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REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA
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Archeological area of Sant'Eulalia

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ Rosaries

In the funerary area of the central crypt of Sant'Eulalia we also found three fragments of rosaries with wooden and bronze beads, both in tact and in fragments (figs. 1-4). One specimen has wooden or bone beads, while the chain and medals are bronze, dividing the seven sequences of just as many beads.¹ Supported by another two beads, the larger medal portrays a human bust and is like a pendant. The recurring number seven connects to the cult of Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows, deeply felt from the XVI century and linked to the functions of the second day of the Holy Week.²

Together with the medals and crucifixes, the rosaries (fig.s 1-4) are linked to stronger worship of a renewed, more deeply felt Christianity, especially after the Council of Trento and the Counter-reform. This was when the rosary was most used Its birth would seem to date back to the 13th century³ and corresponds to the image of a garland of roses, typical sign for the Virgin Mary. For this reason, the *rosarium* in its most common, smaller version has five rows of ten beads each (the number may vary depending on the religion that it refers to); each groups is separated by a row of a larger size to which the reciting of the mysteries corresponds. The moment in which San Domenico di Guzmán, the deputy abbot, was in Toulouse, was 1212⁴: He invoked the Virgin Mary so she would indicate a way to peacefully win the fight against the Albigensian heresy and this occurred by giving him the rosary⁵. This legend corresponds to the next creation of the Confraternity of the Rosary desired by the Saint himself.

¹ Nieddu 2002a, p. 158; Pinna 2003 p. 329; fig. 18, p. 335.

² Nieddu 2002a, p. 158; see Leonio, Fersini 1986, pages 104-105, figs. 50, 59-60, pages 127, 131; see Leonio, Fersini 1986, pages 104-105.

³ Leonio, Fersini 1986, p. 99.

⁴ Koudelka 1995, coll. 695, 701-704.

⁵ *Bull. Ord. Praed.*, t. V, p. 223, 17 September 1569.



Fig. 1 - Rosary with 7 medals (photo by AFS).



Fig. 2 - Rosary linked to the cult of Our Lady of Sorrows (photo by AFS).



Fig. 3 - Rosary (photo by Unicity S.p.A.).



Fig. 4 - Rosary (photo by ASF).

■ Credits

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■ Bibliographic abbreviations

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