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REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA  
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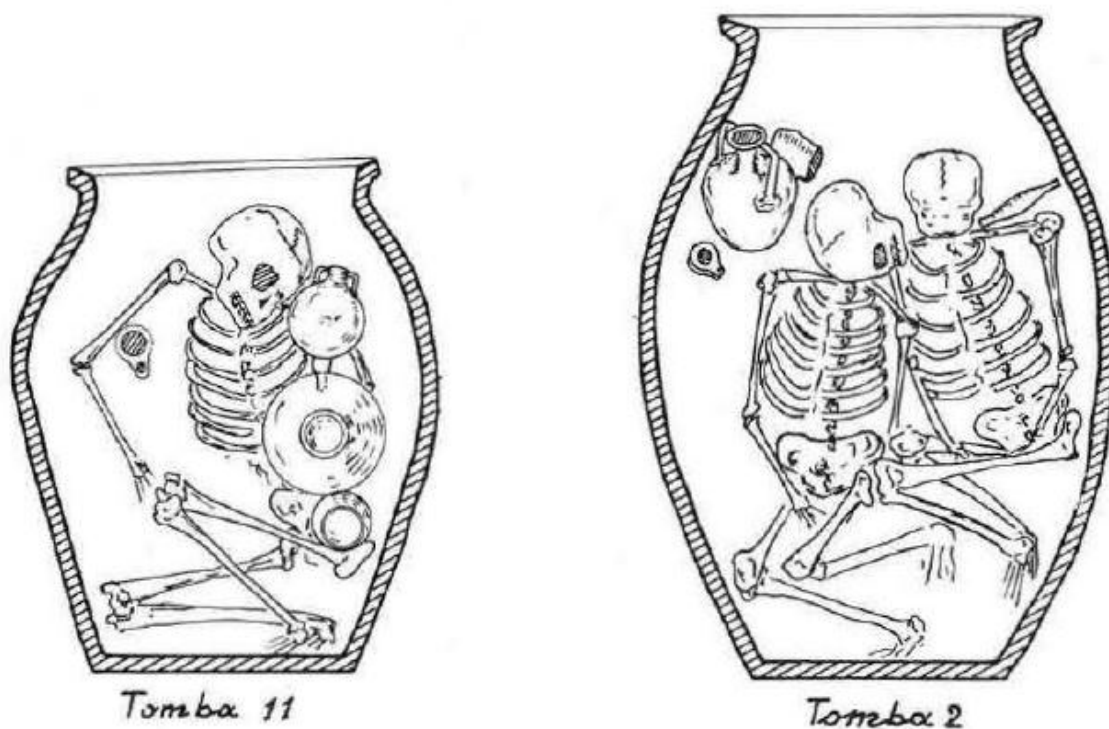
# Necropolis of Is Pirixeddus

Patrimonio culturale  
**SARDEGNA** Virtual Archaeology



## ■ *Enchytrismos* Tomb

A good number of enchytrismos burials have been found in the necropolis of Sulky, a type of tomb which was used as early as prehistoric times, when at times it was necessary to use large jars (ziri) as burial vessels (fig. 1), while in Punic, Roman and Christian times amphorae were used, particularly for burying children.



**Fig. 1** - Ziro (large terracotta vase) burials from Cantaru Ena, Florinas - SS (from MAETZKE 1964).

When the amphora was used for infants who died at an early age, it was cut vertically to allow the insertion of the body; the cut part was then joined up and then it was placed inside a pit (fig. 2).



**Fig. 2** - Reconstruction of an enchytrismos burial for infants  
(from [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2e/Esempio\\_di\\_sepoltura\\_ad\\_Enchytrismos.JPG](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/2e/Esempio_di_sepoltura_ad_Enchytrismos.JPG)).

In the case of adult burials, as the amphorae were too small to contain the body, they used two, which, once cut from the shoulder diagonally and then again vertically in order to allow the body to be inserted, were united so as to form a single container for the body (fig. 3).

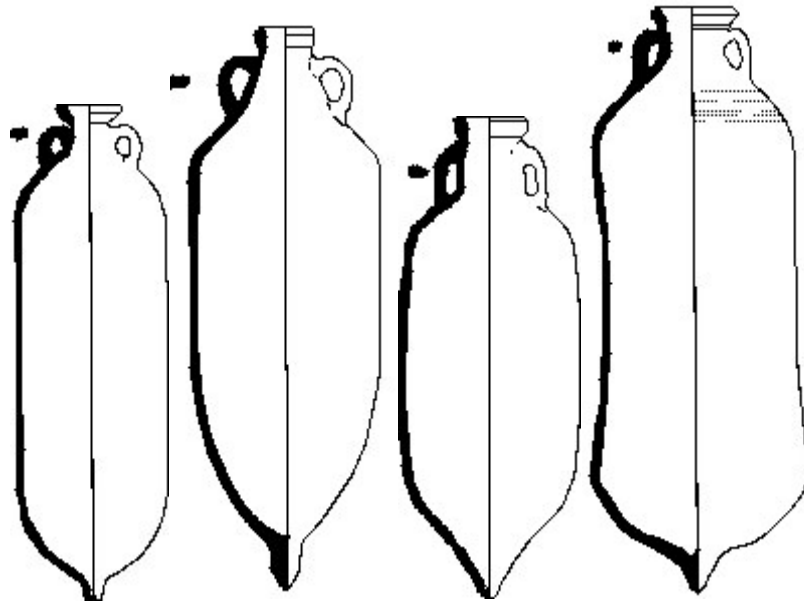


**Fig. 3** - Enchytrismos burial which combines two jars to allow the burial of an adult, at the necropolis of Agrigento from late ancient and medieval times (from CAMINNECI 2012, p. 123, fig. 11).

As concerns the Punic Age, the enchytrismos burial appears during the latter part of the sixth century B.C. and endures until the beginning of the fourth century A.D. It was carried out with large commercial amphorae where the children were buried and then placed in a dedicated area within the necropolis.

During the Roman Empire, the most used amphorae for burying the dead were the Tripoli type, the African I type and the African II, which were originally used to transport oil and other products, including a fish sauce which the Romans were particularly fond of, the garum. They document Sulky's relationship with Africa (fig. 4).





**Fig. 4** - Types of amphorae also used for enchytrismos burials. From the left: African I and II types; Tripoli I and II types (from [http://ceipac.gh.ub.es/MOSTRA/i\\_p11.htm](http://ceipac.gh.ub.es/MOSTRA/i_p11.htm)).

Only a few cases of burials of this type still have their accompanying grave goods. This is the case of tomb 146 in the necropolis of Sulky, where they had been placed partly inside and partly outside the enchytrismòs.

The conservation status of the amphorae is often compromised, so it is not always easy to identify the type, but in any case they supply general guidelines concerning their history which places them between the second century and the fourth century A.D. The enchytrismos for burying infants continued in the early Christian Age, a period during which the amphorae were often placed in niches inside the catacombs.

## ■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Cinzia Olianas

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### **NSc**

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### **QuadCa**

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## La Sardegna cresce con l'Europa



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