



UNIONE EUROPEA



REPUBBLICA ITALIANA



REGIONE AUTÓNOMA DE SARDIGNA
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Archaeological area of Tharros

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ Female statue

Among the small terracotta figures in the ancient Punic Age, female statues with a disc on their breast (figs. 1-3) played an important part.



Fig. 1 - Statue of a woman with disc on chest (Oristano, *Antiquarium Arborensis*) (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)



Fig. 2 - Statue of a woman with disc on chest (Oristano, *Antiquarium Arborense*) (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)



Fig. 3 - Statue of a woman with disc on chest (Oristano, *Antiquarium Arborense*) (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)



The woman has a veiled head and is wrapped in a heavy cloak that hangs on her legs in three stiff vertical folds. She holds a disk in her left hand to her breast, on which she places her right hand.

The small statue is made with a single façade, and therefore was meant to be seen from the front.

This type of iconography was widely known in the western Punic world and several statues with similar characteristics, although not identical, have been found in Tharros (fig. 4).



Fig. 4 - Statue of woman with disc on chest. From Tharros, kept at the British Museum in London (from AA.VV. 2007, p. 354)

Debate is still ongoing about identification of the female figure shown. It is uncertain whether she is a priestess or a worshipper. In any case it is generally accepted that she plays the tambourine, thus surpassing the old theory that saw her as a divinity holding the sun.

This series of statues dates to the end of the 6th and first decades of the 5th century B.C.

■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Carlo Tronchetti

■ Bibliography

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La Sardegna cresce con l'Europa



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