

Necropolis of Is Pirixeddus

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ *Lekythos*

The *lekythos* (fig. 1) was found in a tomb which cannot be precisely identified, in the Phoenician-Punic necropolis of Sulky. It is an aryballic *lekythos*, from its similarity with the round body of the *aryballos* (fig. 2) a shape of Attican origin, that can be dated between the end of the 6th and the 5th century B.C.



Fig. 1 - Attic *Lekythos* found in the necropolis of Sulky. Municipal Archaeological Museum "F. Barreca"
(photo by Unicity S.p.A.)



Fig. 2 - A typical Greek Aryballos decorated with black figures on a cream-coloured background (from http://www.antika.it/005070_vasi-greci-forme-e-tecnica.html).

This example, in black paint with red figures, was found in fragments and then reassembled for the most part, leaving a wide gap in the body (fig. 3) under the part where the handle joins the body. The handle has also been lost.

The vessel has a narrow neck and a mouth like a funnel; the body is globular with the image of the profile of a woman's face, looking to the right.



Fig. 3 - Attic Lekythos found in the necropolis of Sulky, detail of the gap. Municipal Archaeological Museum "F. Barreca" (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)

It is a rather well-known shape in the Phoenician-Punic world and is placed in the realm of trade exchanges across the Mediterranean Sea: already from the early Phoenician colonisation in the West (9th-8th century B.C. circa), in fact, relations between the eastern



population and the Greek continent were frequent and due to a series of episodes linked especially to trade, for primary goods, such as oil, wine, cereals and fish sauce, and also so-called "luxury" items, main fine tableware.

Lekythos from the first half of the 6th century in both Corinth and Attica are round or oval (fig. 4) with a short neck and solid ring foot. The so-called standard shaped developed from this, in which the shoulder is separate from the body, taking on a horizontal direction and slightly hollow with the brim evident and in a goblet shape, around the end of the 6th century B.C. (fig. 5).



Fig. 4 - Egg-shaped Lekythos

(from http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lekythos#/media/File:KAMA_Guerrier_s%27armant.jpg)



Fig. 5 - *Lekythos* in its characteristic standard shape
(from http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lekythos#/media/File:NAMA_Act%C3%A9on.jpg).

This characteristic Attican shape was used as an balm container and the round shape with narrow neck and the spout opening was functional for this purpose.



■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Cinzia Olianas

■ Bibliographic abbreviations

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