

Urban and Rural Life in Roman Sardinia

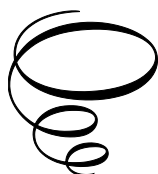
Urban and Rural Life in Roman Sardinia:

Economy, Society and Land Use

By

Attilio Mastino

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*To Simona,
for her kind smile and radiant gaze*

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INTRODUCTION

The objective of this volume is that of demonstrating that the Roman inheritance has profoundly influenced the plural identity of the Sardinia of today, an expression of a long history that in some ways conditions even contemporary society.¹ First and foremost, there is the Sardinian language, which was derived directly from Vulgar Latin, with a particularly conservative character in the mountainous centre.² Its particular nature is due to its relationship with a place, with a geography and a natural and human environment. The Roman influence can be seen in the toponymy, in the geography, in the road network in relation to the rivers, the agricultural land transformed by humans,³ the strong bonds the local populations have with the rural spaces, the natural borders and those of the first Late Antique dioceses, the current divisions of provinces and communes, the bonification of marshes, some forms of settlement, the very uses of the territory, the crop farming, animal husbandry with its specific skills and age-old traditions. It can also be seen in the mining activity, fishing, the harvesting of coral, as well as certain juridical norms and folk traditions that can be placed on a line of continuity with the past. We can also mention magic, folk medicine, religion, and the measurement of time, which on this island seems to pass more slowly. All this is the result of the meet-

¹ G. Paulis, *Latino, greco e volgare nella Sardegna bizantina e alto-giudicale. Dinamiche sociolinguistiche e onomastica personale* “Linguarum varietas”, 5, 2016, pp. 191-210.

² G. Lupinu, *La romanizzazione linguistica della Sardegna*, in *Storia della Sardegna antica*, A. Mastino (Ed.), Il Maestrale, Nuoro 2009², pp. 193-195; Id., *Manualetto di linguistica sarda* (Sardiniae memoria, 2), Unicapress, Cagliari 2023. The historical setting of P. Maninchedda, *Medioevo latino e volgare in Sardegna*, CUEC, Cagliari 2012, pp. 15 ss. is still relevant; themes now taken up again in G. Paulis, *Lingue in contatto nella Sardegna giudicale*, in *Il tempo dei Giudicati. La Sardegna medievale dal X al XV secolo d.C.*, S. Cisci, R. Martorelli, G. Serreli (Eds.), Ilisso, Nuoro 2023, pp. 261-265.

³ G. Azzena, F. Bua, *Rappresentare l'irrappresentabile. Il problema della rappresentazione scientifica della memoria storica dei luoghi*, in *Il paesaggio agrario italiano medievale. Storia e Didattica. Summer School Emilio Sereni, 2 edizione* (Gattatico, 24-29 agosto 2010), G. Bonini, A. Brusa, R. Cervi (Eds.) (Quaderni, 7), Istituto Alcide Cervi, Reggio Emilia 2011, pp. 217-223.

ing between the civilisation of the Sardinians with their canton-like divisions and Rome in a given environment and a given landscape, which had exotic characteristics and truly spectacular diversity.

Today we have a new sensibility towards the natural environment, which must have been characterised by an equilibrium between the coastline and the urbanised spaces⁴ and the presence of vast wooded areas such as the *Nemus Sorabense* (in Fonni), where the cult of Sylvan and Diana was practiced. The properties of the wild plants were well-known, and an economy of the woodland was developed. The same was the case at the temple of *Sardus Pater*, the true *genius loci* of the valley of Antas. We immediately beheld the quality of the artistic craftsmanship, the connection with other centres of trade and production. Finally, there is the landscape of today and that of yesteryear, which the code of cultural heritage has defined as “the territory as an expression of identity the character of which derives from the action of natural and human factors, and their inter-relations”.⁵ This prompts a new reflection on the tools for the protection of heritage, which in the past was threatened by military bases and uncontrolled town planning, even in the coastal areas, as well as by ineffective and overly slow forms of protection. Cultural heritage is fragile and is in need of best practice, care and attention.

Our focus in this work will be that of following the features inherited from the prehistoric and protohistoric periods also from a material point of view, with particular reference to the era which saw the construction of the Nuraghes: this heritage ran right through the Roman era (we may think of the onomastics that at times re-emerged in the Medieval, but the issue relates also to Sardinian architectonic culture that maintained its vitality linked to the Punic tradition and the reception of Italic models)⁶ and has been re-oriented over time several times in a *terra mari cincta*.⁷ To

⁴ S. Melis, *Variations des lignes de rivage aux environs de la ville antique de Nora (Sardaigne, Sud-Ouest-Italie) d'après les données geoarchéologiques*, in *Geoarchaeology of the landscapes of classical antiquity. Atti del Colloquio Internazionale* (Ghent, 23-24 ottobre 1998), F. Vermeulen, M. De Dapper (Eds.), Leiden, Stichting Babesch, 2000, pp. 127-136; Id., *Cenni geoarcheologici sulle variazioni delle linee di costa nel Mediterraneo*, in *L'Africa Romana XIV*, 2002, pp. 129-138.

⁵ Art. 131, “Decreto legislativo” 42/2004.

⁶ P. Floris, *Breve rassegna dell'onomastica paleosarda della Sardegna*, in *Sardegna isola megalitica. Dai menhir ai nuraghi: storie di pietra nel cuore del Mediterraneo*, F. Doria et al. (Eds.), Skira editore, Milano 2021, pp. 175-181.

⁷ F. Borca, *Terra mari cincta, Insularità e cultura romana*, Carocci, Roma 2000. See R. Zucca, A. Mastino, *Identità insulare*, in *Insularity, Identity and Epigraphy in the Roman World*, J. Velaza (Ed.), Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Cambridge 2017, pp. 3-22.

the contrary of Corsica, at least according to Seneca, who was displeased with the exile order decreed by Caligola, for which the population of this arid and bush-ridden reef has changed too many times (*totiens huius aridi et spinosi saxi mutatus est populus!*)⁸ it was not without its attractions, as it was crossed by rivers rich in fish (*Corsica piscosis pervia fluminibus*)⁹.

We are convinced that the forms of settlement and economy in the Medieval period were rooted in Sardinia in a substrate that was far older, where a more structured matrix would appear certainly linked to the Roman traditions in the territory, which had caused different stimuli to mature. The references to the norms and ancient laws of Roman jurisprudence are clearly present in the Medieval in the agrarian system and that of land use, especially those that were public. The judges meted out justice to the Genoese *secundum leges romanas et bonos usos*, hence with explicit reference to Roman law. The carrying out of *conventus-sinodos* in significant dates in the Judicial Kingdom era would appear to be a continuation of a judicial practice handed down from the Roman and Byzantine era with respect to the provincial governor, who expressed himself publicly in various venues in the territory, after having heard his *consilium*.¹⁰

The Roman experience was still fully alive in the island in the era of the “Giudicati”. In fact, Arrigo Solmi retained that many forms of Roman law had been maintained intact, an “admirable Latin tradition” that had been inherited by a social constitution that was less complex, which had remained almost isolated for a number of centuries, but stayed faithful to its traditions and its origins.¹¹ Scholars of Rome have reached extraordinary results on this theme. Just as the Sardinian language is a child of Latin, similarly Solmi saw the law of the “Giudicati” as being directly descended from classical Roman law. It is striking that the term *republica dessa p(rese)nte citate*, even though it appears only occasionally, main-

⁸ L.A. Seneca, *Ad Helviam matrem de consolatione*, 7.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 8, 4. See however Pliny commented by A. Ibba, Ante quem, post quem: *Plinio e la descrizione della Corsica e della Sardegna*, in *Plinio el Viejo y la construcción de Hispania Citerior*, P. Ciprés (Ed.), Universidad del País Vasco, Vitoria-Gasteiz 2017, pp. 33-46.

¹⁰ F. Sini, *Comente comandat sa lege. Diritto romano nella Carta de Logu d'Arborea*, Giappichelli, Torino 1997; Id., *Influssi del diritto romano sulla “Carta de Logu” di Arborea*, in *La Carta de Logu d'Arborea nella storia del diritto medievale e moderno*, I. Birocchi, A. Mattone (Eds.), Laterza, Bari 2004, pp. 50-96. See now *Il tempo dei Giudicati. La Sardegna medievale dal X al XV secolo d.C.*, cit., 2023.

¹¹ A. Solmi, *La Sardegna e gli studi storici*, “ASS”, I (1905), p. 13; Id., *Prefazione*, in *Testi e documenti per la storia del Diritto agrario in Sardegna*, A. Era (Ed.), Gallizzi, Sassari 1938, pp. VII ss.

tains a precious reference to the town coffers in the *Statuti Sassaresi*, just as in Turrus Libisonis in the Imperial era. We find reference to this, for example, in the Temple of Fortune and of the restoration of the tribunal within the Judicial basilica (perhaps dating to the Republican era) for the expenses incurred for the celebrations of the millennium of Rome.¹²

The inheritance of Roman law in Eleonora d'Arborea's *Carta De Logu* has recently been studied by Francesco Sini and his school, and some precise references have been identified in the Arborea Codex that allow us to see a clear deviation from the Roman laws, and even remind us of forms and contents of Roman law, such as the non-punishability of murder carried out for legitimate defence. Even in relation to trials, with regards to the times and the modalities of appeal, the Carta de Logu strictly adheres to the Late Ancient legislation of *de appellationibus* in a Justinian novella of 536. Other implicit connections with Roman law, which can be considered to be fully applicable, can be identified in the norms with regard to inheritance and more specifically in the 14 ways by way of which a legitimate heir can be disinherited. These are elements that, even though not present in the *Carta de Logu*, are listed clearly in the *Statuti sassaresi*.¹³

This does not mean that Sardinia has always remained the same, peripheral from a cultural point of view, but placed geographically at the centre of the Empire. In the Roman era, the island was a great bridge over which passed innovations and cultural revolutions that had their origins on the different shores of the Mediterranean. In the same way as in Corsica, where Seneca complained, with a considerable amount of exaggeration, of the successive arrival of the Greeks, the Marseillaise, the Celts, the Ligurians, the Iberians, so much so, that the local population was annihilated.¹⁴ These exchanges, which were more intense and lively than might be thought, were fuelled by the movement of the islanders to other provinces and to the traditional bonds with Africa. Thanks to them Sardinia was immensely enriched, and it allowed it to partake in the construction of a new unitary culture, while maintaining evident specificities even over the centuries.

¹² A. Mastino, *La romanità della società giudiciale in Sardegna: il Condaghe di San Pietro di Silki*, in *Atti del Convegno Nazionale "La civiltà giudiciale in Sardegna nei secoli XI-XIII. Fonti e documenti scritti"*, Sassari-Usini, Marzo 2001, Sassari 2002, pp. 23-61.

¹³ G. Azzena, A. Mastino, E. Petruzzi, *Dalla Colonia Iulia Turrus Libisonis al Comune di Sassari. Eredità, persistenze e trasformazioni*, in *I settecento anni degli Statuti di Sassari. Dal Comune alla città regia*, A. Mattone, P. Simbula (Eds.), Franco Angeli, Milano 2019, pp. 643-665.

¹⁴ *Ad Helviam matrem*, 7.

We are well aware that the themes of “resistance to Romanisation”, of “the survival of Punic features” and “persistence of indigenous characteristics” were partially corrected by Marcel Benabou (the father of the theory of “resistance to Romanisation”)¹⁵ as early as in the presentation of Volume VII *L’Africa Romana*, and it is a “un sujet qui n’était peut-etre pas sans risques”, with the need to move progressively towards “l’élargissement et l’approfondissement” on a geographical, chronological, thematic and methodological plane. Today there is also discussion relating the interpretative tools relating to the degree of “Romanisation” or to the relationship between “continuity” and “transformation”. These are all categories that allow us to enucleate specificities in time and space.¹⁶

We are prepared to face the risks linked with the deforming lens of the interpretation of the ancient by way of recent models, although we must also be wary of some ideological models and some abstract categories that were in vogue in the past, as it is necessary to be as prudent as possible when interpreting the Roman world with the eyes of today. After all, we cannot do otherwise, even though it would appear clear that we must avoid simplifications that do not take into account the diversity of the local situations and cultural diversity is a source of value, without which “people and local communities” are deprived of “precious sources of meaning, identity, knowledge and economic benefits”, which make up human rights and social cohesion.

Marco Tangheroni asked for more respect for the complexity of history without renouncing the establishment of connections, of ordering and proposing lines of reorganisation of the past, with the aim of understanding and explaining. A fundamental concept is that of the apprehension that historians must always feel that through their craft they may be distorting the object of their studies.

Hence: what do we know? How do we know it? What are the limits of our knowledge? What are the sources? These are all elements that make the art of the historian similar to that of a craftsperson, or even an artist, and make it fundamental that there be a phase of apprenticeship in which the pupils must observe their masters. It is important to anchor oneself to a historical period, to a geographical reality. In order to gain insight, one

¹⁵ M. Benabou, *La résistance africaine à la romanisation*, Maspero, Paris 1976; but see the *retractatio* in Id., *Présentation*, in *L’Africa Romana* VII, 1990, pp. 5-8. See C. Vismara, *Sopravvivenze puniche e persistenze indigene nel Nord Africa ed in Sardegna in età romana. Introduzione*, in *L’Africa Romana* VII, 1990, pp. 39-48.

¹⁶ As a result, the volume of G. Lilliu, *La costante resistenziale sarda* (Biblioteca Sarda, 79), Ilisso, Nuoro 2002 appears to be relatively outdated.

must seek new paths and the time would appear ripe not to consider archaeology as a fundamental tool to understand the ancient world, with its autonomy from the literary sources, and from the inscriptions that conserve the ancient writings, often bound to the rock like in the rural *terminus* of the Balari between Monti and Berchidda. Similarly, it can also be seen as independent from numismatics. The most recent studies, the new methodologies adopted, the latest large scientific projects in the Roman towns (above all Nora, Carales, Sulci, Neapolis, Tharros, Cornus, Turrus Libisonis, Olbia) and in many inland areas, on the plains and in the hills, have allowed us to overturn many old, fixed notions about heritage and to understand many phases and procedures. We can now follow historical events over a period that amounts to at least eight centuries, even though with this volume we stop at the peace of the church, when in actual fact nothing really changed.¹⁷ Marco Tangheroni suggested a method, that of his Medieval miners in Iglesias: when a vein became less interesting, a new excavation was started. In these last decades, historians have met with archaeologists on common ground, that of stratigraphic excavation of territorial areas, of monuments, but also sources, inscriptions, coins, the products of material culture, starting from the value of cultural heritage and the defence of common valuables, with a view that is ever more interdisciplinary, which must take into account the sustainability of intervention in terms of respect for the environment.¹⁸ In this volume we also present the new interpretations and intuitions of a new generation of archaeologists who are also historians, epigraphists, numismatics experts, and jurists, who we see at work in Cagliari and Sassari with great hope, even with some surprises.

There is then the field of genetics with the studies of the genome, which year after year offers surprising results from Gallura to the Campidano plain (above all for the prehistoric era). It is the clear testimony of the arrival of new ethnic components, but also a substantial homogeneity with the population of Sardinia today (particularly clear in Barbagia and Ogliastra), on the basis of the Y chromosome and mitochondrial DNA.¹⁹

¹⁷ We will mention only the last two splendid works: S. Angiolillo, R. Martorelli, M. Giuman, A.M. Corda, D. Artizzu (Eds.), *La Sardegna romana e altomedievale. Storia e materiali*, Sassari, Carlo Delfino editore, Sassari; R. Carboni, A.M. Corda, M. Giuman (Eds.), *Il tempo dei Romani. La Sardegna dal III secolo a.C. al V secolo d.C.*, Ilisso, Nuoro 2021.

¹⁸ M. Tangheroni, *Della Storia. In margine ad aforismi di Nicolás Gómez Dávila*, SugarCo Edizioni, Milano, 2008.

¹⁹ I owe this information to my friends Francesco Cucca, Paolo Francalacci and Laura Morelli. Vd. J.H. Marcus *et alii*, *Genetic history from the Middle Neolithic*

This perhaps also demonstrates a certain irrelevance of the institutional, statutory and juridical forms with respect to the everyday life of the (old and new) Sardinians, who are resilient and entrenched in faraway peripheries, bound to the land, intent on maintaining a culture and a traditional way of life almost unchanged, rooted in local history. Obviously with continuity, but also with myriad moments of schism, from the Neolithic, to the era of the Vandals, which we now gather by way of new genetic data, a signal of the meeting and mixing of people.

Finally, there are new perspectives that, with a rigorous approach truly aim to decolonise classical studies, but also to avoid all forms of victimisation and any kind of nostalgic emphasis. These are adopted in many universities and research institutes, starting from the most resilient North African models, those linked with the post-colonial phase, with specific attention to new social-cultural and heritage approaches on being “autochthonous” or “becoming autochthonous” in relation to the capability of geography to absorb even the Romans. These are terms that, in their ambition to be essentialising, may leave the anthropologists aghast.²⁰

In order to summarise, we believe that complexity is itself a value, as there are geographic and chronological variables in the moment in which different cultures come into contact. This is all the more so in an island, which is characterised by a fundamental ambivalence: a place of passage along the Mediterranean routes, but also a place that is “remote” or “isolated”. As such, these places can be turned into utopias.²¹ It is therefore

to present on the Mediterranean island of Sardinia, “Nature Communication”, 2020 2411(1):939. doi: 10.1038/s41467-020-14523-6.

²⁰ Laboratoire «Diraset Etudes Maghrébines», *L'autochtonie dans le Maghreb et en Méditerranée occidentale de la protohistoire aux temps modernes : Approches socio-culturelle et patrimoniale*. Actes du Colloque international *Être autochtone, devenir autochtone: Définitions, représentations* (Tunis 24-26 octobre 2019), N. Kallala (Ed.), Tunis 2021; École tunisienne d'Histoire et d'anthropologie qui relève du Centre des arts, de la culture et des lettres – Ksar Saïd, *L'autochtonie II, Les savoir-faire autochtones dans le Maghreb et en la Méditerranée occidentale, de l'antiquité aux nos jours: originalités, mutations*, N. Kallala, B. Yazidi, S. Séhili (Eds.), Tunis 2023. See also A. Campus, *Utopia e distopia. La romanizzazione come fenomeno di resilienza*, Aracne, Roma 2015. The volume on the natives in the Danubian provinces now responds to an even deeper vision: *Romans and Natives in the Danubian Provinces (1st-6th C. AD)*, L. Mihailescu-Bîrliba, I. Piso (Eds.) (Philippika, 173), Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2023.

²¹ A. Mastino, *Isole, Tavola rotonda con Umberto Eco*, in *Le isole fra mito, storia, Progetto* (Carloforte, 27-29 giugno 2010), Festival Uize, Cagliari 2010, pp. 1-7; Id., *Apertura del Symposium RETI I mari delle isole. Réseau d'excellence des territoires insulaires* (Alghero, Porto Conte Ricerche, 20 giugno 2013), in *Quei*

necessary to avoid losing pragmatism and distorting scientific data to adapt it to ideological schemes, recognizing its complexity and making it a tool for interpreting reality. Consequently, it is necessary to set aside easy periodizations, starting from ancient writings often linked to the landscape, monuments, material testimonies. We also want to overcome the prejudice of an anti-historical continuity in a liquid reality: the great size of the Empire progressively extended to the entire Mediterranean²², the territorial division, the biological processes, the evolution of culture and religious life with divinities always in motion, the presence of marginal areas have influenced artistic languages, artisan schools, linguistic variants, even the perception of time, which is not measured everywhere in the same way, on the relationship between *otium* and *negotium* in the different geographies even within the province²³: Sardinia was influenced less profoundly by the Italic, Iberian, Celtic and African models, together capable of welcoming and protagonism.

The world we live in is the result of this complexity, in the sense that history has a value only if it allows us to operate effectively in the present, starting from a respect for all, for the dignity of each, looking always to wider horizons.

I would like to thank my friends and colleagues who have been very generous with me, in particular David Brett for his translation of this work, Antonio M. Corda, the director of Unicapress, Paolo Maninchedda, the scientific director of the series *Sardiniae memoria*. However, it is important to remember that behind this book there is the passionate work in the field of many colleagues who courageously dedicate themselves to large scale projects that are ever more of an international nature. Projects that allow us to view the city-country relationship, the economy, the road network and the army with a view that we would like to believe it truly new.

nostris cinque magnifici anni (2009-2014), Carocci, Roma 2014, pp. 86-92 e 536-543.

²² *Rome and the North-western Mediterranean: Integration and connectivity 150-75 BC*, T. Naco del Hoyo, J. Principal, M. Dobson (Eds.), Oxbow Books, Oxford-Philadelphia 2022; A. Mastino, *La Sardegna al centro del Mediterraneo*, in *La Sardegna romana e altomedievale. Storia e materiali*, cit., pp. 17-32.

²³ For the *Sardinia*, Cic., *ad Q. fr.* 2,2, January 17, 56 BC, I believe with an implicit scholarly reference to the relationship between time and motion in Aristotle's *Physics* still in Sardinia, IV, 11, 218 b, ll. 23-33 e 219 a, ll. 1-2, see A. Mastino, *Aristotele e la natura del tempo: la pratica del sonno terapeutico davanti agli eroi della Sardegna*, in *Giornata di studio I riti della morte e del culto di Monte Prama – Cabras* (Roma, 21 gennaio 2015), M. Torelli (Ed.) (Atti dei Convegni Lincei, 303), Bardi Edizioni, Roma 2016, pp. 151-178.

CHAPTER 1

THE TOWNS AND COUNTRYSIDE OF SARDINIA: A GEOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION

1 The Sardinian towns up to Caesar

In *Pro Scauro* Cicero maliciously maintained that *Sardinia* was the only province in the middle of the 1st c. BC that did not host people who were friendly to the Romans, or who were free, but only *civitates stipendiariae* (19,44): *quae est enim praeter Sardiniam provincia quae nullam habeat amica<m> populo Romano ac liberam civitatem?*¹ In reality, in the same province (in Corsica), there were two colonies of Roman citizens that had been established fifty years earlier by Marius and Sulla, Mariana after the *lex Apuleia Saturnina* of 103 BC and Aleria Veneria twenty years later, respectively.² For the moment we will put to one side Feronia, which was founded one or two decades after the sack of Rome by the Gauls, on the eastern coast of Sardinia, close to Posada. The founders were 500 followers of Titus Manlius Capitolinus, who was killed by the Senate for his populist tendency aiming to free the slaves of their debts, as they had been ruined by the war.³

The existence in Sardinia of cities that were allied with the Romans (*civitates sociiae*), even if *sine foedere*, is certain from the Second Punic War onwards, for example, by way of the help that was provided *benigne*

¹ On Cicero's oration *Pro Scauro*, A. Mastino, *Nazione Sardus, Una mens, unus color, una vox, una natio*, "ASS", L, 2015, p. 147; see A. Muroni, *Cittadinanza romana in Sardegna durante la Res publica: concessioni tra politica e diritto*, "Diritto@Storia", XIII, n. 12, 2014, pp. 1-62.

² R. Zucca, *La Corsica romana* (Pubblicazioni del Dipartimento di Storia dell'Università di Sassari, 29), S'Alvure, Oristano 1996.

³ M. Torelli, *Colonizzazioni etrusche e latine di epoca arcaica: un esempio*, in *Gli Etruschi e Roma. Incontro di studio in onore di Massimo Pallottino* (Roma, 11-13 dicembre 1979), Giorgio Bretschneider Editore, Roma 1981, pp. 71-82; P. Ruggeri, *Titus Manlius Torquatus, privatus cum imperio, in Africa ipsa parens illa Sardiniae*. *Studi di storia antica e di epigrafia*, Edes, Sassari 1999, pp. 115-129.

to Aulus Cornelius Mamulla on the eve of the battle of Cannae (Liv. 23, 21,1; see 23, 41, 6);⁴ the cities defended by Titus Manlius Torquatus after Hampsicora's attack; after all we know of the generosity of the Sardinian *poleis* that were friendly to the Romans in the episode in which Gaius Gracchus obtained military uniforms for his soldiers, even in light of an exemption decreed by the Senate (Plut., *Gracchus*, 2, 2).⁵

It is a recognised fact that on the large Tyrrhenian island there were no founded towns (colonies) or towns of Roman citizens in Cicero's time. All the ancient Phoenician and Punic colonies were still governed by *suffetes*, following the Punic tradition, even though this was more than a century after the fall of Carthage.⁶ These were considered by the Romans to be only *civitates stipendiariae*, i.e. towns occupied by foreigners (peregrines), who were expected to pay a *stipendium* in cash, *victoriae premium ac poena belli*, a prize for the victors, punishment for the Sardo-Punics who had been vanquished at the moment of occupation of the island (the expression is used in the *Verrinae* 2,3, 12 for Sicily); and hence without a proper *foedus*.⁷ The texts cited are to be linked with two other passages in *Pro Balbo* in which the *stipendiarii* condition of the Sardinians is registered: *Nam stipendiarios ex Africa, Sicilia, Sardinia, ceteris provinciis multos civitate donatos videmus*. And more: *Quodsi Afris, si Sardis, si Hispanis agris stipendioque multatis virtute adipisci licet civitatem*. Putting to one side the exaggerations of a lawyer who is defending a dishonest governor, we can conclude that Sardinia (not the province) was reduced to the status of *ager publicus* in 56-54 BC and it was without *civitates* that were not *stipendiariae*.

The most recent research has led scholars to believe that Julius Caesar, on his visit to Carales (16th-27th June 46 BC) and his long stay in the ports and coastal towns of Western Sardinia during the month of July 46 BC,

⁴ A. Mastino, *Cornus e il Bellum Sardum di Hampsicora e Hostus, storia o mito?* Processo a Tito Livio, in *Il processo di romanizzazione della provincia Sardinia et Corsica*. Atti del convegno internazionale di studi (Cagliari (OR), 26- 28 marzo 2015), S. De Vincenzo, C. Blasetti Fantauzzi (Eds.) (Analysis Archaeologica. An international Journal of Western Mediterranean Archaeology. Monograph Series, 1), Quasar, Roma 2016, p. 29.

⁵ A. Mastino, *Colonie, Municipi, Civitates stipendiariae della Sardinia*, in *Il tempo dei Romani. La Sardegna dal III secolo a.C. al V secolo d.C.*, R. Carboni, A.M. Corda, M. Giuman (Eds.), Ilisso, Nuoro 2021, pp. 46-50.

⁶ The *suffetes* of Punic and Roman Sardinia are in R. Zucca, *Sufetes Africae et Sardiniae e ricerche storiche e geografiche sul Mediterraneo Antico* (Pubblicazioni del Dipartimento di Storia dell'Università di Sassari, 1), Carocci, Roma 2004.

⁷ P. Meloni, *La Sardegna romana. I centri abitati e l'organizzazione municipale*, in *ANRW*, II, 11, 1, 1988, pp. 491-551.

before returning to Rome, had planned a territorial re-organisation of the island, which at this stage would be divided into four parts with the capital Carales, the possible Iulia colony of Tharros, the Iulia colony of Turrus Libisonis and the city of Olbia, on the border with *Barbaria*, with their own borders marked by rivers and mountains.⁸ In recent years much has been discussed concerning institutional aspects, but also those relating to urban planning and themes of great social interest.⁹

2 Colonies and municipalities of Roman citizens from Octavian onwards

Caesar's decisions in relation to the new colonies (Turrus Libisonis and perhaps Tharros) must have been carried out during the first years of the second triumvirate with Octavian, in which the first foundation city was established. This was the *colonia Iulia* of Turrus Libisonis, which is attributed to the legate Marcus Lurius. At the same time the *municipium Iulium* of Carales was perhaps established. This was supported by quadrumvirates who substituted the Punic *suffetes*. The same Octavian Augustus founded the *colonia Iulia Augusta* of Uselis some decades later. This was beyond Monte Arci and was a waystage on the central Sardinian road, which was divided into two parts. One led to the new colony of Turrus Libisonis, the other to the municipality of Carales. They met at Aquae Hypsitanae on the Tirso river (Fordongianus). Uselis was initially a *pagus*, and then a *forum* of the *pertica* of the new colony, with a bifurcation towards Olbia in the North. It is possible that Tharros was also promoted to the level of colony. A small nucleus of *populares* families must have remained there after the death of the anti-Sulla Lepidus.¹⁰

The Augustan situation is summarised in Pliny the Elder's *formula provinciae*, written in the first years of the seventh decade AD, but using older sources, perhaps the *Commentarii Geographici* by the son-in-law of

⁸ In the past skeptical about the definition of precise borders for Sardinian *Barbaria*: A. Stiglitz, *Borders and frontiers in Punic and Roman Sardinia: criticism of the geographical imagination*, in *L'Africa Romana* XV, 2004, pp. 805-817. For the archaeological evidence of *Barbaria*: M.A. Mele, *Archeologia in Barbagia*, Zenia, Nuoro 2014.

⁹ C. Vismara, *Civitas. L'organizzazione dello spazio urbano nelle province del Nord Africa e nella Sardegna*, in *L'Africa Romana* X, 1994, pp. 45-52; A. Zara, *Abitare nella Sardegna romana*, in *Il tempo dei Romani*, cit. pp. 118-123.

¹⁰ P. Ruggeri, *Nel segno della dea Astarte-Venere Ericina. Cesare tra Sicilia, Africa e Sardegna, lungo l'antica rotta punica dei cultores Veneris Ericinae*, in *In Africa e a Roma, Scritti mediterranei*, Aonia edizioni, Raleigh 2023, pp. 15-58.

Augustus Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa (who died in 12 BC):¹¹ the great naturalist imagined a pyramid with the three *populi celeberrimi*, Ilienses, Balari and Corsi at the bottom. There are then 18 *oppida*, which we think may be the *civitates stipendiariae* that are listed with the ethnic groups of their inhabitants. It is less likely that they were towns under Roman law as Ettore Pais thought. We possess the names of only four of the towns of this type: Sulci, Valentia (perhaps founded by M. Cecilius Metellus around 115 BC)¹², Neapolis and Bithia. These were considered to be inhabited by *peregrini*. The names of the other 14 are missing, perhaps due to a gap in the manuscript tradition. Two more towns followed, inhabited by Roman citizens (Carales and Nora), and at the top of the pyramid there was a single colony, Turris Libisonis.

Amongst the contemporary scholars, Leandro Polverini thought that Pliny made reference also to a second colony, Uselis, which would lead us to the end of the Augustan principality for the source consulted in the Imperial archives, not perfectly up to date, used by Pliny about Sardinia.¹³ If we accept this interpretation, Sardinia would arrive at a total of 22 *urbes* (while in the list that has survived to this day, there are only seven),¹⁴ with

¹¹ We follow closely R. Zucca, *Gli oppida e i populi della Sardinia*, in A. Mastino, *Storia della Sardegna antica*, Nuoro 2005, pp. 205-331; for the cities in the area around Oristano we follow A. Mastino, R. Zucca, *Urbes et rura. Città e campagna nel territorio oristanese in età romana*, in *Oristano e il suo territorio, 1, Dalla preistoria all'alto Medioevo*, P.G. Spanu, R. Zucca (Eds.), Carocci, Roma 2011, pp. 411-601. At a date between 38 and 35 BC. Mentions now S. Sisani, *I nomi e le cose: oppidum, oppidum latinum, oppidum civium Romanorum nel lessico istituzionale della Naturalis Historia pliniana*, in *Agrupacione cívicas, intracívicas y no cívicas en la Hispania Citerior altomperial*, Estibaliz Ortiz-de-Urbina (Ed.) (Epigrafia e antichità, 50), Carocci, Roma 2024, p. 71; see also Id., *Sulle cosiddette formulae provinciarum contenuto e natura dei registri di comunità provinciali trasmessi dalla Naturalis Historia pliniana*, in *Le strutture locali dell'Occidente romano (L'Aquila, 4-6 maggio 2022)*, E. García Fernández, E. Melchor Gil, S. Sisani (edd.) (Diuturna Civitas 1), Roma 2023, pp. 195-196 (according to the a. if we follow Pliny's text to the letter, Nora would not be a municipality of Roman citizens).

¹² For Valentia P. Floris, *Nota sul centro romano di Valentia in Sardegna*, "Epigraphica", 71, 2009, pp. 133-160.

¹³ L. Polverini, *Una lettera di Borghesi a Niebhur (e l'iscrizione CIL X 7845)*, in *Imperium Romanum. Studien zu Geschichte und Rezeption. Festschrift für Karl Christ zum 75° Geburtstag*, P. Kneissl, V. Losemann (Eds.), Steiner, Stuttgart 1998, pp. 571-581.

¹⁴ J. Bonetto, A.R. Ghiotto, *Le città della Sardegna in età romana*, in *La Sardegna romana e altomedievale. Storia e materiali*, S. Angiolillo, R. Martorelli, M.

few inhabitants in possession of Roman citizenship up to the era of the Severan dynasty. It is clear that the urbanisation of the island was particularly limited when compared with Sicily or with other large Mediterranean islands, with many rural communities¹⁵ and little innovation with regards to the Phoenician and Punic eras.¹⁶ In short, the population lived above all in the countryside.

The interpretative lines of the theme were already laid down in Ettore Pais' article on Pliny's *formula provinciae* of the island, which was published in 1894 and then revisited in 1908, for the volume on the *Ricerche storiche e geografiche sull'Italia antica*, which was then enlarged for the volume *Storia della Sardegna e della Corsica durante il periodo romano* in 1923 with a section relating to Corsica.¹⁷ The general themes are those

Giuman, A.M. Corda, D. Artizzu (Eds.) (Corpora delle antichità della Sardegna), Carlo Delfino, Sassari 2017, pp. 45-56.

¹⁵ D. D'Orlando, *Comunità rurali e territorio*, in *Il tempo dei Romani*, cit., pp. 100-101.

¹⁶ S.L. Dyson, *The limited nature of Roman urbanism in Sardinia*, in E. Fentress, *Romanisation and the city: creation, transformations and failures* (Journal of Roman Archaeology), Portsmouth 2000, pp. 189-196; G. Tore, A. Stiglitz, *Urbanizzazione e territorio: considerazioni sulla colonizzazione fenicio-punica in Sardegna*, 1. L'urbanizzazione e lo spazio urbano; 2. Lo spazio rurale: parametri geografici e indicatori territoriali, in *L'Africa Romana X*, 1994, pp. 779-808.

¹⁷ I The topic of municipal organization in Sardinia has been widely studied since E. Pais, *La formula provinciae della Sardegna nel I secolo dell'impero secondo Plinio*, in *Ricerche storiche e geografiche sull'Italia antica*, STEN, Torino 1908, pp. 579-627; Id., *Storia della Sardegna e della Corsica durante il dominio romano*, Nardecchia, Roma 1923, (A. Mastino (Ed.), Ilisso, Nuoro 1999), II, pp. 139-154; C. Bellieni, *La Sardegna e i Sardi nella civiltà del mondo antico* (Collezione sarda de Il Nuraghe), Edizioni della Fondazione Il Nuraghe, I, Cagliari 1928; II, 1931, II, pp. 209-316. See G.I. Luzzatto, *In tema di organizzazione municipale della Sardegna*, in *Studi in onore di G. Grosso*, I, Giappichelli, Torino 1968, pp. 292-312; C. Tronchetti, *The Cities of Roman Sardinia*, in *Studies in Sardinian Archaeology*, I, M.S. Balmuth, R.J. Rowland jr. (Eds.), University Michigan Press, Ann Arbor 1984, pp. 237-283; L. Pani Ermini, *Le città sarde tra antichità e medioevo: uno studio appena iniziato*, in *L'Africa Romana V*, 1988, pp. 431-438; P. Meloni, *La Sardegna romana*, Chiarella, Sassari 1991², pp. 229-316; R. Zucca, *Il decoro urbano delle civitates Sardiniae et Corsicae: il contributo delle fonti letterarie ed epigrafiche*, in *L'Africa Romana X*, 1994, pp. 857-936; Id., *Gli oppida e i populi della Sardinia*, in A. Mastino (Ed.), *Storia della Sardegna antica*, Nuoro, Il Maestrale, 2005, pp. 205-332; P. Meloni, *La Sardegna romana*, Ilisso editore, Nuoro 2012 (reeddition of the work: *La Sardegna romana*, Sassari, Chiarella, 1990), pp. 153-199; A. Mastino, R. Zucca, *Urbes et rura. Città e campagna nel territorio oristanese in età romana*, in *Oristano e il suo territorio, I, Dalla preistoria all'alto*

of the relations between the colonies, towns governed by Roman law, towns governed by Latin law, *peregrinae civitates*, in a dialectic relation with the ancient Punic constitutions of the old Phoenician-Punic colonies governed by *suffetes* and the new Roman institutions that became ever more important from the last decades of the Republic onwards. The theme of the statutes of the individual Sardinian towns will be dealt with in detail in the following chapters.¹⁸

Medioevo, P.G. Spanu, R. Zucca (Eds.), Carocci, Roma 2011, pp. 411-601. See C. Vismara, Ph. Pergola, D. Istria, R. Martorelli, *Sardinien un Korsika in römischer Zeit, Zaberns Bildbände zur Archäologie*, Sonderbande der Antiken Welt, Darmstadt 2011. For archaeological sources it has fundamental methodological importance G. Azzena, *Osservazioni urbanistiche su alcuni centri portuali della Sardegna romana*, in *L'Africa Romana XIV*, 2002, pp. 1099-1110; see C. Tronchetti, *The Cities of Roman Sardinia*, cit., pp. 237-283; A.R. Ghiotto, *L'architettura romana nelle città della Sardegna*, Quasar, Roma 2005 (Antenor. Quaderni, 4), on which: G. Bejor, *Presentazione del volume L'architettura romana nelle città della Sardegna*, di Andrea R. Ghiotto, in *L'Africa Romana XVI*, 2006, pp. 103-106; A. Boninu, *La Sardegna in età romana*, in *Il Museo Sanna in Sassari*, F. Lo Schiavo (Ed.), A. Pizzi, Cinesello Balsamo 1986, pp. 129-156.

¹⁸ Lastly: A. Ibba, *Gli statuti municipali*, in *La Sardegna romana e altomedievale. Storia e materiali*, S. Angiolillo, R. Martorelli, M. Giuman, A.M. Corda, D. Artiz-zu (Eds.), Carlo Delfino editore, Sassari 2017, pp. 185-192. See Pais, *Storia della Sardegna e della Corsica*, cit., II, p. 68 n. 122, pp. 71 f. n. 136; Luzzatto, *In tema di organizzazione municipale della Sardegna*, cit., pp. 292-312; Id., *Sul regime del suolo nelle province romane*, in *I diritti locali nelle province romane con particolare riguardo alle condizioni giuridiche del suolo*, Roma 1974, p. 35; Meloni, *La Sardegna romana*, pp. 133 f. For comparisons with other provinces: J.M. Bertrand, *Territoire donné, territoire attribué: note sur la pratique de l'attribution dans le monde impérial de Rome*, "CGG", 2, 1991, pp. 125 ff.; M. Genovese, *Condizioni delle civitates della Sicilia ed assetti amministrativo-contributivi delle altre province nella prospezzazione ciceroniana delle Verrine*, "Iura", 44, 1993, pp. 171 ff.; A. Pinzone, *Provincia Sicilia. Ricerche di storia della Sicilia romana da Gaio Flaminio a Gregorio Magno*, Catania 1999, pp. 59 ff.; Id., *Civitates sine foedere immunes ac liberae: a proposito di Cic. I Verr. III 6, 13*, "Mediterraneo antico. Economia-Società-Cultura", 2, II, 1999, pp. 463 ff., particularly p. 463, n. 1; P. Le Roux, *Romains d'Espagne. Cités et politique dans les provinces. IIe siècle av. J.-C. - IIIe siècle ap. J.-C.*, Paris 1995, p. 50; J.M. Abascal, *Derecho latino y municipalización en Levante y Cataluña*, in *Teoría y práctica del ordenamiento municipal en Hispania* (Anejos de Veleia, series Acta 3), Vitoria 1996, pp. 211 ff., 255 ff.; A. Orejas Saco del Valle, I. Sastre Prats, *Fiscalité et organisation du territoire dans le Nord-Ouest de la Péninsule Ibérique*, "DHA", 25, 1999, pp. 159 ff. *On the problem of civitates and urbes sociae* cfr. Pais, *Storia della Sardegna e della Corsica*, cit., II, pp. 68 f.; G. Brizzi, *Nascita di una provincia: Roma e la Sardegna*, in *Carcopino, Cartagine e altri scritti*, Sassari 1989, pp. 81, 84; Meloni, *La*

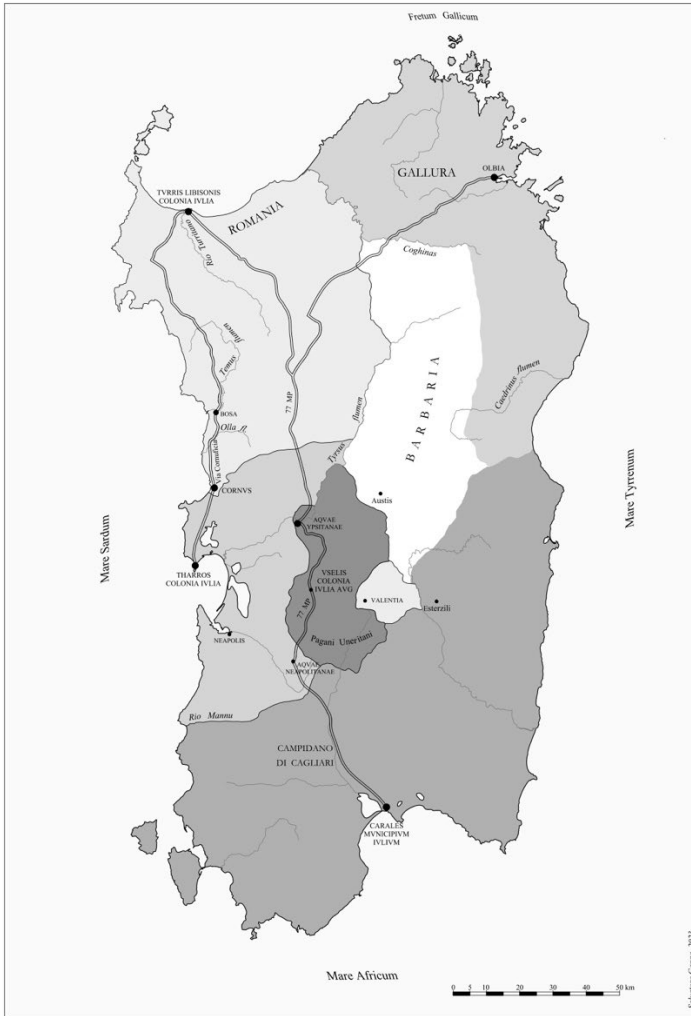


Fig. 1-1 Map of the colonies and municipalities in the Augustan age, hypothetically resulting from the measures of Caesar and the triumvirs; at the root of the quadripartition of Sardinia in the Judicate kingdoms (post-Byzantine period) (Salvatore Ganga).

Sardegna romana, cit., pp. 133 f. See L. Pani Ermini, *Le città sarde tra antichità e medioevo: uno studio appena iniziato*, in *L'Africa Romana* V, 1988, pp. 431-438.

On the basis of the comparisons with Africa, Pais did not believe that the attestation to Turrus of the division of the citizens in 23 curie (rather than in the town of Sulci)¹⁹ could testify to the presence of *ius Latii*,²⁰ while he recognised that Pliny's list could include (excluding the towns, the colony of Turrus and the non-urbanised populations) a group of Latin towns. There would also be a series of *vici*, amongst which Metalla (with the great temple of Antas, which was still not dedicated definitively to the cult of *Sardus Pater* at the start of the triumviral era) and the Populum in the Sulcis area (which Pais understood as Plumbeum, with reference to *Plumbaria insula*, the island of lead, today Sant'Antioco), Tiliu, Nura, Tibula, in north Sardinia, cities that were mentioned by Ptolemy, but have not left any archaeological traces. In reality the only *vicus* that we know of specifically from the sources is *Susaleus vicus* (in Greek *kóme*), *Susalea villa* in Cod. Lat. 4803 of Ptolemy's *Geographia*. This is placed on the east coast of Sardinia (not far from Carales), south of the mouth of the *Saeprus*, today's Flumendosa. This may have been Cala Pira, where the *Siculenses* were located; otherwise it could have been Is Cuccureddus in Villasimius.

Piero Meloni and Raimondo Zucca's precious insights²¹ based on this have allowed us to make clear steps forward in terms of a reconstruction of the juridical, institutional and prosopographical aspects of the Sardinian towns, often defining the territorial limits. In some cases, such as in that of Cornus, or more recently Sulci, this is the consequence of the role played in wars, rebellions, or mere disputes between neighbouring towns. These geographical borders were not always surpassed in the Medieval and Modern periods, instead we often find them to be still valid in the territory today.

The difference between the colonies that were founded (Turrus Libisonis in the era of the triumvirate, Uselis in the Augustan era), honorary colonies (Cornus, Tharros, Neapolis), municipalities of Roman citizens (Carales, Nora, Sulci, perhaps Olbia, Bosa, Forum Traiani) and the *civi-*

¹⁹ For the *curiae* of Turrus Libisonis: Luzzatto, *In tema di organizzazione municipale della Sardegna*, cit., pp. 305-306 n. 53; A. Boninu, M. Le Glay, A. Mastino, Turrus Libisonis colonia Iulia, Sassari Gallizzi, 1984, pp. 40-41. For the tribes of *municipium* of Sulci, see A. Mastino, *Le relazioni tra Africa e Sardegna in età romana*, "ASS", XXXVIII, 1995, p. 23.

²⁰ On the *ius Latii*, Pais, *Storia della Sardegna e della Corsica* cit., II, p. 100, n. 201.

²¹ The fundamental contributions of Piero Meloni and Raimondo Zucca are in R. Zucca, *Il decoro urbano delle civitates Sardiniae et Corsicae: il contributo delle fonti letterarie ed epigrafiche*, in *L'Africa Romana* X, 1994, pp. 857-936; Meloni, *La Sardegna romana*, cit., pp. 153-199.

tates stipendiariae became less marked with time. With Caracalla, at least in theory, all the Sardinians became Roman citizens, with the exception of the slaves, of which there must have been a great number, and very widespread, especially in rural contexts, mostly on the large *latifundia* and the public *ager*.

In terms of archaeology, we can now avail of a valid work by Andrea Raffaele Ghiotto on the Roman architecture of the towns of Sardinia, which covers an array of aspects ranging from the building techniques to the defensive works, from the sacred temples to the *fora* and squares, from the buildings for entertainment to the *macella* and the *horrea*. It also addresses the bath complexes, fountains, aqueducts and residential buildings. It focuses on the monumental development of the Sardinian cities, in particular those of Carales, Nora, Bithia, Sulci, Neapolis, Othoca, Tharros, Cornus, Bosa, Olbia, Turris Libisonis, Forum Traiani and the towns of the *Barbaricum*. It does not neglect the phenomenon of Euergetism, in an interpretative framework in which the architectonic culture of Sardinia maintains its own vitality linked to the Punic tradition and the reception of Italic models.²²

3 The sources

For Sardinia urbanisation a constituted driving force for the demographics, employment, craft activities and growth of the local aristocracy.²³ The Ravenna's Cosmography of the 7th c. would lead one to believe that *Sardinia* was characterised by a rich urban organisation: *Insula quae dicitur Sardinia, in qua plurimas fuisse civitates legimus*.

In reality the literary, geographical-itinerary, epigraphic, numismatic, juridical, hagiographic and archaeological sources relating to the *civitates Sardiniae* highlight that, to the contrary, a very limited amount of urbanisation took place in Sardinia during ancient history, and that this was almost exclusively limited to the coastal regions.

The main source for the urban organisation of Sardinia is composed of the *formula provinciae* in the third book of Pliny's *Naturalis Historia*. This *formula*, according to unanimous historical appraisal, derives from the *Commentarii Geographici* and the relating *Tabula picta* by Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa (25-12 BC): *Celeberrimi in ea populorum Ilienses*,

²² A.R. Ghiotto, *L'architettura romana nelle città della Sardegna*, cit.

²³ M. Maiuro, *Urbanizzazione, demografia, lavoro e artigianato. A proposito di alcune opere recenti*, "Mediterraneo antico, Economie, società, culture", XXIII, 2019, pp. 11-33.

Balari, Corsi, oppidorum XVIII Sulcitani, Valentini, Neapolitani, Vitenses, Caralitani Civium R(omanorum) et Norenses, colonia autem una quae vocatur ad Turrem Libisonis. The most famous (non-urbanised) peoples in Sardinia are the Ilienses, the Balari and the Corsi, among the eighteen cities, the citizens of Sulci (Sulcitani), of Valentia (Valentini), of Neapolis (Neapolitani), of Bitia (Vitenses), and those with Roman citizenship, the inhabitants of Caralis (Caralitani) and Nora (Norenses) and finally (the colonisers of) the only colony, which is called Turrem Libisonis.

Ettore Pais' study of the *formula provinciae* of Sardinia highlighted on one hand the congruity of the figure of 18 *oppida* for Sardinia in the 1st c. AD, compared with the 68 for Sicily and 15 for Cyprus (remaining in an insular context), and on the other, the distinction regarding the 18 towns indicated in Sardinia between those endowed with a statute that could be municipal or colonial (Caralis and Nora *municipia*, Turrus Libisonis and, if we accept Leandro Polverini's hypothesis, *Uselis coloniae*) and those without. These were four simple *civitates*: Sulci of the Sardinian Sea (Sant'Antioco), Valentia, Neapolis, and Bithia. These were in any case *celeberrimae* with respect to the other ten (or eleven if we do not consider *Uselis* in the list). The other ten towns not mentioned in Pliny's *formula* may be considered, even tentatively, on the basis of Ettore Pais' list: Tharros (which may also have been a triumvirate colony), Othoca, Cornus, Bosa, Tibulas, Olbia, Feronia, Sulci on the Tyrrhenian, Gurulis Vetus and Gurulis Nova, the latter connected with the *limitatio* of the *agri deserti* after the *Bellum Sardum*.

4 The 29 towns and villages in Ptolemy's *Geographia*

In order to define a general description and a calculation of the number of towns and villages, we may avail of numerous other sources. These may be epigraphic (the milestones, but not only),²⁴ numismatic (the coins relating to the *deductio* of the colonies),²⁵ geographical (such as Ptolemy's

²⁴ For the epigraphic documentation see the entries of each city, written by Th. Mommsen in the X volume of the *CIL* and the updates cited below and R. Zucca, *Il decoro urbano delle civitates Sardiniae et Corsicae: il contributo delle fonti letterarie ed epigrafiche*, in *L'Africa Romana* X, 1994, pp. 857-935; Id., *Il paesaggio epigrafico delle città della Sardinia*, in *Paisajes epigráficos de la Hispania romana. Monumentos, contextos, topografías*, J.M. Iglesias Gil, A. Ruiz Gutiérrez (Eds.), L'Erma di Bretschneider, Roma 2013, pp. 237-265.

²⁵ For numismatic sources, see M. Grant, *From Imperium to Auctoritas*, Cambridge 1969, pp. 149 ff.; 205 ff.; A. Burnett, M. Amandry, P.P. Ripollès, *Roman Provincial Coinage*. I. From the death of Caesar to the death of Vitellius (44 BC-

Geographia)²⁶ and those relating to itineraries, such as the Antoninian Itinerary dating to the age of Caracalla²⁷ and the Ravenna's *Cosmographia*,²⁸ which dates to the mid-7th c. and registers a progressive reduction

AD 69), London-Paris 1999, pp. 162 ff.; C.A. Hersch, *Overstrikes as evidence for the history of Roman Republican Coinage*, "The Numismatic Chronicle and Journal of the Royal Numismatic Society", 43, 1953, pp. 33-68; see E. Birocchi, *La circolazione monetaria in Sardegna durante la dominazione romana*, "SS", XII-XIII, 1955, pp. 519-574; G. Perantoni Satta, *Rinvenimenti in Sardegna di monete dell'Impero romano e dell'Impero romano d'occidente*, "Annali dell'Istituto Italiano di Numismatica", 1, 1954, pp. 66-111; Id., *Rinvenimenti in Sardegna di monete della Repubblica Romana*, "Annali dell'Istituto Italiano di Numismatica", 7-8, 1962, pp. 91-152; L. Forteleoni, *Riconiazioni romane di monete puniche in Sardegna*, "Annali dell'Istituto Italiano di Numismatica", 18-19, 1971, pp. 113-118; M.H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1974. For Sardus Pater coins: I. Didu, *La cronologia della moneta di M. Azio Balbo*, "Atti Centro Studi Documentazione Italia Romana", VI, 1974-1975, pp. 107-120. M. Sollai, *Le monete della Sardegna romana*, Sassari 1989; E. Piras, *Le monete sardo puniche*, Torino 1993; L.I. Manfredi, *Dal minerale al metallo monetato nella Sardegna e nel Nord Africa punico*, in *L'Africa Romana XVII*, 2008, pp. 1573-1580; C. Tronchetti, *La civiltà romana. Cultura materiale e monetazione*, in V. Santoni (Ed.), *Il museo archeologico nazionale di Cagliari*, A. Pizzi, Cinisello Balsamo 1989, pp. 179-200; R. Zucca, *Le monete puniche di zecca sarda di Son Solomó, ciudadella (Minorca) e il riflesso della guerra dei mercenari in Sardegna e nelle Baleari*, "Mayurca", 29, 2003 [2004], pp. 85-96; D'Orlando, *La monetazione*, in *Il tempo dei Romani*, cit. pp. 278-280.

²⁶ For Ptolemy's Sardinia, C. Müller, *Claudii Ptolemaei Geographia*, I, Parisii 1883, pp. 372 ff.; P. Meloni, *La geografia della Sardegna in Tolomeo*, "NBAS", 3, 1986 (1990), pp. 207-250; P. Meloni, *La costa sulcitana in Tolomeo (Geogr. III, 3,3)*, in *Carbonia e il Sulcis. Archeologia e territorio*, V. Santoni (Eds.), S'Alvure, Oristano 1995, pp. 309-314.

²⁷ For the ration purposes of the Antoninian Itinerary, R. Rebuffat, *Un document sur l'économie sarde*, in *L'Africa Romana VIII*, 1991, pp. 719-734; L. Di Paola, *Il Mediterraneo occidentale nelle testimonianze itinerarie imperiali*, in *L'Africa Romana XIV*, 2002, pp. 189-200. See P. Arnaud, *L'Itinéraire d'Antonin: un témoin de la littérature itinéraire du Bas Empire*, "Geographia Antiqua", 2, 1993, pp. 33-50; Id., *À propos d'un prétendu itinéraire de Caracalla dans l'Itinéraire d'Antonin: les sources tardives de l'itinéraire de Rome à Hierasycaminos*, "Mon. Bull. Soc. Ant. Fr.", 1992, pp. 374-380; L. Di Paola, *Il Mediterraneo occidentale nelle testimonianze itinerarie imperiali*, cit. pp. 189-200 places emphasis on the logistical characteristics of the itineraries, irreplaceable tools for administrative and military control of the territory.

²⁸ For the Anonimous Ravenna's, I. Didu, *I centri abitati della Sardegna romana nell'Anonimo Ravennate e nella Tabula Peutingeriana*, "Annali della Facoltà di Lettere dell'Università di Cagliari", III (XL), 1980-1981, 1982, pp. 203-213.

in the number of towns.²⁹ All of these use earlier sources, such as Ptolemy, who, for example, knew only of *Aquae Hypsitanae*, the thermal water area on the Tirso, as a locality that bore a name that was older than Forum Traiani, which was founded in 111 AD (unless it refers to a settlement that was born around the sanctuary of Aesculapius and the Nymphs, distinct from the Forum).

For the itinerary sources, an essential resource is that of the official lists of the Imperial *cursus publicus* (the public transport service), which was based on towns, rural *praetoria* with thermal structures (such as Is Bangius at Marrubiu, Mesumundu in Siligo, and Sas Presones at Bonorva), *stationes*, *mansiones*, and *mutationes*. We can imagine an extraordinary richness in the rural settlements, which is testified to by the archaeological remains of the presence of rustic villas, *praetoria*, and baths, as well as the *pagi*³⁰ and *vici*.³¹

In some cases, as in that of the Antonian Itinerary, we also have the distances in miles from one station to another, along the different road routes, with an aim that is clearly related to the transport of supplies (René Rebuffat). The work of the anonymous geographer of Ravenna would appear to depict three road routes, which referred however to a distant period in which there were numerous towns in Sardinia: *plurimas fuisse civitates legimus, ex quibus aliquantas designare volumus*. The *Tabula Peutingeriana* provides fewer details, however it highlights the growing role of Turris with a draw cartoon of the station with two towers.³²

²⁹ For medieval demographic impoverishment, see P.G. Spanu, *La Sardegna Bizantina fra VI e VII secolo*, S'Alvure, Oristano 1998, pp. 121-124.

³⁰ The term *pagus* survives everywhere in modern Sardinia, see L. Guido, *Romania vs Barbaria. Aspetti der Romanisierung Sardiniens* (Berichte aus der Geschichtswissenschaft, D61), Shaker Verlag, Aachen 2006, p. 316, 8.2.6; A. Mastino, *Rustica plebs id est pagi in provincia Sardinia: il santuario rurale dei Pagani Uneritani in Marmilla*, in *Poikilma. Studi in onore di M.R. Cataudella in occasione del 60° compleanno*, S.M. Bianchetti (Ed.), Firenze 2001, pp. 781-814.

³¹ E. Trudu, *Vici, pagi, agglomerations secondaires. Insediamenti e abitati di epoca romana nella Sardegna centro-orientale*, "Archeo Arte", 3, 2014 (2016), pp. 105-125; in general: C. Letta, *Il vicus come articolazione del pagus in area centro-appenninica: aspetti istituzionali e intrecci di competenze*, in *Samnitice loqui. Studi in onore di Aldo Prosdoci per il premio I Sanniti* (L'Aquila, 16-18 dicembre 1999), II, D. Caiazza (Ed.), Piedimonte Matese 2006, pp. 197-312.

³² On the *Tabula Peutingeriana*: O. Baldacci, *La Sardegna nella «Tabula Peutingeriana»*, "SS", 14-15, 1955-57, pp. 142-148; P. Arnaud, *L'origine et la date de rédaction et la diffusion de l'archictecture de la Table de Peutinger*, "Bulletin de la Société nationale des antiquaires de France", 1988, pp. 302-321; Didu, *I centri abitati della Sardegna romana nell'Anonimo Ravennate e nella Tabula Peutinge-*