

Necropolis of Is Pirixeddus

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ The Municipal Archaeological Museum "Ferruccio Barreca"

Excavations began in Sant'Antioco, the ancient *Sulky*, in the area of the *tophet* and of the underground necropolis in 1956. The digs were carried out by the Superintendent of Antiquities in Cagliari of the time, Gennaro Pesce (fig. 1) and Inspector Ferruccio Barreca (fig. 2) in collaboration with the main assistant Peppino Lai.



Fig. 1 - Gennaro Pesce in an image from 1942
(detail from http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Sassari_-_Menhir_di_Monte_d%27Accoddi,_1942.jpg)



Fig. 2 - An image of Ferruccio Barreca at work (from BARTOLONI 2007, p. 5, fig. 1)

The considerable findings made it necessary to find a suitable arrangement for the findings in loco, due to the distance from Cagliari and the lack of adequate space in the National Archaeological Museum in Cagliari. The Superintendency was forced to create a store in Sant'Antioco, although a temporary one, to house most of the items. In the same period, in the area next to the part of the necropolis known as *Is Pirixeddus* (i.e. "the small wells"), construction had begun of three two-floor buildings that were to be built in what was at that time the immediate north-east outskirts of the town, between the basilica of Sant'Antioco and the Savoy fortress of *Su Pisu*. While work was carried out, the first building was finished and work began on the others. Then officials from the Superintendency found traces of ancient structures between the foundation trenches. This brought the works to an immediate halt, which were then suspended permanently and the sites were moved to another area; the two apartments on the second floor of the building already built, totalling about 150 square metres, was granted to the town council for use as a temporary depot for the findings, thus forming the first centre for the future Municipal Archaeological Museum. F. Barreca wanted at least a part of the items found in those

years to be on show and made available to the public, thus creating a small *antiquarium* that was included in the Sardinia tour guides from the early 1960s.

Around the mid 1980s, the items found and stored in the temporary depot were partly placed in a temporary exhibitions in a room on the ground floor of Monte Granatico in the town, that was suitable renovated. In the meanwhile, at the beginning of the 1970s , the new museum was planned and in 1973, the building was constructed in an area next to the *tophet*, thanks to funds made available by the *Cassa del Mezzogiorno*. After various events and several changeovers of the building from one body to another, it was acquired by the Municipal Council in the mid 90s, and using funds from the Autonomous Region of Sardinia, managed to complete the building that was opened at the end of 2005, after being carefully fitted under the supervision of Piero Bartoloni (fig. 3). The museum was named after F. Barreca, who was the creator of the very first centre.



Fig. 3 - Outside view of the Municipal Archaeological Museum of Sant'Antioco (from <http://www.tharros.info/sites/Sulki/Sulki001a.jpg>).

The current museum has four rooms, the first of which introduces us to the various civilisations which lived on the island of Sant'Antioco and is partly devoted to the origins of

human settlements from prehistory and early history. From the second to the fourth room, the exhibition concerns discoveries made in the area of the necropolis and the Tophet, embellished by explanatory panels and reconstructive plastic models (fig. 4). The video which reconstructs the wooden sarcophagus of tomb 11 is of great interest.

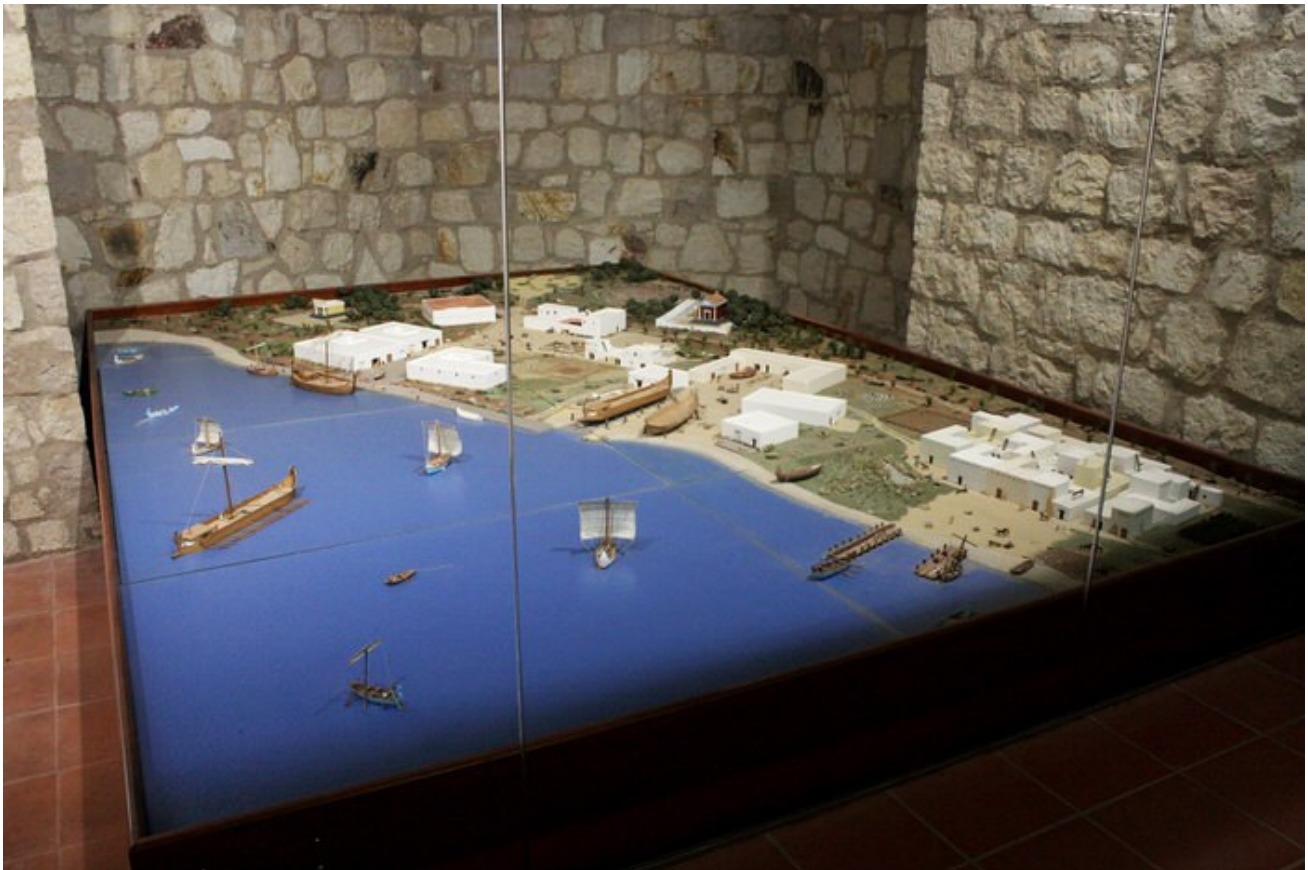


Fig. 4 - One of the models with the reconstruction of the port of Sulky (photo by M. Murgia).

The Museum may be reached by driving along the State Road 126 to the entrance to the village. Once over the bridge which connects the island of Sulcis with the main Island, one turns to the right and drives along the waterfront, leaving the city centre on the left, up to a sharp bend, near the shipyards. It is obligatory to turn left and to drive along the straight road which leads directly to the square in front of the Museum (fig. 5).



Fig. 5 - The Archaeological Museum seen from above. To the left of the building, the Tophet (from Google Earth).

■ 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

TRONCHETTI 1989 C. TRONCHETTI, *S. Antioco*, SASSARI 1989.





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Progetto cofinanziato dall'Unione Europea
Programma Operativo FESR 2007-2013

FESR - Fondo Europeo di Sviluppo Regionale - Asse I, Linea di Attività 1.2.3.a