



UNIONE EUROPEA



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REGIONE AUTÓNOMA DE SARDIGNA
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Archaeological area of Tharros

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ The area in the Punic Age

The urban centre of Tharros was founded in Sinis, a good area for human settlement, with its easy landing place in the Gulf of Oristano, the amount of fish in its waters, game to be hunted, the fertile soil and the wealth of metal in Montiferru, just a few kilometres further north (fig. 1).

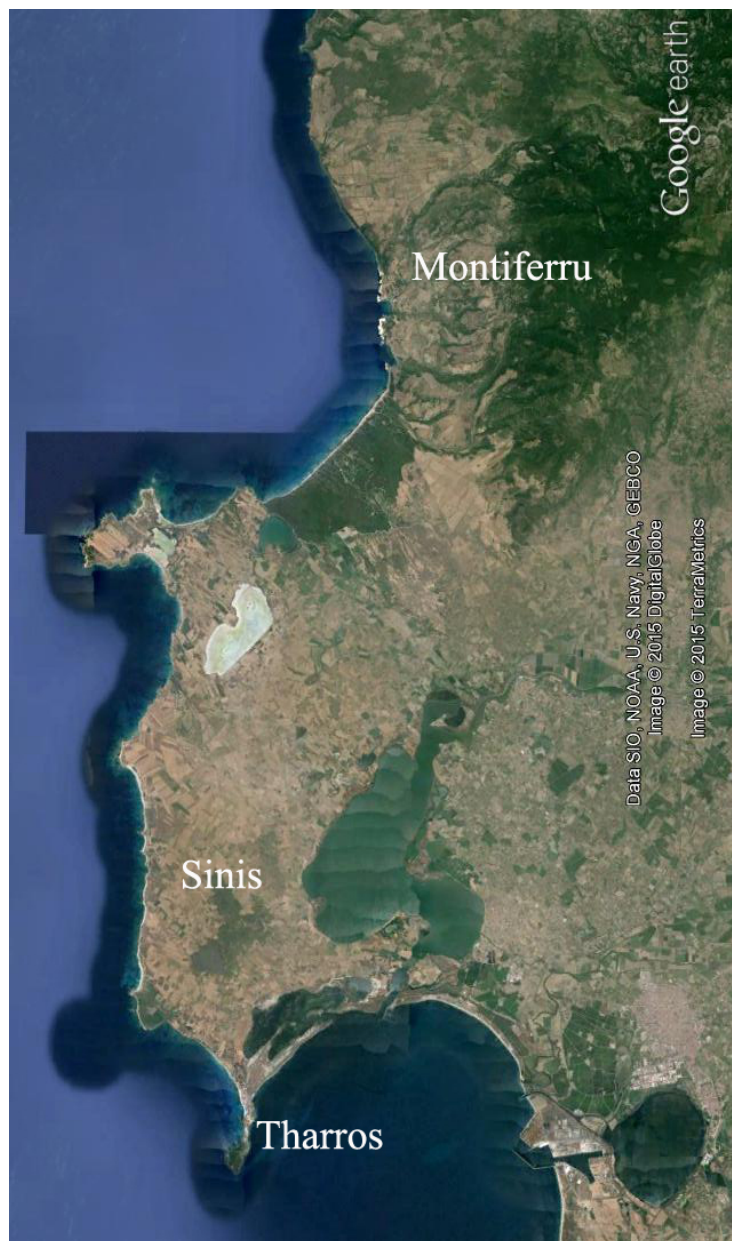


Fig. 1 - The area of Sinis and Montiferru in relation to Tharros (from Google Earth. Review C. Tronchetti)

The intense traces of anthropisation in the area in the Punic Age, starting from the end of the 6th century B.C. Onwards, show how the city, although mainly with a commercial vocation, was also aimed at a rational use of the economic potential of local resources (fig. 2).

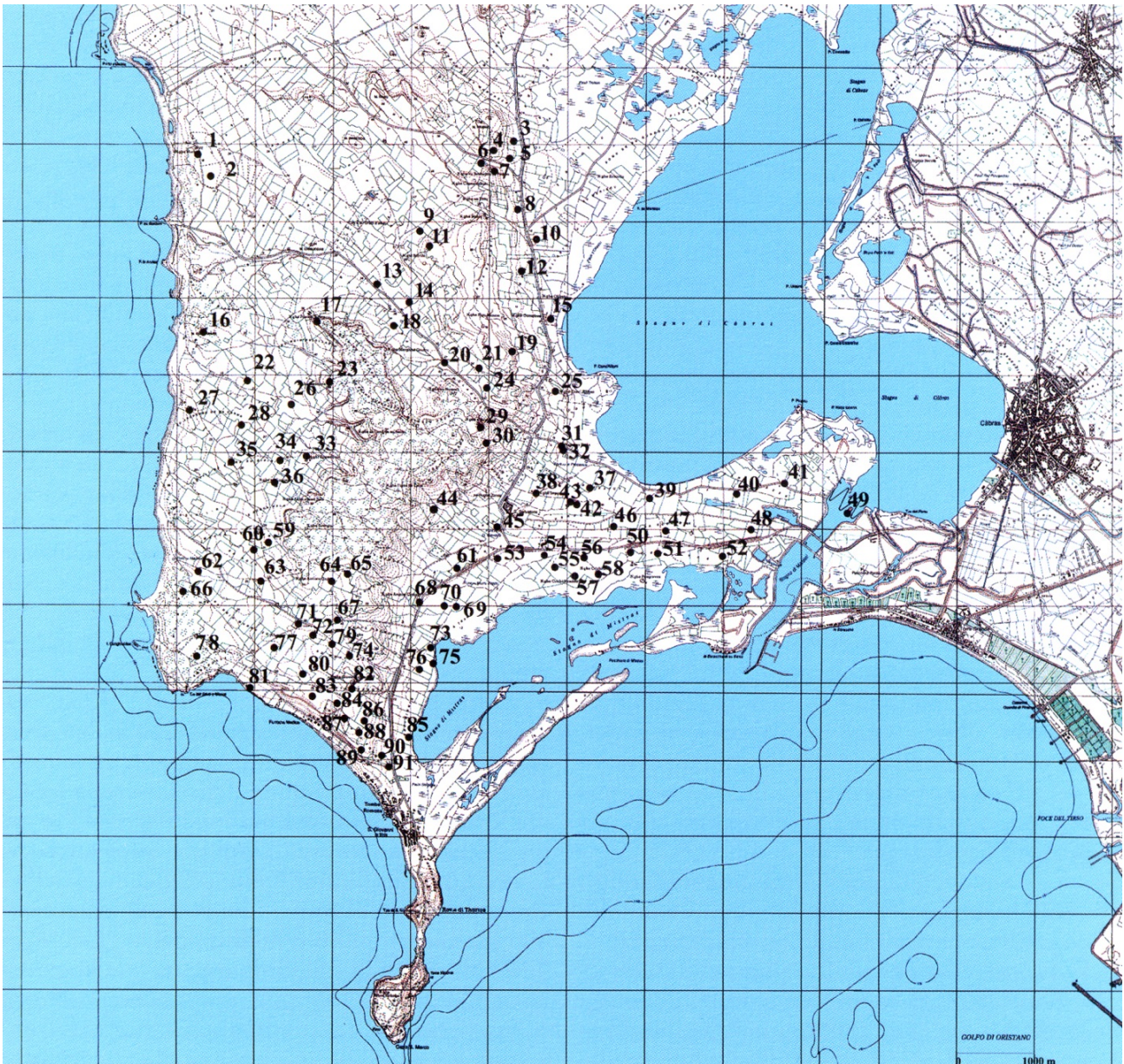


Fig. 2 - Punic settlements in the Sinis region (from DEL VAIS 2015)

The spreading of Punic settlements in the area grew over time, until its peak in the 4th and 3rd centuries B.C.

The favourite locations were the countryside and the lower parts of hills, while the higher areas had a more sporadic presence, often linked with Nuragic structures being used again. The phenomenon of re-using these structures also occurred in other situations, as in the area of the Cuccuru S'Arriu temple well, where a small place of worship was built in front of it (figs. 3-4).



Fig. 3 - The Punic place of worship in front of the Nuragic well temple of Cuccuru S'Arriu (from DEL VAIS 2015)



Fig. 4 - Part of the votive depository in the Punic sacellum of Cuccuru S'Arriu (from DEL VAIS 2015)

Overall it can be said that the Punic presence in the area followed certain settlement choices intended to use the countryside and its resources in the best way possible. The rational way in which the settlements were arranged lead them to be used for the entire Roman Republic era, until the moment of radical transformation in the Imperial Age.

The rural settlements identified are rarely large, and most comprise rather small residential areas. The territory was organised in a hierarchical manner, with some centres that acted as coordinators and collectors of resources, that were then sent to Tharros. The town, in turn, distributed items produced in the town and imported ones, such as Attican pottery.

There are still some traces of some places of worship, dedicated to a female goddess protector of the fields and the harvests, that had many features in common with the Greek goddess Demetra.

■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Carlo Tronchetti

■ Bibliography

C. DEL VAIS, *Il Sinis di Cabras in età punica*, in M. MINOIA, A. USAI (edd.), *Le sculture di Mont'e Prama. Contesto, scavi e materiali*, Roma 2015, pp. 103-136





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