento on the role of direct control was done by Torre Accio.
- [33] (F. Ambrosio: Historia civic Bernalda; Apa Rhododendron)