



# Necropolis of Is Pirixeddus

Patrimonio culturale  
**SARDEGNA** Virtual Archaeology



## ■ Askos

The *Askos* was found in tomb 10AR of the necropolis in Sulky, and belongs to a set of grave goods dated to the mid-fifth century B.C. This example (figs 1-2) belongs to the type of bird-shape containers, with three feet, one front and two rear, with a long body and tall neck and a small head with a rounded tip to represent the beak, with a hole. The handle starts from the rear of the head, arching to-wards the middle of the body, that is then linked to the pouring sport, with a small funnel neck and the perforated bottom that creates a filter.



**Fig. 1** - Bird-shaped Askos from Sulky. Municipal Archaeological Museum "F. Barreca" (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)



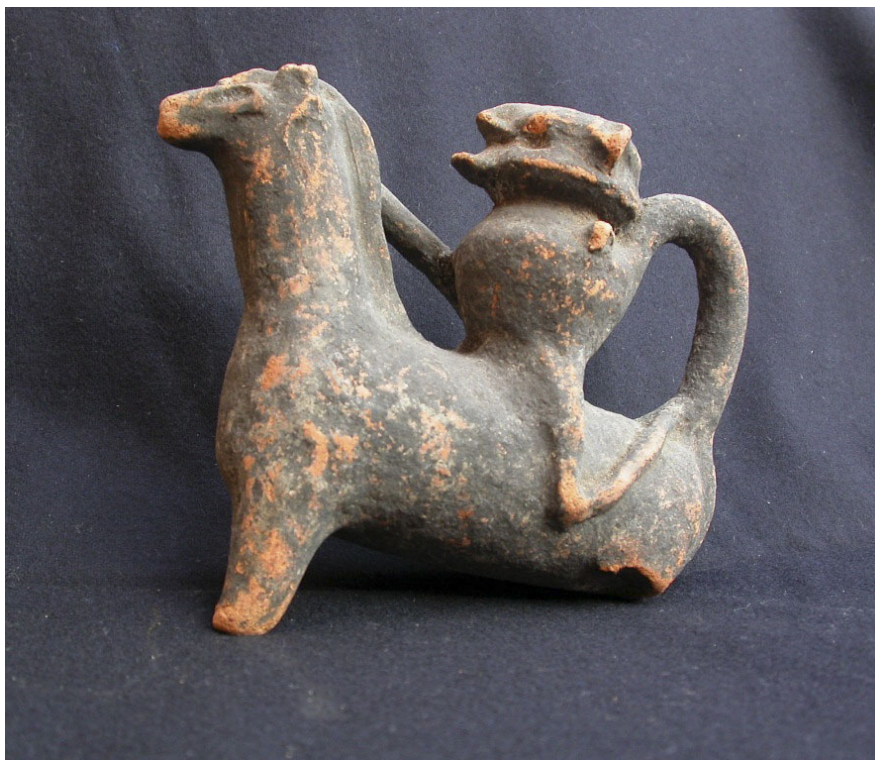
**Fig. 2** - Bird-shaped Askos from Sulky. Municipal Archaeological Museum "F. Barreca" (photo by Unicity S.p.A.)

The rear end of the Askos is pointed in order to represent the tail of the bird. The entire vessel is then enriched with a decoration in black and white paint on the red clay surface. The parts of the bird's body, the wings, chest and head are outlined by a black line, filled in with white on which black varnish is painted to give the idea of feathers, created with dots and diagonal lines. There are also typical horizontal alternating lines in black and white paint. Another bird-shaped *askos* found in *Sulky* is kept at the National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari and is in the shape of a dove (fig. 3): unlike the other, this does not have the anatomic parts of the bird highlighted through the drawings on the surface of the container. The Phoenician-Punic bird-shaped *Askos* is inspired by the same type of vascular Cypriot and Philistine production from the period 1200 to 1050 B.C., and is present in funerary,

sacred (as in the Tophet) and housing contexts. A large number have been found in Sardinia, with different shapes: the horse-shaped one is quite common (fig. 4) as is the bovine-shaped one (fig. 5). Furthermore, clay is not the only material used: in fact, bronze Askoi can be found (fig. 6).



**Fig. 3** - The dove-shaped Askos from Sulky. National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari (from <http://www.isoladisardegna.com/fenici/askos-a-forma-colomba.html>).



**Fig. 4** - The Askos in the shape of a horse and rider. Antiquarium Arboreense in Oristano  
(from <http://museisardegna.blogspot.it/2011/11/antiquarium-arboreense.html>).



**Fig. 5** - A bovine-shaped Askos from Motya. Archaeological Museum of Motya "G. Whitaker"  
(from <http://web.tiscalinet.it/fondazionewhitaker/Mozia/dir/vasi.htm>).

The Punic materials are vaguely faithful to the Aegean and Cypriot originals, as we also see in our examples. Its primary function was to contain liquids, or more likely, ointments, a hypothesis confirmed in this case by the presence on the bottom of an opening with small holes which was probably used for filtering fragrant herbs.



**Fig. 6** - Askos in bronze plate from the Nuragic village of Sa Sedda and Sos Carros  
(from <http://www.lamiasardegna.it/files/storia-fenici.htm>).

## ■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Cinzia Olianas

## ■ Bibliographic abbreviations

- BARTOLONI 2007      P. BARTOLONI, *Il museo archeologico comunale "F. Barreca" di Sant'Antioco*, Sassari 2007
- CINTAS 1970        CINTAS P., *Manuel d'archéologie punique I*, Paris 1970.
- MUSCUSO 2008      S. MUSCUSO, *Il Museo "F. Barreca" di Sant'Antioco: le tipologie vascolari della necropoli di Sulky = Sardinia Corsica et Baleares Antiquae*, Sassari, VI, 2008, pp. 9-39.

## ■ Periodicals and magazines

- SARDINIA, CORSICA ET BALEARES ANTIQUAE**      *Sardinia, Corsica et Baleares Antiquae. An International Journal of Archaeology*, Sassari, I, 2003 e ss.



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