E. Guidoboni, A. Comastri, The large earthquake of 8 August 1303 in Crete: seismic scenario and tsunami in the Mediterranean area, *Journal of Seismology* 1 (1997), pp. 55-72.

abstract

By conducting a historical review of this large seismic event in the Mediterranean, it has been possible to identify both the epicentral area and the area in which its effects were principally felt. Ever since the nineteenth century, the seismological tradition has offered a variety of partial interpretations of the earthquake, depending on whether the main sources used were Arabic, Greek or Latin texts. Our systematic research has involved the analysis not only of Arab, Byzantine and Italian chronicle sources, but also, and in particular, of a large number of never previously used official and public authority documents, preserved in Venice in the State Archive, in the Marciana National Library and in the Library of the Museo Civico Correr. As a result, it has been possible to establish not only chronological parameters for the earthquake (they were previously uncertain), but also its overall effects (epicentral area in Crete, Imax XI MCS). Sources containing information in 41 affected localities and areas were identified. The earthquake also gave rise to a large tsunami, which scholars have seen as having certain interesting elements in common with that of 21 July, 365, whose epicentre was also in Crete. As regards methodology, this research made it clear that knowledge of large historical earthquakes in the Mediterranean is dependent upon developing specialised research and going beyond the territorial limits of current national catalogues.