



UNIONE EUROPEA



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REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

Castle of Monreale

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ Building materials

The stone used in the construction of the keep's walls, the fortified walls and the adjacent cistern (*Su Zubu*) all comes from the Sardara area and can be traced to six groups: schist, sandstone, marlstone, basalt, trachyte and river pebbles (fig. 1)¹.

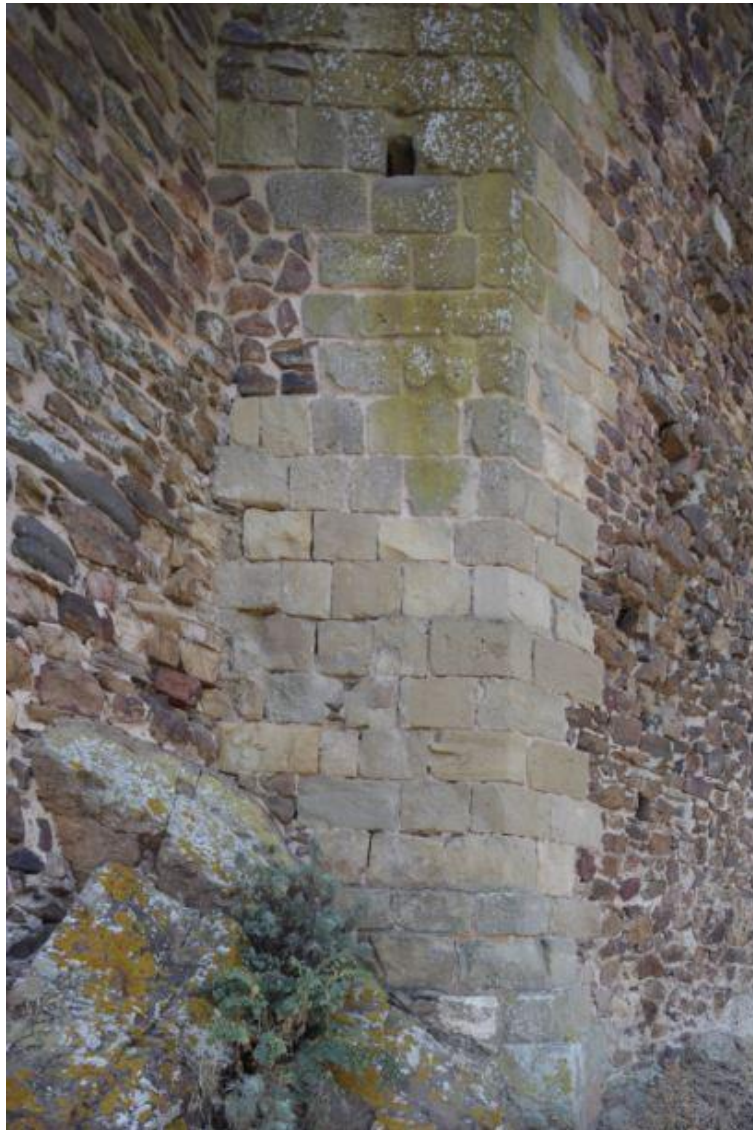


Fig. 1 - The North-east corner outside the perimeter wall of the keep (photo by Unicity S.p.A.).

¹ UCCHEDDU 2004, p. 187.

Schist stone was mainly used in roughly-hewn blocks or with no work whatsoever, while the sandstone and marlstone blocks have been squared off (fig. 2).



Fig. 2 - Wall building inside the *theta* room (photo by R. Bordicchia).

Basalt and trachyte were used occasionally but are sometimes square block and sometimes re-used materials, fragments of prehistoric or Roman ruins². During the archaeological digs inside the keep, considerable amounts of terracotta building material were also recovered (fig. 3) belonging to various types such as roof materials (tiles), bricks and stones, rainwater pipes (drains and terracotta pipes)³.

The material used to bind the walls are three types of limestone mortar, that are different in colour, consistency and type of material: mud-based mortar was also used.

² *Ibidem*, p. 188.

³ ARRU 2001, pages 115-124.

Four different materials were used on the floors: *opus signinum*, conglomerate, stones, stone slabs. The floor slabs in the first courtyard are interesting, made from rectangular, grey trachyte slabs, with wings cut into the depth of the slabs, to allow them to lock onto each other without binding materials⁴.

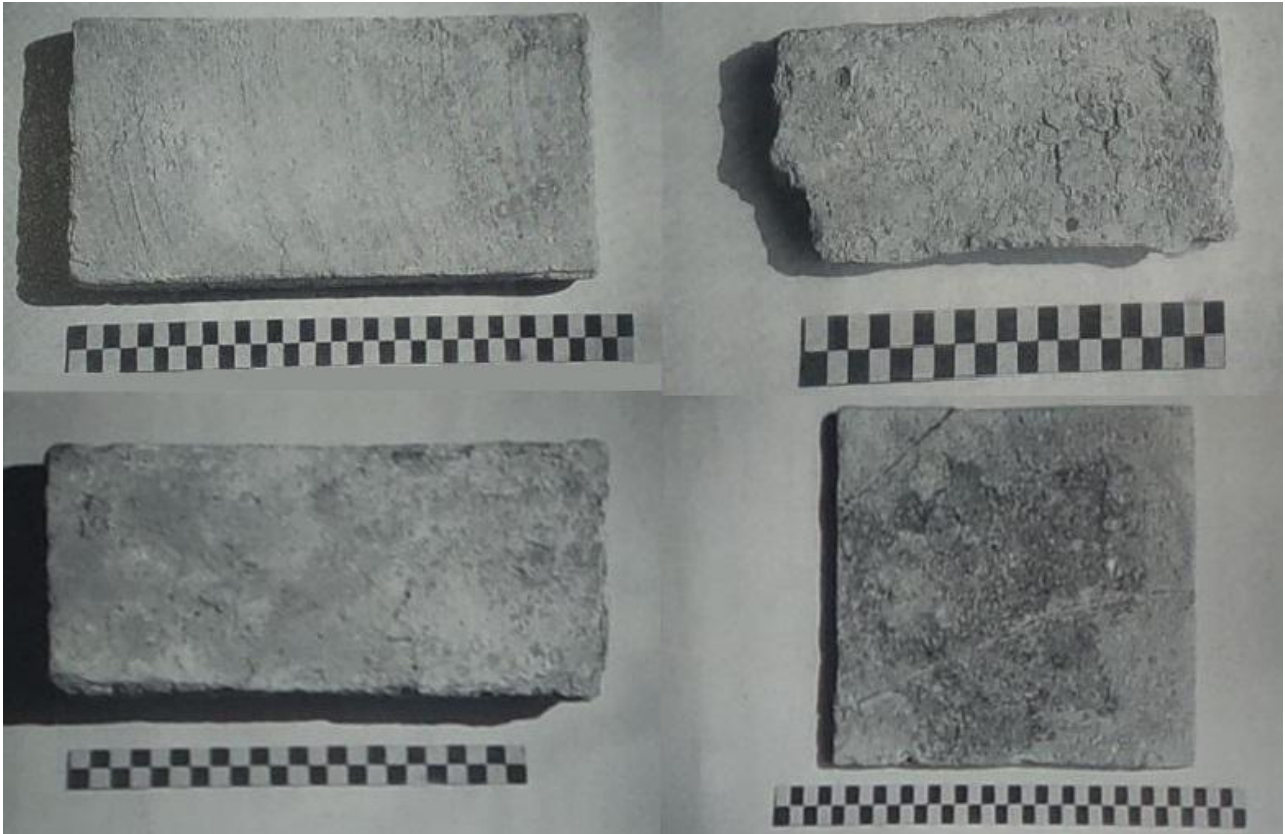


Fig. 3 - Bricks and tiles coming from the Monreale castle keep (From Arru 2001, pages 117-118).

⁴ UCCHEDDU 2004, p. 189.



Fig. 4 - Reconstruction drawing of façade and pipes Comprising terracotta pipes (photo by Unicity S.p.A.).



■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Maria Grazia Arru.

Preliminary research by Dr. Valeria Paretta and Dr. Daniele Corda.

■ Bibliography

Arru 2001 = M.G.N. Arru, *I materiali fittili da costruzione del castello di Monreale (Sardara-Cagliari)*, in *I laterizi in età medievale. Dalla produzione al cantiere. Atti del Convegno Nazionale di studi (Roma, 4-5 giugno 1998)*, Roma 2001, pp. 115-124.

Uccheddu 2004 = G. Uccheddu, *Le strutture murarie del castello di Monreale a Sardara*, in V. Grieco, *I Catalani e il castelliere sardo*, Cagliari 2004, pp. 181-240.





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La Sardegna cresce con l'Europa



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