



UNIONE EUROPEA



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REGIONE AUTÓNOMA DE SARDIGNA  
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

# Archaeological area of Tharros

Patrimonio culturale  
**SARDEGNA** Virtual Archaeology



## ■ The Punic temple of semi-columns

The most important and significant evidence of Punic Tharros remaining is the so-called temple of semi-columns" (figs 1-3).



**Fig. 1** - Location of the temple of semi-columns (from Google Earth. Reprocessed by C. Tronchetti)



**Fig. 2** - The semi-column temple from above (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)



**Fig. 3** - The temple of semi-columns; left, the remains of a Roman structure; top the large cistern (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)

The name was allocated by the digger Gennaro Pesce, due to the special construction technique of the structure. In fact, the base of the temple was made from the rock "by lifting", until a terraced podium was formed. Using the same technique, the two long walls and the back wall were decorated with semi-columns in relief work (figs- 4-7).



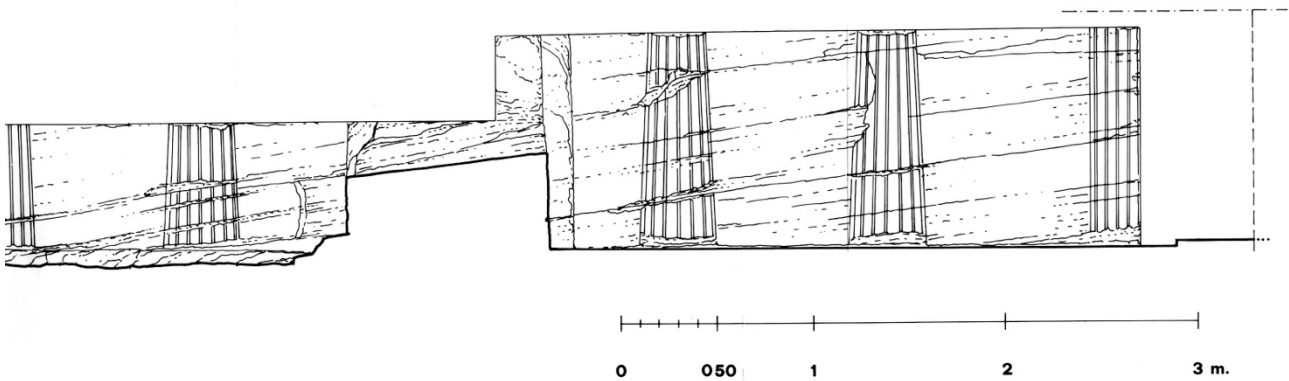
**Fig. 4** - The temple of semi-columns (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)



**Fig. 5** - The temple of semi-columns; details of the relief work on the columns (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)



**Fig. 6** - The temple of semi-columns; details of the relief work on the columns (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)

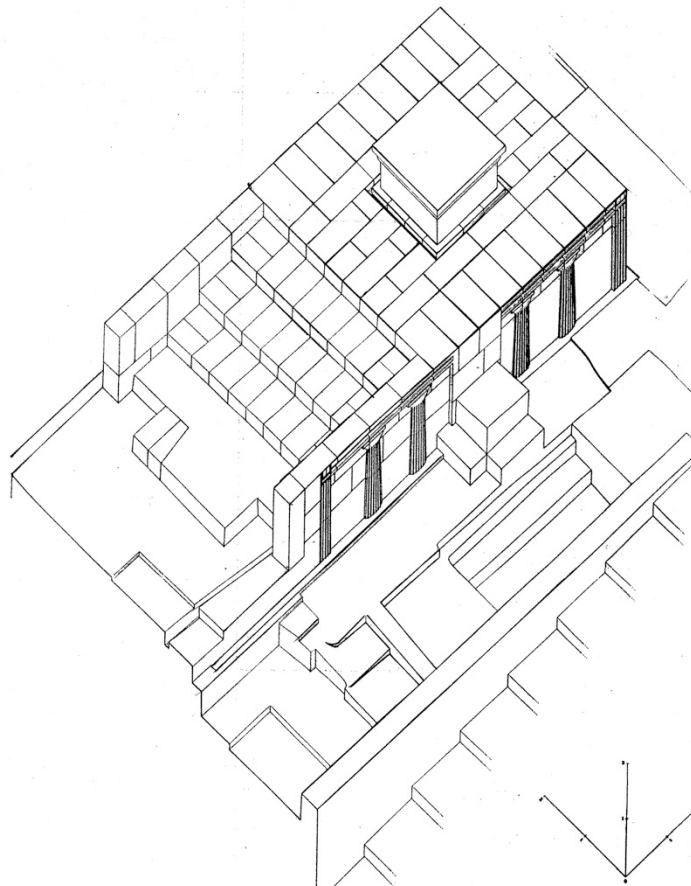


**Fig. 7** - Relief work on the northern side of the temple of the semi-columns  
(from ACQUARO 1991, page 541)

The temple of semi-columns is dated between the 4th and 3rd centuries B.C., and the reconstruction of the upper part is made complex by the fact that during the 1st century B.C., in the Roman Republican Age, it was demolished and covered by a limestone floor for a new sacred structure.

The current hypothesis is considered to be the most feasible, and reconstructs the temple as having only the terraced podium, as a base for an open-air altar (fig. 8) according to a sacred type that was popular in the semitic world.

The temple was decorated in the western and southern corners with two statues of sandstone lion, which have only partly been preserved (fig. 9).



**Fig. 8** - Axonometric reconstruction of the temple of the semi-columns (from PERRA 1998, page 214)

We know for sure, on the other hand, that the front of the temple was decorated with two sandstone lions in the corners, which have only been partly preserved.





**Fig. 9** - Sandstone lion statue from the temple of semi-columns (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)



## ■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Carlo Tronchetti

## ■ Bibliography

E. ACQUARO, *Tharros tra Fenicia e Cartagine*, in *Atti del II Congresso Internazionale di Studi Fenici e Punici*, Roma 1991, pp. 537-558

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G. PESCE, *Il tempio punico monumentale a Tharros*, in *Monumenti Antichi dei Lincei XLV*, 1960, coll. 332-440.





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