



UNIONE EUROPEA



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REGIONE AUTÓNOMA DE SARDIGNA  
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

# Archaeological area of Tharros

Patrimonio culturale  
**SARDEGNA** Virtual Archaeology



## ■ Punic Tharros

During the second half of the 6th century B.C., Sardinia underwent a large increase in the presence of Carthaginians; the influence of the African city became stronger, also with a few episodes of war. In the first treaty between Carthage and Rome, in 509 B.C., Sardinia was included in the metropolitan area of Carthage. We can speak of a Punic Sardinia from this date.

As a Phoenician centre, Tharros is fleeting and the data we have only comes from the study of the materials found in the necropolis.

For Punic Tharros, the situations is a little better, as life in the site continued up to the Byzantine age, and the Punic structures were almost all destroyed or obliterated by later interventions.

There are still a few signs, however, and together with the information from the necropolises, help to restore a picture of a rich, flourishing city.

The top of the Su Muru hill showed up a stratification of life in which the Punic age is particularly evident (fig. 1).



**Fig. 1** - The top of the hill of Su Muru Mannu, with indications of the items from the Punic age: A) tophet; B) craftsmen quarter; C) fortification wall; D) fortifications from Republican Age (from Google Earth. Re-processed by C. Tronchetti).

The tophet covers the centuries from the 7th to the 2nd centuries B.C.; to the west, in an area out of the town, separate from the actual residential area, there was a craftsmen's area, active in the 4th century B.C. dedicated to the working of iron and pottery. A boundary wall from the end of the 4th century B.C. was found in the same area. (fig. 2) built with materials from older sacred buildings, as shown in the inscriptions found engraved on some of the blocks.



**Fig. 2** - Punic fortification wall (from E. ACQUARO ET ALII 1997)

Lower down the southern slope of the hill, was the centre of Roman Tharros, which was also existent in the Punic Age, as the most imposing monument is there, the temple of semi-columns (figs. 3-5), datable in the 4th century B.C.





**Fig. 3** - The central quarter with the temple of semi-columns (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)



**Fig. 4** - The base of the temple of semi-columns (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)



**Fig. 5** - The base of the temple of semi-columns (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)

On the eastern slope of the San Giovanni hill, there is another sacred area, smaller, with a small temple (temple K) with an attached portico (figs. 6-7).



**Fig. 6** - Area of temple K on the slopes of San Giovanni hill (photo by Unicity S.p.A.).



**Fig. 7** - Temple K and the portico on the slopes of San Giovanni hill (photo by Unicity S.p.A.).

We cannot say whether the several open cisterns with dual sloping covers (fig. 8), the typical shape of the Punic world but continued to be built for a long time in the Roman age, are of Punic or later origin; it is likely that at least one part of them is datable to the Carthaginian age, later used by the Romans too.



**Fig. 8** - Cistern covered with double sloping blocks (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)

## ■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Carlo Tronchetti

## ■ Bibliography

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