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REPUBBLICA ITALIANA



REGIONE AUTONOMA DE SARDIGNA
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

Roman baths of Forum Traiani

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ The frescoed house

In the southern part of the L-shaped building to the SE of the Baths (fig. 1) you can see three rooms which seem to have been communicating, thus forming a residential nucleus. The dig performed on one of these areas identifies the house as belonging to a medium-high class: the walls include a well structured fresco (figs. 2-6).



Fig. 1 - In green the three rooms of the house with frescoes (from Bacco - Serra 1998; re-worked by C. Tronchetti).

In an area above a high band left white or decorated with red stripes, probably imitating marble, there are white parts framed in red, ochre and/or green including stylised candlesticks (fig. 3) and fantastic animals (fig. 4). Those motives are widespread in Roman painting, first as more natural shapes (fig. 6), then increasingly stylised.



Fig. 2 - L-shaped Building. Wall frescoed in panels: to the left a narrow panel with a stylised decoration; to the right a panel portraying a fantastic sea animal, datable to the II-III cent. A.D. (photo by Unicity S.p.A.).



Fig. 3 - L-shaped Building. Detail of corner panel: red and yellow bands framing a stylised candlestick; II-III cent. A.D. (photo by Unicity S.p.A.).



Fig. 4 - L-shaped building. Detail of panel with figurative scene. Bands of yellow and red frame the figure of a fantastic sea animal, recognisable as a horse ending with the coils of a sea serpent (photo by Unicity S.p.A.).



Fig. 5 - L-shaped Building. Frescoed wall. The lower part decorated with oblique red bands. Above, red bands frame a smaller panel with a decoration that has disappeared; the remaining spaces are decorated with plant motifs (plant by Unicity S.p.A.).

Another room has a different decorative fabric, with the lower band marked by red oblique stripes, probably imitating marble coating, while the upper part is in composite squares which had an animal figure in the centre, now lost (fig. 5).



Fig. 6 - Candlestick. Picture of the wall of a *villa rustica* at Santa Maria la Carità (NA), datable to the I cent. A.D.. The greater stylisation of the Fordongianus candlestick indicates that it was made at a later date than the one in Campania (from Donati (ed.) 1998, p. 140).

■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Carlo Tronchetti

■ Bibliography

G. BACCO, P. B. SERRA, *Forum Traiani: il contesto termale e l'indagine di scavo*, in *L'Africa Romana XII*, Sassari 1998, pp. 1245-1247.





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La Sardegna cresce con l'Europa



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