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REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

Port and coastal towers of Arbatax

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ The territory in the Middle Ages

Because there are no written documents we do not have any precise knowledge of events affecting the territory of Tortoli in the Middle Ages¹.

Sardinia, during the VIII and IX century, gradually moved away from Byzantium, up to the creation of four administrative areas governed by a *Iudex* who exercised both political and military power. The Giudicati of Cagliari, Torres, Arborea and Gallura were established like that (fig. 1).



Fig. 1 - The Sardinian Giudicati from the XI to the XIV century
(from http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/c5/Giudicati_sardi_1.svg).

The island's coastal centres, between the end of the VIII and start of the IX century, suffered the violent attacks by the Arabs and began to depopulate because inhabitants moved inland, to safer sites.

¹ By agreement, the Middle Ages starts with the fall of the western Roman Empire in 476 A.D. and ends in 1492, the year America was discovered.

In this period, the territory of Tortolì belonged to the ancient department of Ogliastra (fig. 2), belonging to the Giudicato of Cagliari; while the Christian community was led by the Diocese of Suelli².

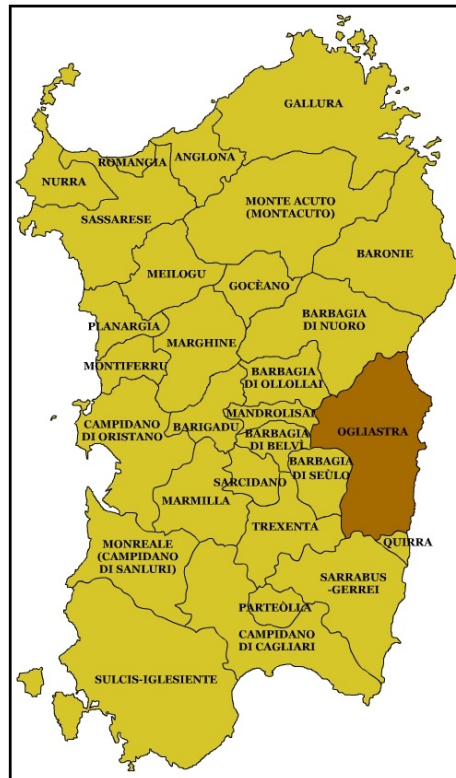


Fig. 2 - Ogliastra in the Judicial Age
(from <https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ogliastra#/media/File:SAR-Subregioni-Ogliastra.jpg>).

Around the year 1000, the ancient habitat of Tortolì, by the church of San Lussorio, is supposed to have been abandoned to escape the Arab raids and a new nucleus was founded in the zone of the current rio Foddeddu³.

To ward off the Muslim danger, the four judges were forced to ask for help from Pisa and Genoa. Once the Arabs had been defeated, the Pisan-Genoese interference in the island became stronger and stronger. Members of important aristocratic families from Liguria and Tuscany, merchants and businessmen moved to Sardinia and the four Sardinian states were soon politically dependent on Pisa and Genoa.

² ANGIUS 1836, *sv.* Tortolì.

³ Nonnis 2005, pp. 143-144.

When the Cagliari Giudicato fell (1258), Tortolì came under the control of the Municipality of Pisa, to whom it paid taxes (as is proved by the "register of revenue" of 1316 in which the first official mention of the name *Tortohelie* appeared)⁴.

Over the years, Pisa also managed to occupy the Giudicato of Gallura which lost its independence in 1296; while the territory of the Giudicato of Torres was divided between the Giudicato of Arborea and some aristocratic families from Genoa in 1284.

In 1324, Sardinia became part of Aragona. The Giudicato of Arborea was the only one that managed to escape its dominion.

In 1325, the villages of Tortolì and Lotzorai were enfeoffed by King James II to Francesco Carroz (fig. 3).

Related to that period is the mention of Tortolì in documents of 1358 of the Department *de Cerdeña*: it is the list of villages which had to pay taxes to the new masters and Tortolì, which belonged to the Giudicato of Ogliastro, had to pay taxes to the nobleman Berengario Carroz (fig. 4) who administered for the Aragonese⁵.



Fig. 3 - Giacomo II d'Aragona

(da https://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giacomo_II_di_Aragona#/media/File:Jaume_II.jpg).

⁴ Artizzu 1957.

⁵ See Bofarull y Mascaró 1856, pp. 682-686; Cocco 1987, p. 7.



Fig. 4 - The coat of arms of the Carroz, counts of Quirra (from Floris 1997, p. 349).

In 1403, with the death of the *giudicessa* Eleonora d'Arborea, the Spanish troops conquered the island and a long period of exploitation, famine and socio-political crises began for the Sardinians.

■ Credits

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La Sardegna cresce con l'Europa



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