



UNIONE EUROPEA



REPUBBLICA ITALIANA



REGIONE AUTONOMA DE SARDIGNA
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

Giants' tomb of Thomes

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ The political and military penetration of the Romans into the centre of Sardinia: the Military diploma of Tunila

The first item of information about the ancient history of the Dorgali area so far is the military diploma¹ issued to the Sardinian soldier Tunila Caresius (figs. 1,2) by the Emperor Nerva (96-98 A.D.) on 10 October 96 A.D., illustrated by Cav. Baille in 1831. This precious epigraphic document, a bronze rectangular table, was found during the first half of the nineteenth century near the thermal water spring of Monte de Su Anzu or San Giovanni.



Fig. 1 - Front of the military diploma of Tunila

(from <https://museoarcheocagliari.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/diplomaext.jpg?w=370&h=>).

¹ 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.



Fig. 2 – Back of the military diploma

(from <https://museoarcheocagliari.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/diploma.jpg?w=1000&h=>).

From the mid 3rd century and the end of the 2nd century B.C., the Roman conquest of central-eastern Sardinia, inhabited by *civitates Barbariae* (the communities of Barbaria) which were predominantly pastoral with prehistoric legacies, was at first difficult.

During the Roman Age, from the 2nd century B.C., up until the fourth century AD, life in Dorgali was still spent in 53 Nuraghic settlements, where rectangular plan materials and buildings replaced the original circular huts, exploiting however the building material. 24 new agglomerations were also built *ex novo* (isolated buildings, perhaps farms, but more often villages/settlements), distributed throughout the territory, big or small, variously structured, related to the trade and navigation routes along the east coast of Sardinia and characterised by an economy based on farming the land, sheep farming, exploiting springs and marine resources and on crafts. The settlements were mainly distributed near the Roman road (*Iter a Portu Tibulas Karalis*) which unwound along the east coast of Sardinia. Other sites have been identified at the two intersecting branches directed inland, towards the valley of Isalle and to inner Barbagia. Some large Roman settlements placed over the Nuraghic settlements, documented as the Nuraghe Mannu (fig. 3) and the Nuraghe Arvu (fig. 4), sprang up close to the coastal route.



Fig. 3 - Nuraghe Mannu-Dorgali (from DELUSSU 2009, fig. 1, p. 1).



Fig. 4 - Nuraghe Arvu-Dorgali (from http://www.archeologia.beniculturali.it/index.php?it/142/scavi/scavi-archeologici_4e048966cfa3a/54)

■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Emanuela Atzeni

■ Bibliography

- BAILLE L., *Diploma militare dell'Imperatore Nerva*, in Atti Accademia di Torino, 35, 1831.
- BONINU A., *Testimonianze di età romana nel territorio di Dorgali*, in AA.VV., *Dorgali. Documenti archeologici*, Sassari 1980, pp. 221-239.
- DELUSSU F., *Nuraghe Mannu (Dorgali, Nu): scavi dell'abitato tardo-romano e altomedievale (campagne 2005-2006)*, in FastiOnline, 165, 2009, pp. 1-13.
- MANUNZA M. R., *Nuraghe Arvu*, in Dorgali. *Documenti archeologici*, Sassari, Chiarella, 1980, pp. 192-193.
- MANUNZA M. R., *Dorgali. Monumenti antichi*, Oristano, 1995, pp. 199-219.
- MASTINO A., RUGGERI P., *La Romanizzazione dell'Ogliastra*. In in *Ogliastra. Identità storica di una Provincia. Atti del Convegno di Studi* (Jerzu-Lanusei-Arzana-Tortolì, 23-25 gennaio 1997), Comunità Montana n. 11-Ogliastra, 2000, pp. 155-158.
- MORAVETTI A. (a cura di), *Carbonia-Fonni*, in *La Sardegna. I Tesori dell'Archeologia*, La Biblioteca della Nuova Sardegna, vol. 3, Sassari 2011, p. 71, p. 77.
- PULACCHINI D., *Il museo archeologico di Dorgali*, Sardegna Archeologica. Guide e itinerari, 27, Sassari 1998, p. 40.
- SPANO G., *Terme antiche ed acque termali in Sardegna*, Bullettino Archeologico Sardo, 1859, pp. 107-108.
- TARAMELLI A., *Relazione dell'attività svolta dalla direzione del Museo e degli scavi di Dorgali nel trimestre Luglio-Settembre*, in *Bollettino d'Arte*, 1928, VII, 2, p. 476, figg. 10-15.
- TARAMELLI A., *Edizione archeologica della Carta d'Italia*, Foglio 208 (Dorgali), Firenze 1929, p. 20, n. 5.

TARAMELLI A., *Dorgali (NU). Esplorazioni archeologiche nel territorio del Comune*, in *Notizie degli Scavi*, IX, 1933, p. 370, 378, figg. 23-32.





UNIONE EUROPEA



REPUBBLICA ITALIANA



REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

La Sardegna cresce con l'Europa



UNIONE EUROPEA

Progetto cofinanziato dall'Unione Europea
Programma Operativo FESR 2007-2013

FESR - Fondo Europeo di Sviluppo Regionale - Asse I, Linea di Attività 1.2.3.a