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REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA
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Palace of Baldu

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ The Village of *Sent Steva*

The village of *Sent Steva* belonged to the curatoria of Balayana and has been linked to the Baldu Palace because of the permanence of the place name in the area, still known as Santo Stefano (*Sent Steva*) where there is a church dedicated to the martyr himself, and because this site is still within the Balaiana region.

There is news of the villa from sources in the 14th century, about payment of the land tax of four lira to the Municipality of Pisa (fig. 1), based on which demographic size can be estimated at between thirty and sixty units.

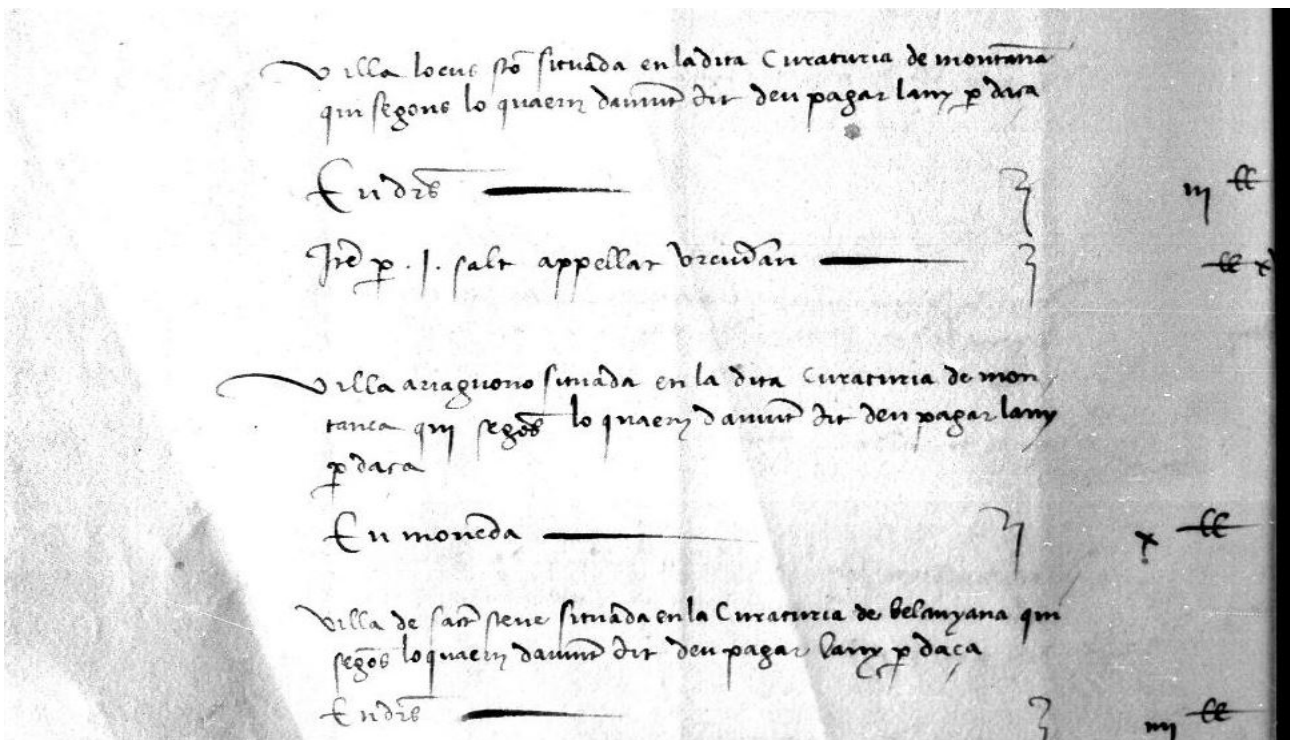


Fig. 1 - A piece of the document that is part of the register containing provisions by the Giudicati of Gallura and Arborea, (ASC, Antico Archivio Regio, reg. F1, f. 25) in which the villages of *Locus Sancto*, *Ariaguono* and *Sant Steve* are mentioned
(from http://www.archivostatocagliari.it:443/patrimonioarchivio/immagine.html?open=F44010901_S&t=UA&pg=1&idp=2112&typ=s&doc=00000063.Jpg&sceglilmm=vai).

Due to the lack of details about the settlement, the village has been given - for a long time and by various authors – different interpretations and was made to coincide with the spaces arranged around the courtyard of the Palace of Baldu (fig. 2).



Fig. 2 - The area surrounding the *Palatzu* of Baldu, seen from the North (photo by Unicity S.p.A.).

To the west of *Lu Palatzu*, next to the church, (fig. 3), several dividing walls have been identified which have led to two hypotheses: the first suggests that the walls are an extension of the village, larger than the known spaces; the second identifies it as the inhabitation, distinct from the complex: the latter would identify a building in its own right, around and outside which the village characterised by dwellings, craft and subsistence-based structures was located.



Fig. 3 - Church of S. Stefano (photo by Unicity S.p.A.).

The depopulation of the village may have occurred in the late fourteenth century, according to the statement by King Alfonso V of Aragon in the 1421 act which gave Rambaldo de Corbaria some lands as fief - including those of the village of *Sent Steva* - which had been uninhabited for approximately fifty years. This figure does not seem to coincide with the archaeological evidence, as the artefacts found during the site excavations document at least one inhabitation - if not a continuity of life - up until the fifteenth century.

The extinction of the town could well be due to the progressive depopulation which affected the whole district of Gallura from the fourteenth century, but the information gathered from the Fifteenth-century document might more appropriately show the end of the village as an administrative entity capable of centralising the population, which at that time, must have been spread throughout the countryside.

■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Claudia Cocco and Dr. Francesca Collu

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