



FIG. 10A. GOLD COINS OF EUKRATIDES, KING OF BACTRIA, B.C. 180-150.

1142

[Handwritten signature]



THE SARDE COSTUMES ARE BRIGHT, ATTRACTIVE AND WELL ADAPTED TO CLIMATIC CONDITIONS.

PICTURESQUE SARDINIA

By GUIDO CALZA

"*E sospinando che tu vieni in Sardegna, ma è piangendo che tu la lascia.*" You come to Sardinia with sighs, but you leave it with tears, as an old Sarde saying puts it. Yet we experienced no feeling of melancholy when we set sail from Civitavecchia to take part in an Italian archaeological congress in Sardinia.

In fact, a glorious sunny day and a splendid sea enlivened our departure and we, the Italians, were justly proud that the Italian government should have organized an archaeological congress in a land that is little frequented by tourists, yet is one of the most char-

acteristic and interesting in the world, not solely because of the modern life and its modern population, but because of the records of a primitive civilization in this Mediterranean island, which presents so many important problems in ancient history and art. The interest of a visit to Sardinia is such: that representatives of all the foreign schools of archaeology at Rome - Americans, English, French, Germans, Spanish and Swedish, took part in it with us.

After a night on the boat, the coast of Sardinia appeared in the first rays of the sun, clearly outlined against the



"THE CHARM OF A FESTA, WITH THE NATIONAL SARDINIAN COSTUMES, LEAVES AN INERADICABLE IMPRESSION."

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sky; and we saw the promontory that hid Cagliari from us—the famous *Sella del Diavolo*.

Cagliari is in a marvelous situation. From the higher part of the town, the eye embraces an immense gulf whose waters spread out into vast salt-fields, where the sky finds an ever-changing mirror, yet the surrounding country is almost desolate.

All the products of the various civilizations that followed one after the other in Sardinia have been collected in the beautiful Museum at Cagliari, and arranged with great judgment by Prof. Antonio Taramelli, who for twenty-five years has dedicated all his energy as a student to researches in Sardinian history. The whole progress of human civilization, from the



THE NURAGHI, OR FORTRESS-TOWERS, ARE A CHARACTERISTIC SIGHT IN SARDINIA.

Our first walk in Cagliari gave the impression of an Oriental or African city, where the first civilized inhabitants have left their memorials in a Punic necropolis, and where the Romans erected an amphitheatre of which there are still imposing ruins; while the cupola of the Church of SS. Cosmo e Damiano recalls that of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem.

most ancient times down to our own days, is illustrated before our eyes in this museum.

It may be affirmed that man appeared in Sardinia when the first Stone Age came to an end in the other countries of Europe, and in Italy, also. In fact, the primitive man of Sardinia lived beneath the open sky, excavating only dwelling-places for his dead in



THE SARDINIAN RUINS TELL A COHERENT STORY OF CULTURAL PROGRESS.

the rock—those *Domos de Gianas* ("Fairy Houses", as the Sarde peasant calls them), which are a characteristic of the earliest local civilization.

The question is whether the people who built the megalithic monuments in this country (the *nuraghi*) were really the first to inhabit Sardinia, or whether they were a mixed race born of other peoples who came from across the sea. Prof. Taramelli holds that the nuragic civilization was an autochthonic culture, since ruins of large furnaces for smelting ore have been found, proving that the first Sardes knew how to provide themselves with the mineral which was necessary to their existence, and that they sought for it in their own mountains.

In any event, there can be no further doubt that these first Sardes were the builders of the famous *nuraghi*, true fortresses, the defensive purpose of which is now certain. The most ancient, those dating from the Neolithic Age, recall the Talayots in the Island of Majorca; but those very characteristic ones which are only found in Sardinia, belong to the Bronze Age. These fortresses may be compared to mediaeval castles, or to donjons and watch-towers.

They are, in fact, situated in places where they might best serve in the defense of the island—near the ford of a river, or at the entrance to a valley, the largest and the most imposing in the most important positions. They

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are really strategic monuments, and look like great cones built of enormous blocks of stone without cement. Time has covered them with ivy, and lent these stones an orange-tinted patina. There is an uninterrupted succession of these *nuraghi* on both sides of the railroad between Macamer and Sassari; in fact, nearly four thousand of them are scattered throughout the island.

The Nuraghe Losa, which we visited, is one of the most beautiful, and a magnificent example of the strength in building of the ancient Sardes. It is constructed entirely of blocks of basalt, and is surrounded by fortified bastions, between which were the circular huts of the village that grew up around the *nuraghe*. Inside are three vaulted chambers with cupolas, lighted

through a hole which could be covered with a moveable stone in time of danger. A flight of steps, built in the thickness of the wall, leads to an upper terrace from which there is a view of all the surrounding country. The now ruined *nuraghi*, scattered here and there, could communicate with each other by means of signal-fires.

The excavations at Serri have demonstrated that the primitive Sarde worshipped springs of water.

The tribes met on the magnificent plateau of Serri for their religious ceremonies, which took place in a sanctuary consisting of a ruined temple and a sacred well; a flight of steps led down to this well from an atrium where there were an altar and tables for offerings to the divinity. The dwell-



THE SARDINIAN MAIDEN IS AT HER BEST IN HER VERY CHARACTERISTIC FESTAL ATTIRE AND JEWELRY.

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ings that grew up around this sanctuary were similar to the modern Sardinian farmhouse, called *lolla*. In fact, we saw a large arcade with rough pillars made of stone and mud, and roofed with limestone slabs placed on wooden rafters; and there were stone benches along the walls.

As for the tombs—the primitive people of Sardinia buried their dead in caverns cut out of the rock, or in the famous "Giants' Graves". The one we saw near Barore is in a good state of preservation. A stela closes a long subterranean corridor surrounded by a circular area with seats for the relations, who met together here near the deceased.

Nor was the charm of a *festa* with national Sardinian costumes wanting; and it has left an indelible impression. A group of youths and young girls of Cagliari, wearing the costumes of the various regions of the island, presented themselves before his Majesty the King and before us, the members of this Archaeological Congress. The women's costumes, which are usually red, are made of some heavy woolen stuff and have a very voluminous plaited skirt, the border being ornamented with a design woven in silk. The head is covered with a piece of colored woolen material and a piece of white linen, something like the coif worn by nuns; gold and silver jewelry complete this characteristic feminine toilet, which is very becoming to the Sardinian woman, as she is, as a rule, of a dark complexion, has big black eyes and very beautiful teeth. Nevertheless, there are some blond descendants of the Genoese who settled in southern Sardinia.

The men's costumes are even more characteristic than those of the women, and are worn a great deal, because they

are adapted to the climate and to their pastoral life. This costume consists of a *collettu* or close-fitting, sleeveless leather jacket, which is very tight around the hips, then overlaps, and hangs down to the knees. Over it is worn a sheepskin cape with the wool inside or outside, according to the season; and on the head is a cap with a point dangling down to the shoulder.

The interest of the monuments left by the peoples who have held sway over the island—Carthaginians, Romans, Pisans, and Spanish—has been our guide through the various regions of Sardinia, which are desolate in part, yet always splendid with their varied coloring and great luminosity. We crossed the Sulcis mountains, clothed with odorous plants; in their foot-hills is the Castle of Siliqua, where the tradition is that Count Ugolino lived. The villages seem poor, at first sight, but some splendid monument always enriches them and lends them interest. At Dolianova is one of the most beautiful churches in Sardinia, an example of the Romano-Pisan style with barely a suggestion of the Gothic innovation; it is dedicated to a physician and saint—San Pantaleo.

And the mountainous group of the Gennargentu has shown us a high-mountain landscape with immense pastures, just as in our Italian Alps. A great many houses in the villages hidden among its forests still have the characteristic wooden balconies. These villages are centers of the artistic peasant industries, especially that of carving marriage-chests of chestnut-wood. The colored woolen counterpanes, called *fressadas*, are really worthy of admiration.

Yet costume and archaeology are not the sole attractions in Sardinia; modern Italy has created in this island a



THERE IS A STRONG SUGGESTION OF THE ITALIAN ALPS ABOUT THE MOUNTAIN VILLAGES OF SARDINIA.

most enormous reservoir for water by constructing a magnificent dam in the river Tirso.

Thus in these days of our archaeological congress, we have relived thousands of years of history in the testimony born by her monuments; from the cult of the gods and of the dead by the primitive inhabitants, and the full testimony born by the many civilizations which have left their records, down to the costumes of the modern population and the great work of drain-

age that has been carried out to improve sanitary and industrial conditions throughout the island.

Sadness filled our hearts when we left, and regret at quitting a land where courtesy is innate, and hospitality a duty—a land that, with the beauty of the landscape, the charm of national costumes, and the importance of monuments dating from every age, scattered through its mountains and plains, is certainly one of the most interesting regions of Italy.