



UNIONE EUROPEA



REPUBBLICA ITALIANA



REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

Archeological area of Sant'Eulalia

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ Glasses

A person buried in tomb no. 28 of the Sant'Eulalia crypt is still proving, after centuries, his medium-high level *status* because of his metal reading glasses ¹ (fig. 1), found during the dig.



Fig. 1 - Metal glasses (from Pinna 2003b, p. 335, fig. 13).

The item found in the crypt, and a second bronze item, coming from the convent of San Silvestro in Genoa² (fig. 2) would seem to date to the 18th century. Glasses were often found in the portraits of people who lived between the 18th and 19th centuries (fig. 3).

¹ Pinna 2003b, p. 328; fig. 13, p. 335.

² Gardini, Benente 1997, p. 321; fig. 12, p. 322.



Fig. 2 - Bronze glasses from the convent of San Silvestro in Genoa (from Gardini, Benente 1997, p. 322, fig. 13).



Fig. 3 - Camillo Benso, Count of Cavour (1810-1861), minister of the Kingdom of Sardinia from 1850 to 1852 (from <http://biografieonline.it/biografia.htm?BioID=989&biografia=Camillo+Benso+conte+di+Cavour>).

The invention of glasses, around the 13th century, may be traced to Venice, but the Romans already used the benefits of corrective lenses: emeralds were used as magnifying glasses. Glass was used only in the 12th century, first using the smooth parts that enlarged objects, but which did not guarantee sharp vision; later lenses were made and used by amanuensis copiers when copying their books. Thanks to the theoretical studies by Roger Bacon (1214-1294) the technical knowledge required to make the first glasses was obtained. Their invention can be attributed to Bacon and Alessandro della Spina (XIII-1313): the former proposed the difference between eye nses and magnifying lenses, explaining the method of use in their innovation in 1262; the second, a Dominican monk from the

Monastery of Santa Caterina in Pisa, made the studies of their precursor concrete in 1280³. This date is taken from *Chronica Antiqua Conventus Sanctae Catharinae de Pisis*⁴. The use of glasses became popular first of all in England, during the 17th century, a period during which the German astronomer and mathematician Johannes Kepler (1571-1630), (fig. 4) also spoke of this matter



Fig. 4 - Johannes Kepler (1571-1630),
(from http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Giovanni_Keplero).

³ Ovio 1935.

⁴ Del Lungo 1920, p. 5.

■ Credits

Coordination Prof. Rossana Martorelli

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

■ Bibliographic abbreviations

- DEL LUNGO 1920 I. DEL LUNGO, *Le vicende di un'impostura erudita*, in *Arch. stor. ital.*, LXXVIII, I, 1920, pp. 5-53.
- OVIO 1935 G. OVIO, s.v. *Occhiali*, in *Enciclopedia Italiana*, 1935. Disponibile su:
[http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/occhiali_\(Enciclopedia-Italiana\)/_](http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/occhiali_(Enciclopedia-Italiana)/_)[26/10/2013].
- GARDINI, BENENTE 1997 A. GARDINI, F. BENENTE, *Archeologia postmedievale in Liguria*, in *AM*, 1, pp. 305-328.
- PINNA 2003b F. PINNA, *Il corredo funerario nella Sardegna post-medievale: la cripta della chiesa di S. Eulalia a Cagliari*, in S. LUSUARDI SIENA (a cura di), *Fonti archeologiche e iconografiche per la storia e la cultura degli insediamenti nell'alto-medioevo*, in *Atti delle giornate di studio* (Milano-Vercelli, 21-22 marzo 2003) = *Contributi di Archeologia*, 3. Milano 2003, pp. 323-335.

■ Periodicals and magazines

- AM** *Archeologia Medievale, cultura materiale, insediamenti, territorio*, Firenze, I, 1973 e ss.
- Arch. stor. ital.** *Archivio storico italiano*, Firenze, I, 1842 e ss.



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