



UNIONE EUROPEA



REPUBBLICA ITALIANA



REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA  
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

# Giants' tomb of Thomes

Patrimonio culturale  
**SARDEGNA** Virtual Archaeology



## ■ Bronze military Diploma (Su Anzu)

The military diploma is a document comprising a pair of small bronze rectangular tables (about 10x12cm to 14x21cm, varying based on when issued), linked to each other on the longest side by bronze wires and written on both sides, accompanied by official seals, that are appropriately protected. It documents, following the *honesta missio*, the granting of the *civitas* (Roman citizenship) and the recognition of *ius connubii* (i.e. the legalisation of a marriage possibly contracted whilst peregrinus or the right in any case to marry legitimately), that is the possession of all civic rights, for his children and for his descendants. Every soldier involved was given a copy at the time of his discharge, engraved on two sheets of bronze attached to each other, while the original was displayed in Rome on a wall located behind the Temple of the Divine Augustus, near the temple of Minerva, although none of these has ever been found, perhaps because they were melted in later times after the fall of the Western Roman Empire. Examples are known from the Age of Claudius (41-54 AD) up until the beginning of the fourth century AD.

Of the ten military diplomas found in Sardinia to date, three military diplomas have actually been found in the hinterland of Ogliastra, the heart of Barbaria, which document the return of Sardinian *peregrini* to the island after many years of service completed in the operational headquarters of the fleets of Miseno and Ravenna.

A bronze military diploma consisting of three fragments (figs. 1.2) was found in 1830 at the baths of San Giovanni Su Anzu near Dorgali. In the same year, the item was passed to the major chaplain of the church of S. Efisio in Cagliari, who gave it to the Cagliari Archaeological Museum (fig. 3).

This is the discharge issued on 10th October 96 A.D. By the Roman emperor Nerva (96-98 A.D.) for the Roman soldier Tunila, who served in the II gemini Cohort of Ligui and Corsi in Sardinia, for having served for over twenty-five years. The holes on the surface allowed metal wires to be passed through fixed with seals that kept the two original sheets together.

The origin of Tunila, *Cares(ius)* would lead us to believe he came from a place probably situated close to the River Cedrino.



**Fig. 1** - Front of the military diploma  
(from <https://museoarcheocagliari.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/diplomaext.jpg?w=370&h=>).



**Fig. 2** - Back of the military diploma  
(from <https://museoarcheocagliari.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/diploma.jpg?w=1000&h=>).



**Fig. 3** - The military diploma on display at the Regio Museo of Cagliari  
(from <https://museoarcheocagliari.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/diplomaexmuseo.jpg?w=700&h=>).

## ■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Emanuela Atzeni

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