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REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA  
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

# Castle of Monreale

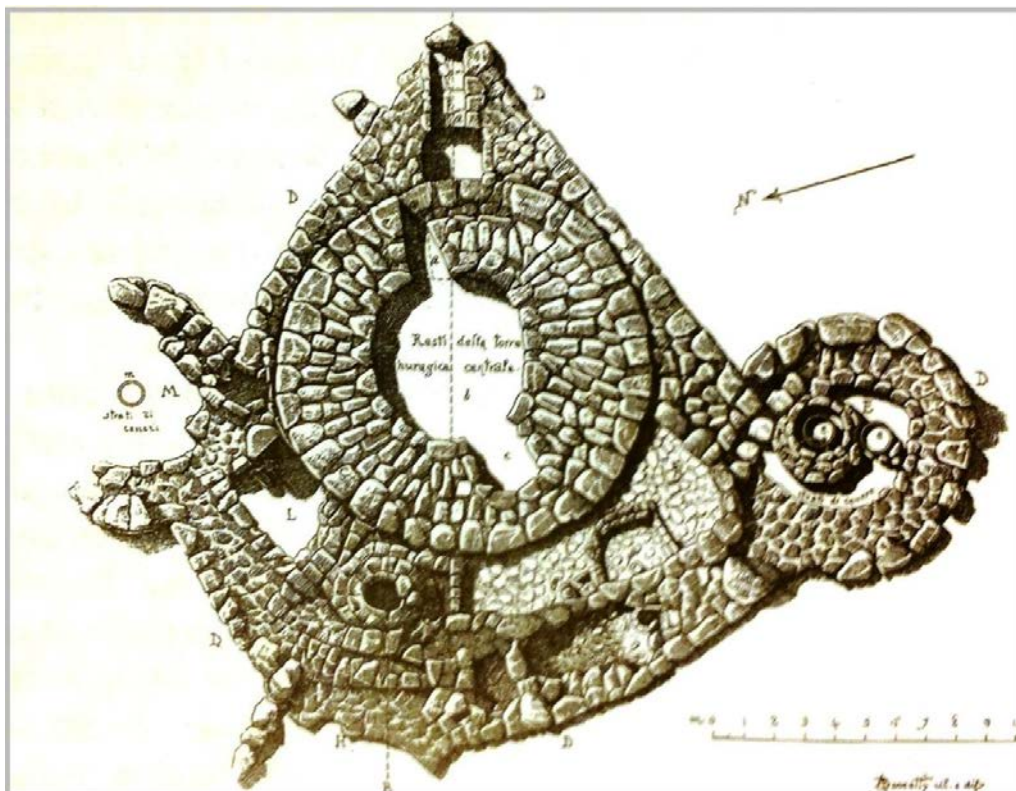
Patrimonio culturale  
**SARDEGNA** Virtual Archaeology



## ■ The territory of Sardara in the Nuraghic Age

The monumental remains of the Nuraghic Age in the area of Sardara are particularly numerous and important; there are, in fact, several complex nuraghi, such as those of Ar-rigau, Axurridu, Barumeli, Jana, Perra and Ortu Comidu, each flanked by the relevant vil-lage<sup>1</sup>.

The archaeological searches carried out at the Nuragic area of **Ortu Comidu** (fig. 1), lo-cated a few kilometres from Sardara, have revealed the use of the monument over a long period of time ranging from the Nuraghic to the Roman Age.



**Fig. 1** - Survey of the nuraghe *Ortu Comidu* after the excavation by A. Taramelli (from Usai 2003 a page 42).

<sup>1</sup> See USAI 2003 a.

The Sa Costa site, now partially occupied by the building that houses the Civic Archaeological Museum of Sardara, has also shown several Nuraghic structures and, in particular, a tomb excavated in 1912 by Antonio Taramelli, whose funerary objects included two small bronze statues of an archer with a hemispherical helmet and an armoured apron covering a short tunic (fig. 2)<sup>2</sup>.



**Fig. 2** - The two small bronze archer statues found on the site of Sa Costa (photo R.A.S.).

The well temple of **Sant'Anastasia** (fig. 3), one of the most important of Nuraghic Sardinia, consists of blocks of basalt and limestone and includes an atrium with seats, a 12 step staircase covered with degrading lintels and a "Tholos"-roofed circular room (fig 4).

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<sup>2</sup> See TARAMELLI 1913. The archaeologist Antonio Taramelli, born in Udine in 1868 and who died in Rome in 1939, was director of the Cagliari museum and superintendent of the Sardinian Antiquities; he studied the largest monuments on the island, in particular the Nuragic ones. For a description of the two bronze statues see LILLIU 2008, pages 144-147.

The water, coming from a vein spring, flowed from an opening located at the base of the well chamber, after passing through a 5-6 m long tunnel.<sup>3</sup>

The temple, dated to the period of the late Bronze age (13th-12th centuries B.C.), is located in a civil and religious settlement where there is also a second sacred well, an isodomic structure and an enclosure with the remains of several huts.<sup>4</sup> One of these, hut 5, (dated between the late eleventh and the beginning of the tenth century B.C.), has been described as a "meeting room", as inside it there is a countertop-seat with a central stone column, next to which lay a basin and a sandstone altar shaped as a Nuraghic tower. In a pit-storage room near the entrance, a jar filled with metal objects and three basins of bronze were found, dating from the late eighth and early seventh century B.C.<sup>5</sup>

The sacredness of the area continued throughout the ages, as is documented by the remains of the religious building from the Byzantine period dedicated to St. Anastasia, above which stands the structure of today's church, dating from the fifteenth century (figs. 5-6).

Inside the church there is a Nuraghic well, originally relating to one of the village huts, which has shown materials dating back to between the Late Bronze Age and the seventh century B.C.

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<sup>3</sup> The first digs in the Sant'Anastasia area were carried out by Antonio Taramelli in 1913. More recently, the digs were carried out in 1980-1984 by Giovanni Ugas and Luisanna Usai, in 1988 by Giovanni Ugas and in 2000-2001 by Roberto Sirigu and Donatella Cocco. For a history of the digs of this important site, see SIRIGU 2003.

<sup>4</sup> UGAS, USAI 1987; UGAS 1990.

<sup>5</sup> USAI 2003 b.

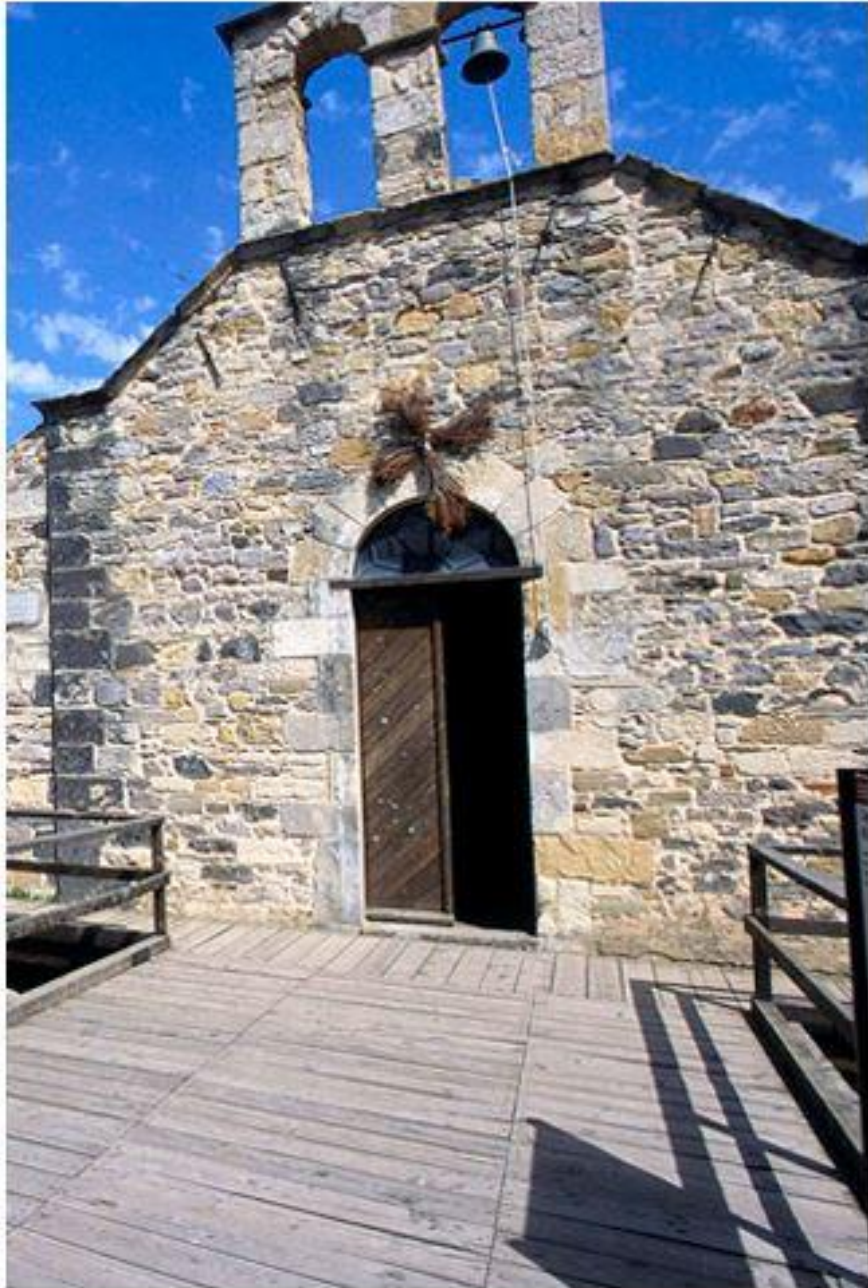


**Fig. 3** - The sacred well of Saint Anastasia

(From <http://www.sardegna.digitalibrary.it/index.php?xsl=615&s=17&v=9&c=4461&id=56472>).



**Fig. 4** - The interior of the sacred well of Saint Anastasia  
(from <http://www.sardegna.cultura.it/j/v/277?s=7&v=9&c=2488&notizia=20757&pic=4&ng=1>).



**Fig. 5** - The church of Sant' Anastasia near the Nuraghic sacred well  
(from <http://www.sardegna.cultura.it/j/v/277?s=7&v=9&c=2488&notizia=20757&pic=6&ng=1>).



**Fig. 6** - The Church and the sacred well of St. Anastasia  
(from <http://www.sardegnaigitallibrary.it/index.php?xsl=615&s=17&v=9&c=4461&id=56478>).

## ■ Credits

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