



UNIONE EUROPEA



REPUBBLICA ITALIANA



REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA
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Necropolis of Is Pirixeddus

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ The Roman amphitheatre

What remains of the ancient Roman amphitheatre of Sulky was identified at the end of 1983 at the base of the hill where the Punic necropolis with the underground chamber tombs is also located. The burial area, was largely re-arranged already in the 2nd century B.C. then in the Roman Republican Era to accommodate the huge entrance to the acropolis, the remains of which are placed at the foot of the fortress Su Pisu, to the north. Traces of a temple building with steps, similar in structure to the one in via Malta in Cagliari, are still preserved on the Acropolis (fig.1).



Fig. 1 - Remains of walls on the acropolis of *Sulky* (photo by C. Olanas)

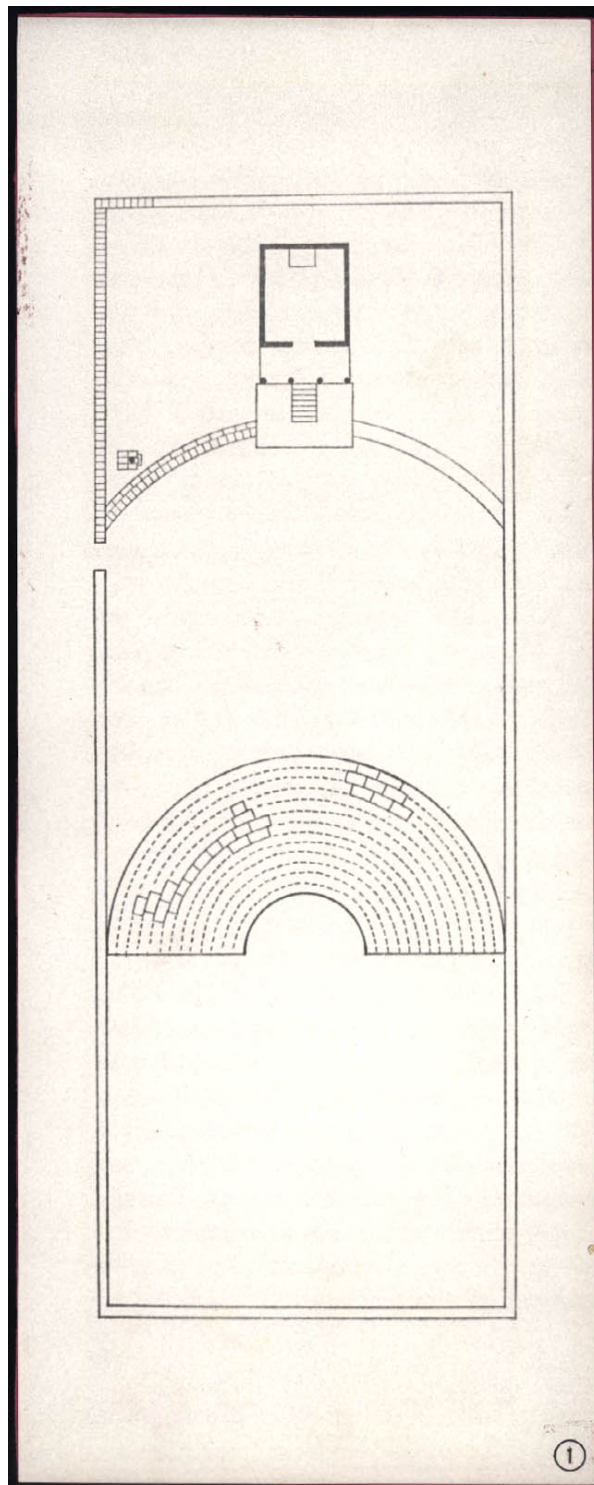


Fig. 2 - Reconstruction of the plant of the so-called "temple-theatre" of Via Malta in Cagliari (from <http://mediateca.comune.cagliari.it/Archivio%20Comunale%20JPG%5CSerie%20VIII%20Mostre%20jpg%5Cfoto%20308.jpg>).

During that time, a ramp and the terrace wall connected to the esplanade were built, in the lower part to the east of the *Is Pirixeddus* necropolis, made by filling a part of the Punic tombs with earth and then other soil placed over it which was then further levelled. Therefore during the Roman Republican period, the area ceased its funerary role and took on a public character linked to cult instead.

Later, around the 2nd century A.D., the area underwent another radical transformation: the esplanade was almost completely removed; the dig reached the underlying rock, encountering the underground Punic tombs during the first rearrangement and leaving a large area exposed where the *podium* of the amphitheatre was built, in large, regular blocks that were plastered and painted several times. A large ellipse was built (fig. 3) on a north-south axis, where the enclosure was made by using perishables, probably wood, according to a technique that was also used in Nora.



Fig. 3 - The ellipse of the amphitheatre of Sulky seen from above (reconstruction by C. Olianas, from Google Earth).

In the *podium* there are statues of two lions (fig. 4), belonging to a city gate, or to a place of worship from the Punic funerary sphere, evidently with a decorative function.



Fig. 4 -Lions of Sulky still in situ
(from <http://www.archeotur.it/santantioco/immagini/category/3-museo-archeologico.html>).

Along the perimeter of the remains of the monument, it is possible to identify the two main entrances, one on each vertex of the ellipse, and three other small openings one of which was not a real door, but probably gave access to a niche, perhaps destined to a statue.

The area therefore changes yet again: from an Acropolis and its temple it becomes an area for public performances, now in suburbia, immediately adjacent to the coeval imperial necropolis, a little further north.

■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Cinzia Olianas

■ Bibliographic abbreviations

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