



UNIONE EUROPEA



REPUBBLICA ITALIANA



REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA  
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

# Archeological area of Sant'Eulalia

Patrimonio culturale  
**SARDEGNA** Virtual Archaeology



## ■ Honorius coin

In the western sector of Sant'Eulalia, inside the bottle cistern, a solid gold coin weight 4.5 grams was found. The coin carries the bust of the Roman Emperor of the West Honorius on the front (393-423) and the words *Dominus Noster Honorius Pius Felix Augustus* (fig. 1; see fig. 3); while on the back there is another image of the emperor, with his head turned to the left and with his foot on his defeated enemy, while he holds a *labarum* and a young plant on a globe. On that same side, around the figure, it indicates the mint of Ravenna (R V) and on the exergue (space in the coin field limited by a straight line) the legend COMOB (fig 2; see fig. 3), abbreviation of the title *Comes Sacrarum Largitionum* (count of the sacred donations), authority controlling the empire's finances starting from Constantine and OB for obryzum, indicating the gold's purity.

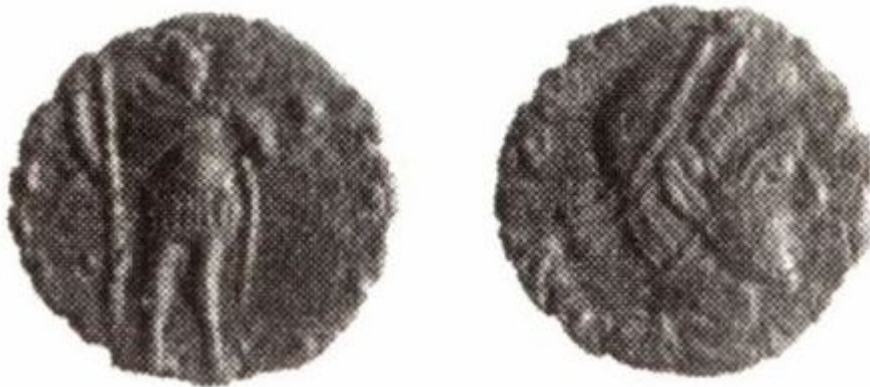


**Figs. 1, 2** - Gold coin of Honorius: front (1) and back (2), (photo by Unicity S.p.A.).



**Fig. 3** - Solid gold coin from Honorius I, minted in Ravenna (from RIC X, tab. 40, n. 1321).

The portrayal of the bust of Honorius with his typical hairstyle where his hair is held by a double rows of pearls and his dress (perhaps a *paludamentum*) is held by a circular buckle with four pendants (fig. 1). The iconograph of the emperor can be compared with a bronze coin found in Cornus, in the burial area of Columbaris (fig. 4)<sup>1</sup>.



**Fig. 4** - Cuglieri, Cornus: bronze coin of Honorius (from Martorelli 2000, p. 81, cat. 122).

The solid gold coin (Latin *solidus*; Greek *nomisma*) was created by Constantine I (emperor between 324 and 337)<sup>2</sup> to replace the gold coin, in the monetary reform of 324

<sup>1</sup> Martorelli 2000, pp. 52, 56; n. 122, p. 81. For the burial area of Columbaris see *Cornus* I.1.

<sup>2</sup> Treadgold 2009, pages 31, 313.

and was minted until the 10th century. Its introduction streamlined the economic management of the Byzantine empire: minted in pure gold, as the solid coin was the coin with the highest value, and was used to sizeable payments and for important financial operations<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> Treadgold 2009, p. 35.



## ■ Credits

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

## ■ Bibliographic abbreviations

- Cornus*1.1                    A. M. GIUNTELLA, *Cornus*1.1. *L'area cimiteriale orientale = Mediterraneo tardoantico e medievale. Scavi e ricerche*, 13. 1, Oristano 1999.
- Cornus*1.2                    A. M. GIUNTELLA (a cura di), *Cornus*1.2. *L'area cimiteriale orientale. I materiali = Mediterraneo tardoantico e medievale*, 13.2, Oristano 2000.
- MARTORELLI 2000            R. MARTORELLI, *Le monete*, in *Cornus*1.2, pp. 50-105.
- RIC X                            J. P. C. KENT, *The Roman Imperial Coinage, Volume X. The divided Empire and the Fall of the Western Parts AD 395-491*, London 1994.
- TREADGOLD 2009            W. TREADGOLD, *Storia di Bisanzio*. Bologna 2009.



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## La Sardegna cresce con l'Europa



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