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REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

Castle of Monreale

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ Roman Age Ceramics

Numerous grave goods have been recovered from the necropolis discovered in the territory of Sardara, many of which are currently on display in the Civic Archaeological Museum "Villa Abbas".

The burial area of Santa Caterina, dated from the Punic-Roman Age, is located in the area which had already been frequented during the Nuraghic Age, and which experienced a continuity of life throughout subsequent periods.

The necropolis of *Terr'e Cresia* was discovered in 1986 and explored several times until 1999.

The approximately one hundred identified graves belong to the pit type and are covered by heavy stone slabs. Both burial and cremation graves have been found which may be dated, thanks to the information provided by the grave goods, to a time span ranging between the first century B.C. and the III A.D.



■ Thin-walled ceramic glass (first century AD), fig. 1.

The glass, from the Punic-Roman city of Santa Caterina, has a slightly distinct edge, two handles, a ring-shaped foot and a body decorated with floral motifs (palms and plants). It belongs to the "thin-walled" class of ceramics, so called because its main characteristic is the thinness of the walls (0.5 to 3-4 mm thick).

The objects belonging to this class, which includes drinking vessels of various forms, were produced, at first, only in Italy and, subsequently, in various provinces of the empire, covering a time span ranging from the second century B.C. to the third A.D.



Fig. 1 - Ceramic thin-walled glass from the necropolis of Santa Caterina (photo by R.A.S.).

■ Common ceramic bottle (late second century AD), fig. 2.

The specimen was found in one of the graves of the Roman necropolis of *Terr'e Cresia*.

It has a high neck marked by horizontal grooves, a rounded body with hollows given by fingerprints; a ring-shaped foot. It belongs to the class of the so-called "common ceramics", characterised by numerous productions in which functional aspects outweigh aesthetic ones.

Because of the long time span of production and distribution, it is difficult to provide accurate histories of individual artefacts, which are usually dated according to the context in which they are discovered and the associated materials.



Fig. 2 - Ceramic bottle from the necropolis of *Terr'e Cresia* (photo by R.A.S.).

■ Round oil lamp

(late second century AD), fig. 3.

The article comes from one of the tombs of the Roman necropolis of *Terr'e Cresia* and can be classified as a lamp of African production. It has a small handle, a short spout and a central disk decorated in relief with two figures, a female and a male and two torches.

The inscription Q MEM [---] is printed on the bottom. Clay oil lamps (i.e. terracotta) have a main body which serves as a tank, a spout and a small handle. The tank was filled with oil or tallow through the hole on the body, and this burned by means of a vegetable fibre wick.

In addition to illuminating the various rooms of the house, they were often laid inside tombs as a symbol of life and in order to guide the deceased through his afterlife.



Fig. 3 - Round oil lamp from the necropolis of *Terr'e Cresia* (photo by R.A.S.).

■ African terra sigillata cup (third century AD), fig. 4.

The finding comes from the Roman necropolis of *Terr'e Cresia* and has a horizontal flat rim characterised by a series of indentations, a groove between the rim and the wall and a low ring-shaped foot .

It belongs to the class of "African red terra sigillata" ceramics, produced in the Roman provinces of North Africa and widespread in Sardinia for several centuries. The most documented shapes are plates and cups, but there are, although less frequently, also bottles and jugs.

The artefact from Sardara is dated to the third century AD on the basis of the grave's discovery context, but may be compared with samples from IV-V cent. A.D.



Fig. 4 – African terra sigillata cup from the necropolis of *Terr'e Cresia* (photo by R.A.S.).

■ Credits

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