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REGIONE AUTÓNOMA DE SARDIGNA
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

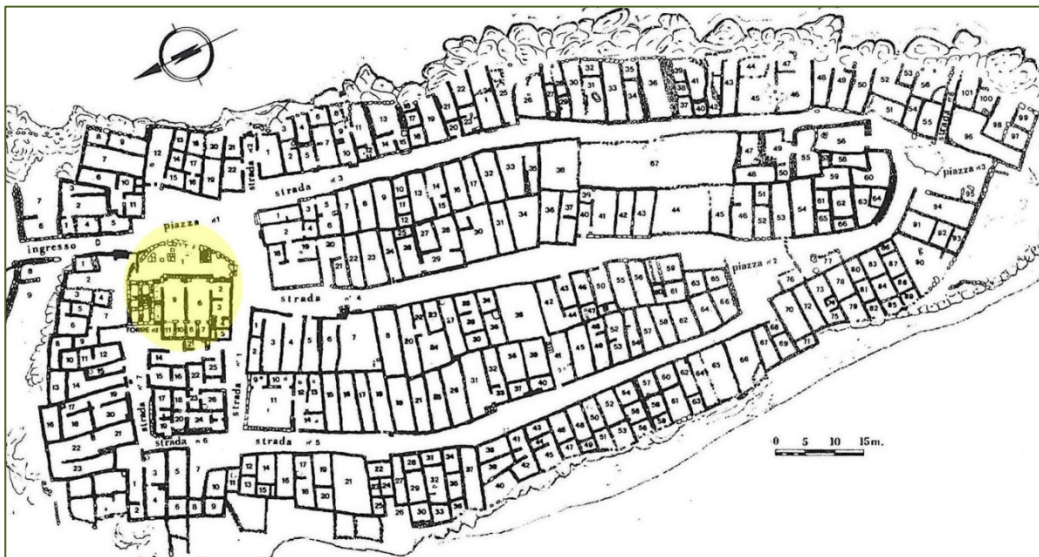
Archaeological area of Mount Sirai

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ The temple of Astarte

The temple (or sanctuary) of Astarte (from the name attributed to the small statue found there) is dated in its last arrangement to the 3rd or 2nd century BC. It is located immediately after the entrance to the acropolis and before the blocks (figs. 1-2).



Figs. 1, 2 - The settlement of Monte Sirai: highlighted the "temple of Astarte". BARTOLONI 2004, fig. 11; drawn up by GUIRGUIS 2013, fig. 11).

This has various rooms, cells of worship (fig. 3) and a nearby tub, now in the ground (fig. 4) that was presumably used for cleansing functions. The monument is one of the keys for understanding the history of the site, as it is a religious structure used for worship, set on a previous Nuragic area that was also perhaps holy (part of the round wall can be seen), that was active between the 8th and 6th century BC, before the Carthaginians conquered the area. The small statue of Astarte (fig. 7), a Phoenician goddess with astral value, connected with love and healing, was found (an item of worship) in the latter Roman period, but dates back at least to the 7th century B.C.



Figs. 3, 5 - The settlement of Monte Sirai: highlighted the "temple of Astarte". (BARTOLONI 2004, fig. 11; drawn up by GUIRGUIS 2013, fig. 11)

Nuragic and Phoenician bronze statues refer to this phase; one of them, the symbol of the well-known meeting between Phoenicians and Nuragic people in Sardinia (stated to have taken place a short distance from the Sirai nuraghe) shows a libation with a pitcher similar to the askoid Nuragic ones (figs. 5-6).



Figs. 6, 8 - Phoenician bronze statue (MOSCATI 1988b, p. 427) ; statue of Astarte (MOSCATI 1988b, p. 286) ; Egyptian-style protome (MOSCATI 1988, p. 362)

Following the Nuragic and Phoenician period, there was an episode (general on the site) of destruction and reorganisation, attributed to the Carthaginian conquest in the final decades of the 6th century BC: materials from the Late Antique age and the 5th century BC, such as masks, protomes (fig. 8), Attica ceramics with black figures and a possible reworking of the statue all refer to this period.

Another Punic phase, in the 4th century BC, a period in which the cistern and an inscription on bronze sheet are placed, was prior to the final arrangement, after 238 B.C., for which a graphic reproduction has been proposed (fig. 9). The famous statue was found on a shelf at the back of one of the central cells.

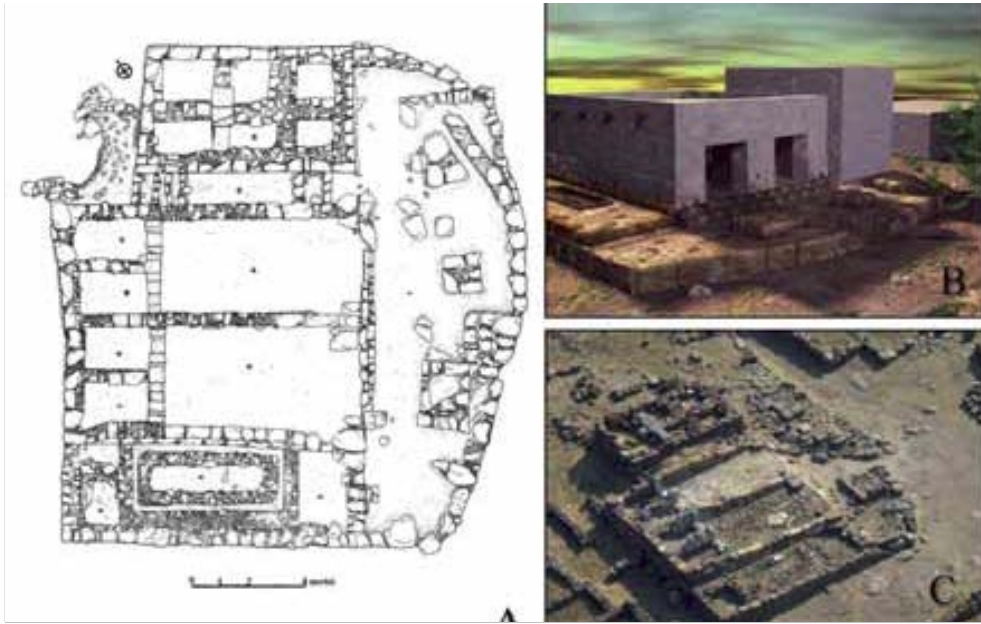


Fig. 9 - Temple of Astarte: map and reconstruction hypothesis (GUIRGUIS 2013, fig. 15)

■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Giuseppina Manca di Mores and Prof. Marcello Madau

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La Sardegna cresce con l'Europa



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