

LEGACY OF THE FERTILITY BELT “BREZI”

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Abstract

Arberesh culture, even today, is characterized by elements with a specific character, which give the Arberesh community a strong and rich element in its complexity. The specificity of this culture is found in the Traditions, Costumes, Art, and Gastronomy, which are nowadays strictly preserved in many cities, particularly in southern Italy. The traditional costume is one of the obvious signs of diversity and culture in the Arberesh creations. These costumes are multi-functional, such as: practical, aesthetic, magic, ritual, etc. In addition to these functions, these costumes show gender, age, class categories, work and everything else, as a departure for a religious ministry, or to make a distinction between married and single people. One of the primary accessories and the most important element in a traditional Arberesh costume, which is easily noticeable, is the belt called “BREZI”. The “BREZI” belt is the main ornament of a traditional costume in Piano Degli Albanesi, which is a real triumph of rich with gold, gold coins, red gold, silver, etc. In general, all of them have religious elements. In Arbereshe language the word "Brezi" (belt) means: generations, backgrounds, grandchildren, continuity, because the belt was put as a symbol of motherhood, and of the continuity for the next generations. The belt, or silver belt, is part of the traditional women’s costumes in Piana Degli Albanesi, and was exchanged in Arberesh tradition as a ritual of engagement, but not only. The belt was also given in the days before the wedding ceremony. The bride should put the belt “BREZI”, during the days of the marriage ceremony. The earlier origin confirms that the new couples were supports from “BREZI”, which between his histories ensures fertility and also continuity of generations. This belt was offered to the bride to wish her a good fertility.

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