Funerary Archaeology and Changing Identities: Community Practices in Roman-Period Sardinia

Mauro Puddu



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To Gianni Albai, an inspirational man

Contents

List of Figures iii

List of Tables v

Acknowledgements vi

1. ROMAN-PERIOD SARDINIA: A SEMIOTIC THEORY OF IDENTITY 1
- 1.1 Archaeology and identity: a theory of signs 1
  - 1.1.1. Scope and structure of the book 1
  - 1.1.2. Identity and archaeology: an inevitable relationship 2
  - 1.1.3. Today's critique of identity approaches 4
  - 1.1.4. Semiotic definitions of identity and identities of semiotics 4
    - A. Remotti's identity between Peirce and Saussure 4
    - B. Exemplifying Peirce's semiotics: Umberto Eco and Karl Marx 6
    - C. Semiotics and archaeology: only a partial commitment 7
  - 1.1.5. Identification and identity: the archaeological context as an interpretant 9
  - 1.1.6. Practice, agency, structure: signs of a semiotic continuum in identity negotiation 10
  - 1.1.7. A semiotic definition of identity 12
- 1.2. Romanization and *Romanizzazione* of Sardinia today: a question of identity 13
  - 1.2.1. Paradigm switches within Roman archaeology in the last century 13
  - 1.2.2. Romanization's origins and current debate in Britain 13
  - 1.2.3. *Romanizzazione* in Italian academia 15
  - 1.2.4. Sardinia within *Romanizzazione* 16
  - 1.2.5. An archaeological agenda on identity: continuity *versus* structural space 18
- 1.3. Archaeology of funerary practice in the Roman world 18
  - 1.3.1. Funerary archaeology theory and burial studies: a state-of-the-art 18
  - 1.3.2. Theories of funerary archaeology 19
  - 1.3.3. Funerary studies within Roman archaeology 21
  - 1.3.4. Tradition of funerary archaeology in Roman-period Sardinia 22
  - 1.3.5. Communities, burials, and rhizomatic identities: a semiotic theory beyond the textual metaphor 23
- 1.4. Theory and data: a practical guide to the emergence of different identity patterns 24

2. BURIALS OF SARDINIA: METHODOLOGY OF DATA COLLECTION 26
- 2.1. Introduction 26
  - 2.1.1. Sardinia and Roman archaeology: a personal account 26
  - 2.1.2. Sardinia in written sources 27
- 2.2. Methodology of data collection 28
  - 2.2.1. Geo-morphology of Sardinia 28
  - 2.2.2. Sardinian funerary sites: a survey 29
  - 2.2.3. Selection of a region: criteria and limitations 31
  - 2.2.4 Data typology and methodology of collection 33
- 2.3. The case studies: history of excavations and topographical account 36
  - 2.3.1. The necropolis of *Sulci*, Sant'Antioco 38
  - 2.3.2. The necropolis of *Sa Mitza Salida*, Masullas 38
  - 2.3.3. The necropolises of Cagliari 38
  - 2.3.4. The necropolis of *Sa Mitza de Siddi,* Ortacesus 43
  - 2.3.5. The necropolis of Santa Lucia, Gesico 43
  - 2.3.6. The necropolis of Bidd'e Cresia, Sanluri 43

3. FUNERARY PRACTICE AND THE URBAN COMMUNITIES OF *SULCI* 46
- 3.1. Introduction 46
  - 3.1.1. Sulci during the Punic and Roman periods 46
  - 3.1.2. Archaeological background 46
  - 3.1.3. Before the *municipium*: the necropolis in the Punic-phase 47
- 3.2. The archaeological evidence from the Roman-period 48

3.2.1. The data sources: strengths and limitations 48
3.2.2. Burials between the Punic and Roman period: bridging neat categorizations 49
3.2.3. The Roman period *Necropolina* 49
3.2.4. The cremation burials 52
3.2.5. Extra-burial contexts: visibility as practice 55
3.2.6. The inhumation burials 58
3.2.7. Diachronic history of the Necropolina 62
3.3. Practice and grave goods at Sulci: a synthesis 65
3.3.1.Material culture: a chrono-typological study 65
3.3.2. Sulci's funerary practices: Punic continuity and Roman-period diversity 66

4. FUNERARY PRACTICE AND RURAL COMMUNITIES OF MASULLAS 68
4.1 Introduction 68
4.1.1. Masullas and western central Sardinia during the Punic and Roman periods 68
4.2. The archaeological evidence at *Sa Mitza Salida* 69
4.2.1. The necropolis of *Sa Mitza Salida* as an interconnected whole 69
4.2.2. The deceased and their anthropological remains 71
4.3. Material culture of *Sa Mitza Salida* 74
4.3.1. Grave typology and grave goods distribution 74
4.4. Chrono-typological analysis of material culture 75
4.4.1. The grave goods classes 75
4.4.2. The ceramic forms 77
4.5. Grave goods and bodies in context 79
4.5.1. Material culture in context 79
4.5.2. Bodies and material culture: a contextual synthesis 81
4.5.3. Shared practices of Masullas' communities 82

5. FUNERARY PRACTICES AND URBAN COMMUNITIES IN KARALES 86
5.1. Introduction 86
5.1.1. Karales during Punic and Roman periods 86
5.1.2. The archaeological background 87
5.1.3. Karales' necropolises and their excavations 87
5.2. The necropolis of Tuvixeddu 89
5.2.1. History of the excavations and general account 89
5.2.2. Tuvixeddu – Via Is Maglias (north side) 89
5.2.3. Tuvixeddu – Via Sant'Avendrace (west side) 93
A. The graves at Sant'Avendrace and their associations 94
B. Entangled funerary practices at Sant'Avendrace 98
5.3. *La Scala di Ferro*: the eastern necropolis of Karales 104
5.3.1. The eastern necropolis: sites and discoveries 104
5.3.2. The necropolis under the ex hotel *La Scala di Ferro* 105
5.4. The Imperial period western necropolises: *Santa Gilla* and *San Lorenzo* 110
5.5. Urban communities and complexity in funerary practices at Karales 110

6. CONNECTING THE DOTS: BETWEEN SULCI, MASULLAS AND KARALES 113
6.1. Sardinian funerary practices and continuity along the road *a Karalibus Turrem* 113
6.2. *Sa Mitza de Siddi*, Ortacesus 114
6.3. Santa Lucia, Gesico 116
6.4. *Bidd'e Cresia*, Sanluri 118
6.5. Sardinia and funerary practices in the rest of the Mediterranean 120

7. SARDINIA'S COMMUNITIES AND THE MEDITERRANEAN AT LARGE 123
7.1. Broadening comparison: synechism applied 123
7.2. The case studies compared 123
A. Republican period practices in the urban communities: Karales and Sulci compared 123
B. Diversity in rural inland communities: Masullas, Gesico and Sanluri 125
C. Inhumations and cremations at Karales and Ortacesus: identities versus ethnicities 125
D. Sulci's variety and Masullas homogeneity: collective ideology in funerary practice 126
E. Burial tradition and change: overcoming structural tensions in Masullas 126
7.3. Beyond funerary contexts: indications from other spheres 127

7.4. Archaeological rhizome and data limitations: present and future of the study 129
7.5. Community identities of Sardinia as a Roman province: the layers of a long-lasting interaction.....131

BIBLIOGRAPHY 133

APPENDIX 1 148

APPENDIX 2 162

List of Figures

Figure 2.1. Topographic map of Sardinia (the area studied in this study is framed). (Source: www.lamiasardegna.it).....30
Figure 2.2. Distribution of Roman-period funerary sites in Sardinia (see List 1 in Appendix 1). (Source of base map: www.Sardegnaweb.it). 31
Figure 2.3. Map of Roman-period Sardinia (Source: Barrington Atlas: 48).....32
Figure 2.4. Modern geographic and administrative regions of central and southern Sardinia. 33
Figure 2.5. Case studies analysed in this thesis. 33
Figure 2.6. Chronological distribution of the necropolises under study. 37
Figure 2.7. Aerial view of the necropolis of Is Pirixeddus, Sant'Antioco (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth) 38
Figure 2.8. Topographic map of Sant'Antioco, ancient Sulci (Source: www.sardegnageoportale.it DBMP Sardegna Topographic Map). The ellipse indicates the position of the Necropolina. 39
Figure 2.9. Aerial view of Sa Mitza Salida, Masullas (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth). 39
Figure 2.10. Topographic map of the area of Masullas with the plan of Sa Mitza Salida (Source: www.sardegnageoportale.it DBMP Sardegna Topographic Map).....40
Figure 2.11. Location of the archaeological sites of Cagliari named in the book. 1: Monumental graves along via Sant'Avendrace; 1a: Necropolis of Tuvixeddu, Via Sant'Avendrace side. 1b: Necropolis of Tuvixeddu, Via Is Maglias side. 2: Phoenician-Punic settlement of Via Brenta. 3: Villa di Tigellio. 4: Roman Amphitheatre. 5: Roman Forum (Piazza del Carmine) and temple-theatre of Via Malta. 6: Necropolis Ex Hotel La Scala di Ferro. 7: Necropolis of Bonaria. 8: Vico III Lanusei. 9: Imperial period Necropolis of Santa Gilla.10. San Saturnino church. - The dark stars indicate other archaeological sites. The light colour stars indicate historical architectures. (Foglio 557. Sez. III. Piano paesaggistico 2006-Regione Sardegna).....41
Figure 2.12. Aerial view of the necropolises on Tuvixeddu hill (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).....41
Figure 2.13. Topographic map of Tuvixeddu, Cagliari, indicating the sites of Sant'Avendrace and Is Maglias (Source: www.sardegnageoportale.it DBMP Sardegna Topographic Map). 42
Figure 2.14. Topographic map of Cagliari indicating the necropolis of Ex Albergo "La Scala di Ferro" (Source: www.sardegnageoportale.it DBMP Sardegna Topographic Map).....42
Figure 2.15. Aerial view of the excavation area of the necropolis of Sa Mitza de Siddi, Ortacesus (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth). 43
Figure 2.16. Topography of Ortacesus around the necropolis of Sa Mitza de Siddi, to which overlaps the plan of the necropolis (Source: www.sardegnageoportale.it DBMP Sardegna Topographic Map). 44
Figure 2.17. Aerial view of the area of the necropolis (now covered) of S. Lucia, Gesico (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth). 44
Figure 2.18. Aerial view of the area of the necropolis (now covered) of Bidd'e Cresia, Sanluri (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth) 45
Figure 3.1. Aerial photography of the necropolis of Sulci (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth). 50
Figure 3.2. Multi-context plan of the Necropolina (From the archives of the Unità Operativa di Sant'Antioco). 50
Figure 3.3. Graphic showing the number of items from cremations per century at Sulci. 53
Figure 3.4. Urns of the Necropolina from south (From the archives of the Unità Operativa di Sant'Antioco). 54
Figure 3.5. Picture of excavation at Sulci (From the archives of the Unità Operativa di Sant'Antioco). 54

Figure 3.6. Extra burial deposit: Necr-129 (From the archives of the Unità Operativa di Sant'Antioco).....57
Figure 3.7. Miniature jar (Inv. Number 103709) from extra-burial context.....57
Figure 3.8. Enchytrismos 147 and Forma 148 (From the archives of the Unità Operativa di Sant'Antioco).....59
Figure 3.9. Grave NECR-66 with detail of two jugs by the hips (From the archives of the Unità Operativa di Sant'Antioco).....60
Figure 3.10. Number of context types per each phase at Sulci.....60
Figure 3.11. Enchytrismos NECR-147 covered by roof tiles (from the archives of the Unità Operativa di Sant'Antioco).....61
Figure 3.12. Quantity of grave goods per burial type at Sulci.....61
Figure 3.13. Types of material culture per phase at Sulci.....62
Figure 3.14. Grave goods distribution per burial type at Sulci.....63
Figure 3.15. Position of the body and orientation of the deceased at Sulci.....63
Figure 3.16. Recurrent associations of grave goods with specific body areas at Sulci.....64
Figure 4.1. Plan of Sa Mitza Salida (From the archives of the Soprintendenza Archeologia della Sardegna).....70
Figure 4.2. Example of cist grave, covered by roughly rectangular stone slabs, from grave MAS-6 (Drawing by Michele Sannia; From the archives of the Soprintendenza Archeologica dealla Sardegna).....70
Figure 4.3. Taphonomy showing the absence of cranium (centre: MAS-44), and the effects of cushions decay (left: MAS-7, right: MAS-46); (Taken from original drawings by Michele Sannia, from the archives of the Soprintendenza Archeologica della Sardegna).....72
Figure 4.4. Plan of Sa Mitza Salida in relation to primary and manipulated inhumations (from the Archives of the Soprintendenza Archeologica della Sardegna).....73
Figure 4.5. Examples of reductions and other manipulations from early graves at Sa Mitza Salida (from the archives of the Soprintendenza Archeologica della Sardegna).....74
Figure 4.6. Number of cist graves (including the "tombe a cassone") and pit graves in Masullas through time.....75
Figure 4.7. Number of grave goods per grave through time at Mitza Salida.....75
Figure 4.8. Material culture classes distribution at Mitza Salida.....76
Figure 4.9. Material culture types per century at Mitza Salida.....80
Figure 4.10. Assemblage of grave goods at Mitza Salida through time.....80
Figure 4.11. Recurrent association between material culture and body parts at Mitza Salida.....82
Figure 4.12. Clusters of graves with similar features, with arrows indicating the potential movements of crania from and to graves.....84
Figure 5.1.a Map showing the perimeter of Republican period Karales (wide rectangle) as revealed by excavations (Piazza del Carmine within a small rectangle and Via XX Settembre highlighted by a straight line). (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).....88
Figure 5.1.b Map showing the area of the forum of Karales and the necropolises mentioned in this book. A) Necropolis of Tuvixeddu, Sant'Avendrace Side; B)Tuvixeddu, via Is Maglias; C) La Scala di Ferro; D) Bonaria; E) Santa Gilla (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).....88
Figure 5.2 View of the hill of Tuvixeddu overlooking the lagoon of Santa Gilla to the west. (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).....90
Figure 5.3. Early 20th century photograph of the grave of Attilia Pomptilla, known as Grotta della Vipera, Via Sant'Avendrace From Angiolillo 2000).....90
Figure 5.4. Aerial photography of Tuvixeddu, showing the formae excavated in the limestone. (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).....93
Figure 5.5. Panoramic view of the excavations in Tuvixeddu, Sant'Avendrace side (From Salvi 2000).....94
Figure 5.6. Plan of Tuvixeddu, Sant'Avendrace side, drawn by geom. Olla (From Salvi, 2000: tav. VII).....95
Figure 5.7. Grave goods assemblage from grave AVN-32. Picture by U. Virdis (From Salvi 2000: tav. XVI).....97
Figure 5.8. Grave AVN-27, one of the latest archaeological layers (From Salvi 2000: tav. XII).....98
Figure 5.9. Use of each grave type per period in Sant'Avendrace.....100
Figure 5.10. Material culture from *busta* in Tuvixeddu-Sant'Avendrace.....101
Figure 5.11. Material culture from chamber graves at Tuvixeddu-Sant'Avendrace.....101
Figure 5.12. Material culture from chamber graves at Tuvixeddu-Sant'Avendrace: 5th/4th centuries BC original assemblages (blue) and 3rd /2nd century BC additional ones (red).....102
Figure 5.13. Material culture from burials in amphorae at Tuvixeddu-Sant'Avendrace.....102
Figure 5.14. Material culture from pit-graves at Tuvixeddu-Sant'Avendrace (3rd BC-1st AD).....103
Figure 5.15. Material culture from cremations in urn at Tuvixeddu-Sant'Avendrace.....103

Figure 5.16. Area of the eastern necropolis of Karales with excavated sites: 1-"Ex Albergo La Scala di Ferro" 2-Cemetery of Bonaria; 3-Vico III Lanusei; 4-Corner between Via Frassoi and Via Delitala; 5-Via Deledda; 6-Chiesa di San Lucifero. (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth). 104
Figure 5.17. Sketches of graves from via Frassoi (from Salvi, 1998: tav. IV). The sketch shows: 1a: plan of cist grave III closed; 1b: plan of cist grave III open; 2: section of the features housing one grave *alla cappuccina* and one pit grave; 3: plan of grave IV; 4: plan, section and grave goods distribution of grave *alla cappuccina* V (from left to right); 5: sketch of grave goods from grave 5. 105
Figure 5.18. Grave types at SCF from the 3rd century BC - 1st AD (included). 106
Figure 5.19. Material culture (300) from pit graves at Scala di Ferro. 107
Figure 5.20. Material culture types from *busta* at SCF. 108
Figure 5.21. Material culture types from cremations in urn at SCF. 108
Figure 5.22. Material culture from extra-burial contexts at SCF. 109
Figure 5.23 Timeline of the different periods of use of the sites in Karales (each ritual is underlined with a different colour), underlying each ritual with a different colour. 110
Figure 6.1. Map of the necropolis of Sa Mitza de Siddi, Ortacesus (from Cocco, Arru 2009: 6-7) 114
Figure 6.2. Grave 15 at Pill'e Matta (from Salvi 2005). 115
Figure 6.3. Burial types per period at Sa Mitza de Siddi – Ortaceus, considering a total of 40 graves. 116
Figure 6.4. Material culture types from pit burials at Ortacesus-Mitza de Siddi. (Between parentheses, the number of items from Punic-period graves, outside parenthesis those from Roman-period ones). 117
Figure 6.5. Material culture from cremation burials at Bidd'e Cresia, Sanluri (data from a nine burials sample elaborated from Paderi 1982). 119
Figure 6.6. Material culture pieces from inhumations at Bidd'e Cresia, Sanluri (data from a 15 tombs sample). 119
Figure 6.7. Grave SAN-16C, Sanluri. (From the archive of the Soprintendenza archeologica della Sardegna) 120
Figure 7.1. Map of south-central Sardinia showing the location of the sites analysed in this study and the trajectory of the main road a *Karalibus Turrem*. 124
Figure 7.2 Timeline of sites analysed and relative trends. 127

List of Tables

Table 1. Accessibility of sources in the cemeteries originally taken into account in this study. 35
Table 2. Sources involved in dating the necropolises. 37
Table 3. Summary of major trends highlighted in the sites under study. 124

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1. Roman-Period Sardinia: a semiotic Theory of Identity

Tous les êtres se tiennent par une chaine dont nous apercevons quelques parties continues, quoique dans un plus grand nombre d'endroits la continuité nous échappe. L'art du Philosophe ne consiste pas, comme il ne lui arrive que trop souvent, à rapprocher de force les parités éloignées pour renouer la chaine mal-a-propos dans les endroits où elle est interrompue; car par un tel effort on ne fait que séparer les parties que se tenaient, ou les éloigner davantage de celles dont elles étaient déjà éloignées [...]. L'art du philosophe consiste à ajouter de nouveaux chainons aux parties séparées, afin de les rendre le moins distantes qu'il est possible : mais il ne doit pas se flatter qu'il ne restera point toujours de vides en beaucoup d'endroits.[1]

Jean Le Ronde d'Alembert, *Encyclopédie de Diderot et d'Alembert.*
(Categorie parente: Science; Categorie: Cosmologie), 1752.

1.1 Archaeology and identity: a theory of signs

1.1.1. Scope and structure of the book

This is an archaeological study on Roman-period communities of Sardinia. Its purpose is to interpret the finds of Sardinia's funerary practices as signs of group identities. It looks at archaeology in semiotic terms, holding a postcolonial perspective that gives attention mainly to the people left voiceless by the official historical narratives of Rome and its provinces. These are mainly the people – the majority in Roman period society – that did not hold a clearly stated – i.e. through epigraphy – high political, economic, and social rank. Hence, the focus here is on Sardinia's communities and on those subalterns – sensu Gramsci[2] - who built their identities through daily activities that involved their interaction with signs left by past communities.

The word "subaltern" refers here to the original meaning attributed by Gramsci in the second paragraph of his *Quaderno 25. Ai margini della storia. (Storia dei gruppi sociali subalterni)* ([1934: (16)] 1975: 2283,2284). There he writes about how the history of subalterns is disaggregated and sporadic and needs being treated systematically.

The five long chapters and two shorter ones into which this book is divided are meant to simplify the exposition as much as possible. Chapter 1, 'Roman Period Sardinia: a Semiotic Theory of Identity' sets up the debate around identity theories and the interpretive frameworks of the Roman world: it will eventually draw a semiotic theory of an archaeology-bound identity looking specifically at Italy and Sardinia. Chapter 2, 'Funerary Archaeology of Sardinia: Methodology of Data Collection', presents both my educational background (maintained here influential for the results of this research) and the criteria adopted in selecting the case studies analysed in Chapters 3 to 6; it accounts for both the data sources available and those unavailable from which the limits of this work derive. Chapters from 3 to 6 analyse the selected case studies in relation to both a chrono-typological perspective and the concepts of practice and identity outlined in Chapter 1. Chapter 7, 'Sardinia's Communities and the Mediterranean at Large', explores the potential of identity as an interpretive tool by comparing the case studies analysed in each chapter, placing them in a broader Mediterranean context. The last chapter will provide a semiotically informed appreciation of group identities, highlighting the fundamental relationship of each community with the materiality of its past, and offering a multi-dimensional model based on the reconstruction of continuities and discontinuities with such past(s), whilst acknowledging and embracing the apparent contradictions and inconsistencies with which the archaeological remains of funerary practices of Sardinia – and beyond – provide us.

[1] Everything is linked in nature; all beings are connected by a continuous chain in which we sometimes see the continuous parts, even though there are a greater number of places in which the continuity escapes us. The art of the philosopher does not consist, as it all too often happens, of forcing estranged parties together by inappropriately re-forging connections which are unfortunately broken in certain places; [...] Thus the art of the Philosopher consists of offering more links to those separated parties so as to have them at the least distance possible, but he should not flatter himself that there will no longer be any empty space in places.

[2] The definition of subalterns used here is neither that used by mainly Indian scholars who originated the fortunate area of Subaltern Studies in the '80s (see, for instance, the fundamental analysis by Chandra 2015); nor that later promoted in American Universities by scholars (Spivak, 1988, 1999) inspired mainly by Derrida and Foucault (see Liguori, 2011 for a detailed study).

The aims of this study are synthesised in this chapter, Chapter 1, that introduces a theoretical discussion of the three core points developed throughout the book:

1. the definition of identity;
2. the general understanding of the Roman world;
3. the social significance of funerary practice for the previous points.

Section 1.1 centres on the role played by the theory of identity within archaeology. Starting from the premise that any archaeological find is interpreted as a sign of something else – of what happened in the past – the section offers a semiotic understanding of the identity-archaeology relationship. It analyses the notion, definition, and functioning of signs in both Ferdinand de Saussure and C.S. Peirce's semiotic theories, questioning which of them helps the most to enhance the relational value of identity. Section 1.2 looks at key-theories regarding the Roman world – Romanization/ *Romanizzazione* and critiques of them – produced in UK and Italy. It relates them to the semiotic theory of identity discussed in the previous and in the following sections. The discussion of Section 1.2 will allow me to define the position of this study in relation to the main interpretive traditions of Roman identity and to clarify why the application of homogenizing models to the Roman world is semiotically unsustainable. Section 1.3 centres on the development of the scholarship working on the interpretation of funerary remains through the last century, first at a general level, second within the Roman world, and third referring to Sardinia. This section will provide a synthesis linking funerary traditions, the Romanization debate, and the semiotic theory of identity.

Aiming at enhancing our understanding of the Roman world, this study explores the theoretical possibilities through which archaeology can contribute to understanding the social value of everyday practices performed in the Roman world, particularly burial-related activities, by connecting the static archaeological record to the dynamic practices that created it. This research springs from the assumption that each human practice is an action potentially able to produce, perpetuate and change – and to be interpreted in relation to – group identities, given the relational nature of human beings. This assumption is founded on Gramsci's wide work and thoughts on the nature of humanity. For Gramsci

> 'The fact that human nature is "the sum of social relationships" is the most satisfying answer because it includes the idea of becoming. Men become, they mutate continuously along with the mutation of social relationships. And because it denies the "man in general terms": social relationships are expressed by different groups of men that acknowledge themselves and whose unity is a dialectical one rather than a formal one' (Gramsci, 1975 [1930-1931]: 885).

It is essential to understand the communities living in Sardinia during the Roman period in relation to each other and within the broader context of tradition and change, which occurred both at a local level and all around the Mediterranean. This work attempts to do so looking at the practices performed in six sites. These are located between central and southern Sardinia and are: Cagliari, Masullas, Sant'Antioco, Gesico, Ortacesus, Sanluri (Figure 2.5).

The concepts of identity, funerary practice, sign and community mentioned so far need accurate definitions in relation to archaeology before proceeding with their use as interpretive tools. Community is used here to mean a human group whose members share a common space. Archaeology highlights only a portion of such space – the site – artificially detaching it from the whole, where the group's individuals enacted collective practices that emphasize their perceived togetherness (Mac Sweeney, 2011: 37). This enhances the definition proposed by Trigger for whom a community is 'a group of people who normally live in face to face association for at least part of the year' (Trigger, 1978: 118, quoting Murdock, 1949: 79). The combination of these definitions has a twofold advantage. On the one hand, it avoids considering a community as a homogeneous and autonomous entity, as it accounts for the possibility of having different practices performed within the same community. On the other, it avoids the 'danger of classifying different aspects of life of the same groups as different cultures' (Trigger, 1978: 116), as it acknowledges that diverse practices can be expressed by members of the same community. The concept of community intertwines with those of identity and funerary practices that will be provided below.

1.1.2. Identity and archaeology: an inevitable relationship

In 2007, Timothy Insoll wrote, at the beginning of his *Archaeology of Identity. A reader* that 'identity today is a 'hot' topic even though it might not be defined as such' (Insoll, 2007: 1). Eight years later, in May 2015, identity gained centrality during a heated debate that took place at the Laurence Seminar, *Rethinking Artefacts in Roman Archaeology: Beyond Representation*, organised by A. Van Oyen and M. Pitts at the Faculty of Classics, Cambridge. The seminar's aim was to move away from representational uses of archaeology, meaning by this to consider ancient artefacts *per se* rather than as signs of something else. By doing this, the seminar encouraged an understanding of Roman-period material culture through the implementation of new models, such as material agency. Although marginal to the scope of the majority of papers presented, the

concept of identity emerged repeatedly throughout the seminar. This indicates that today as in 2007, identity is still an issue of paramount concern, unavoidable, although seemingly marginal to the archaeological agenda. Furthermore, we live in a period when identity – often poorly defined and radicalised – is central to any piece of news in the newspapers, on television or on the radio. Some examples around an approximate use of identity will recall such trend.

Recently, on Sunday 21st of June 2015, thousands gathered in *Piazza San Giovanni*, Rome – for the 'Family Day' – to defend the so-called identity of the traditional family, and to protest against the recognition of civil rights to homosexual unions. In the last 24 months, E.U. has constantly called for strengthening the member states' European identity in order to fight the challenges of today's world.[3] ISIS/ISIL, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria/Levant, sadly famous all over the world for the atrocities committed across the Middle East and in Europe, is increasingly defined by western media as founded on religious principles, creating a permanent Orientalising and misleading identification between Muslims and a monolithic Arab world. Pope Francis himself felt the need to declare that 'identifying Islam with terrorism is not fair and logically sustainable.'[4] A new identity, that of the illegal immigrants, is also arising, following the mass migrations, among others, of the Rohingya from Burma to Indonesia, and of the war refugees from Syria and Africa to the coasts of Italy and Greece, followed by the hysteria and the proposal of closure of the E.U. and Australian borders. Our world today, notwithstanding the extent to which it is interconnected through hi-technology and social media, reportedly thrives on the declaration of clear-cut identities seemingly committed to self-preservation and fearing contact with the 'other'.

Archaeology, having a broad temporal perspective on the history of human beings through their relationship with things, has an enormous potential not only to enhance our knowledge of the past but also to contribute decisively to contemporary debates on identities, joining economics, sociology and anthropology among the disciplines with a voice.

Since its origins, archaeology has dealt with identity. In the first half of the 20th century, it was mainly concerned with distinguishing between archaeological cultures – assemblages of objects – and people (Jones, Graves-Brown, 1996: 4; Meadows, 1997; Roymans, 1996, 2004; Pohl, Reimitz, 1998), contributing to the political creation of nations based on their archaeological evidence (Jones-Graves-Brown, 1996; Meskell, 1998; Diaz-Andreu, 2005, 2007; McGuire, 2008). This approach, which tended to see artefacts 'as "signatures" or "representations" of specific cultures' (Casella, Fowler, 2004: 1), was widely criticised in the second half of the century (i.e. Trigger, 1978: 75, 131). Then, identity was often qualified with an adjective – cultural, religious, ethnic, gender related – in order to specify its human sphere of reference.

Despite its widespread use in social studies, there are not many clear definitions of identity available. Ambiguity has often characterized the use of the term identity in ethnography and anthropology too, where it is used to discuss both an individual and groups (Barnard and Spencer, 1996: 292). This ambiguity is linked with the concept of culture that developed in archaeology in the early decades of the 20th century. As noted above, archaeological cultures, defined by shared material features – pottery, metals, houses, graves (i.e. Gordon Childe, 1927, 1929) – became identified with ethnic groups (i.e. Bosh Gimpera, 1922 on the Iberic Peninsular). Such approaches in social thought and in ethnicity studies were modified through time. Barth (1969) had an important impact on the matter by suggesting that the boundaries between such ethnic groups – identities – were constantly created and re-negotiated and never immutable.

From the 70s, the role of the individual became more actively taken into account when discussing group identity, especially due to the work of sociologist Anthony Giddens (1979) and anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu (1972). Emphasis was placed first on the capacity of people to make choices – agency – and second on their understanding of how the world around them operates – *habitus*. Following this, identity came to be dealt with in association with feminist and gender studies (Gilchrist, 1994; Graves, 1989), status, particularly within Marxist studies of class struggle (McGuire and Paynter, 1991), religion (Mendels, 1992), and with a focus on material culture within archaeology (Hodder, 1982).

In the last 20 years, the tendency has been to deal with identity not in isolation but within its social context, creating links especially between gender and status (Hodder, 1982; Díaz-Andreu, 2005) gender and age (Lucy, 2005), religion and nationalism (Regev, 2013), ethnicity and gender (Hodder, 1982; Meskell, 2001; Díaz-Andreu, 2005; Mac Sweeney, 2011), and ethnicity and status (Gardner, 2007; McGuire, 2013).

Central to the plethora of identity-studies carried out over the last decades is the concept of practice, through which people's actions create the material conditions to sustain their lives, to contribute to social reproduction, and, to an extent, to change the society

[3] See the inaugural speech by Matteo Renzi, Italian Prime Minister, at the opening of the E.U. Italian Semester, July 1st 2014.
[4] Words pronounced on the flight back from Krakow to Rome on July 31, 2016.

to which they belong and the personal and group identities which they embody. This framework makes identity particularly accessible through archaeology (Dobres and Robb, 2000) because allows scholars to define human groups looking – put simply – at what they do/did with the material objects available to them, rather than identifying them with such objects. It is clear that the introduction of the concept of practice in the identity debate has elevated our understanding of the past to a higher step. Nevertheless, the concept of practice is not a risk-free one, usable with no rules and specification, as the next sub-section will show.

1.1.3. Today's critique of identity approaches

On diversity in gender, minorities and individuality often within multicultural societies. One of the main methodological strengths of identity is its postcolonial potential –*sensu* Edward Said [5] – which allows 'us to understand social groups and cultures that were not able or empowered to write their own histories' (Pitts, 2007: 697). Said's postcolonial aim parallels the one pursued in this book: highlighting mutable and relational identities against the background of a homogeneously constructed history of the Roman world. However, this scope is not free from risks. One cannot just argue for multiculturalism a priori, assuming that such model succeeded in the past and will succeed in the future just to be politically correct; one rather needs to assess and analyse contextually multicultural groups of communities (Insoll, 2007: 14). For instance, Pitts (2007: 696) has underlined the risk, specific to Roman archaeology, of dealing with identity as simply 'a descriptive process, looking for diversity for diversity's sake', rather than attempting a historically informed exploration of how such diversity may have flourished within the Roman Empire. This work tries to deal with diversity contextually, looking at the evidence of funerary practices in Roman-period Sardinia by attempting to go beyond the blatant uniformity of objects used, and of the adoption of apparently uniform practices. Spotting diversity requires a very high and scientific attention for depositional details that will hint at diverse practices. Hence, despite considering the risks highlighted, the brief account of identity given so far raises the question of 'whether one can actually have an archaeology that is not concerned with identity' (Insoll, 2007: 1). This considered, the challenge today is, on one hand, how to deal with identity without reducing the archaeological evidence to a material support to *a priori* ideas of the world as-we-would-like-it-to-be; on the other, how to break the resistance to let diversity emerge through multiple identities that we ourselves attribute to the materiality of the world.

[5] As it appears particularly in *Orientalism*, where Said shows how multiple and complex cultures are often homogenised and simplified for scholarly and political purposes (Said, 1978: 12-14).

1.1.4. Semiotic definitions of identity and identities of semiotics

A. Remotti's *identity between Peirce and Saussure*

In his book *Contro l'Identità*, Remotti (1996: 60), aiming to describe the relational nature of identity, invites those who deal with it theoretically, historians and sociologists, to go beyond it, quitting the logic of identity *per se*. Obsessively sought, identity risks losing its own specificities that derive from the relation between diversities. An obsessive identity becomes simple identification. Despite they sound similar, identity and identifications encapsulate very different concepts. Roland Barthes (1977), in his imaginative *Fragments d'un discours amoureux*, defines very effectively identification as a pure structural operation: it gives importance primarily to the 'position' occupied by an element/individual/society in a closed structure (Barthes, 1977: 153), neglecting their specificities and their capacity to act differently from others.[6] This work attempts avoiding this structural and 'topographic' operation by making clear the conceptual gap standing in between identity and identification and by consequently attempting to be as close as possible to the former and keep distance from the latter.

This chapter follows Remotti's suggestion by attempting to go beyond obsessive identities – static identifications – by engaging with identity theoretically first, and looking at the material evidence second. It provides a definition of identity that looks at the multiple elements that take part in the processes of human interaction both historically and socially.

I maintain that central to the process of construction and negotiation of identity is the interpretation of signs. Hence, it is crucial to a successful reconstruction of such process to be aware of the different interpretive frameworks and definition of signs that have been given by philosophers, anthropologists, and archaeologists. It is undeniable that human beings act in certain ways, in relation both to others and to the past, by producing signs that allow people to make assumptions about who they are in relation to what/whom surrounds them. For this purpose, the study of identity pursued here is based on the definition of sign, the most relational entity existing.

The word sign is used here by referring to the definitions and theory of signification formulated by American pragmatist C.S. Peirce between 19th and 20th centuries, and later developed by Umberto Eco and other scholars

[6] More specifically, Barthes refers to the condition of the lover – to the person who has fallen in love – that is dealt with by society as always the same in each situation. "I am that individual who occupies my same position" (My translation of Barthes 1977: 102).

of the Italian[7] tradition from the 1970s onwards.[8] Peirce has defined a sign as 'something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity' (C.P. 2.228).[9] This definition points to the presence of three elements at once with which the interpreter has to deal, by building on an action of *semiosis.* This, for Peirce, always involves a triadic relationship, which can never be resolved in a relationship between any two elements (C.P. 5.484). This definition is crucial to clarify the particular theory to which I have chosen to refer[10] (and that which I reject) by using the words semiotics, sign, meaning and interpretation. And it is also crucial to understand the impasse that often characterises the debates on identity.

Two main school of semiotic studies have developed: one from the work of C.S. Peirce, and the other from that of French linguist Ferdinand de Saussure.

Ferdinand de Saussure, in his *Cours de Linguistique générale* (1916), defined the sign as a two-faced entity, formed by signifier and signified - *signifient et signifié* – which are respectively 'a concept and a sound pattern' (Saussure, 1966: 66). This description derived from Saussure's studies in linguistics and has remarkably contributed to develop a semiotic consciousness (Eco, 1975: 25). The key of Saussure's theory is that the correspondence between signifier and signified is programmatically 'unmotivated, i.e. arbitrary in that it actually has no natural connection with the signified' (Saussure, 1966: 69, in Preucel, 2006: 19). This works fine when it comes to the use and understanding of language, that was exactly the sphere of interest of Saussure. Saussure's definition of sign differs in many ways to those provided by Peirce, one of which was quoted above in this subsection. The definitions of sign of the two philosophers differ, foremost, because of the number of elements involved in the signification process. These are two for the French linguist, three (and never fewer), for the American philosopher. But they also differ fundamentally in their theoretical nature, although some intriguing attempts of combining the two have recently arisen (i.e. Paolucci, 2010). The three interchangeable entities in Peirce's theory are contrasted by a codified correspondence of two elements, signifier and signified, container and content, in Saussure's one.

An example will further clarify the conceptual distance between the two semiotics. The relationship that characterises the Saussurian sign to its meaning is that between a word and the idea to which it refers. The word 'tree' designates an entity characterised by a vertical trunk, which branches out and grows green leaves and fruits, and that uses roots to find nutrients under the soil. No one who speaks the English language will be confused when the word tree is mentioned and associating the word tree to a specific tree will seem to anyone the most logical process. Nonetheless, the relationship between these specific features of the tree – the signified – and the word composed by specific sounds is in no way intrinsic. It is not a naturally occurring one. Rather, it is a conventionally established one. By contrast, Peirce introduces in the interpretive mechanism a third element to mediate a meaning to a specific sign. Peirce calls this third element *interpretant*.

Peirce defined the interpretant in numerous ways. The most quoted one, but also the most misleading if read by itself, is 'a mental sign of the same object' (E.P. 1998: 13), where the object is the meaning of a sign. Peirce explained in various ways that the interpretant is a name he gave to a process, rather than to an element. For Peirce, 'the soul without the body is simply an impossibility and an absurdity [henceforth] a sign must have an interpretation or interpretant, as I call it. This interpretant, this signification, is simply a metempsychosis into another body' (MS 1906: 298: 15, 24 quoted in Gorlée, 1993: 196). Eco synthesises Peirce's numerous definitions by stating that an interpretant is what grants the validity to the sign even though the interpreter were absent (Eco, 1975: 101). In other words, the interpretant is another representation of the same meaning. It could be either an idea, an object, or even a complex discourse that not only translates the sign in its meaning but also develops all its logical possibilities (Eco, 1975: 13), for example an encyclopedia, an history book, or a typology of Roman pottery to which we refer when studying the material culture dug out from an archaeological site. Let us now go back to the example of the tree. The Peircean sign would start from the interpretation of the word 'tree' and potentially arrive to signify, for instance, the father of the interpreter, via various interpretants: a photograph (sign) of a specific tree that the interpreter planted in his childhood (interpretant) can trigger the memory of his family (meaning). Due to their capacity of offering a physically verifiable object to the rightfulness of the interpretation, interpretants can be properly 'material expressions' (Eco, 1975: 379) rather than just mental ones. In the example of thre tree, the memory recalled by the interpretant is certainly mental, but for the interpreter it has a physical value as it will bring back with it experiences that he himself lived once: the smell of the wet ground, the cold of the shovel used to dig the

[7] U. Volli, P. Fabbri and recently P. Violi, M. Leone, C. Paolucci.

[8] Umberto Eco's *Trattato di Semiotica Generale* (1975) results from decades of semiotic studies in Europe, US, and Russia, and began a new tradition of study that is widely cited, both in Italy and worldwide.

[9] The texts of C.S. Peirce are referred to as CP: *Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce,* volumes I-VII; EP: *The Essential Peirce. Selected Philosophical Writings.*

[10] See Preucel's (2006) *Archaeological Semiotics* for a full account of the use of different semiotic theories in relation to the paradigms of both processual and post-processual archaeology.

tree bole, the texture of the tree at the touch, the green of its little leaves, and so on.

The main novelty of Peirce's semiotic theory is that the production of meaning is potentially infinite, a phenomenon that Peirce calls *synechism* – or continuity (EP: 312-33). This consists in a chain of interpretants and meanings each of which contributes to explain the previous and following ones by holding different perspectives on apparently the same matter/sign. The meaning just found – a specific tree – can itself become a sign standing for, for instance, the feeling of coolness mediated by the memory of the shade that the tree creates in the hot weather, and so on.

Where Saussure's signs are arbitrary and independent, and under rare circumstances allow to account for change, Peirce's signs are interrelated and participate in the signification process in such a way that the sign itself becomes a process rather than an entity.

B. Exemplifying Peirce's semiotics: Umberto Eco and Karl Marx

At this stage, it is useful to provide a clear explanation of the opposite directions that the study of any material culture may take depending on whether Peirce's or Saussure's semiotics are applied to identity studies. A fitting example comes from the theory of the form of value provided by Karl Marx in *Das Kapital*, where he shows how all commodities can become signs that stand for other commodities (Eco, 1975: 40). Eco is particularly interested in the fact that Marx suggests that commodities are organised in a system of oppositions that is very similar to that used for phonological values in linguistics (Eco, 1975: 40). However, what is looked at here is how Marx designed the concept of value warning against its reduction to a simplistic identification between two elements only, in a similar guise to what is attempted in this study on identity. For Marx,

> 'if we say that, as values, commodities are mere congelations of human labour, we reduce them by our analysis, it is true, to the abstraction, value; but we ascribe to this value no form apart from their bodily form. It is otherwise in the value relation of one commodity to another. Here, the one stands forth in its character of value by reason of its relation to the other.' (Marx, 2013 [1867]: 29)

The key expressions in this passage are 'mere congelations of labour' and 'value relation'. Although Marx admits that labour is embodied in the value of a commodity, he manifests his dissatisfaction in making this value correspond to the congelation of labour that was necessary to create it only. Stating that, Marx exposes an idea of stasis that fails to explain the concept of value, which is instead a dynamic and mutable entity in both capitalist and pre-capitalist worlds. This is where Marx clarifies that we take into account the bodily form of commodities, but if we want to understand their relational use we have to go beyond that.

Apart from the necessary account of the labour embodied in it, value is expressed by the relational character between commodities. From this follows the famous example of the value of coats in relation to the linen from Section 2 of Chapter 3 of Volume 1 of the Capital (Marx, 2013: 68-77). Although the amount of labour to produce the two commodities may remain the same over time, one has to be aware that production, economic, and social conditions can change in such a way that the relationship between the two commodities can be completely modified. The result is that the labour necessary to produce them can become, at some stage, less significant than other factors.

If we substitute the word 'value' with 'meaning' and 'commodity' with 'sign', we will find that Marx's definition of value matches Peirce's definition of sign. This should cause no surprise as both philosophers lived between the middle and the end of the 19th century, witnessing the first results of the industrial revolution. Both were interested in the social significance of the material world in relation to human beings' needs and concepts. Both are deep-rooted in a humanistic interpretation of reality.

Synthesising, Saussure's theory is closer to the system of value that Marx criticises, the one that provides a congelation of value/meaning, a direct correspondence between signifier and signified, a fixed content for a fixed container. In fact, the famous equation Marx makes – 20 yards of linen = 1 coat – in isolation would be of no use in a social and economic system, being only a static correspondence unable to account for change in taste, availability of sources, climatic conditions, exploitation, workers' requests, capital status. This is the reason why Marx reminds us that 'their change of value is seen as soon as they are compared with a third commodity' (Marx, 2013 [1867]: 32). The inclusion of a third element within what started as a binary relationship is fundamental to allow the latter to produce meaning, unblocking it from a static identification. In order to help us understand what this means, Marx literally takes us out to the market – the real place where commodities are given value in relation to each other – 'to accompany the owner of some commodity – say our old friend the weaver of linen' (Marx 2013: 69). Following the weaver to the market, Marx disentangles the labour-value of his linen to that of the coat introduced earlier, and introduces another term of comparison in the guise of other commodities. The weaver manages to sell £2 of linen but does not go

home with those. Rather, he re-exchanges exactly those £2 with another commodity 'which is destined to enter his house as an object of utility and of edification to its inmates': the weaver bought a Bible. By doing so, Marx disproved the idea that the value of commodities is embodied in the labour required to produce them. This would not be enough to explain value at all. Hence, he introduced the concept of use-value. The amount and types of labour required to produce £2 of linen and a Bible are certainly not comparable. However, the two commodities could be exchanged for the same money because our weaver – together with other sellers and buyers a t the market – has acknowledged the use-value of the book. The use and the request of the market to use some commodities give value to them. And as practices, ideas, and uses of objects did change and may change, so did and will their use-value, independently from the labour provided to produce them.

It is maintained in this study that Peirce's sign is very close to Marx's value relation of commodities, being able to include, in the production of meaning, the contextual variables – a third element – that make them acquire dynamism, allowing those who study them to avoid a reduction to pairings and to account swiftly for change. Two further decisive elements from Marx's theory of value can help us understand better how signs work in Peirce's theory, and how they are used in the theory of identity proposed here. The first is that value, which is the ability of one commodity to stand for another, 'exists in the case of any commodity B, only when some other commodity A enters into a value relation with it, and then only within the limits of this relation' (Marx, 2013 [1867]: 34). This recalls the 'some respects or capacities' of Peirce's definition of sign through which he tells us that a relationship established between two things, their meaning, is not valid under all circumstances, but only under specific and contextually motivated ones. The second element is the concept of infinite continuity (see sub-section A above). For Marx (2013 [1867]: 41), the expression of value is potentially infinite as 'the chain of which each equation of value is a link, is liable at any moment to be lengthened by each new kind of commodity that comes into existence and furnishes the material for a fresh expression of value'.

The social dynamism Marx expresses through the theory of value of commodities resembles the theory of *synechism* and the chain of interpretants of Peirce. The key concept for both is that no value/meaning is fixed unless it becomes conventionally motivated for someone with a specific purpose, provided that all subjects involved accept the stagnation that it brings along. Socially dynamic meanings/values are, instead, constantly renegotiated via the introduction of new elements that reinforce, motivating it, or weaken, denying it, the relationship between two signs/commodities.

This example from *Das Kapital* should have clarified that where Saussure's theory is a model of equivalence, Peirce's theory is a model of logically-motivated inference: interpretation. It is an act of mediation between two elements, A and B, by a third element, C, which can exist only in relation to the others.

C. Semiotics and archaeology: only a partial commitment

Several archaeologists have engaged systematically with the literature on semiotics (i.e. Gardin, 1992; Preucel and Bauer, 2001) although principally referring to Saussure (Preucel, 2006: 3; Lele, 2006: 50) rather than to C.S. Peirce.[11] The approach inspired by the Swiss linguist has been particularly successful within cognitive archaeology (Renfrew, Zubrow, 1994; Marcus, Flannery, 1994; Renfrew, Bahn, 2000) and is detectable within Roman archaeology too.

In one of the most recent attempts to link Roman material culture and identity, Eckardt highlights the flaws of post-processual approaches to material culture by stating that their 'concept of objects as essentially arbitrary signs fails to engage with the physical and specific nature of things' (2014: 8). This comment reveals a widespread assumption held by scholars of the Roman world: when material culture studies adopt a semiotic approach, they follow the Cartesian division between mind and matter. This shows that the understanding of material culture is deeply, even if perhaps unconsciously, entrenched in the Saussurian theory of sign. Eckardt's critique refers, indirectly, to Saussure's binary sign, constituted by a physical half and a mental half: the symbol.

Indeed, whenever a semiotic approach is brought into archaeology, its users tend to make the materiality of things disappear and the arbitrariness of meaning manifest. This way of proceeding is typical of symbolic rather than of contextual archaeology. In opposition to this trend, the latter is sought in this book.

An illustrious example of a symbolic – Saussurian – approach in archaeology is D'Agostino's study of Iron Age necropolis of Pontecagnano. Discussing typology and the function of material culture, D'Agostino (1988: 13) claims that, when trying to approach objects' meanings, as in linguistics, one can speak of the arbitrariness of the sign-object, which needs to be considered inside a codified system. This framework is typical of an attempt to discern the world through

[11] See also Gambatesa (2015 and 2016) who engages with a further semiotician, Algirdas Julien Greimas and with his semiotic square of oppositions, quickly dismissed in archaeology.

symbols, as happens in communication. Indeed, a symbol is the sign that expresses a meaning by means of a communicative act (Eco, 1975: 25). This appears in all of the examples of signs Saussure refers to, which are all highly conventionalized and often come from linguistics studies. Conversely, Peirce's examples of sign offer a plethora of cases, including both intentionally produced signs, aimed at communicating, and unintentionally left ones, available for any potential interpreter to consider as symptoms, unconscious behaviours, unwitting gestures, and practices.

The distinction between Peirce's and de Saussure's sign is important here because it provides a scientific base for the archaeology of practice and identity. Along with Preucel (2006: 3) and others (Gottdeiner, 1995; Keane, 2003; Parmentier, 1997; Sirigu, 2003, 2005), I maintain that the Saussurian theory of signs cannot support a sound and relational interpretation of material culture. By contrast, the Peircean model provides a dynamic theory indispensable for questioning homogenising models. It does so by extending the signification process to all archaeological finds on a site, whether intentional or unintentional products, seeking a correlation between all of them. It allows us to assess any human practices – and relative material signs – as relevant partakers in signifying identity. The adoption of Peirce's theory of sign allows us to define communities fluidly, based on what people did individually, collectively, in relation to each other and, particularly, to the past. This work seeks to apply such framework to the burial sites of Sardinia looked at here.

This framework fits Gramsci's definition of human nature quoted in Section 1.1.1, where he considers that social relationships and becoming are essential to all men. Gramsci's idea is embodied in two of the most successful attempts to apply Peirce's semiotic framework to archaeological studies: Lele's concept of human identity and Preucel's account for semiotic ideology.

Lele (2006) has stressed how, when it comes to material culture, Peirce's semiotics helps overcoming the Cartesian division of mind *versus* matter that underpins Saussure's conception of sign. He demonstrated that material habits provide the substance for human identities, looking at how the use of rosaries performed in Aran, Western Ireland (2006: 58-62). The rosary is a tool composed of 50 beads linked together by a thread that finishes in a cross, used by religious Catholics to pray the Holy Mary. The rosary works as a reminder of how many prayers are to be recited to the end of a series of 50. Lele came across someone using a rosary with worn-out beads in a western Irish house, and inferred that they were the physical sign of usage of the rosary. Being each rosary formed of five groups of ten beads, each bead indicates to the person using it how many prayers, out of a total of 50, he/she has recited and how many are left. The way through which the person using the rosary can realise the exact number of the prayer he/she is at, is by constantly touching each bead while reciting it. Hence, the beads bring with them at least two significations. The first, common to all rosaries, is the numbering of the prayers – 50 – useful to any religious person praying. The second, proper of that unique rosary witnessed by Lele, is its deterioration, for the holder of the rosary passed each bead through his/her fingers so intensely to leave perceptible marks on them. The worn beads are the material sign of – stand for – the prayers recited by their holder. It is only through their materiality that an interpreter can recall the gestures that involved those specific beads. The specific worn-out beads are the sign (*representamen*) standing for the prayer (meaning/object) via the practice of holding and rubbing them while praying (interpretant).

Preucel (2006: 210-246) has provided an assessment of Anglo-American archaeology throughout its historical engagement with structuralism and semiotics, applying Peirce's theory to the case study of the Pueblo revolt, an event occurred in New Mexico between 1680 and 1696. The revolt has long been considered as the natural outcome of a cultural revitalization of the villages who wanted to fight Spanish authority during the 17th century colonization. This interpretation has been taken for granted since its first acceptance, and has rarely been challenged since. Preucel has tried to go beyond that simple appreciation. In his study, he looked at the practices through which the revolt was put in place. Preucel has this way highlighted that the goal to eliminate the Spanish rule was mediated by the development of an ideology among the Pueblo people. Such ideology had manifested materially through the signs left by a series of practices, among which architectural choices and decorative innovations of common used objects. On one hand, the revitalization of the architectural features of both the new village and the main plaza of Pueblo, for instance, aimed at getting rid of the buildings that had been signifying the Spanish authority to the local people. Clearing the Spanish period buildings, the new architectures connected ideally to the pre-Hispanic authority while linking physically to the architectures of the ancestors. On the other hand, during the same years, the women of the villages started to produce vessels' decorations imitating the pre-Spanish ones. Preucel names these practices as 'signs of history' – the architecture – and 'signs in history' – pottery forms and decorations – depending on their unique way to refer to the past. None of such signs would be correctly understood if simply treated as a symbol. In fact, in the first case, the architectural choices are an attempt of physical connection to material remains older than the Spanish rule, and as such they indicate them. They

signify through their indexicality. In the second, the decorations made by the women aim at recalling the decorations of the old times, resembling their aspect. As such, they signified in an iconic way. Peirce's semiotics was used by Preucel to show effectively how 'signs function not simply to represent social reality, but also to create it and effect changes in that reality' (Preucel, 2006: 249).

Lele and Preucel's studies show how, to produce meaning, signs not only need a material ground of human interaction – practice, decision-making, reaction to the stimuli of the material world; they also need to be deeply grounded in materiality themselves. Peircean semiotics accounts successfully for the materiality of objects (i.e. the rosary's worn beads), unveiling the impact of both practice and choice on the corporeality of the world, as much as that of the established social structure.

1.1.5. Identification and identity: the archaeological context as an interpretant

The sections above should help to anticipate that in any discipline that studies signs, and hence also in archaeology, identity tends to become identification if it follows Saussure's binary structure. Archaeological signs, mainly material culture with certain morphological characteristics, have been for long identified with people and their movements, particularly within the culture history tradition of studies (i.e. Childe, 1929: v, vi), where vessels and brooches became substitutes of people (Trigger, 1989: 237). This simplistic identification process has been partially overcome through the decades, but it still re-emerges sometimes, especially when archaeologies of the empires are looked at. Using Peirce's structure of sign and interpretation can help to move a step further in overcoming identification and getting closer to multiple identities of human groups. Given its tripartite structure, it forces us to account for an element – the interpretant – that can bridge the gap between the object – i.e. a pot assemblage – selected as a sign of something else and what it stands for – i.e. a people.

The role of the interpretant, the element by which one justifies the logical sustainability of an interpretation, should not really be new to most social scientists, in particular to archaeologists. Archaeologists are largely used to giving meaning to finds – literally signs-from-the-past – through the analysis of artefacts within the context in which they are found. A thorough application of Peirce's semiotics to material culture is indeed perfectly in line with a rigorous usage of contextual archaeology. It is one of the main purposes of this work to illustrate the equation between interpretant and context.

Using contextual elements systematically as interpretants, triangulating the meaning of archaeological finds, fluid and mutable identities are more likely to emerge than any one-to-one correspondence between an object and its meaning. This process, so familiar to archaeology, is not rarely neglected when it comes to interpreting archaeological contexts as signs of a human group's identity.

Contexts are often overlooked, especially when dealing with identity, to the advantage of the old and frequently criticised use of artefacts as signatures of cultures and peoples. For Pitts (2007: 701) 'by looking at contexts in which different vessels types and fabrics are found (e.g. domestic, funerary, religious, regional), it is feasible to approach the role of pottery in the articulation of complex webs of interrelated identities.' However, the contexts exemplified by Pitts are too broad and leave little room for a proper interpretant to contribute to the interpretation process. Sirigu (2004: 5), by quoting Starobinski (1981: 193), reminds us that 'the language with which we indicate data is already the same language with which we are going to interpret such data later'. Even innocent archaeological choices of nomenclature create a series of linguistic thresholds that limit and define finds' interpretation (Sirigu, 2006: 73, 74). For instance, defining a context as religious and framing the pottery within a religious domain and language is, at its best, unhelpful for our knowledge of the past and allows essentialism to emerge.

Avoiding essentialism is hard and the risk seems inevitable, but there are prospects of success. As archaeologists, we not only need more fine-grained data and better ways to collect them. Archaeology has indeed invested consistently in the last decades in new technology to obtain them. Nonetheless, we must also consider fine-grained contexts and interpretations.

Using contexts and periodizations that are too broad – religious, domestic, Roman, local – we run the risk of building homogeneous interpretations that neglect those details – those fine-grained interpretations – that could reveal significant diversities. A good example is the division of burial practices between cremations and inumations and their consequent attribution to broad ethnic identities based on that evidence alone.

Although providing a base for further interpretation, a distinction between cremations and inhumations is, on its own, insufficient to define group identities. In Roman archaeology, cremations found in the first centuries B.C. in the provinces are often considered a sign of Romanness – or Romanization, or auto-Romanization, or the presence of people from Italy – as is the presence of some pottery such as *terra sigillata italica*. It is precisely this attitude that makes simplistic identifications emerge rather than identity.

Identification – rather than identity – takes place when the presence of a specific object, ritual, style is made a symbol of a specific identity.

Conversely, the context must be a fine-grained one, to detect as many details as possible that are often generated by unconscious behaviours. This approach springs from the need to go beyond the idea that human decisions often derive from the will communicate something to someone. Rather, significant diversities lie behind signs that their producer left unconsciously, with no communicative aim whatsoever. Signs are simply the product of ordinary living. As Gardini (2016) puts it referring to the Latin word *signum*, a sign can be anything: the light of a star that disappeared millions of years ago, an invisible dripping, an unexpected cloud, a stomachache, a pointing finger, as long as we decide that that specific thing evokes something more than what it represents *per se*. Detecting these details and attempting their contextual interpretation is the key to success in understanding community identity.

Anthony Snodgrass accounts for such a scientific attitude by referring to the mid-20th century art-historian Sir John Beazley. In order to identify the authors of Renaissance paintings very similar to one another, Beazley looked for answers 'not in those overall effects for which the painters were consciously striving, but in the trivial differences of rendering which they unconsciously, yet regularly, observed' (Snodgrass, 2012: 22). This passage is crucial.

This method – named '*metodo circostanziale*' by Giovanni Morelli – is the core of the fundamental essay on signs as 'spies' – *spie* – by Carlo Ginzburg (1979). Ginzburg underlined how even Sigmund Freud (1957) found Morelli's art historical method inspiring for the importance it attributed to secondary, apparently insignificant, details, close to the *modus operandi* of medical psychoanalysis. What brought Freud, Morelli and Sherlock Holmes to follow the same methodology is, for Ginzburg, the use of a method founded on the refuse, the marginal data, whose importance is reversed in this paradigm, capable of revealing only the bigger picture (Ginzburg, 1979: 58). Marginal data acquire the form of symptoms in Freud, of hints in Sherlock Holmes, and of painted signs in Morelli, all inspired by the model of semiotic medicine (1979: 59). The same focus on assemblages of details is pursued here, aiming to highlight conscious and unconscious behaviours that can reveal human groups' relational choices and identities.

Material culture assemblages – collections of things that give contextual meaning to each other in a given place –[12] the position of their constituents and proximity to each other, are fundamental to the reconstruction of the practices that formed them. I refer to heterogeneous – that is, real – assemblages made of any objects, biological and anthropological remains in physical proximity. This is a contextual assemblage. By treating each element of the assemblage as an interpretant, a chain of interconnected interpretants emerge, each element becoming indispensable to sustain an interpretation, the latter being never reducible to a correspondence between two elements.

The next section will link Peirce's framework and the concept of context as interpretant with the value of identity in archaeology.

1.1.6. Practice, agency, structure: signs of a semiotic continuum in identity negotiation

As underscored above, archaeologists have largely criticized the habit of identifying objects with people, urging a more dynamic study of material culture. One way to achieve this is through the concept of practice (i.e. Barrett, 1997). Drawing on Giddens' work on identity and social structures, Gardner (2007: 19) has defined practice as 'what people do'. Understanding how things were used within human practices rather than simply identifying them with people via their formal features is an indispensable step for archaeological interpretation. However, the study of practice is not immune from risks of essentialism. Casella and Fowler (2004: 8) pointed out that 'just as we cannot look to a form of material culture and attest the presence of a certain cultural group, so we cannot look to the adoption of specific practices and know the identity of the practitioners.'

The danger of identifying people with their practices is a concrete one and the tendency to a simple descriptive process has been flagged (Pitts, 2007). Although the knowledge of a certain practice can inform us of people's actions, this does not much improve our knowledge of their identity, as it does not highlight its relational nature, and hence its logic. Nonetheless, 'a certain slippage could occur between practices and identities' (Pitts, 2007: 96), and the identification of the two happens often. The way to avoid such slippage, I maintain, is by defining identity through a solid theoretical apparatus that highlights its epistemological nature.

Identity is relational in its essence and cannot exist in isolation. It is temporary and mutable, as much as are human beings. Every action is performed with reference to prior knowledge and previous experience (Casella, Fowler, 2004: 8), either in continuity or opposition with

[12] For recent debate on the assemblage concept drawing on the theory of Deleuze and Bennett see Hamilakis, 2014; Fowler, 2013; Alberti, Jones, 2013. See also session S(2) *Archaeology and Assemblage* held at TAG – Theoretical Archaeology Group – Manchester, December 2014.

them. My research adopts Remotti's (1996: 5) crucial idea that identity does not encapsulate an object's essence but rather depends on our decisions.[13]

If identity is determined by decisions, it is essential to understand the options from which a community can choose in negotiating its identity. Gardner's use of Giddens' structuration theory clarifies this. He defines identity as 'a key symbolic medium through which agency and structure interrelate' (Gardner, 2007: 18). Since Gardner uses agency as 'a capacity for acting in a particular, self-conscious way' (Giddens, 1984: 9), Remotti's *decisions*, then, can be seen as the product of agency put into practice. Agency – or decisions – determine both single individuals and the community to which they belong. They develop throughout their relationship with the wider world creating what Giddens (1984: 25-27) defines as the 'duality of structure.' This structuration framework puts agency and structure on the same interpretive level and tends to reduce decisively the risk of attributing ontological supremacy to one term only, avoiding viewing one as the fixed container of the other (*contra* Saussure; see Section 1.1.4.) - i.e. agency as the content of practices. Structuration allows us to see identity as the result of the mutually constituted relationship between agency – the capacity of people to act in this world – and structure – the world as it was framed by previous and others' manifestations of agency. Its biggest value for archaeology is that it does not allow straightforward representations of identity to emerge.

However, Giddens relies on a theoretical detail that constitutes a potential pitfall worth investigating in semiotic terms. For Gardner (2007: 18), identity comes onto the scene as a result of the interaction of agency and structure as a symbolic medium.[14] This definition of identity as a symbolic medium contrasts with Peircean semiotics on which this research draws. It has to be clear that identity can be seen as a sign itself, intended within a triadic structure. As such, it can also become a symbol, as symbols are a specific type of sign whose existence is mediated by means of convention. In providing a sign's typology,[15] Peirce defines symbols as those signs 'which have become associated with their meanings by usage. Such are most words, and phrases, and speeches, and books, and libraries' (EP 2: 5). Symbols are the closest type of sign to Saussure's theory: an arbitrarily justified one.

What makes a symbol so powerful is its use with a precise and fixed meaning. A symbol gives a sense of security and it does so when a community is aware of its communicative properties, conventionally understands it, and agrees on its attributed meaning. However, in the large majority of cases, interpreters infer a meaning from gestures even if the person making them is not aware of their semiotic properties (Eco, 1975: 30-32). Unconventional behaviours are interpreted through middle terms – interpretants – by means of their physical origins, indexicality, and iconicity and so on: for instance, smoke is generally a sign of fire as it is in causal relationship with fire. It would be inappropriate to make smoke a perpetual symbol of fire, losing their causal connection. Likewise, Saint Augustin spent numerous passages defining signs as something that recalls something else in such a way that, when we see a trace on the ground, we think that an animal whose the trace is has passed that way (*De Doctrina Christiana* II, I, 1).

When a generic sign becomes a symbol, its meaning is fixed and hard to change if not through another symbolic event that will substitute the former with another fixed meaning. To improve the relational value of identity, we have to be clear that it cannot be a symbolic medium. Identity is a sign in the creation of which both agency and structure participate, each of them contributing to change the others in a constant, fluid, becoming.

What might seem just a theoretical elucidation is fundamental to getting the scientific framework right and avoiding confusion between fixed identifications and fluid identities. It has to be acknowledged that identities consciously held by communities can become symbolic, of which there are historical examples. Such examples though, need to be analysed within the particular historical circumstances that generated them and these will reveal that such identities arise often because specific social and political tensions created the conditions for their emergence. The perception of threat coming from outside is one of the circumstances that may engender the fear of losing one's identity[16] that is consequently sought and obsessively and constantly remarked. These identities are historically justified by a political agenda. Treating identity always as a symbol, though, would prevent us from understanding symbolic identities when they really become so and from inferring their historical causes.

If the distinction between sign – of which symbol is only one type – and symbol leaves us doubtful, the archaeological purpose of disclosing multiple identities and explaining their relational reasons through the study of material culture and practice will cease. The risk lying behind any hesitation in distinguishing

[13] *'L'identità, allora, non inerisce all'essenza di un oggetto; dipende invece dalle nostre decisioni. L'identità è un fatto di decisioni.'* (Remotti, 1996: 5).
[14] See also Gardner 2002: 345-6.
[15] See Eco, 1975 on the necessity of updating and adapting Peirce's categorization of signs for modern times.
[16] The political campaign by Republican candidate for the US presidency Donald Trump is only the last famous example.

between sign and symbol is the confusion between identity and stereotype. Gardner's definition of identity built on Giddens' theory laid a bridge between agency and structure that contributes very importantly to the improvement of archaeological interpretation. However, it is paramount to underline that identity cannot always be dealt with as a symbolic medium. There is the need for a theorisation of identity as a proper sign in itself. The next section will attempt to develop such a framework.

1.1.7. A semiotic definition of identity

An archaeologically-detectable identity is a set of decisions that a community takes at a precise time. These decisions stand for the practices performed by its members in relation to both their past and practices performed by others.[17] Traces of such practices are materially visible on the site and have to be archaeologically justified.

This definition indicates that identity is not a fixed entity but something whose nature requires constant negotiation through decision-making and action. By identity negotiation, I mean a mutual influence involving the cooperation of at least three subjects per time: the choices of a community/individual, the past with which they relate, and the practices performed by both the community/individual under studies and by other surrounding agents. The confrontation with the past of a community creates a chronological account, historically embedded; that with other subjects produces a diachronic account rooted in social structures. This triadic relationship is never reducible to a link between pairs.[18] If it were, one would obtain precisely what archaeology is trying to abandon: a simple identification with either material culture or practice. What creates a social structure, within this definition of identity, is the constant relation with others, from which a new set of decisions derives.

The ways in which the members of a community engage with these structures are multiple. Among them is the physical, tactile, sight-involving engagement with material remains that recall practices performed in the past, in the sites used by the communities under study. The relationship with such structures, the resultant decisions of the community, and the practices performed accordingly, participate all together in the negotiation of the community's identity. The same relational procedure has to be followed archaeologically, starting from the material remains that their decisions and practices left in the ground. These material remains also need to be accounted for in relation with what is not preserved: the materiality of absence (Denti, 2014). For example, in funerary sites, among the grave goods generally left alongside the deceased are vessels used to pour and serve drinks, and to prepare and serve food; sometimes though, only bottles, used to pour drinks, are present, whereas drinking vessels such as cups or glasses are not. This absence needs to be taken into account because it hints at social and economic circumstances.

The advantages of identity as a dynamic sign are twofold.

- First, it explicitly refers to material culture, demonstrating that identity has a material aspect. It results from a constant engagement – conscious and unconscious – of communities with the material traces of practices performed both in the past and by their contemporaries. This definition allows appreciating 'the centrality of objects to the definition of cultural identity [which] is essential if we are to understand the role of archaeology in western society' (Millett, 2012: 31).

- Second, its theoretical involvement of no less than three elements helps to reduce drastically the possibility of confusing identity with straightforward identifications established on the simple relationships between pairs of features.[19]

Considering this semiotic account, it is no surprise that one of the main outcomes of the Laurence Seminar mentioned in Section 1.1.2 was a heated discussion around identity in Roman archaeology. This is inevitable because identity discourses are inherent in archaeology. Archaeology should definitely not give up on identity as an interpretive instrument to enhance our knowledge of the past, but rather ought to engage more theoretically on how identities are constructed and how they are reconstructable referring to material remains only. This would allow archaeology to acquire an even more influential position in the modern political debate, disclosing the political agendas hidden behind the statement of supposedly exclusive and monolithic identities.

The next section will show how the debate on Romanization in England, Italy, and particularly in Sardinia, is founded on – often binary – notions of identity.

[17] Definition shaped on that of sign by C.S. Peirce (C.P. 2.228). See section 1.1.4.
[18] Discussion inspired to the further definition of sign provided by C.S. Peirce (C.P. 5.484).
[19] See the critiques to binary identification by Diaz-Andreu (2005); Pitts (2007); Casella-Fowler (2004); Gardner (2007); Insoll (2007); Gardner, Herring, Lomas (2013).

1.2. Romanization and *Romanizzazione* of Sardinia today: a question of identity

1.2.1. Paradigm switches within Roman archaeology in the last century

Since the origins of the discipline, at the end of 19th century, Roman archaeology has been widely influenced by the use of Classical sources. Their value for the knowledge of the ancient world, and impact on academia, were so powerful that they became the main subject of entire departments, of Classics, worldwide. Throughout the decades, Roman archaeology gained more space in these departments. It contributed to enhancing our knowledge of the classical world with a change of perspective, by integrating written sources with material culture studies. Particularly popular in the last decades have been postcolonial approaches to Roman archaeology (i.e. Gosden, 2004). By importing postcolonial ideas from critical theory (i.e. Said, 1978; Spivak, 1988; Bhabha, 1994), Roman archaeologists, particularly in Britain, have enhanced the role of archaeology giving voice to those people neglected by written sources and unaccounted for by the archaeology of monuments and art works.

In order to create alternative narratives to those produced from the perspective of people in power, archaeologists have given greater emphasis to material culture beyond texts and switched their focus from Rome to natives in the provinces (Millett, 1990; Webster, Cooper, 1996; Webster, 2001; Hingley, 2005; Mattingly, 2007, 2011; Jimenez, 2007; Revell, 2008). This attitude arose as a reaction to much scholarship of the first half of the 20th century that shaped the archaeological sources. These were founded on the cultural ideal of Rome's imperialism and on the political aims associated with the rise of European nations and empires. The latter were modelled on the Roman Empire's inheritance so much that 'the artefacts associated with the Classical past are deeply entrenched in the self-definition of the peoples of Europe' (Millett, 2012: 31).

The agenda of Roman archaeology was originally shaped by Rome's military conquests, her administration and the acculturation of the provinces (e.g., Hogarth, 1899; Potter, 1999; for Sardinia see Pais, 1923). Much of the debate around Roman archaeology has been influenced by this agenda for the last twenty years at least, and centred on the concept of Romanization.

1.2.2. Romanization's origins and current debate in Britain

Romanization has had different fortunes in Britain and in the Mediterranean countries. Theodor Mommsen (1886) was the first to use the term. It indicated the process of integration of the peoples in the provinces under Rome. Francis Haverfield (1912) – who also worked under the influence of Mommsen – adopted this concept in the United Kingdom, followed soon after by Collingwood (1932), with different outcomes.[20]

The Romanization paradigm has its origin in the political and social contexts of European nations (Millett, 2012: 31), reminding us how the study of the past cannot be isolated from the context of the present (Hingley, 2005: 5). The Roman Empire worked as a model for understanding the interaction of people from different places, consolidating 'a sense of subjectivity and cultural integration' (Benton, Fear, 2003: 268). Interestingly, Mommsen also worked as a politician in Germany from 1863 to 1884, when he was asked to oppose anti-Semitic behaviours that were taking over in Germany at the end of the 19th century.[21] In particular, Mommsen thought that a solution to anti-Semitism could be a voluntary cultural assimilation by the Jews who could give up some of their special customs to better integrate in Europe.[22] This political background is extremely significant when one considers that Romanization was a model founded on integration of diversity.

The acknowledgement of the intertwining of past and present has often been distorted in the over-confident interpretation of the Roman world, with the result of making it 'seem perhaps a bit too easily comprehensible' (Gardner, 2007: 15), and hence too often dangerously unquestioned. This attitude has become common in every area of Roman archaeology, from population studies to ceramic analysis, funerary practice, and religion, with all these subjects becoming 'falsely familiar to the scholarly community' (Bang, 2008: 1).

For some of these reasons, together with the fact that sometimes it provided over simplistic paradigms of assimilations (Hingley, 2005: 26), Romanization has been harshly criticised, particularly in Britain, for the last twenty years. As designed by Mommsen, Romanization was underpinned by the concept of progress: change and transformations occurring in the regions controlled by Rome were a gradual effect of the diffusion of a top-down modern culture. This

[20] Haverfield's model is founded on a binary relationship between Roman and indigenous (Celtic) material cultures, corresponding neatly to Roman and Celtic civilizations – rather than 'people' as in the traditional culture-history approach – in a mutually exclusive way. Differently, Collingwood opposed this exclusive homogeneity (1932: 111) reinterpreting material culture in Britain as embodying a mixture of both Roman and indigenous features, anticipating in an embryonic way some key concepts adopted in postcolonial models: hybridization and creolisation.

[21] For Mommsen's pamphlet on the issue, where he invites the Jews 'to abandon their separateness', see Graetz's (2013) entry 'Mommsen, Theodor' in the Jewish Virtual Library.

[22] Prof. Mommsen and the Jews, in The New York Times 8 January 1881.

model, politically motivated as demonstrated above, needs to be contextualised in 1880s Germany and 1910s Britain, France and Italy. Later, Millett redefined it in his *The Romanization of Britain*. This represents 'its most sophisticated expression [as it] did significantly shift attention to the 'Native' side of the Romanization equation, and – as an implicitly 'processual' work – focused more on socioeconomic aspects of the period than had many previous 'standard' accounts' (Gardner, 2007: 27).

Compared to the past uses of Romanization, Millett stressed the active role of natives in the building of Roman period society, finding that 'by the time Britain was invaded, the Roman army and administration were increasingly peopled by natives from other provinces' (Millett, 1990: 53). Millett added that natives 'had adopted Roman cultural values and trappings [so that] personal advancement was obtained through service in the Roman army or civil life' (Millett, 1990: 53). Often, this change has been considered 'a process that was carried out through imitation, 'by osmosis'' (MacMullen, 2000: 128, 137), that is by passive adoption of material objects as well as social practices.[23] This shows that, rather than being criticised as a whole, Romanization should be looked at in the context of specific research questions.

Whether one criticises it or embraces it, Romanization still raises one permanent issue. It is entrenched in the opposition of homogeneous categories: 'Roman' and 'native' (i.e. Hingley, 2005: 87; Mattingly, 2011: 29). From this perspective, Gardner (2007: 27-28) has a point in underlining that only the adoption of a post-colonial critique of these essentialist ethnic categories produced a change of perspective (e.g., Barrett, 1997; Jimenez, 2007: 24, 25; Fincham, 2002; Freeman, 1993; Hingley, 1999; Webster, 2001; Webster, Cooper, 1996). But this did not produce the expected results. Although switching the focus from Rome to the periphery of the Empire and from works of art to ordinary material culture, postcolonial archaeology has struggled to overcome the duality – Roman *versus* local – introduced by Romanization. One example comes from the attempt to substitute the word Romanization with *creolisation* and *hybridity*. Webster argues that creolisation is 'a process of resistant adaptations' (Webster, 2001: 118), a principle that underscores 'the possibility for this bottom-up cultural development to take place' (2001: 220). However, the three principles on which creolisation is based – the process of negotiations in the Roman world, its material expression with new meanings in new contexts, and the influence on this of asymmetric power relations – were already part of the Romanization paradigm (Pearce, 2013: 3).

Postcolonial approaches are based on models created to account for precise historical contexts, such as the modern colonisation of Americas and Asia. The main issues with these models originate from their founding theoretical assumption: the rootedness of the term hybrid 'in its even more problematic counterpart: purity' (Stockhammer, 2012: 2). If we accept the existence of something creole, we must accept the encounter between two pure entities. By doing so, we incur in the paradox of getting rid of essentialist views on Roman culture by introducing essentialist models of native culture (Jimenez, 2008: 24).

Cultural purity has long been problematic. The risk of reviving it by applying certain models without an overall comprehension of the circumstances in which they arose – as with Romanization – is high. No culture was born pure, rather every culture was from the beginning the result of interaction, exchange, influence (Fabietti, 1995: 21; Geertz, 1973). Creolisation has impacted positively Roman studies by highlighting the unpredictable solutions that adaptations to the colonial encounters generated. But it refers to processes of linguistic and cultural mixing that originated from the encounter of cultures unknown to one another until the reality of slavery, plantation and colonization brought them together (Benitez-Rojo, 1996: 12; Hall, 2010: 28). Neglecting this particular context is risky at least as much as neglecting the context within which Romanization originated.

From this angle, the bilingualism and *codeswitching* model advanced by Wallace-Hadrill (1998, 2008) to understand the process of hellenisation is relevant. Understood this way, the interactions between Rome and the Hellenic culture provoked in people in Rome the capacity to switch behaviour, adapting to the context and identity of people they dealt with, just as one would switch language depending on the interlocutor. Wallace-Hadrill's model can apply to people in the provinces who likely had at their disposal one code to deal internally with people bearing the same history and social structure, and another to deal with Roman and Italic peoples (i.e. Jimenez, 2008: 26 on Corduba). Versluys (2014: 8-9) links his theory of hybridity of archaeological contexts to Wallace-Hadrill's code-switching theory, attributing to agents the capacity to choose which way to behave in relation to different contexts. This fits Woolf's (1997: 341) 'unity in diversity' concept applied to Gaul and can ultimately fit Millett's (1990) Romanization of Britain, and Torelli's (1999) *Romanizzazione* of Italy that will be exposed below. All these models are led by the principle that 'by no means, however, did Romanization lead to a loss of local identity' (Roselaar, 2012: 14). Material culture coming

[23] For a more complete account on Romanization as the diffusion of a Romanised lifestyle through local elites' mediation see Alcock, 1994; Brandt and Slofstra, 1983; Terrenato, 2005; Woolf, 1998; Whittaker, 1997.

from thousands of miles apart and used by people in the provinces might have not 'challenge[d] their identity in any major way' (Terrenato, 2005: 68). Nonetheless, the question of group identities and of their negotiations arises any time material culture is looked at, revealing the dualism Roman *versus* local.

Today, most scholars acknowledge that 'ancient ethnic groups did not exist in isolation and cannot be defined only by their own cultures' (Gardner, Harring, Lomas, 2013: 2). So, identity was constantly reshaped by interaction and negotiation with others. The same can be said for the adjective 'Roman', recognised not as an unchanging package but as an entity in constant fluctuation depending on time and place (*Ibid*: 4) and hence something whose meaning – as the meaning of Rome (Revell. 2009; Keay, Terrenato, 2001: IX) – we should critically discuss (Versluys, 2014: 5-6). These insights go along with the certainty that, to highlight new interpretations of change and tradition, we should focus on 'how things are made, used, exchanged and consumed and see what patterns emerge' (Woolf, 2014: 48). Hence, scholars of the Roman world who refer to apparently very distant theoretical models of interpretation agree on some crucial points on Romanization. Nonetheless, different approaches to Roman archaeology developed in very distant agendas that deal with Romanization in opposed ways.

In fact, Versluys (2014: 14) and others argue for the recovery of the Romanization paradigm as a single cultural framework within recent theories as globalization. Conversely, postcolonial scholars urge us to focus on how present and past interact in the creation of past narratives (Hingley 2014: 23). Gardner and others see the future of Roman archaeology within the group identities debate, particularly by exploring the concept of human agency, with the aim of restoring people's capacity 'to exercise active cultural choices in appropriating, adapting or, rejecting aspects of Roman culture' (Gardner, Herring, Lomas, 2013: 6). In opposition, material agency has recently become central for some scholars urging us to focus on the entanglement between objects and people (Versluys, 2014: 14), switching towards the former and its influence on people's actions (Van Oyen, 2013). Romanization has not been so harshly criticised elsewhere outside United Kingdom.

1.2.3. Romanizzazione in Italian academia

The debate around the concept of Romanization developed differently in the Mediterranean countries, especially in Italy, where *Romanizzazione* is still used today, in a much less problematic way than in Britain, to describe the change the provinces underwent when annexed by Rome. One thing all archaeologists have agreed upon since the '90s is that the 'Romanization of Italy is the very unequal level of development found in the territories inhabited by peoples speaking Italic languages' (Torelli, 1995:2). Diversity is at the core of such model. Conversely, in Portuguese academia, the concept of *romanização* was until recently still used to define a unidirectional process of Roman acculturation over indigenous peoples (Soria, 2013: 713), often resulting from a coercive and violent process (Fabião, 2001: 110). The interpretative trend in Portugal today leaves room for the interpretation of *romanização* less as a military imposition and closer to today's globalization (Soria, 2013: 713).[24] Likewise, in French scholarship, the word *Romanization* is generally used in both historiographical and archaeological research, either as an analytical tool or as an historical process. Its use, though, occurs always with full consciousness of its partiality and awareness of the conceptual problems it implies.[25] It is often tested against the archaeological evidence filtered through postcolonial perspective,[26] focusing on a smaller regional level[27] than in the past. The same change has occurred in German[28] and Spanish scholarships.[29] Nonetheless, these are only trends, and even within these national traditions the use of the term Romanization may vary. Of course, it is worth remembering, with Le Roux (2004: 93), that the concept of Romanization has developed archaeologically to account for the widely observed increasing homogeneity of material culture in the Roman period.

Mommsen's work on Romanization has permeated the vision of the Roman world in Italian academia, both in the fields of history and archaeology, even though a debate as heated as the one in Britain has not taken place in Italy. *Romanizzazione* is well known to students of Roman history and archaeology who prepare their theses (see section 2.1.1 for a personal account). Being the most widely applied paradigm – and the least discussed one – Romaization's multiple meanings, often taken for granted by scholars, are rarely discussed. Some examples illustrate this.

The course of Roman archaeology (2008-2009) held by Lo Cascio at *La Sapienza*, Rome, discussed 'the characteristics of the Imperial Roman model, the key points of the modern debate on Romanization, integration and homogenisation, Romanization as self-Romanization, persistence of different cultures within the Empire.'[30] In that course, Romanization is seen as an acculturation process, either imposed from top down

[24] See Gardner (2013), and Versluys (2014) *contra* Gardner for opposite visions on globalization.
[25] Janniard, Traina, 2006.
[26] Lamoine, 2009.
[27] Van Ossel, 2009.
[28] Schörner, 2005.
[29] Vigil, 1986.
[30] http://scienzeumanistiche.uniroma1.it/guide/vs_moduli_orario_2007_8b.aspID_modulo=272.

or spontaneously adopted. Another example comes from Rinaldi Tufi's influential *Archeologia delle Province Romane* (2000), where *Romanizzazione* is introduced without a definition. It is possible to infer that Rinaldi Tufi uses Romanization mainly in relation to cities, as a synonym for Rome's arrival in the provinces, and for the changes in architecture and urban planning that this brought about. Rather more energetically, Desideri holds that *Romanizzazione* is 'perhaps the greatest phenomenon in the history of human civilization, of reduction of a set of peoples submitted with the power, to a political unity and cultural homogeneity' (Desideri, 1991: 577). These examples show some of the different circumstances and agendas involving *Romanizzazione* within Italian academia.

A valuable attempt to bridge the gap between Italian academia and the debates held in Britain comes again from Lo Cascio (1999). Commenting on Woolf's (1998) critique of Romanization as too wide a concept, unable to cover the cultural and ethnic variety it deals with, Lo Cascio invites us to investigate the causes for such variety. He questions whether this unfinished cultural standardisation is either a sign of respect for and acceptance of diversity by the Roman authorities, or of the inability to promote approval, or rather of disinterest by the Empire in the homogenising the surrounding cultures to theirs (Lo Cascio, 1999: 163). The divergence is evident. Where Woolf engages critically with the definition of Romanization as a problematic concept, Lo Cascio assesses the value of Romanization as an historical phenomenon.

The work of Mario Torelli helps clarify this blurry picture. Archaeological evidence for change in the provinces is agreed, both by British and Italian scholarship, to be 'the adoption of Roman material culture' (Van Dommelen, 2001: 71). For Torelli (1995: 1) 'the study of material culture (...) provides a detailed picture of the main transformations which occurred in the production process.' He qualifies *Romanization* as acculturation, calling for attributing to archaeological evidence the capacity to reflect historical reality, structures and ideologies (*Ibid*). He also argues that the mid-90s state-of-the-art of material culture studies 'provide[ed] an overall view of the ruling classes' (Torelli 1995:1), depicting Roman society as the product of class struggle. Economic development and agricultural production acquire a central role in Torelli's studies of Roman Italy (1995: 9). Torelli also faced the Roman-locals divide, holding that this reflects academic priorities: on the one hand, scholars of the indigenous world, mainly archaeologists – 'Italicists' – who concentrate on local cultures, and on the other, scholars of the Roman world, usually historians, who focus on the political and military dominion of Rome. This picture of Italian academia was the object of further reflections by Torelli few years later, when he defined the Romanization of Italy 'the problem of denied history' (1999: 1), adding that

> 'The young Italian liberal middle class tended to identify itself with the pre-Roman peoples (...). They deliberately put the Greek presence and contribution into the shade and pointed to the Romans, frequently guilty of outright genocide, as being responsible for the tragic decline of their regions, of their peoples, and of the civil life of Italy itself. The Risorgimento, for patriots such as Andrea Lombardi, meant the rescue from a decadence begun with the Roman conquest.' (Torelli 1999: 1).

This passage demonstrates two things. First, that disentangling the interpretation of the past from the beliefs held in the present is impossible, with Torelli's Marxist ideas applied to both academia and the Roman world. Second, that some topics central to today's debate in Britain – the ethics of the Empire (Hingley, 2000; Mattingly, 2006) – were discussed in Italy decades ago even if unrelated to postcolonial theory. The allegedly parallel paths of Britain and Italy on Romanization did not prevent the two traditions from sharing similar views. The attribution of the role of intermediary between Romans and locals to native elites, argued for by both Millett (1990) and Torelli (1999), is one. Another similarity is the vast specialization in material culture morpho-typological studies. This positive aspect is not risk-free. Referring to Maghrebi archaeologists, Mattingly expressed his concern over an excessive specialization trend in well-established traditional fields of study, like Latin or Greek epigraphy, Roman mosaics, Roman cities, Roman army, and more. The risk, extendable to Italy and Britain, is that there are very few archaeologists 'with expertise in less traditional aspects such as rural archaeology or the ancient economy' (Mattingly, 2011, 66). Accordingly, Roth (2007: 8) has highlighted an unnatural separation between identity and economics in Roman studies.

This account shows both the variety of forms taken by Romanization, and that a generic *romanizzazione*, problematic in Britain, applies also in Italy to uneven episodes of change.

1.2.4. Sardinia within *Romanizzazione*

The paradigm of *Romanizzazione* has acquired several connotations in Sardinia, and it has often been countered by a paradigm of resistance to Romanization. Before facing the archaeological problem of Romanizzazione and Sardinia, it is worth discussing briefly the role of Sardinian Academia within the Italian on.

Dyson and Rowland (2007), authors of an influential study on Sardinian archaeology, believe that the results of archaeological studies developed in Sardinia reflect

the structure of Sardinian academia, separating it from the Italian one. For them, Sardinian academia 'has been dominated by Sardinians who have made their careers in their native land' leading 'to a certain level of cultural and intellectual isolation' (Dyson, Rowland 2007: 11). These assumptions, that might be founded on some true elements, have the ironic effect of attempting fighting the isolationist paradigm of resistance, popular in the island, by applying a simplistic model of cultural and intellectual isolation to modern Sardinia.

It is true that many archaeologists focusing on Sardinia were born and raised in the island. However, is the same not true for British scholars studying Roman Britain, Spanish scholars working on Punic Spain, Dutch ones investigating colonial Netherlands and so on? It is vital to remember this to have a balanced approach to Sardinian scholarship, avoiding the dismissal of its conclusions based on its alleged isolationism from national and international scholars. It is also worth underlining that some key scholars of Italian and international archaeology have worked in Sardinian universities. Among its teaching staff, the University of Cagliari had Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli (1929-30) and Mario Torelli (1969-73), Simonetta Angiolillo, and Peter Van Dommelen, certainly not Sardinian themselves, but with a high role in the universities of the island.

A partial explanation for the academic isolationism that Dyson and Rowland attributed to Sardinia derives from the prominent academic figure of Giovanni Lilliu. A renowned politician, who long stood for the island's independence, and also a leading archaeologist, Lilliu contributed to outline an historical and archaeological vision of an island that, 'often articulated in the popular press, has been shaped by pro-Sardinian and anti-colonialist views that emphasized the resistance of the Sardinians to the outside influences and outside conquerors' (Dyson, Roland, 2007: 12). This point helps to reveal the main interpretive paradigms applied to Sardinia, which often acquired the shape of 'a complex combination of conservative, empirical archaeology and Sardinian identity politics' (2007: 13).

Dyson and Rowland's account should be carefully considered and contextualised. I have referred already, in Section 1.2.2, to the deep contribution that modern political ideas held by Mommsen in Germany had in the shaping of the Romanization paradigm, and to Torelli's insights about the way Risorgimento's values were entrenched in the making of Roman history in Italy, in Section 1.2.3. But as in the case of Mommsen and Torelli, acknowledging the influential role exercised by the current political debate in the shaping of interpretive ideas of the past does not undermine their outstanding research; on the contrary, it contributes to understanding better their credibility and to pinpoint the influential factors that brought some ideas on the past to arise.

In order to understand Sardinia historically and archaeologically, one needs to break free from an account that sees Sardinian archaeology as a unique case in world academia, where politics contaminated the results of academic research and vice-versa. Sardinia's past was interpreted, and still is, according to contemporary perspectives, as is the archaeology and the past of any territory in the world. In fact, be it not for the political postcolonial movement that arose within the intellectuals of Britain who criticised the recent past of their nation, we would have never had a harsh postcolonial critique of the Roman Empire in archaeology.

From this angle, in addition to understanding Sardinians under the Roman rule, this research aims to follow in the steps of Edward Said's (1978) postcolonial theory, by avoiding essentialism and exposing it when it is found. The study of Sardinian archaeology passed through the interpretative lens of scholars from Sardinia and overseas, and both benefited from and was affected by their biographies and political questions in the same way as the study of Britain was by British and overseas scholars.

From this, it follows that a model of academic isolationism, due to a fixed attitude to isolation entrenched in the past of the island, cannot and should not be applied to Sardinia. This would be the most orientalist of interpretations, and it is imperative to call it that way revealing its historical falseness and essentialism.

Once the essentialist model applied to Sardinian academia has been dismissed, it is easier to contextualise Roman studies in the island. The paradigm of *Romanizzazione* has not been applied uniformly to Sardinia. A neat distinction between a Romanised coastal Sardinia and a non-Romanised inland emerges from historical and archaeological studies[31] (Mastino, 2005: 168-172; Meloni, 1990). Dyson and Rowland (2007: 14) noticed that 'an historical model of two Sardinias developed, with a coastal region that had been much influenced over the centuries by foreign invaders, and the "true Sardinia" of the interior that largely resisted those outside influences and clung to its traditional culture.'

Such a binary paradigm applied to Sardinia recalls the model of the reservoir where the indigenous tribes of the new colonised lands of Americas had been isolated in

[31] *Nella Sardegna romana vanno nettamente distinte (sul piano geografico, ma anche sul piano culturale) due grandi regioni, la Barbaria interna e la Romania costiera, con realtà economiche e sociali nettamente differenti.* (Mastino, 2005: 168).

the 18th and 19th century. This vision of a split Sardinia applies not only to Roman but also to prehistoric and medieval periods of the island. For instance, Punic-period archaeological remains are framed within the imperialism that led Carthage, from the 7th century BC, to control the majority of coastal settlements but only few parts of the interior, sometimes depicted as resistant to outsiders' penetration (Tronchetti, 1988: 101-11; Perra, 1997; Tronchetti, Van Dommelen, 2005). This binary paradigm will be looked at against the archaeological evidence collected in this study.

Two models have been applied to Roman-period Sardinia: Romanization as acculturation of the island (i.e. Sirigu, 2012a: 83; Nervi, 2015; Zucca, 2008: 13), and the cultural, rather than military, resistance to the former (Angiolillo, 2008: 86; Mastino, 2005: 173). Romanization is generally viewed by highlighting the adoption of material culture from Italian peninsula. Resistance to Romanization is archaeologically underpinned by the survival of sardo-punic material culture throughout the Roman period (see Chapter 3 for a different interpretation).

Sirigu and Nervi have recently highlighted that such paradigms take different forms in different areas. Sirigu, focusing on the terminology used , stated that Romanization is an heterogeneous acculturation process that sometimes follows a unidirectional stream, with only one group influencing the other/s, although often it is characterised by reciprocal exchange and modification (2012a: 83). Nervi (2015), analysing 4th century BC-1st AD Nora and its hinterland, dismissed the idea of a single Romanization process homogeneously applied; there were, though, different ways of adapting to the Sardinian substrate, and 'the inhabitants of Nora became Romans despite being Punic and staying Sardinians'.[32] This is not far from Woolf's (1997: 341) account of 'unity in diversity' in Roman Gaul. By contrast, Salvi (2015) addresses the funerary practices of Karales considering material culture of Roman or Italic provenance as a secure indicator of the presence of specific people on a site, assuming that funerary practices move together with people, and hence were used to express consciously their identities and ethnicities. This assumptions will be analysed further and, to some extent, challenged throughout the book.

The accounts given in the last two sections, highlighting the diversity with which the concept of Romanization has been applied by international scholarship, show that Romanization is primarily a question of identity and it will be addressed as such in the rest of the book.

[32] See Trow, James, Moore, 2008.

1.2.5. An archaeological agenda on identity: continuity *versus* structural space

The interpretive models seen so far – a Romanised coast *versus* an indigenous interior, Romanization, creolisation, resistance – applied strenuously to the archaeology of Sardinia and of the Roman world at large, have created a series of structured fields within which human groups bearing a monolithic identity move and act: these are nothing but hierarchic, branched, cut and divided interpretive spaces (Paolucci, 2010: 288), generally mutually exclusive.

Romanization, which answered important questions on change and local administration in the provinces, has proven to be less valid a model when it comes to understanding community identities that derived from the local interaction between Rome and people in the provinces. The strenuous defence of either Romanization, resistance, or creolisation models seems destined to keep producing homogeneous identities that do not contribute to advancing our knowledge either of the Roman world in general or of Sardinia. But if these models have created that divided and hierarchic space mentioned above, the opposite process must also be possible. The synechistic process inspired by Peirce reintroduces heterogeneous and non hierarchic continuities, reconnecting what was divided by process of analysis (Paolucci, 2010: 188, on Deleuze and Guattari, 1980) by accounting more thoroughly for incoherent data. Searching for continuity between elements that have been separated by previous interpretations – i.e. Romans *VS* locals – is the way proposed here. The central role of the interaction of three elements as material culture, practice-agency, and social structure, will help to overcome the often emerging homogenising models. This triangulation should help to avoid the risk of confusing identity with identification, key to the advancement of identity studies.

As the concept of practice is fundamental to the semiotic explanation of identity provided so far, this book will focus on a specific type of collective practice: the care and disposal of the dead.

1.3. Archaeology of funerary practice in the Roman world

1.3.1. Funerary archaeology theory and burial studies: a state-of-the-art

The dead were a recurring presence in the lives of Roman-period communities. Care of the deceased, their burial, funerary customs, the spaces where these took place, and the gathering of community members are practices that left numerous material traces that sometimes we intercept within the limits of archaeological sites. Through the analysis of such traces,

the collective activities thoroughly reconstructed can be the vehicle for interpreting the decisions taken by the communities under scrutiny, and hence the key to grasping their identities.

Despite the central role that burials have always had in the archaeological understanding of the Roman world, these actions have generally received little attention except in relation to 'the adoption of Roman practices, and to social status' (Pearce, 2013:8). It is to the detailed analysis of such practices that this study is committed. Before doing so, a comprehensive review of the main interpretive models applied to burials is required to understand how the semiotic approach suggested here can contribute to an advancement of the field.

1.3.2. Theories of funerary archaeology

When considered interpretable,[33] the dead, their grave goods and variability[34] were put at the centre of identity-discourses as a reflection either of the social status, [35] ethnic affiliation or economic status held by the buried individuals when they were alive. The latter are part of what can be defined a positivist approach, preferred by processualists from the 70s, and still applied today.

In contrast, post-processual archaeology holds a hermeneutic approach, which denies that burial customs reflect society. D'Agostino (1985), Hodder (1982a), Shanks and Tilley (1987) derived these assumptions from the textual analogy, by attributing the value of text to the archaeological settings and material culture, treating each piece of it as product of symbolic behaviour contextually interpretable. D'Agostino (1985), along with Hodder (1989) and others, was among the first to deny any possibility that the necropolis could be seen as a mirror of social structure, maintaining that the former is rather a metaphor of the latter. Within this framework, grave goods would become the way through which specific codes can be disclosed, some of which were aimed to change the identity held in life by the deceased.

Although funerary archaeology has largely changed in the last 70 years, some core ideas have remained central or have re-emerged, after a period of neglect, sometimes incorporated in different theories from the original ones.

Early funerary studies relied widely on ethnographic comparison. Their aim was 'to widen the horizons of the interpreter' (Ucko, 1969: 262) and boost the understanding of archaeological data. The ethnographic approach was a reaction to the nihilism of the very first burial studies, imbued with scepticism about the possibility of finding reliable criteria for understanding the society to which the deceased belonged (Lull, 2000: 576). The ethnographic interest, which is still part of funerary studies today, brought archaeologists closer to ethnographers and anthropologists who were developing new ideas about burial rituals in the '60s and '70s. Arnold Van Gennep became one of the most influential figures thanks to his theories on liminality and rites of passage (1981), later reinterpreted by Victor Turner and Maurice Bloch. Central to Van Gennep's theory was the idea that before embodying another role, or status, within society, the member's previous self would disappear.

Childe (1944, 1946), certainly aware of Van Gennep's ideas, proposed a functionalist interpretation of burials and religious rituals as social mechanisms for the maintenance and renewal of the social structure. Functionalism characterises the work of Radcliffe-Brown too, for whom social actions performed by small groups of large societies are necessary for the survival of social systems, without individuals being necessarily conscious of it (Radcliffe-Brown, 1952: 178-187). Many anthropologists and archaeologists have made this assumption central to their work, including sociologist Giddens (1984). The idea of the relevance of unconsciously performed actions for the identity of human groups is also central to semiotics and will reappear throughout the book (see Chapter 4).

Radcliffe-Brown's and Childe's ideas were integrated into Binford's belief that mortuary practices are conditioned by social organisation and hence the complexity of funerary rituals grows proportionally to the complexity of society (Binford, 1971: 235).

Later anthropological studies framed funerary rituals in relation to conflict and power struggles (Geertz, 1973: 142). The same attitude is in Saxe's 'hypothesis 8', where the variability of a burial site is attributed 'to consciously selected distinctions which are in keeping with the social identity by the deceased throughout his or her life' (Lull, 2000: 577). Lynn Goldstein (1976) reformulated and tested hypothesis 8 against thirty ethnographic case studies, concluding that 'the maintenance of a permanent, specialised and bounded disposal area was one means by which a corporate group, seeking to legitimize its rights over scarce

[33] Traditional archaeology originally considered funerary activities as a domain of impenetrable religious beliefs (Piggott, 1973).
[34] Saxe (1970) assumed that the variability in the treatment of each deceased in a cemetery was a conscious choice of the society. Hence, for him, a thorough analysis of each burial would yield insights into social organization.
[35] By 'reflection', I mean the attribution of a fixed value to the quantity and quality of the energy expenditure (grave goods, treatment of the dead, burial architecture). I refer to the approach that maintains that burial rituals are directly proportional – or inversely proportional (see Childe 1944, 1946) – to the class and economic possibilities that the deceased individual held in life (Goodenough, 1965), reflecting 'form and complexity of the organisational characteristics of that society' (Binford, 1971: 235).

resources, might ritualize such relationship' (Pearson, 1999: 30).

The use of hypothesis 8 within post-processual thoughts is consistent, and exemplifies the thick intertwining of ideas belonging to different theories. This is inevitable: ideas of power, consciousness, struggle, land control, display of wealth and belonging are central to many hypotheses on funerary rites, and contribute to blur the solid distinction between processual and post-processual theories. Even Hodder (1982a, 1982b, 1989), although distancing himself from processual approaches, still made use of some processual ideas within post-processual theory while developing the theory of material culture as text. The meaning of material culture is, for Hodder, symbolic, and only contextually interpretable. These approaches are particularly valuable as they help discussing the archaeological problem of the complex relationship between the cultural horizon – material culture – and ethnicity, already faced by Childe in 1930s.

In contrast to Hodder, D'Agostino's study (1988) of Pontecagnano introduced ways of interpreting a funerary site by focusing on formal aspects of material culture, on its typology, particularly of pottery, without any hope of identifying the function of an item used in such practice. For D'Agostino, a classification centred on the function of objects, accessible to an ethnologist observing individuals handling objects, but inaccessible to archaeologists (D'Agostino, Gastaldi, 1988: 13), who are excluded from witnessing such actions. D'Agostino argues that the function of a vessel, for instance, is graspable only in those rare cases where it shows traces of its precise use, for example as a cinerary urn. He notes that, as the use of an item is likely to change, such use ought to be looked at inside a codified system. For Hodder, such a codified system has to be the ultimate object of archaeology, attempting to put symbols back into action (Hodder, 2003: 162-166). For D'Agostino (1988: 13-14), formal analysis and the production of a reliable typology and an interpretation of society through it only is the solution, leaving aside the arbitrariness of uses of objects. Despite attributing the same principles to material culture, Hodder and D'Agostino reached completely different conclusions.

Not only processualists renounced meaning, but also some post-processualists such as Barrett did so (1997), maintaining that only dominant meanings should be sought (Hodder, 2003: 164).

The difference between past approaches – mainly processual – to mortuary archaeology and more recent ones – mainly post-processual[36] – is the concept that, for the latter, material culture does not passively reflect pre-formed social structures, but is rather something used dynamically by the communities to condition, drive, manipulate and even create people's perceptions. From this point of view, one of Eco's essential definitions of sign links this account to the semiotic definition of identity provided in Section 1. For Eco, a sign is 'anything that can be used to lie' (Eco, 1975: 14), because a sign is deceiving, and can drive to erroneous conclusions depending on what elements are taken into account in the interpretation process. This reveals once more how the debate on funerary archaeology – as that on Romanization – revolves around the understanding of sign and its capacity to signify people's actions. Hence, it is dealt with as a semiotic debate here.

Hodder approached funerary archaeology in explicitly semiotic terms. Nonetheless, his work addresses only a specific set of signs, the symbol, and actions linked to it. These are signs resulting from acts of conscious communication rather than unconscious signification (See section 1.1.4.). Referring back to Eco's (1975: 14) definition of sign as 'anything that *can* be used to lie' (my emphasis), it is as if Hodder's approach modified it in 'a sign is anything that *is always* used to lie'. Such fictional definition of sign helps us to understand the difference between a world made of signs, ours, and one made of just symbols.

Human beings did in the past, as we do today, signify with the aim of communicating something – delivering a message not necessarily corresponding to reality or truth – and did it consciously. It is likewise clear that the large majority of signs people produced in the past, as we do today, are a product of unconscious behaviours. Signs left from shoes on the sand, crumbs under the benches in the parks, stains on the kitchen's walls, pen marks, the shape of a body on the mattress, and many more signs, are potentially there for an interpreter to make them signify but were in no way left with the intent of communicating something to someone.

Signs are in the majority of cases unwillingly produced and yet still potentially meaningful. This semiotic framework applies all the same to funerary archaeology. There is no doubt that certain gestures are symbolically mediated and that the presence and absence of some objects was meant to communicate something precise. Nonetheless, even within symbolic behaviours, individuals leave other signs unintentionally. For example, the attempt to deposit a body (see Chapter 4) inside a narrow pit-grave resulting in the dislocation of the shoulders has no symbolic aim, but offers a series of signs that reveal details about the treatment of the dead within a particular community – i.e. lack of care for the deceased and likely absence of its beloved. For Lull, 'funerary practices, offerings and rituals, denote the material conditions of the society and provide

[36] Until the latest suggestion by John Robb (2013), who notes that funerary archaeology has looked at everything but death.

information on the forms taken by it' (Lull, 2000: 579) beyond the potential message signified by those practices.

Ian Morris' observation that 'the angry differences between 'new/and 'postprocessual' archaeologists seem to be more about form than content' (1992: 163) is shared here. One of the possible consequences of much post-processual archaeology is to be overwhelmed by symbols that it are impossible to codify without the cultural keys of interpretation. This attitude is not far from the nihilism, stressed by Piggott (1973), resulting from the assumption that intangible religious beliefs are inaccessible to archaeology.

1.3.3. Funerary studies within Roman archaeology

Both processual and postprocessual theories have been applied to Roman archaeology, even though less a theoretical debate has taken place within it in comparison to the archaeologies of other periods and regions of the world. This has created a less organic discipline.

Often, burial remains are framed within Romanization, used to understand the degree of cultural proximity to Rome of the funerary customs in the provinces. In the early '90s, Jones (1993: 432), reflecting on Hodder's (1982; 1986) idea on symbolic behaviour and death, underlined the difficulties of understanding symbols due to the use of concepts such as culture, society and Romanization without sufficient reference to social theory. Jones suggested that the example to follow is Morris's (1992) work *Death-Ritual and Social Structure in Classical Antiquity,* where he links funerary practice to an understanding of social structure. Morris is also one of the few archaeologists of the Classical world to engage openly with the theoretical debate on funerary practice, testing the Saxe/Goldstein hypothesis 8 within a postprocessual perspective. Despite considering hypothesis 8 – highly criticised in the 1980s – as a typical product of normative processual archaeology (Morris, 1992: 163), he demonstrated in his case studies the functioning of its central idea, that a community could also use a funerary area to legitimise its rights over resources. Through the use of ethnographic examples from Taiwan and Kenya (Morris, 1992: 152-156) applied to Athens and Rome, he confirmed the validity of hypothesis 8, while urging its contextualisation within each case study and warning against using it as a general law for a 'scientifically observed social reality' (1992: 163). Morris instead advocates a role for agency.

Millett focused on a contextual approach too. He provided a diachronic comparison between cemeteries by assessing the average number of grave goods in burial samples during early Roman-period Britain, which showed a pattern of decline in grave furniture after Rome's conquest of Britain (Millett, 1995: 123-124).

Seven years after Jones' invite to follow Morris' example, the volume edited by John Pearce, Martin Millett and Manuela Struck, *Burial, Society and Context in the Roman World* offered a systematic and multidisciplinary account. In line with postprocessual concepts of material culture and contextual meaning, the central idea of the book is 'how 'Roman' material forms were adopted in different contexts, including burial' (Pearce, 2000: 1) rather than focusing on the degree of their intrinsic Romanness.

There, Pearce (2000) warns against the risk of translating funerary habitus in a discourse about explicit and conscious ethnic affirmation, traditionally applied in the past. Polfer (2000: 37) too warns against 'the dangers of interpretations and conclusions based on the grave goods' alone, aiming at studying cremations not as a finished product – as traditionally seen – but as a long process made of stages that it is possible to reconstruct (2000: 32). Another central issue raised by both Polfer (2000: 32) and McKinley (2000: 39) is the terminological inaccuracy within funerary studies, especially concerning cremations. The volume gives space also to more traditional approaches. Marie Tuffreau-Libre's (2000: 60) acknowledged that pottery studies offer important information on funerary ritual in both social and economic terms, but she warns against allowing these approaches to dominate chronological interpretation, vital to Roman studies.

Since the end of the 1980s, several authors dedicated greater attention to the systematic analysis of funerary contexts (Ortalli, 1988), producing relevant data usable for comparisons between Roman provinces. A valuable example is Jimenez's comparative work (2008) on three necropolises of Hispania Baetica through the long term, with the aim to account for change and tradition. Interpreting funerary practice as the result of a bilingual symbolism deriving from the encounter between a 'local language' and a 'Roman' one between which the users of the three necropolises were able to switch, Jimenez (2008: 353) concludes that material culture witnesses a process of intense hybridisation. This study did not allow Jimenez to define social groups and identities as either Roman or native, but rather as hybrids, resulting from generations of interaction between local populations and Italic migrants. Despite bringing other problematic concepts such as cultural purity (see Section 1.2.2) into the identity question, hybridity has had a positive impact on the Romanization debate, by discarding deceptively essentialist ideas from culture studies (Jimenez, 2008: 353).

Today, emphasis of funerary studies is on practice, that is the way in which material culture defined as

Roman was used in different contexts (Pearce, 2000: 1), and on comparative approaches. These attitudes have contributed to broadening the debate from questions of elites to others around gender and local customs. When dealing with burials in Roman archaeology the question 'is not the attribution of status labels to particular burial types, problematic both in principle and in practice, but rather the investigation of how difference is articulated' (Pearce, 2013: 10). Pearce's (2013: 10) twofold objective, aimed, on one hand, at studying burials not just as interments, but as part of a broader archaeological evidence, and on the other, to compare different funerary sites to obtain a better account of diversity, is adopted here.

This work springs from these concepts to reconstruct funerary practice as a dynamic social process that produced an apparently static feature: the burial. The next section will introduce the topic of funerary studies of Roman-period Sardinia, where the case studies analysed in this book belong.

1.3.4. Tradition of funerary archaeology in Roman-period Sardinia

The conference on Roman archaeology held at Sanluri in 2011[37] provides important insights into the state of funerary studies in Roman-period Sardinia. This was summarised by Tronchetti's (2013) paper presented at the same conference, where he underlines several problems:

- lack of completely excavated cemeteries;
- lack of information on the spaces between burials, due to the primary focus on grave goods;
- absence of a reliable overview of the graveyard, causing a disconnection between individual finds;[38]
- too general a level of documentation and terminology that characterise the majority of the excavations carried out at least until the 1960, making it hard to infer secure information.[39]

For these reasons, Tronchetti believes it is more appropriate to talk about a tradition of studies of groups of graves rather than of necropolises, when it comes to Roman-period Sardinia. At least until 1960, information reported on cemetery excavations – rarely published – centred on three elements: the number of graves, their internal disposition, and the typology of grave goods (Tronchetti, 2013).

Likewise, Sirigu underlines that insufficient attention has been given to the most common and humble burial types – simple pits and graves *alla cappuccina* (covered in tiles) – or to the most common grave goods in them – *ceramica comune*/coarse ware (Sirigu, 2003: 111-113). He noted a discrepancy between the small number of elite burials and grave goods that attracted the greatest among scholarly interest, and the large majority of non-elite ones, mainly neglected, indirectly supporting the aim of Gramsci to look at the history of the subalterns, pursued here. Sirigu, like Tronchetti (2013), addressed the issue of the definition of the necropolis. He maintains that the number of graves in a site, their spatial organisation, and a chronological understanding of the burials are necessary conditions for the site to be a proper necropolis (Sirigu, 2003: 116). This definition, although problematic as it springs from a textual analogy and tends to exclude from the site elements that do not fit the textual model (Sirigu 2005: 21), helps to define the theoretical agenda of funerary studies in Roman-period Sardinia.

Sirigu (2003) and Tronchetti (2014) describe Sardinian funerary archaeology as a discipline with a long tradition specifically focused on morpho-typological analysis of grave goods, on social differentiation (Tronchetti 2014) and on change brought about locally by Roman influence (i.e. Carboni, 2005).

Despite such issues, there are also many positive aspects. Several excavations have been published in the last ten years, and in some of them, multiple detailed publications provide an excellent typological overview of grave goods, allowing a valuable comparative work. Such data come from both northern Sardinia – Olbia, Sassari – central Sardinia – Ortacesus (Arru, Cocco 2009), Sanluri (Paderi, 1982) – and southern Sardinia – Cagliari (Locci, 2012), Quartucciu (Salvi, 2002a, 2005). In a few cases, relevant studies were carried out on specific classes of grave goods, in some cases previously neglected and hence even more important – i.e. Sirigu (1999) on coarse ware. In addition, even though not widespread yet, contextual archaeology of funerary remains has been boosted by the work of Salvi (2002b) on Cagliari and its hinterland (1990, 2005, 2012), tracing an important trend in this study.

The main legacy of this tradition of studies is the availability of a vast database on material culture, particularly pottery, diffused throughout numerous publications. These data are fundamental for the comparative work attempted here, and constitute a solid foundation to this study.

[37] *Societa' dei vivi, comunita' dei morti: un rapporto (ancora?) difficile. Atti del Convegno di Studi 2013.*

[38] For instance, the number of funerary inscriptions is relevant in Sardinia, but there is not, in the majority of cases, evidence for the relationship to any grave or even of their exact provenience.

[39] Particularly concerning material culture typology, many vessels were often described just as 'typical Roman small vessels', 'coral glass vessels' and 'red vessels.'

1.3.5. Communities, burials, and rhizomatic identities: a semiotic theory beyond the textual metaphor

The last four sections have provided a threefold account of funerary archaeology in relation to archaeological theory, to the Roman period, and to Sardinia as a Roman province. This section reconnects the aim of this book to the tradition of Sardinian funerary studies, with which shows both continuity and discontinuity. Continuity with such traditions is pursued giving an important role to the chrono-typological analysis of grave goods. Discontinuity emerges because the focus of this book is primarily on contextual interpretation of each burial within the necropolises, that only afterwards are compared with broader funerary practices. It aims at filling the gap highlighted in that tradition of study. All elements of the archaeological record will be looked at in relation to one another. Information on the position of grave goods in relation to the body of the deceased will be central, as much as their relative position within the group, without neglecting their formal qualities. This will combine the typological approach, of which the tradition of Sardinian funerary studies abound, with a semiotically informed contextual approach, largely neglected in the same tradition, with a few exceptions (i.e. Locci 2013; Salvi 2005, 2012). The contextual-analytical approach adopted here is justified by the semiotic framework of identity outlined in Section 1.1.

Reconstructing the sequence of the practices held by different contemporary communities over time is key to the success of this study ans will result in a multidimensional account. This will reveal the full semiotic potential of the archaeological record and will allow me to hypothesise which decisions were central to each community, in relation to their historical tradition, their neighbouring communities, and to the social and economic structures.

The rest of the book will be structured as follows. The contextual details of each site will be analysed, without neglecting the formal properties of each item – class, type, and chronology. This method is required to avoid the emergence of essentialist ideas. Funerary practices obtained from the contextual study of the archaeological record will be then compared with the traditional picture of a Sardinia framed by the split model of a homogeneous, Romanized coastal area and a consistently un-Romanized inland (i.e. Mastino, 2005: 168).

Funerary practices across the book will be treated neither as simple reflections of the communities' social organization – as maintained, broadly, in processual terms – nor as impenetrable symbolic behaviours only individually graspable – as held within post-processual beliefs. Both approaches are imbued in an understanding of signs that has been explained here as essentially binary, static, and hence hard to relate to the understanding of dynamic identities. The processual methodology springs from the systematic application of a binary sign to material culture. The items introduced in each grave are assumed to reflect, through both their formal features and economic value (i.e. imports, material and so on), the role held by the deceased in life. The post-processual method is entrenched in a symbolic reading of human behaviour and archaeological remains as a text. This approach generates numerous issues,[40] some of which have been acknowledged by its supporters (Hodder, 2003: 204; Sirigu, 2009: 1232), despite having been systematically applied at least since the early 2000s.

The main issue with applying textual analogy to material culture – refuted systematically here – is that one must assume that a site/material culture has the same structure of a text, [41] which is a 'concrete group of signs, delimited by precise extra-textual boundaries and structurally organized' (Sirigu, 2012: 1231 based on Lotman, 1970: 69). Attributing precise boundaries and internal cohesion to a necropolis as the textual analogy requires is not always, if ever, feasible. Necropolises rarely have precisely delineated boundaries, often blurred to the archaeologist's eye. For instance, Carroll suggests that cemeteries are often nearby 'suburban houses and shops', evidence that helps 'to break down the boundaries between the dead and the living and to foster the intimate connection between the spaces inhabited by both' (Carroll, 2006: 1).

Blurred limits, unacceptable within a thoroughly textual approach, are the most likely to correspond to the reality of funerary practice, especially when looked at with an archaeological approach. Although useful to the advancement of material culture studies, a textual approach is highly problematic as it excludes all signs that are part of a site although far from having a symbolic, codified, and coherent significance.

Different behaviours from coherent habits occur in the necropolis. They are driven by change, economic possibilities, material availability, cultural belonging, whose signs need to be investigated relationally, that is contextually, without necessarily disclosing a symbolic value. Of course, one should not forget that 'material culture was generally placed in the grave to have an effect – on the onlookers at the funeral, on the 'gods' in the present, on the dead person in the afterlife' (Garrow, Gosden, 2012: 196). Nonetheless, traditional actions like laying goods with the burial, being often repeated for centuries, tend to lose their potential originally

[40] For a comprehensive discussion of the semiotic implications of material culture as text and archaeology as reading practice, see Preucel (2006: 131-146).
[41] Puddu, 2016.

codified meaning, and their value stands instead in the repetition of the action itself, in the traditional way of doing things in an un-reflective way, beyond the meanings originally attached to them.[42] Doing things in a certain way is placing oneself into the social structure to which communities are bound. Practices come hand-in-hand with being part of a group and any different decision involving them taken by individuals/communities are expression of their identity.

An alternative approach to the processual/post-processual divide is the recent shift of focus towards the careful reconstruction of the sequence of actions performed by people around a burial, both during the funeral and during commemorative acts. This approach, invited by Tronchetti (see 1.3.4) for Sardinia, has been brought forward by Scheid (2008) and applied successfully to the excavation of the cemetery of Porta Nocera, Pompeii, by Van Andringa, Duday and Lepitz (2013), underlining the infinite multiplicity of contexts and micro-contexts present in funerary sites (See also 3.2.5). Their work is highly taken into account here as it is the closest framework to the semiotic approach attempted in this study, being the reconstruction of each stage of practice fundamental to interpret the identity of communities in relation to their actions, particularly towards ancient burials.

In line with Van Andringa's practical framework, but holding a more explicit theoretical perspective, this work tests the thesis that archaeologists ought to look at any remains from the past and at burials in particular not as a text but as a rhizome (Paolucci, 2010: 60-61; Deleuze, Guattari, 1980). By definition, the rhizome is a multiple non-hierarchical entity in constant ramification, and is the constitutive unity of the encyclopaedia: an open, contradictory, and not cohesive system that Hjelmselv represents with the image of a net (Hjelmslev, 1985: 47). The rhizome is what eventually would emerge from C.S. Peirce's theory of signs as the product of his chain of interpretants or *synechism.*

The understanding of the necropolis as rhizome should allow deeper insights into the semiotic definition of identity provided in Section 1.1.7: a set of decisions taken by a community and standing for the practices performed by its members in relation both to their past and to their contemporary neighbouring communities. Both definitions are based on the relational value of things and actions, and help implementing the contextual possibilities of archaeology.

[42] Compare for instance, as suggested personally by linguist Caterina Tsirodimitri, with the practice to exhume the dead after three years of their burial and washing their bones with wine before re-depositing them in cists in today's Greece. Likely, no one in their 30s/40s would attach any specific meaning to this action today, if not the will to keep alive a traditional practice.

The previous sections have made clear what is meant here by identity, which archaeological and social theories have been applied, and how these relate to other theories that are not applied here. It remains important for the reader to understand how these theories apply to the data in practical terms and how the interpretation of funerary practices is linked to the definition of identity patterns. Making this clear is the task of the next and last section of Chapter 1.

1.4. Theory and data: a practical guide to the emergence of different identity patterns

Central to the identity interpretation sought here is the relationships between the gestures made by the individuals and groups responsible for the funerary practices of Roman-period Sardinia, and the material conditions inherited from the past within which such individuals and groups operated. This relationship, between the materials available to the communities, their actions, and their effect on the material world surrounding them through time, is the key to access their identities dynamically. This will be crucial to avoid fixing identities in a static frame. Some practical example will help explain this concept.

Let us take Chapter 3, on the cemetery of Sulci, Southwest Sardinia. This will show that numerous vessels and burial types – chamber graves – used during the Punic period were still used in the full Roman Imperial period, when cremations and single inhumations were introduced alongside new objects. These elements offer the opportunity to test different conceptions of identity, material culture, and practice, explained above at a theoretical level. Drawing a very synthetic scheme, four main interpretative directions can be followed:

1. a culture-historical one – from Gordon Childe onwards: the objects found in the cemetery of Sulci, together with the grave types, would be at the centre of identity statements, those artefacts being 'expressions of cultural norms' (Johnson, 2010: 17);
2. a processual one: finding behavioural patterns that could be interpreted in terms of cultural evolution, allowing to define underlying social systems beyond the similarities/differences of material culture;
3. a mostly post-processual one: the reconstructed practice and the role of agency would acquire a central role in such interpretations, and hence the way the dead were deposed in the graves at Sulci would be the main focus;
4. a post-processual inspired approach followed here: giving centrality to the gestures performed in relation both to the dead buried at a specific point in time, and to the material world

surrounding them – i.e. previous burials – which they contributed to modify, intensify, enlarge, reduce, each time they interacted with it.

Applied to the data of Sulci, these approaches could result in four possible range of identities:

1. the culture-historical approach would give to material culture the value of 'signatures' of archaeological cultures, assigning a chamber graves and the early pottery to the Punic identity, whereas the African Sigillata dishes and the local products coming along with them a Roman identity;
2. the processual approach would attempt to find any repetition of actions interpreting them as signs of a cultural evolution process as is Romanization (see section 1.4 for a discussion of its concepts), leaving us with two polarising identities: Roman and local;
3. a generic post-processual approach centred on practice would also result in a neat distinction of identities: a Punic one based on the practice of burying the dead in the chamber graves during the first phase of the cemetery; a Roman one based on the practice of burying the dead in an open space, particularly with the use of cremation. Despite the more complex approach focused on what people do, this too risks making practice become a signature of a particular social group, just as seen for point 1;
4. the approach pursued here, inspired to post-processual ideas, takes into account both material culture types and the reconstruction of the funerary practices focusing on those signs that hint to gestures of interaction with the remains of funerary practices performed in the past.

Following the example of Sulci, it would be necessary to look not only at their practices and at their material culture, but also at their relation with the material remains from the Punic period and from the earlier Roman period. This will eventually show a continuity in the use of space established in the Punic period, but it will also expose important differences in its use. On the one hand, this shows that by 1st century BC the community of Sulci had no intention to detach themselves from structures – both architectonic and social – used mainly in the Punic period. On the other, the members of this community were happy to use the same spaces in different ways without feeling constrained to follow the same practices performed over the previous centuries. As it will be seen in detail in Chapter 3, chamber graves designed for the use of no more than 5 or 7 people in the Punic period, were filled with bodies a few centuries later, in the Roman period.

Such actions may be more or less consciously undertaken, but the group identity revealed can relate the communities who made them to their past, to the history of the territory in which they operated, and hence with a sense of belonging to – or detachment from – them.

Examples of the types of evidence sought in this work are:

- the continued use of the same graves or their reuse after a chronological gap;
- the bodies contained inside them;
- their associated grave goods;
- the signs of a wide range of interactions with them: disposal, refuse, breakage, conservation, manipulation, and so on.

Any gesture that hints at an interaction with the past, is here considered important to understand a community's social identity fluidly, accounting for both change and tradition. This approach will clearly give the best results only when comparisons are made between sites of a similar period and with a similar archaeological background. For instance, comparing the Punic-period chamber graves of Sulci with those dug in Karales in the same period will be a very significant one in Chapter 7.2.a.

Such an approach, that seeks detailed evidence to reconstruct interactions between the members of a community and the remains of the past, raises issues of assigning labels to identities – be they Roman, Punic, or local. Such tags are mainly used, and fairly so, to indicate broad chronologies; but they do not provide answers to the questions on identity raised here. Such broad ethnic categorizations are generally the result of essentialist approaches that end up creating dualisms such as Punic/Roman, Roman/Local that this work seeks to avoid. Put simply, if in the 3rd century AD a community is still burying its dead in exactly the same way as two centuries before – as it happens, for example, in Masullas, Chapter 4 – one can infer a cohesive sense of identity and collective belonging to the past of the site. However, such cohesiveness can only be inferred if detailed data reveal a precise re-enactment of the same specific actions through time, not just generic practices – inhumation, cremation, type of grave – and objects used.

These data are the ones that will be sought more carefully in this work. Many of them will be analysed and underlined, where possible, in the following chapters.

2. Burials of Sardinia: Methodology of Data Collection

"Voglio rividiri l'ufficio".
Fazio strammò.
"Ma non l'ha già viduto e rividuto?".
"Sissignori, ma sempre con occhi diversi".
"Quanno ci sono trasuto la prima vota, l'ufficio era stato tiatro di un furto. E io lo talliai come il loco indove era avviunuto un furto. Pò ci tornai pirchìi era stato tiatro di un suicidio. E lo talliai come il loco indove era avvinuto un suicidio. Appresso Pasquano mi fici sapiri che si era trattato di un omicidio. E io non ho avuto modo di taliarlo da questo punto di vista. Sto annando a farlo ora."[43]

Andrea Camilleri, *Una voce di notte* (2012), 83

2.1. Introduction

The current chapter connects the theoretical framework provided in Chapter 1 to the analysis of the case studies that will be provided in Chapters 3-6. It presents some pragmatic aspects of the research such as introducing the specific data types that are sought to disclose the full potential of the theoretical framework on identity presented above. This study focuses on material elements that can mediate between the archaeological record *per se* – skeletal remains, grave goods – and ideal general interpretations of society – Roman, Punic, local, hybrid identities and so on. It aims to dismiss, eventually, those monolithic categories because based on reductionist principles, focusing not only on the way the dead were treated by local communities in each single sites, but also on how each community dealt with remains left by practices held in the past. This will show more clearly in specific case studies.

In order to obtain information on the sequence of actions performed on the same graves, the taphonomic details are essential. Hence, great importance is given, among all sources, to the detailed descriptions of the archaeological deposits reported in the excavation journals, especially in relation to the order in which artefacts and bones of different periods were found. This will allow to reconstruct the precise sequence of actions performed within and around the graves during and after the funeral itself.

Section 2.1 will give a personal account of the Roman historiography and archaeology of Sardinia from within my academic experience. Section 2.2 will illustrate the quantity and quality of accessible sources, and the criteria followed in the selection of the case studies. Section 2.3 will provide a geographical overview of Sardinia and will present the selected case studies.

2.1.1. Sardinia and Roman archaeology: a personal account

The aim of this section is to make explicit my scholarly education through both the quotable ideas gained from publications and the intellectual atmosphere of the universities where I studied. One of the points underpinning Said's introduction to his Orientalism inspires this section. It relates to the personal dimension of the scholar, which Said introduced through the thought of Antonio Gramsci. In his *Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci underlines how 'the starting point of critical elaboration is the consciousness of what one really is, and is 'knowing thyself' as a product of the historical process to date, which has deposited in you an infinity of traces, without leaving an inventory' (Said, 1978: 25, quoting Gramsci, 1971: 324) and 'therefore it is imperative at the outset to compile such an inventory' (Said 1978: 23, his translation of Gramsci, 1975: 2, 1363).

In 2009, after my BA at Università di Cagliari, I began thinking of my MA dissertation on Roman Archaeology, supervised by Simonetta Angiolillo. Inspiration for the topic arrived during my internship at the stores of the National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari where, assisted by Mariella Maxia, I had to photograph, draw, and classify the grave goods from the necropolis of Masullas, western central Sardinia, excavated in the mid-90s and yet unpublished. The site was already classified as Roman at the time it became my dissertation topic. In approaching it, I adopted a diagnostic classification of material culture, particularly ceramics, against

[43] "I want to see the office again".
Fazio was confused.
"But have you not seen it once and once again?"
"Yes sir, but always with different eyes."
"When I went there for the first time, the office had been the theatre of a theft. And I interpreted it as the site where a theft had happened. Then I went back there because it was theatre of a suicide. And I interpreted it as a site where a suicide had happened. Afterwards Pasquano made me aware that it was the theatre of a murder. And I have not got to interpret it from this point of view yet. I'm going to do it now." (My translation).

the background of the model of *Romanizzazione,* soon realising that, along with my colleagues, such concept was quite obscure if one attempted going beyond its generic implication of becoming Roman.

The common approach at the time was to find the elements of material culture that could help to show the growing acculturation of what was called Roman Sardinia. A concrete example is a set of vessels painted with a red glaze, similar in shape and colour to Samian ware – or *sigillata italica* – which I used to strengthen the concept of a Romanised community because its members used to bury their dead with local objects imitating Roman products. This approach, on the one hand, contributed to highlight the strong link between Rome and Sardinia but, on the other, neglected the contextual use of such materials. Indeed, the aim of supporting the validity of the Romanization paradigm resulted in overlooking all those aspects that could have raised questions about it.

Along the same lines is another episode that occurred at the beginning of my Ph.D. in Cambridge, when I had a meeting with the director of the archaeological museum of Cagliari, Donatella Mureddu. Happy about my intention of studying Roman-period Sardinia, she kindly granted me access to all documents, maps, excavation journals, and objects available. We discussed the main interpretive paradigms applied to Roman-period Sardinia. With regard to them, Mureddu acknowledged that a thorough overarching study on both funerary, public and private contexts on Roman period Sardinia was yet to come. From this, it emerged that a generic Romanization paradigm is applied to Sardinia univocally. This has been vaguely defined, rarely tested, and hardly discussed. When I arrived at University College London in 2010, I was exposed to numerous debates on archaeological theory and this allowed me to systematically question generalising paradigms such as *Romanizzazione*, which I reassessed under a new light at the beginning of my PhD at the University of Cambridge, in 2012. During the previous six years, I had the chance to witness the general trends in Roman Archaeology in Sardinia by interacting with scholars who had had for decades the task of building frameworks of ideas of the discipline. Looking at them from abroad provided me with alternative theoretical perspectives that were further enriched from the contact with students from worldwide. The contributions of these professionals and students have been important in order to construct the basis of the research I develop here.

2.1.2. Sardinia in written sources

Sardinia became, along with Corsica, a Roman province in 238 BC, after the First Punic War. Before then, it had experienced a long period of intense exchange with Carthage, whose material effects are visible in the archaeological remains. Sardinia's transformation into a Roman province is reported in a note of the *Fasti Triumphales.* This states that a triumph was celebrated by 'L. Cornelius L.f. Cn.n. Scipio, consul, over the Carthaginians, Sardinia and Corsica, 5 id. Mart. (11th March)' (Degrassi, 1954: 100, lines 259-258). A triumph was a magnificent military victory, celebrated at the return of the army in Rome. It coincided with the annexation by Rome of the land of the defeated people. Sardinia's territory was involved in the wars between Carthage and Rome for the supremacy in the Mediterranean.

By the 6th century BC, the island was central to Carthage's interests (Dyson, Rowland, 2007, 112-115), after a period of intense commercial and cultural exchange with the Phoenicians (Moscati, Bartoloni, 1997; Bartoloni, Campanella, 2000; Bartoloni, 2009; Fariselli, 2014; Bernardini, Perra, 2012; Santocchini Gerg, 2014), evident in centres of Phoenician foundation – Sulki, Karalis, Bosa, Nora, Tharros, and Bithia. Archaeologically,Phoenician material culture brought from Lebanon, North Africa, Spain, and Rome is abundant especially in Southwest Sardinia.

After the Punic wars and the subsequent annexation of Sardinia to Rome, the written sources record a long period of turmoil and discontent in the island. The picture of a turbulent Sardinia changes in the historiographical accounts of the end of the Republican period. Scholars define Sardinia as a peaceful province from the early Imperial period onwards (Le Glay *et al.*, 2009; Mastino, 2005; Meloni, 1990; Zucca, 1986). The stereotypes of an island inhabited either by turbulent natives or by peaceful and dominated indigenous people characterised the descriptions of Roman-period Sardinia for a long time.

It seems clear that Sardinia is mentioned by Roman sources only when Rome's interests were affected. Interestingly, this polarised historiographic vision of Sardinia characterizes also the other major Mediterranean island, Sicily. What Marino (2006: 8) brilliantly named as a phenomenon of '*sclerotizzazione testuale*'– textual stiffening, whose limits, as she suggests, can be overcome through a dialogue between history and archaeology – characterizes both islands, and is certainly applicable not only to ancient historiography, but also to the way modern scholarship[44] was shaped on it.

Le Glay (2009) refers to Sardinia only when it enters the Roman orbit of political interest, after the First Punic War. He underlines that 'with the acquisition of the two islands of Sicily and Sardinia, Rome gained two

[44] For Sicily, see Pinzone, 1999: 259.

important stepping-stones' on the path towards the control over the Mediterranean (Le Glay *et al.*, 2009: 75). In the historiographical accounts of later periods, Sardinia is only cited by reference to native rebels against Rome (Le Glay *et al.*, 2009: 78-79), and to the Civil Wars. This is further emphasised by the adjectives Le Glay *et al.* use to describe Sardinia at the end of the Republic: 'peaceful and obscure' (2009: 77). The authors likely refer to the quiet and not noteworthy behaviour of people in the island after the conclusion of the Punic wars. Should these adjectives make one think that, after the Punic wars, Sardinia was quietly and peacefully acculturated by Rome and as such not in need of any military intervention, and not worthy of any study? Do they rather mean that Sardinia is not worth mentioning further because nothing relevant happened in the history of the Empire in relation to it? Based on current trends in Roman archaeology, both interpretations require deeper thinking. If the answer to the first question was positive, then an archaeological investigation of material culture would help clarify Sardinia's relationship with Rome and would contribute to the wider debate on Romanization. If the answer to the second was affirmative, a thorough investigation of objects and practices would be fundamental in giving voice to an overlooked people in line with the principles of postcolonial theory (Gosden, 2004; Spivak, 1999; Hingley, 2000).

This study is justified by the fact that little is known about Sardinia's social practices, ordinary activities, funerary rituals, economy, interactions between local communities and, hence, their identity. In fact, as often happens within colonial contexts, those writers who paid some attention to Sardinia provided a monolithic vision (see Section 1.1.3 and 1.2.1), often simplistic and immutable through time (i.e. see Gosden, 2004; Said, 1978).

Cicero – who lived at the time when the island was peaceful and obscure – gives a sketch of Sardinia from the perspective of Roman authority. When their territories were transformed into provinces, the inhabitants of Spain, Sardinia, and Sicily were imposed a tax of one tenth of their crops – *decima* – payable to Rome, in addition to a fixed *stipendium* (Cicero, *Pro L. Cor. Oratio*: 41).

In 215 BC, Sardinians revolted against Rome because of 'an unjust requisition of grain' (Livius, *Ab Urbe Condita*, XXIII, 32, 7). Together with Sicily and Africa, Sardinia was defined, in the 1st century BC, as one of the 'three cereal supplying sources for Rome' (Cicero, *Pro l. Man. oratio*, 34, 18). Cicero also provides us with a portrait of a provincial governor accused of acting in his own interests in the island. M. Emilius Scaurus, stepson of Sulla, was praetor in 56 BC and Sardinia's *propraetor* in the following years. Accused for *crimen frumentarium* (Capella, *De Nup. Phil. et Mer.,* V, 469, 164), the collection of a quantity of wheat in addition to the normal tenth set by law, he was defended by Cicero. In his oration *Pro Scauro,* Cicero sang the praises of the governor, defining Sardinians an unreliable people 'mixed with Africans, and relegated to the island' (*Cicero*, *Pro M. A. Scauro Oratio,* 42, 19, 1).

Sardinia is mentioned again in the 4th century AD, in relation to both the administration of cultivated land and potential turmoil. In 334, the Emperor Constantine issued an edict stating that the families of slaves who were forcibly separated because of their territorial redistribution in lands distant from each other should be reunited (Mastino, 2005: 178-179; Colavitti, 1996: 643). This is a sign that the social conditions of workers in Sardinia were worsening at that time, and the Emperor likely wanted to prevent further turmoil of the kind registered previously. This issue will be explored in Chapters 5-7 in relation to Masullas' late practices. The remaining information about Sardinia during the imperial age concerns sporadic disorder amongst the populations of the interior. Tacitus reports that, in AD 19, the Senate sent to Sardinia 4000 freed slaves who professed Judaic or Egyptian cults, in order to suppress brigandage (Tacitus, *Annales,* II, 85, 4).

Another central aspect of the monolithic view of Sardinia consists of describing the subjugated people not only as living under different standards, but also as holding odd and inferior traditions. For instance, Gregory the Great, in the 6th-7th century AD, describes the *Barbaricini*, inhabiting Sardinia's inland, as people who make their living out of animals, do not know any real god, and adore wood and stones (*Epist*. IV, 27, 4).

Such a synthetic historiographical account is only one reasons why we need a postcolonial study of Sardinia's identity based on solid archaeological data able to balance written sources.

2.2. Methodology of data collection

This section deals with the criteria lying behind the selection of this work's case studies. It explains the defects and advantages of the available data in relation to the theoretical framework pursued here, unveiling what data are particularly significant for the study's aims.

2.2.1. Geo-morphology of Sardinia

Sardinia is an island that covers an area of 23,833 square kilometres - 24,090 square kilometres including the minor islands around it - second in size to Sicily only (Treccani.it Enciclopedie online). It is situated at the centre of the Western Mediterranean Sea – 38° 51'-41° 15' and 41° 15' 42" latitude north and 8° 8'-9° 50' east

longitude – facing Corsica to the north, Italy to the east, North Africa to the south, and Spain to the west. The coasts of Sardinia, high and rocky, are the longest in the Mediterranean and are constituted by straight stretches of coastline interrupted by few wide gulfs, the main being Cagliari to the south, Oristano to the west, and Orosei to the east. Sardinia includes small islands and archipelagos, such as San Pietro and Sant'Antioco to the southwest, and La Maddalena to the north. Its mainly hilly territory – 68% of the overall surface – includes small plains, the most extensive being the Campidano, Southern-central Sardinia. Mountains are located at the centre and to the east, the highest peak being within the Gennargentu range, and to the north. In total, only 15% of the territory reaches 1,500 m (Figure 1).[45]

The geological composition of Sardinia is characterised by sandstones and argillaceous rocks – that formed in the Palaeozoic era – which are overlapped by limestones, and quartzite with lead and zinc to the southwest, in today's Iglesias, known during the Roman period as *ad metalla*. Limestones are found in the central-western and central-eastern areas, whereas granites are found to both the southwest – Sulcis – the central Barbagia, and the Asinara to the north.

2.2.2. Sardinian funerary sites: a survey

The selection of the case studies was planned in advance to cover a wide and geographically diverse area of Sardinia. The objective being to critically assess the traditional idea of an island divided between a Romanised coastal Sardinia and an un-Romanised interior, the most appropriate methodology required selecting sites from different areas, both with regard to their topography – coastal/interior – and with regard to the nature of the settlements – urban/rural. I decided to focus on the southern, south-western and southern-central areas of Sardinia, where the three regions are in geographical proximity and fulfil the criterion of representing the variety of the geography and the nature of the settlements.

The first step involved surveying the archives of the *Soprintendenze* and listing the known funerary sites of Sardinia. The list comprises 118 sites, resulting from a survey I carried out in the archives of the *Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici per le Provincie di Cagliari e Oristano*, integrated with additional information from the free access web-site *Anthroponet Sardegna: Censimento del materiale scheletrico*[46] created by the Department of Anthropology of *Università di Cagliari.* Today's population density is 70 people per square kilometre, with a total of 1,675,411 distributed amongst 377 municipalities. Around one necropolis per three modern municipalities is the average of Roman period funerary sites found to date in Sardinia, with an average of 40 graves per site. The real numbers show an imbalance in necropolis' size: nine out of 118 contain more than 100 tombs, and among these, two contain more than 400 graves. The latter are both in Olbia – Su Cuguttu, and Florinas. The former are in Sardara, Cornus, Sant' Antioco, Ortacesus, Piazza Mameli – Porto Torres, Acciaradalza – Olbia, *La Scala di Ferro* – Cagliari. Another 20 sites yielded more than 10 tombs each.

A full list of the excavated sites resulting from the survey is reported in Appendix 1: List 1. The sites are grouped in 58 municipalities and show the number of graves, generic ritual attested and general chronology. Their reference numbers are shown in the map below (Figure 2.2).

Six areas with a high concentrations of necropolises stand out from the map. These are:

- the northwest, mostly plain and hilly, where the closest centre to the sea is Porto Torres (21 on the map) – ancient Turris Libisonis – and the farthest is Bonorva (17);
- the northeast, mainly flat, including almost exclusively the municipality of Olbia and Telti, but with numerous sites;
- the central-south, mostly flat and hilly towards the interior, including Cagliari, the Campidano plain, Marmilla and Trexenta near Oristano, between which the distribution on the map shows no discontinuity;
- the southwest, mostly flat with soft hills, including Sant'Antioco – ancient Sulci – and Carbonia;
- the central-east, mainly mountainous, where only sporadic sites were discovered near Orgosolo;
- the southeast coast, with only a few isolated archaeological finds.

The biggest set of data from the list comes from the modern cities of Olbia, Cagliari and Porto Torres. This is due not only to the size of the cities but also to numerous building projects started from 1980s, which exposed archaeological remains. These cities overlie the main Roman-period regional administrative centres: *Olivii* or *Olbiia* (D'Oriano, 1991), *Turris Libisonis* and *Karales*. The first, Olbia, was a Punic centre of the northeast and became central during the Roman Republic. The second, Porto Torres, was the only Sardinian city to receive the status of *colonia*, probably founded by Caesar, since it had the full name of *Colonia Julia Turris Libisonis.* The third, Cagliari, was a Phoenician colony and had an important role during the late Republic; it is mentioned in Caesar's *Commentarii de Bello Civili I*, where

[45] All geographical information on Sardinia reported in this subsection come from the online encyclopedia Treccani.it.
[46] Managed by Elisabetta Marini. Full url account: http://www.anthroponet.it/index.php.

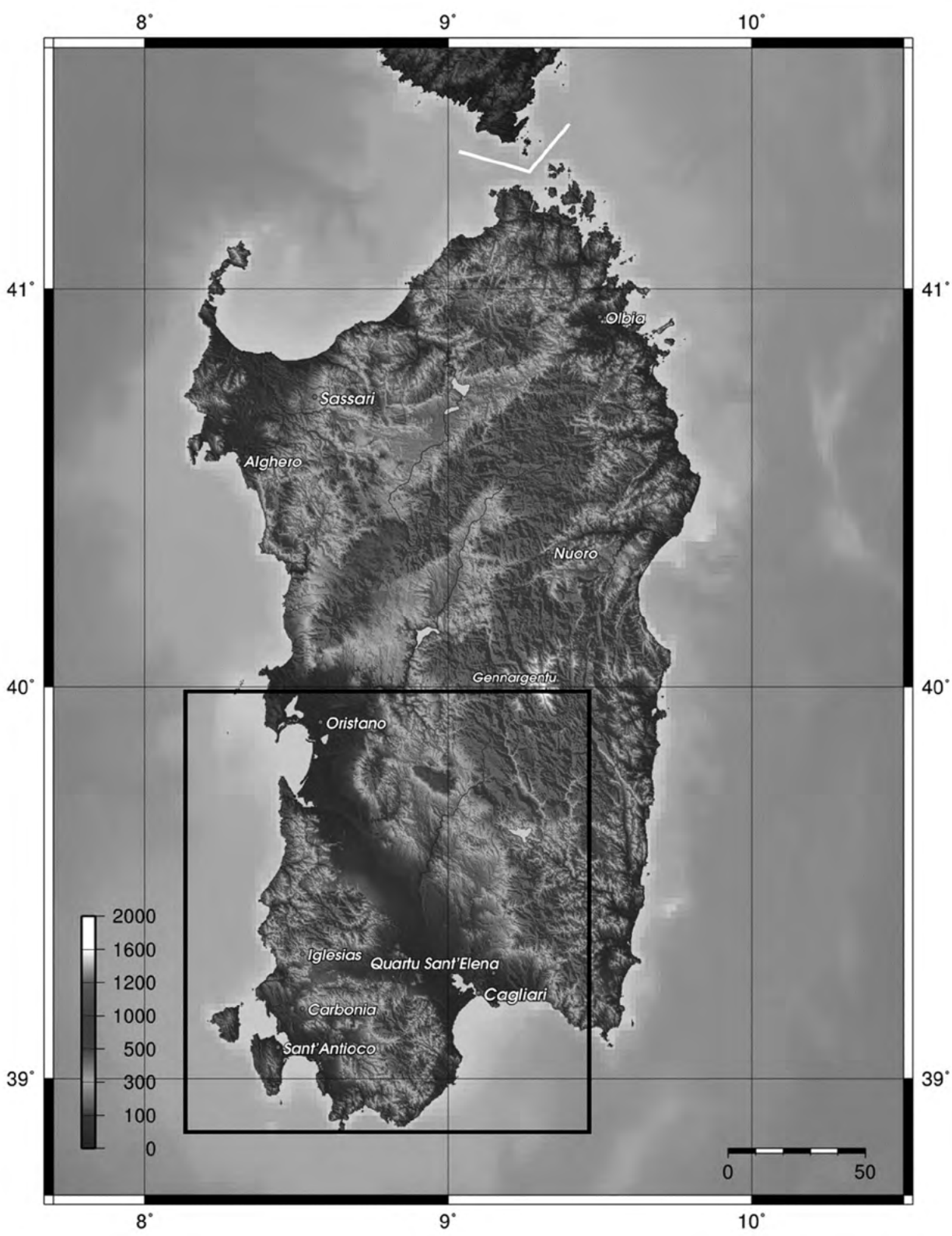


Figure 2.1. Topographic map of Sardinia (the area studied in this study is framed). (Source: www.lamiasardegna.it)



Figure 2.2. Distribution of Roman-period funerary sites in Sardinia (see List 1 in Appendix 1). (Source of base map: www.Sardegnaweb.it).

it sided with Caesar and against Pompey during the Civil War. Olbia's territory is the richest in presence of necropolises, 18. Cagliari follows with nine; then comes Porto Torres with eight. Size and density of urban cemeteries contrast with those in rural areas, where they are both fewer and smaller.

2.2.3. Selection of a region: criteria and limitations

Figure 2.3 shows how the cities just mentioned were connected by a road system active from at least the late Republican period. The road *ad Turrem Libisonis Caralis*, which linked the two cities crossing the island from south to north, and still does under the name of *SS 131 Carlo Felice*, is flanked by funerary sites along both sides, particularly in the Campidano plan.

Despite the number of potential case studies across the island, the data availability is limited in terms of quality. Numerous sites excavated before the 1970s are only dated to a generic Roman period, and some publications lack precision in the description of both material culture typology and contexts.

This lack is particularly evident when it comes to contextual information, and required me to go through unpublished excavation journals, plans of the sites and direct study of the objects excavated. The core of my research is constituted by primary records and unpublished materials stored in the archives of the *Soprintendenza*. This required me to visit the archives and look for available sources, to which a limit needed to be set.

Fifteen sites among those listed in Appendix 1: List 1 proved to have availability of clear contextual data. These are: two at Porto Torres (Piazza Mameli and Via Azuni 5a); three at Olbia (Via Acquedotto Romano, Acciaradalza, San Simplico); one respectively at Cornus; Sardara; Masullas; Gesico; Ortacesus; Quartucciu; Sant'Antioco; three in Cagliari (*La Scala di Ferro*, Bonaria and *Tuvixeddu*). Based on this list, the broad areas that could potentially become object of the study were northern Sardinia, with five sites between Olbia and Porto Torres, and central and southern Sardinia with the remaining ten necropolises. Studying the first group would have provided me with a better understanding of the northern area within two important urban landscapes. However, the sites from the north are disconnected towards the centre of the island. This presents a drawback, as it would not allow a comparative study with inland areas, which is one of the objectives of this study. Conversely, the second group has the potential to provide a perspective on both coastal and urban sites in the south – Cagliari and Sant'Antioco – as well as inland and rural sites – Gesico, Masullas, Ortacesus.

Hence, I decided to focus on southern and central Sardinia taking as reference points Cagliari – Karales – to the south, Sant'Antioco – Sulci – to the southwest, and Ittiri and Nuragus – 30 and 37 in Figure 2.2 – towards the centre. The area so defined offers other methodological advantages: it allows me to compare, on one hand, the south and southwest coasts with the inland sites of Campidano, Marmilla and Trexenta, and on the other, the urban sites of Karales and Sulci with the rural villages. The drawback is that the majority of sites in this area are clustered in the southern central region (Figure 2.5), and the sample is less representative of the west and east coasts. Despite these limitations, the area matches the comparative aims sought in this work.

Once I had chosen the region on which to focus, the second step that would get me closer to the phase of data collection was selecting the sites for the case studies. The sites had to be both geographically and administratively representative and had to have available and accessible data. Geographical representativeness is a fundamental criterion to assess the binary paradigm that divides Sardinia between

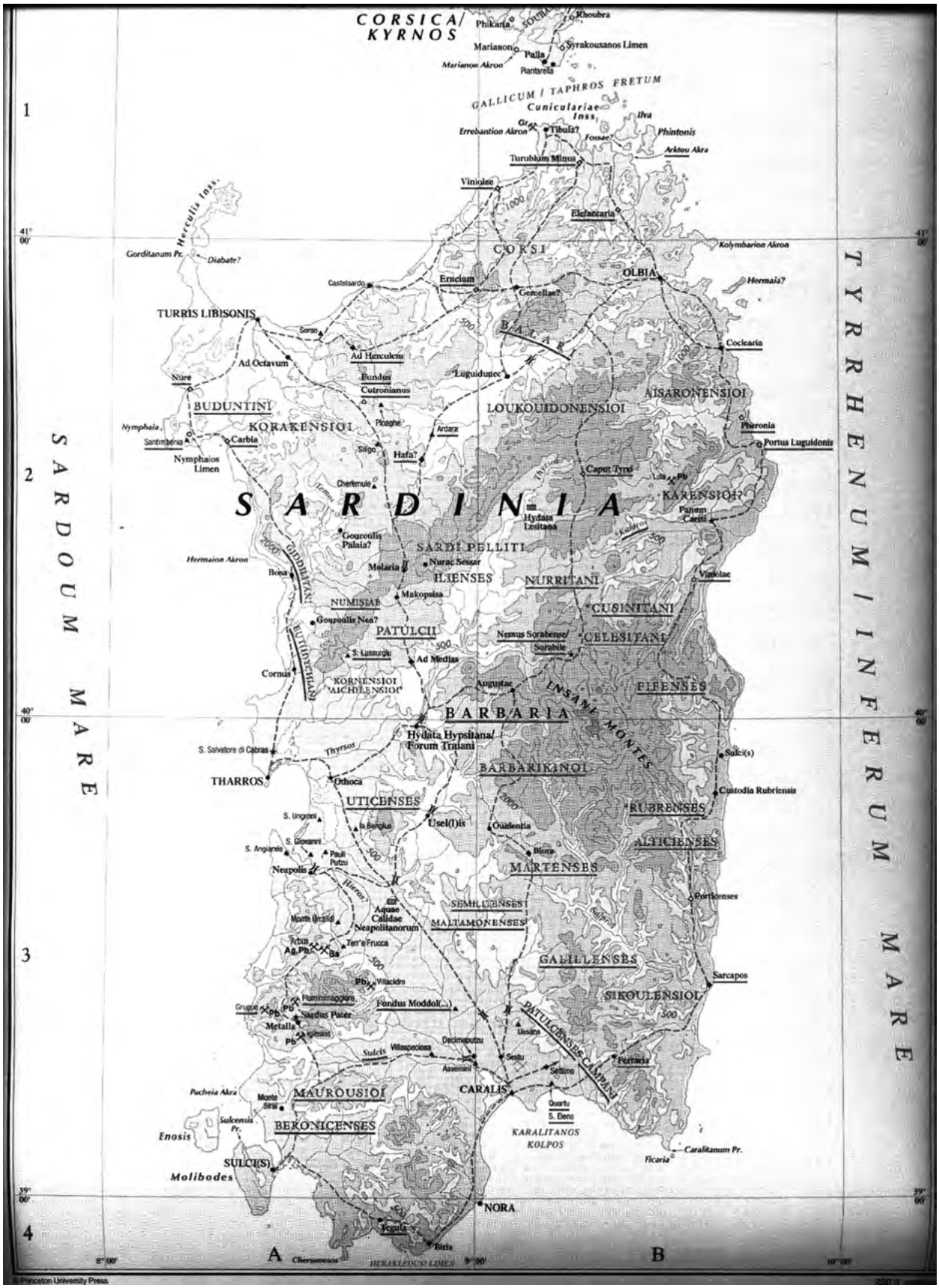


Figure 2.3. Map of Roman-period Sardinia (Source: Barrington Atlas: 48).



Figure 2.4. Modern geographic and administrative regions of central and southern Sardinia.

a Romanised coastal area and an un-Romanised inland *Barbaria*. Administrative representativeness is necessary to sample urban communities of Roman or Latin rights such as *municipia* and *coloniae* as well as communities without any status, mainly set in rural areas. Data availability is crucial, as several sites of potential interest were excavated long ago and the quality of the data is limited to information about a few categories of objects with rare contextual information. This final condition reduced the number of available sites drastically, forcing me to focus on those that had been excavated recently and that provide a contextual account.

The necropolises satisfying the listed criteria are ten. Four coastal/urban cemeteries: one at Sant'Antioco and three at Cagliari; one from Cagliari's hinterland, Ortacesus; four from the central-western part of the region – in Marmilla and Trexenta: Masullas, Gesico, Sanluri, two at San Vero Milis, and Sardara.



Figure 2.5. Case studies analysed in this thesis.

2.2.4 Data typology and methodology of collection

The ten selected sites were subject to a preliminary analysis apt to evaluate the materials available and to assess the amount and quality of accessible information. This implied scrutinising three main sources:

- Published materials;
- Material culture;
- Excavation journals and reports.

Some publications were available for the sites of Cagliari, Gesico, Ortacesus, Sanluri and Sant'Antioco. Direct access to the material culture stored in the museum's archives was possible for Cagliari, Masullas – *Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Cagliari* – and Sant'Antioco – *Centro Operativo di Sant'Antioco.* A few grave goods were also accessible at the local museum of Ortacesus. In addition to those sources, unpublished archaeological reports stored in the Soprintendenza's archives were available for Cagliari, Sant'Antioco, Masullas and Ortacesus.

In order to gather the data coming from those three sources, I organised two research fieldworks to the stores and deposits of the *Soprintendenza*,. These took place in March-April and September-October 2013. The 11 necropolises originally selected for this preliminary assessment are reported below in geographical order from south to north:

- *Is Pirixeddus*, Necropolina, Sant'Antioco, 39.0667° N, 8.4500° E;
- *Bonaria*, Cagliari, 39.20958° N, 9.12380° E;
- Ex Hotel *La Scala di Ferro*, Cagliari, 39.21483° N, 9.11609° E;
- *Tuvixeddu*, Cagliari, 39°13'45.02"N, 9° 6'4.86" E

- *Sa Mitza de Siddi*, Ortacesus, 39.51133° N, 9.11779° E;
- *Sa Mitza Salida*, Masullas, 39.4394° N, 8.4800° E;
- *Bidd'e Cresia*, Sanluri, 39.5667° N, 8.9000° E;
- *Terr'e Cresia*, Sardara, 39.6167° N, 8.8333° E;
- Santa Lucia, Gesico, 39.6167° N, 9.1000° E;
- *Bingia 'e Arena*, San Vero Milis, 40.0167° N, 8.6000° E;
- *Punta Zinnigas*, San Vero Milis, 40.0167° N, 8.6000° E.

During the first research trip, I examined materials from Cagliari and Masullas, stored in the archives and deposits of the *Soprintendenza Archeologia di Cagliari*. The necropolises of Cagliari that were analysed are *La Scala di Ferro*, Tuvixeddu, Bonaria, Santa Gilla and San Lorenzo. The last two provided preliminary and general information only. The necropolis of Masullas, *Sa Mitza Salida*,, provided almost ideal conditions in terms of availability of data and variety of sources. During the second fieldwork, I focused on the materials deposited in the local museums of Sant'Antioco, Ortacesus, Sardara, Sanluri, San Vero Milis, and Gesico. Most available sources were found in Sant'Antioco and Ortacesus, whereas it was not possible to gather any information on San Vero Milis, that is currently undergoing new investigations that will be soon made available by, among others, Stiglitz and Van Dommelen.

The ideal conditions for each necropolis that had been established at the outset of this research project, were satisfactorily met in three cases: *Sa Mitza Salida*-Masullas, *Sa Mitza de Siddi*-Ortacsesus and *Necropolina*-Sant'Antioco. In the first two cases, I had full access to both the objects stored in the *Museo Archeologico Nazionale* of Cagliari and in the *Museo del Grano* in Ortacesus, and to excavation journals, graphic and photographic documentation stored in the archaeological and historical archives in Cagliari. Moreover, I had the opportunity to speak with the project directors who provided me with valuable information about the conditions in which the excavations were carried out. The Department of Anthropology, Università di Cagliari, also provided me with information on current anthropological studies on human remains for these two sites. For the third case study, Sant'Antioco, I was allowed to inspect all the materials stored in the archives of the *Sede Operativa della Soprintendenza.* However, I soon found out that these data-set had a large gap in the evidence on human remains from both cremation urns and inhumation burials, which are yet to be studied by specialists and hence could not be taken into account.

Overall, the three necropolises offer a fair amount of materials and a variety of data sources that allowed me to lay the basis for a comparative work. On the contrary, the preliminary analysis of the remaining necropolises was extremely complicated and too wide gaps in the availability of data was found. Yet, the relative incompleteness of sources is an element with which scientific research must cope.

With regards to the sites of *La Scala di Ferro* and *Tuvixeddu*, at Cagliari, I could access excavation journals and photographs, but I was not granted access to grave goods, that were being moved to a new warehouse at the time. Nevertheless, a detailed photographic catalogue contributed to successfully fill the gap. As concerns the other necropolises selected in Cagliari, and that of *Bidd'e Cresia*, Sanluri, I had access only to a small amount of material stored in the museums, but I could work on a partial catalogue of goods and on the photographic documentation of both goods and graves. For the site of Santa Lucia, Gesico, I relied on the published evidence. The state of things that I found during my preliminary research is summarised in Table 1 below.

Nine out of the eleven sites selected originally had sufficient data sources to allow a reliable study. Amongst the unavailable data, some were temporarily inaccessible; some others had simply never been produced. The main problem faced in collecting archaeological information from those sites was to find consistency in the data sources produced after each necropolis' excavation, fact that created a very heterogeneous picture. This inconsistency needs acknowledgement as it represents an important feature of the available archaeological record on which the study is based. It is indeed important to analyse the reasons of the inconsistency of some sources, and to understand how they can affect the research aims pursued here.

The most important drawback to these sources is the lack of precise anthropological information. The information available on human bones comes from Masullas, Ortacesus, and Cagliari; some from publications, other from personal information. The nature of anthropological data generally consists in the total number of adults, sub-adults, and children, in that of the sexual division, and in the pathologies attested per site. However, these are all information referring to the overall site, whereas it was rarely possible to obtain information on a single individual's sex and age, with some valuable exceptions regarding Masullas and Ortacesus (see Chapters 4 and 6). Drawings and photographs of human remains, though, provided an important alternative source to strictly anthropological data. They offer valuable information on the position of each part of the body in relation to grave goods, fundamental in this study in order to reconstruct collective practices on which identity interpretations are based. These data are sufficient to look at funerary practices as constitutive elements of community identities, in relation to both the past of the sites and to the practices of other communities, although they

Table 1. Accessibility of sources in the cemeteries originally taken into account in this study.

Data Type / Necropolis	Publications	Anthropological data	Goods	Excavation Journals	Goods List	Grave Photos	Grave Drawings	Field Director
Necropolina-Sulci	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
La Scala di Ferro-Cagliari	✓	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
Tuvixeddu-Cagliari	✓	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bonaria- Cagliari	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
Sa Mitza de Siddi-Ortacesus	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sa Mitza Salida-Masullas	✗	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bidd'e Cresia-Sanluri	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗
Terr'e Cresia-Sardara	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗	✓
Santa Lucia-Gesico	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗	✗	✓
Bingia e Arena-San Vero Milis	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓
Punta Zinnigas-San Vero Milis	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓

rarely allow to look into internal differentiations based on sex and age.

Once obtained a precise idea around which sites could provide enough information for a comparative study, the following research phase consisted in creating a database where all data collected during the project were stored. These were organised in open categories of grave typology, grave goods classes, and the grave goods typology.

The data finally collected can be summarised as follows:

- Nine necropolises:
  - Sant'Antioco, Is Pirixeddus, Punic/Roman period, 7th B.C.-5th AD: the Necropolina had 167 graves plus 34 extra-burial contexts;
  - Cagliari, *La Scala di Ferro*, Roman period; 143 graves plus 21 extra-burial contexts;
  - Cagliari, Bonaria, Roman period, 41 graves;
  - Cagliari, Tuvixeddu, Punic and Roman period; 41 graves;
  - Masullas, *Sa Mitza Salida*, Imperial period; 53 graves;
  - Sardara, Terr'e Cresia, Roman period; 29 graves ascertained;
  - Sanluri, Bidd'e Cresia, Punic and Roman period; 72 graves dating to the Roman period;
  - Ortacesus, *Sa Mitza de Siddi*, Punic and Roman-period; 147 graves;
  - Gesico, Santa Lucia, Punic and Roman-period; 30 graves.
- 870 contexts, among which are 762 graves and 108 extra-burial deposits. 231 cremations; 531 inhumations; 23 empty graves.
  - 328 pits;
  - 73 cists covered by slabs;
  - 53 tombs *alla cappuccina*, covered in tiles;
  - 4 sarcophagi;
  - 218 cinerary urns in shallow pits;
  - 13 *busta*;
  - 42 *enchytrismoi* – burials in amphorae.
- 2793 grave goods, grouped by material, class, type, and form.
  - 1400 ceramics;
  - 147 glass;
  - 353 metals;
  - 145 organic objects, mainly bones;
  - 41 stone objects, among which are five urns, nine inscriptions, two statues, and several counters;
  - eight wooden objects;
  - one textile.

These material categories were divided into types, later divided into forms. Here, I use the definition of type and form by Ricci (1985: 12), for whom a type is a limited group of objects characterised by a high number of shared features, while a form, or morphological type, is a group of types with a lower number of common features. The ceramic types are:

- 50 amphorae;
- 214 pots including *askoi*, jugs, *lekythoi* and *skyphoi*
- 285 cups and dishes;
- 66 pans;
- 55 lids;
- 401 balsamaria;
- 57 lamps;
- 67 urns;
- 28 mugs;
- 21 beakers;
- 27 clay figurines;
- 129 unidentified.

Metal types are 176 coins, 103 nails, four strigils, one knife, and 30 ear rings or rings.
Organic material types are 19 knuckle-bones, 19 counters, 16 needles, ten shells and 52 between necklace and bracelet fragments.
Stone artefacts are represented by nine inscriptions, five urns, slabs used as head support, 10 river pebbles, four loom-weights, and three fragments of necklaces.
Inscriptions are certainly some of the most universally significant items, as they were created to communicate something about the identity the buried person held in life. More information about the inscriptions found in the wider contexts of the case studies analysed here will be given in the relevant chapters. However, the individuals whose burial apparatus included an inscription – an item of high economic cost that required reading capacities – belonged to a social status that allowed them to be close to – if not directly involved in – political authority or high economic activities. As such, giving too a wide attention to them would go against the postcolonial aim of this book, as expressed in Chapter 1, which is that of focusing on those people left with no voice in the official historical narrative of Rome and its provinces. In addition, information on an individual's biography coming from their inscriptions would not add much to the knowledge of group practices sought in this study on social identity. Finally, there is a long tradition of funerary studies that has given relevance especially, when not exclusively, to the study of epighraphs and to the biography of the individuals to which they refer. Hence, inscriptions will be mostly overlooked at here.

Glass types are 77 necklace fragments and bracelets, two cups, 32 *balsamaria*, one urn, 15 beakers, two rings and one mug.

All the listed items underwent a chrono-typological analysis and were compared with forms from other Roman-world contexts. I drew each object where a drawing was not available yet: I produced drawings for all items from Masullas (See Appendix 2), some of the objects from Sant'Antioco, Ortacesus and Sanluri. The available drawings from the other necropolises were kindly provided, when unpublished, by the directors of the excavations and were double-checked.

In accordance to the theoretical framework drawn in Chapter 1, all objects were looked at contextually, in relation to each other and to the bodies of the deceased. The methodology followed was aimed at understanding the rationale behind the practices performed by the communities using the sites under study, to assess whether common patterns appeared, and if so whether they changed over time and in comparison with other sites.

Table 2 shows on how many materials I could effectively carry out this analysis, and acknowledges that a variable quantity of graves per site could not be dated. Figure 2.6 below shows the chronological development of each site in terms of grave population, testing the pace of funerary activities for 1000 years, from 500 BC to AD 500.

2.3. The case studies: history of excavations and topographical account

For reasons of space and because of the nature of the sources, not all sites could be analysed at the same level of detail. This book focuses three main case studies, for which a full analytical account, both chrono-typological and contextual, is offered, and four minor case studies analysed at a lower level of detail, but fundamental at a comparative stage (Chapter 7). This section introduces the history of excavations and the topography of both the main case studies and the comparative ones. The main case studies are one from Sant'Antioco, south western Sardinia; three from Cagliari, to the south; and one from central-southern Sardinia, Masullas. The comparative case studies are Ortacesus, Sanluri, and Gesico, all of them from southern and southern-central Sardinia. Sardara was excluded from the sites to study at a later stage because the data initially available became unavailable during the fieldwork, due to the transfer of its finds to another warehouse of the *Soprintendenza*. The seven case studies fulfil the geographical and typological criteria required to discuss the divide between Romanised coast and un-Romanised inner Sardinia presented in Chapter 1.

Table 2. Sources involved in dating the necropolises.

	Total graves	Dated graves	Graves dated looking at first hand materials	Graves dated from publications or second hand materials	Graves yet (or impossible) to be dated
Cagliari *La Scala di Ferro*	164	78	78	0	86
Cagliari Bonaria	41	32	10	22	9
Cagliari Tuvixeddu	41	35	10	25	6
Masullas	54	39	39	0	0
Ortacesus	147	51	30	21	96
Sant'Antioco	195	117	97	20	78
Gesico	30	7	0	7	23
Sanluri	72	40	23	17	32
Sardara*	101	60	29	31	41

* Sardara could not be part of the study as too few contexts resulted directly accessible.

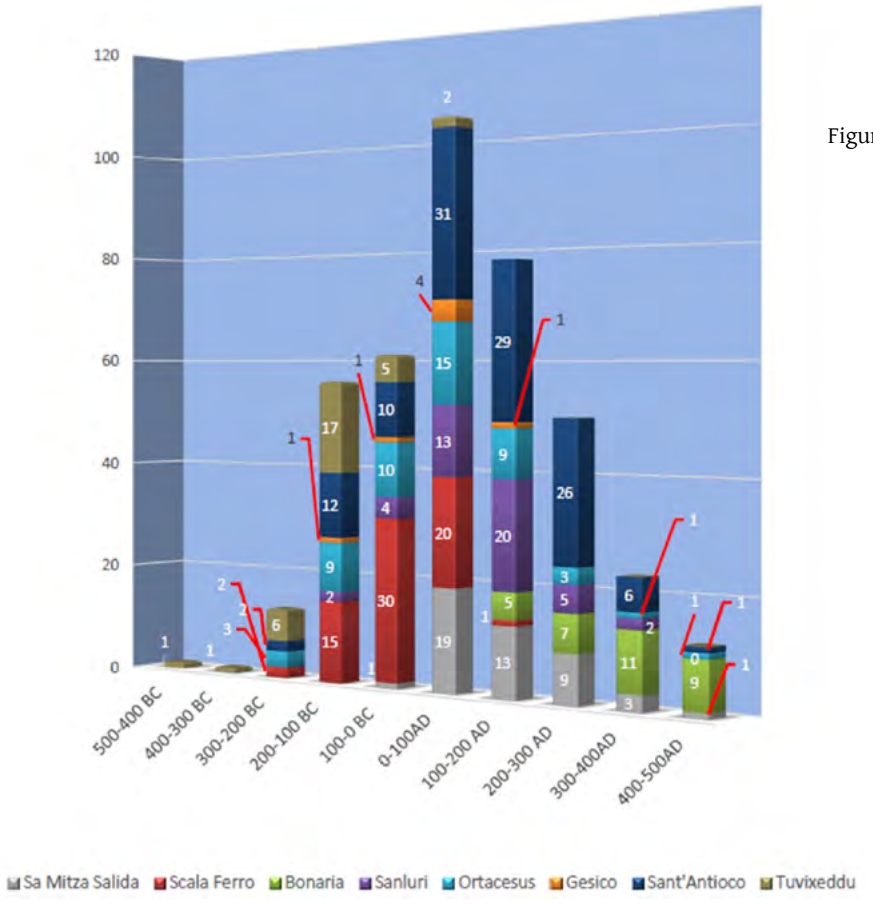


Figure 2.6. Chronological distribution of the necropolises under study.



Figure 2.7. Aerial view of the necropolis of Is Pirixeddus, Sant'Antioco (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth) .

2.3.1. The necropolis of Sulci, *Sant'Antioco*

The site of Sulci (Chapter 3) lays on the island of Sant'Antioco, off the southwest coast of Sardinia (Figure 2.2: n. 1). The Roman-period settlement was located 4 km inshore on the island that covers an area of 110 km². The geology of the island, today connected to the mainland through an isthmus, is constituted by trachyte, basalt and calcareous rock. Its topography is characterised by numerous medium-height hills in its central area, and by valleys at north and south. The coastline is mostly sandy to the east and rocky to the southwest. *Sulci*'s communities used different areas as cemeteries through the centuries (Tronchetti, 1995; 1986), the main one being Is Pirixeddus. The portion of Is Pirixeddus on which this study focuses, called *Necropolina* – small necropolis – is situated on an hilly area, and lies on the southeast slope of a 50m high hill facing the sea to the east, on top of which was set the high part of the Roman period settlement. The excavations by Tronchetti held in 1978-79 yielded 167 graves of different types.

2.3.2. The necropolis of *Sa Mitza Salida*, Masullas

The necropolis of *Sa Mitza Salida* (Chapter 4) lays in the administrative area of Masullas (Figure 2.2: n. 12), a small village in the Province of Oristano, western central Sardinia. Masullas provides a contrast with the coastal and urban site of Sulci, as it is an inland rural site. It is 12 km only from the road *a Karalibus Turrem*, 35 km from the west coast, the gulf of Oristano, and 60 km from Cagliari, south coast. It lies on the north slope of a 150 m high hill, with a slight gradient of the terrain descending gently from southwest to northeast, and with the highest graves located 40 m above sea level (Figure 2.10), near the rivers *riu Gutturu Forru* to the north and R*iu Mogoro* to the west. Situated in a typical agricultural area, *Sa Mitza Salida* is 18 km from Monte Arci, the main landmark of the area, maximum altitude of 812 m above sea level, composed of basaltic rocks on the surface and of trachyte in the internal structure (Cauli, Usai, 2001). The geology of the area where the site lies is made of basalts and tuffs of volcanic formation (Manos, Floris, 2005: 65). Two excavations, held in 1994 and between 1996 and 1997,[47] exposed 54 graves.

2.3.3. The necropolises of Cagliari

The presence of multiple Punic and Roman-period funerary sites represents one of the features of complexity to face when leading an archaeological investigation of Karales, southern Sardinia. Cagliari is located on a hilly territory on the gulf of southern Sardinia and faces the Sardinian sea to the south and the lagoon of Santa Gilla to the west (Figure 2.2: n. 5). The necropolises under study (Chapter 5) lay on two

[47] The excavations were carried out under the direction of *geometra* (quantity surveyor) Michele Sannia. The drawings and maps were realized by the geometra Luca Cabras, whereas I realised the technical drawings of pottery.

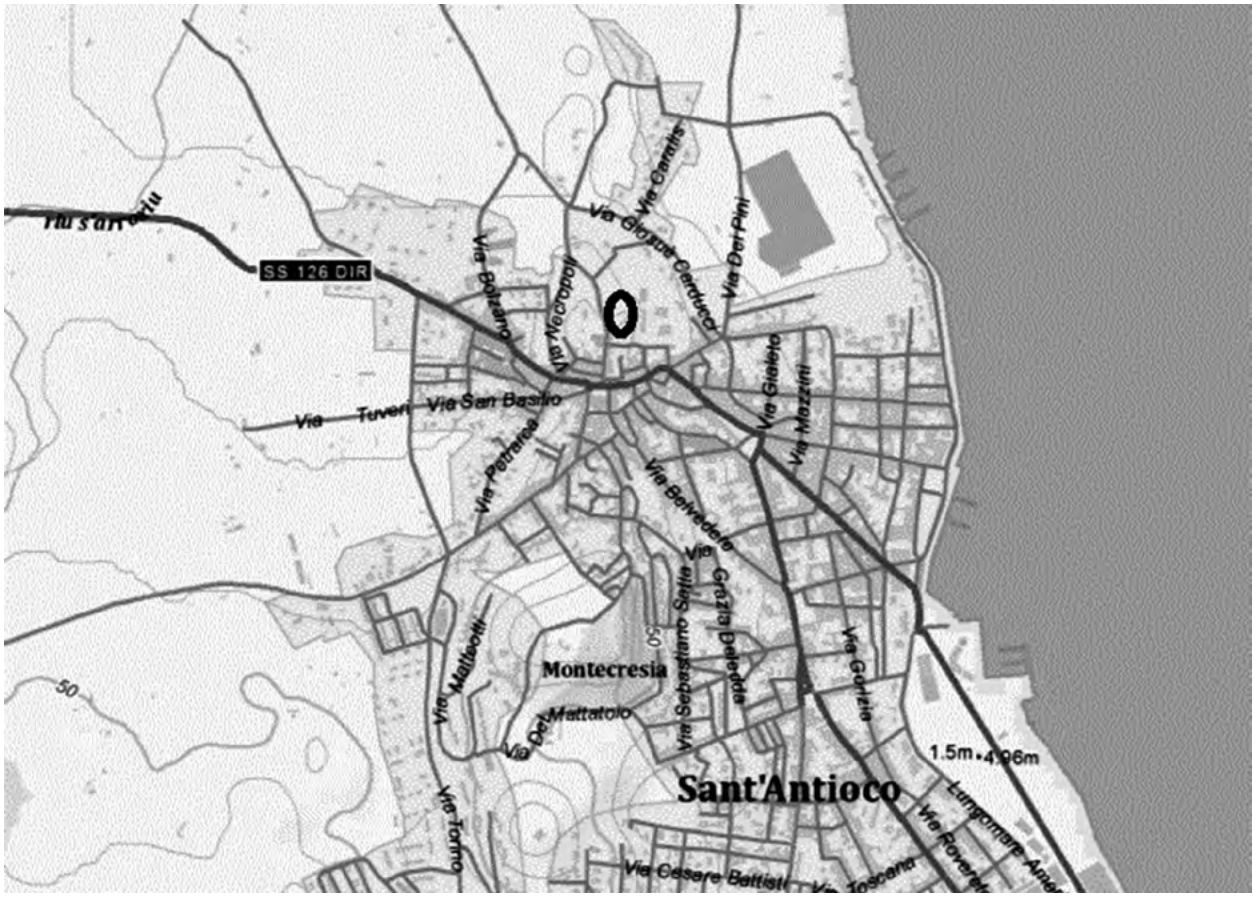


Figure 2.8. Topographic map of Sant'Antioco, ancient Sulci (Source: www.sardegnageoportale.it DBMP Sardegna Topographic Map). The ellipse indicates the position of the Necropolina.



Figure 2.9. Aerial view of Sa Mitza Salida, Masullas (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).

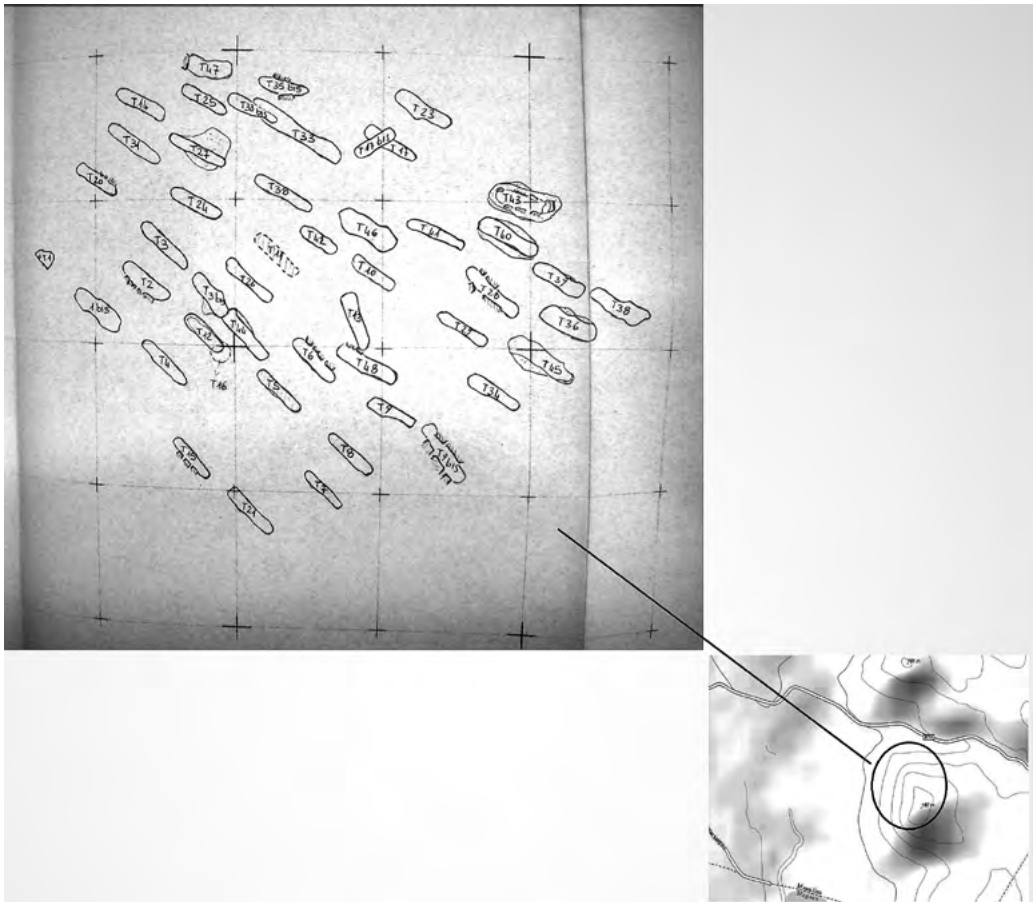


Figure 2.10. Topographic map of the area of Masullas with the plan of Sa Mitza Salida (www.archgis.com).

hills. *Sant'Avendrace* and Via Is Maglias are respectively to the west and northeast slopes of the Tuvixeddu hill, at around 100 m above sea level (Figure 2.13). The necropolis under the hotel *La Scala di Ferro* lies on the south slope of a gentle hill (Figure 2.14) that leads to Cagliari's Medieval bastions, by Viale Regina Margherita.

The necropolises of Cagliari can be divided in three types. The first type includes the monumental graves on the west side of Tuvixeddu hill, along via Sant'Avendrace (Angiolillo, 2000) – the south end of the road *a Tibula Karales* (Figure 2.11, n. 1) – the tombs on Tuvixeddu's eastern side along via Is Maglias (Figure 2.11, n. 1b) (Salvi, 2000; Zaru, 2002), and the graves set-up along the hill's top surface (Figure 2.11, n. 1a) (Salvi, 1998, 2000a, 2000b).

The second group includes the sites belonging to the *necropoli orientale* (eastern necropolis), at the centre of which the church of San Saturnino was erected (Figure 2.11, n. 10). It extends from the slopes of viale Regina Margherita to the west (Figure 2.11, n. 6) to the hills of Monreale and Bonaria to the east (Figure 12.4, n. 7) (Salvi 1998; Mureddu, Salvi, Stefani 1988). Its sites are the church of San Saturnino (Figure 2.11, n. 10) (Salvi 2007, 2002), the cemetery of Bonaria (Figure 2.11, n. 7) (Mureddu, 1993), Vico III Lanusei (Figure 2.11, n. 8) (Martorelli, Mureddu, 2006), the site underneath the hotel *La Scala di Ferro* (Figure 2.11, n. 6) in via Regina Margherita (Locci 2012), the funerary remains at the Stabilimento Ausonia to the east, and at the Botanica to the north (not present in Figure 2.11). If the reconstruction is correct, the overall extent of the necropolis would be of around 1.125 km².

The third group of funerary sites includes the Imperial-period cemeteries of S. Gilla (Salvi, 2012) and S. Lorenzo (both in Figure 2.11, n. 9) (Salvi, 1992) north of the hill of Tuvixeddu, and quite distant from the main settlement of Karales, today's Piazza del Carmine (Figure 2.11, n. 5).

Not all sites listed above could be investigated. Among those providing the necessary data for the purpose of this work are Is Maglias (Figure 2.11, n. 1b) and *Sant'Avendrace* (Figure 2.11, n. 1a) as part of Tuvixeddu,

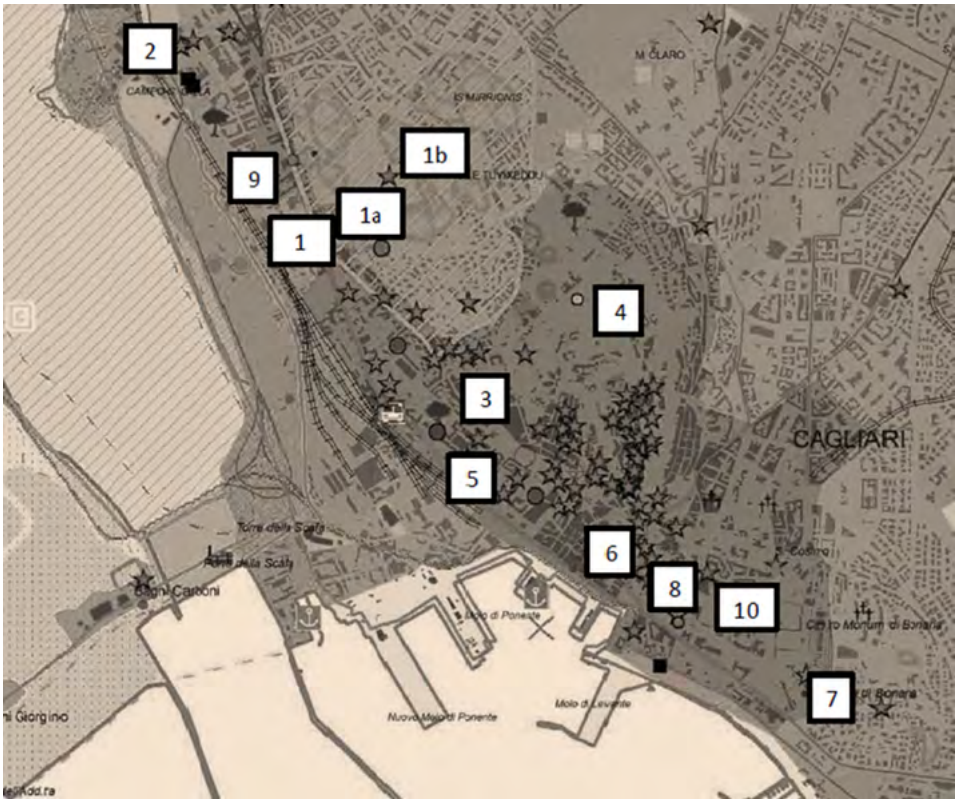


Figure 2.11. Location of the archaeological sites of Cagliari named in the book. 1: Monumental graves along via Sant'Avendrace; 1a: Necropolis of Tuvixeddu, Via Sant'Avendrace side. 1b: Necropolis of Tuvixeddu, Via Is Maglias side. 2: Phoenician-Punic settlement of Via Brenta. 3: Villa di Tigellio. 4: Roman Amphitheatre. 5: Roman Forum (Piazza del Carmine) and temple-theatre of Via Malta. 6: Necropolis Ex Hotel La Scala di Ferro. 7: Necropolis of Bonaria. 8: Vico III Lanusei. 9: Imperial period Necropolis of Santa Gilla.10. San Saturnino church. - The dark stars indicate other archaeological sites. The light colour stars indicate historical architectures. (Foglio 557. Sez. III. Piano paesaggistico 2006-Regione Sardegna)



Figure 2.12. Aerial view of the necropolises on Tuvixeddu hill (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).

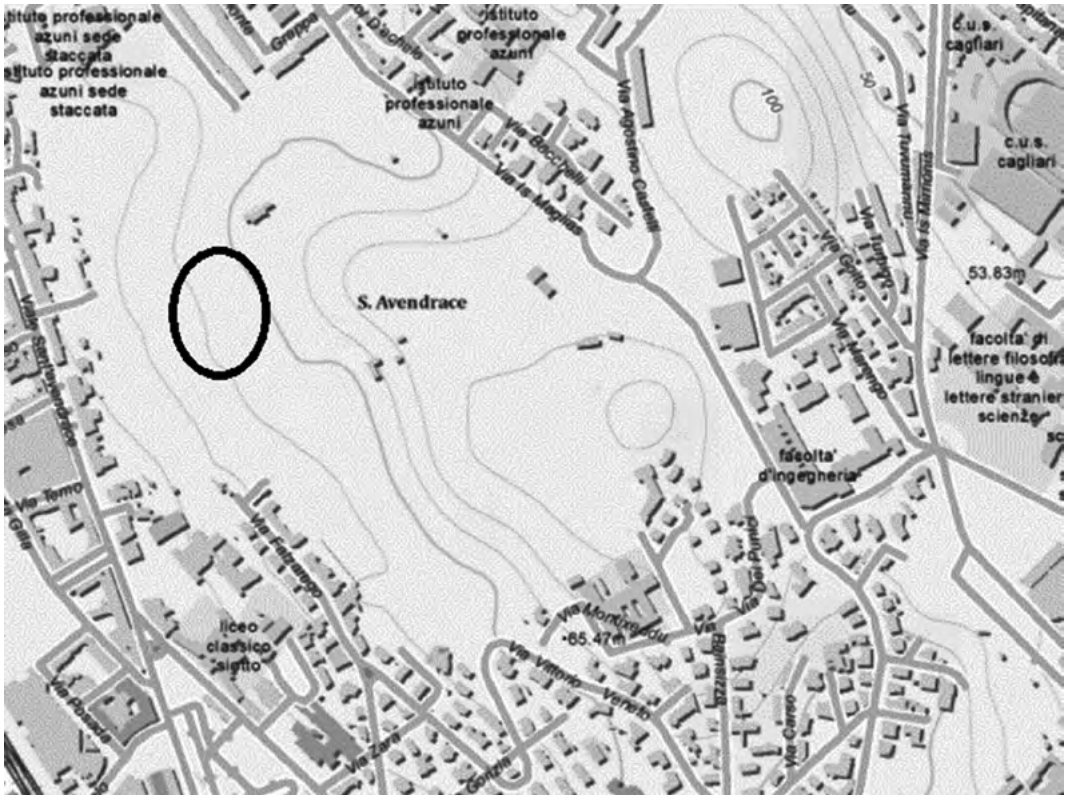


Figure 2.13. Topographic map of Tuvixeddu, Cagliari, indicating the sites of Sant'Avendrace and Is Maglias (Source: www.sardegnageoportale.it DBMP Sardegna Topographic Map).

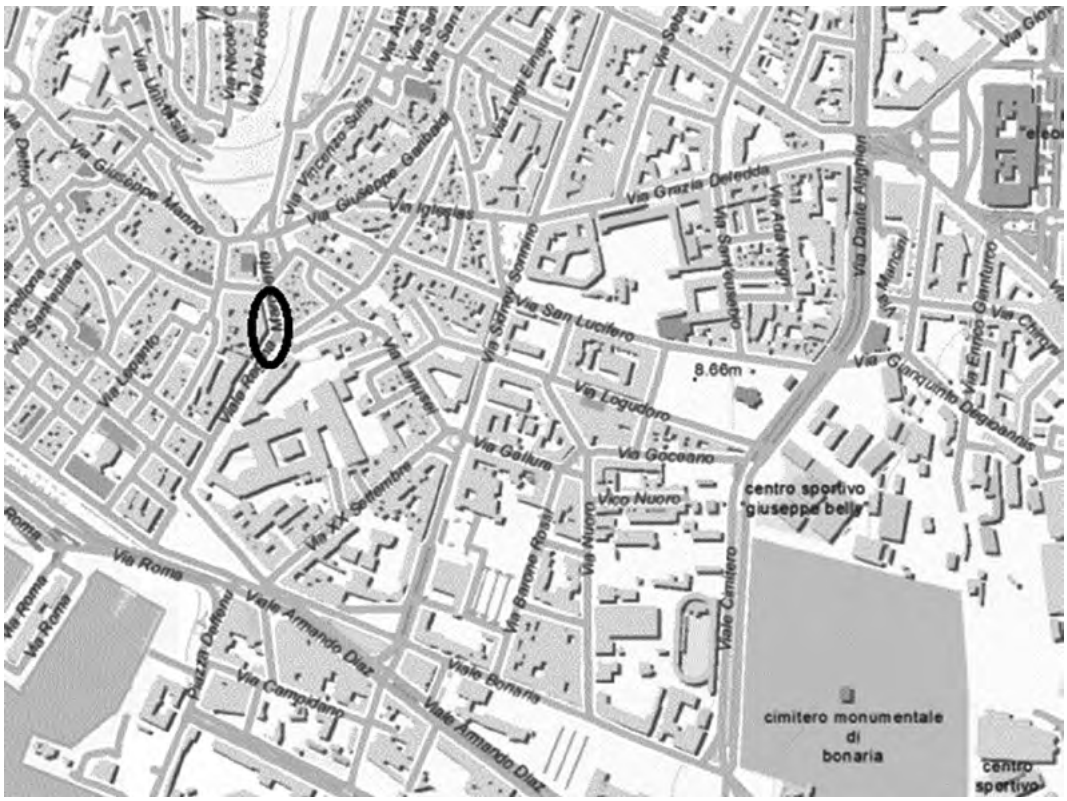


Figure 2.14. Topographic map of Cagliari indicating the necropolis of Ex Albergo "La Scala di Ferro" (Source: www.sardegnageoportale.it DBMP Sardegna Topographic Map).



Figure 2.15. Aerial view of the excavation area of the necropolis of Sa Mitza de Siddi, Ortacesus (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).

and the ex hotel *La Scala di Ferro* (Figure 2.11, n. 6) as part of the *necropoli orientale*, totalizing 211 tombs. These sites are the focus of Chapter 5.

2.3.4. The necropolis of Sa Mitza de Siddi, *Ortacesus*

The necropolis of *Sa Mitza de Siddi,* Ortacesus, is, together with Gesico and Sanluri, one of the three sites used as a comparative support to the understanding of the three main case studies of Cagliari, Sulci, and Masullas. The site (Figure 2.2: n. 3) is located inland, 40 km from the south coast of Cagliari, and 66 km from the west coast. It lies on the side of a low hill, less than 100 m high, and was set up partly to the northwest side of the hill, and partly onto the flat area at the base of the slope. No village associated with the necropolis has been found yet, although its existence has been hypothesized not far to the southeast of the necropolis (Cocco 2009: 9). It is a short distance from the main roads running across the island: less than one km west of the inland road SS 128 and around 10 km east of the Roman period road *a Karalibus Turrem.* The geology of the site is composed of marls, calcareous marls, limestone, and sandstone. The site was excavated between 1999 and 2004 by Cocco and Arru, under whose direction almost 200 graves (Chapter 6), dating between the 4th century BC and the 6th AD (Cocco, Arru, 2009: 9), were exposed.

2.3.5. The necropolis of Santa Lucia, Gesico

The necropolis of Santa Lucia, Gesico (Figure 2.2: n. 54), is located few km north of Ortacesus (see Section 2.3.4) and is the third inland rural site looked at in this work. It is 83 km from the west coast, south of the gulf of Oristano, 100 km from the east coast, and 53 km north of the south coast of the gulf of Cagliari. These distances make of Ortacesus the most inland site discussed here. It is also the farthest site from the central road *a Karalibus Turrem*, from which it is 28 km far. The topography of the area is rather more mountainous than all other case studies, being located on a slope of a hill 400 m high. The geology of the site is characterised mainly by marls and limestone. It was excavated during a rescue operation in 1984. The excavation, held during a rescue operation in 1984 by Geom. M. Sannia of the *Soprintendenza Archaeologia della Sardegna*, did not cover the whole cemetery (Tronchetti, 1999: 107) and yielded 30 graves dating to the Punic, Republican, and early Imperial periods. Its material culture analysis will be object of Chapter 6.

2.3.6. The necropolis of Bidd'e Cresia, Sanluri

The necropolis of *Bidd'e Cresia*, Sanluri (Figure 2.2: 11), is the fourth inland rural site whose archaeological record will be compared with the two urban and coastal *municipia* of Sulci and Karales. It is at the same distance

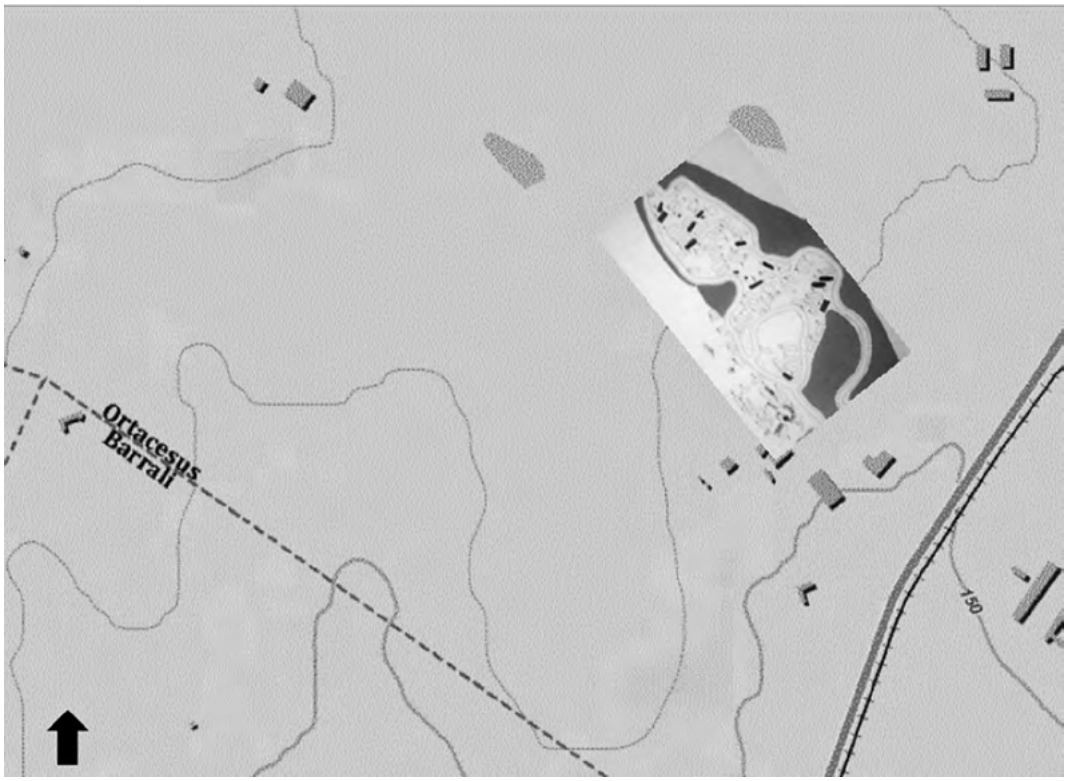


Figure 2.16. Topography of Ortacesus around the necropolis of Sa Mitza de Siddi, to which overlaps the plan of the necropolis (Source: www.sardegnageoportale.it DBMP Sardegna Topographic Map).



Figure 2.17. Aerial view of the area of the necropolis (now covered) of S. Lucia, Gesico (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).



Figure 2.18. Aerial view of the area of the necropolis (now covered) of Bidd'e Cresia, Sanluri (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth)

from both the west and south coasts: 47 km. Bidd'e Cresia is only one km from the Roman period road *a Karalibus Turrem*, along which are located also Masullas, Gesico and Ortacesus. Its topography is constituted of numerous hills, between 200 and 150 m high, on the slope of one of which the necropolis was set. The geology of the area is characterised mainly by sandstone and marls that were easily excavated to create the graves. The necropolis of Bidd'e Cresia belongs to a group of three cemeteries in the territories of Sanluri, the others being Giliadiri and Corti Beccia, archaeologically investigated but yet unpublished. Together with a wider group of six known necropolises, Sanluri offers the most consistent evidence of sites used for funerary practices in central Sardinia. The majority of them, often in proximity of known settlements not yet investigated archaeologically, were used continuously from the Punic to the late Roman period. The excavations of the necropolis of Bidd'e Cresia yielded 76 tombs, which will be looked at in Chapter 6.

3. Funerary Practice and the Urban Communities of *Sulci*

'El tiempo presente era el unico tiempo que existia.'
Patricio Guzmàn, *Nostalgia de la luz,* 2010

3.1. Introduction

The necropolis of Is Pirixeddus, Sulci, was excavated in the 1970s. Several archaeological seasons yielded numerous Roman-period remains belonging to 178 graves. These are of different types and set up on the ground covering the Punic period *hypogaea* cut into the tuff centuries before. The study of these graves, cut in a section of the necropolis called Necropolina (Figure 2.7 and 2.8) because of its small dimensions, are the focus of this chapter.

3.1.1. Sulci during the Punic and Roman periods

The municipium of *Sulci* is on the island of Sant'Antioco. This was named after Antiochus, an African Saint from Mauritania, mentioned on an inscription discovered in 1615 in a church dedicated to the Saint,[48] whose life and burial circumstances in the 2nd century AD are narrated in a 12th century *Passio.*[49]

The Latin name of the *municipium*, *Sulci*, derives from the Semitic form *Slky* (Bartoloni 2008), of either Phoenician, 8th-7th centuries BC, or Punic origin, 6th century BC. The island had its first contact with Carthage in the 6th century BC. At the time, *Sulky* had been engaged for at least two centuries in important commercial activities with the Phoenicians who established emporia on the shores near the modern town of Portoscuso, where a necropolis with abundant Phoenician material culture was found (Bernardini, 1997). A few years after 550 BC, the Punic warrior Malco led the military operations against Sardinia. The expedition resulted in failure. It seems that even the Sardinian cities of Phoenician foundations – as was Carthage – were targeted by Punic military attacks. *Sulky* was one of them. The strength of the relationships between Sulky and Carthage gradually increased, as is historically witnessed when, in 258 BC, Hannibal, admiral of the Punic fleet defeated by Rome during the 1st Punic War, sought protection in its harbour.

The Punic presence is evident in the civil institutions of the centre. Two magistrates named *Su feti* – common in the Punic administration system – likely ruled Sulci in cooperation with a popular assembly. Roman written sources attest the active role played a few centuries later, during the Roman Civil War, by Sulci, which took the side against Caesar by hosting Nasidius, admiral of Pompey's fleet, with important political consequences. Caesar is reported in the *Bellum Africanum* to have punished the town requiring it to give one eighth of its annual harvest to Rome, instead of the usual one-tenth asked of provincial communities.

Sulci reached the status of *municipium* (Bonello, 1992) in the first half of the 1st century AD, probably under Claudius (AD 41-54), of whom many marble portraits have been found in the island (Angiolillo 1978). A few epigraphic and literary sources of that time document Sulci's involvement in the trade of minerals from Sardinia's mainland, from which derives the Greek attribute of Μολιβώδης, meaning leaden.

3.1.2. Archaeological background

Excavations carried out from the mid-20th century provide significant information about Punic and Roman-period Sulci. Recent archaeological studies demonstrate that the settlement was active at least from the 8th century BC to the 5th AD (Bartoloni, 2010; Pompianu, 2010; Unali, 2011), confirming the results of the 1960s' excavations (Bernardini, 1989; Bartoloni, 1973; 1988).

The presence of Proto-Corinthian, Euboic, and Pithecussan (modern day Ischia) pottery sherds from dwelling contexts illustrate that the foundation period of the settlement was between 770 and 750 BC (Bernardini, 1982). However, the majority of archaeological remains comes from the large necropolis of Is Pirixeddus. It lies on the southeast slope of the hill upon which the upper part of the city was founded. Traces from the town centre of Sulci are quite rare, but a new area has emerged recently between the Phoenician period settlement (Bartoloni, 1981: 22-23) and the necropolis, showing a physical continuity with the former (Bernardini, 2007: 151).

The most evident remains of Sulci's urban structure come from the *Cronicario*, an area under investigation since

[48] The inscription, dated to the 7th-8th century, mentions a *'beatus Sanctus Antiochus Pontifex Christi'* (Lai 2010 [De Esquivel 1617]), whom has been related to the historic figure of Antiochus bishop of Sulci, active on the island in the late 7th century AD.

[49] Part of the Hagiography, a literary genre in the early Christian period, which accounts for the Saint's martyrdom (Latin: *passio*), often imbued with popular legends used to explain the etymology of places linked to martyrs and the detailed circumstances of their deaths.

1983 (Pompianu, 2008, Campanella, 2007, Bernardini, 1990). Several houses with central courtyards, dated to 1st century AD and in use for no more than one century, followed the hill's slope westward. The area beneath the Roman-period layers does not show any Punic-period material culture, leading to the conclusion that Roman-period Sulci developed directly above Phoenician-period layers (Bernardini 1989a: 136)[50]. One of the most important features of western Mediterranean Phoenician urban settlements, the Tofet (Guirguis, 2010), a necropolis-sanctuary containing infant and stillborn remains in cinerary urns, is located on top of a trachyte platform around 500 m north of the acropolis. It was in use from the last quarter of the 8th century BC until the Republican period, demonstrating a consistent continuation of practice (Tronchetti, 1989: 3).

The area of the *Cronicario* shows intense building activity, contributing to shape an image of Sulci as a dynamic *municipium* during the imperial age (Guirguis, 2007: 18), particularly under Claudius (Zucca 1994: 881-888). Outside the *Cronicario* is a small funerary mausoleum, known as *Sa Presonedda* (Tronchetti, 1989: 24), composed of square blocks joined with mortar, and a cover of stone slabs which witnesses the presence of important and wealthy people being buried outside the main funerary area of the Necropolina.

The urban picture is completed by an amphitheatre located on the southeast slope of the hill leading to the acropolis. Likely used in the Republican period, it was set in an area later cut by the *Necropolina*, and was reorganised in the 2nd century BC to create a passage to access the Acropolis. No stone structures of the amphitheatre apart from the podium were found, probably because it was mainly built in timber (Tronchetti, 1989: 18).

3.1.3. Before the *municipium*: the necropolis in the Punic-phase

Among the Punic period necropolises in Sardinia, Sulci's Is Pirixeddus is certainly one of the most important due to both its preservation conditions, size, and material culture. It has not been completely excavated yet, but it is supposed to contain around 1500 graves distributed over a 6 hectares area. Around 40 graves – used as shelters by homeless people in the 20th century – lie underneath the Roman-period tombs. A second nucleus of 90 pit graves – some with *archosolia* – used as catacombs in the Christian era, lies underneath the church of Sant'Antioco, near *Is Pirixeddus* (Taramelli, 1921; Porru, 1989).

A switch between cremation, practiced during the Phoenician period, and inhumation, during the Punic phase, marks the mortuary habits of Sulci in the 6th century BC. At that time, the inhumed were deposited in *hypogaea* dug into the tuff (Tronchetti, 2002). They consist of a stepped corridor leading to single or multiple sub-rectangular chambers where the deceased were laid on the floor of shallow pits (*formae*), either cut into the ground or on a wooden bed. Despite mainly containing inhumations, the chamber graves also held cremations (Bartoloni, 1973, 1987; Bernardini, 1990, 1999; Taramelli, 1908, 1925). Small niches cut into the walls contained some of the grave goods, the rest of which were laid on the floor. Some chambers contained a small number of dead, between two and seven, which was probably the number of people that the grave was originally designed to house. However, a large number of chambers were re-opened and used for other interments. This caused an accumulation of both bodies and associated grave goods that ended up occupying the whole space in the chamber, with the latest depositions being piled up untidily over the earlier ones (Tronchetti, 1989: 14) by the entrance. This occurred from the Punic period throughout the Roman one (Guirguis, Unali, 2012), showing a significant continuity of practices and the unproblematic use of the same spaces. Due to this continuity, looking briefly at the remains for the Punic period will help to appreciate better Roman-period remains.

The funerary equipment of Punic-period burials in Sulci is comparable with that from the rest of south-western Sardinia (Muscuso, 2008: 34). This included the well-known amphorae, jugs – of a Phoenician tradition with 'mushroom' shaped rim, and with double-pinched mouth (Bernardini, 1997: 55-58, 235, 238; Bernardini 2000: 34, fig. 2.2) – beakers, lamps, pans/jars, dishes and cups (see Muscuso, 2008: 10 for an updated typology), and double *paterae*, the majority of which were produced locally. The imports were mainly from the Greek world, but were not as numerous as in the contemporary sites of southern and western Sardinia such as Nora, Cagliari and Tharros. All these types come almost exclusively from funerary contexts, and were absent in the settlement area of the Cronicario. Other elements of funerary equipment are interpreted as apotropaic objects, made of bone, glass, or stone, representing parts of the human body, scarabs, masks, pillars, or gods such as Bes, Horus, Ptah (Tronchetti, 1989: 16), as well as rings, earrings, necklace fragments, and bracelets.

The first phase of use of the necropolis of Is Pirixeddus shows that the communities of Sulci held uniform practices until the mid-3rd century BC, when three new elements appeared: cremation, already practiced during the Phoenician period, the consistent presence of material culture from Italic areas, and the diminution

[50] Similarly, the first Phoenician settlements was installed upon a long abandoned settlement dating to the Ozieri and sub-Ozieri periods, 3200-2800 BC, unoccupied during the Nuragic period (Usai 1990: 113).

of objects with marked North-African features. This happened also at Karales (Salvi 2015; 2000; Locci 2012) in the same period, and in Nora later on (Nervi 2015).

The west end of the necropolis, outside the Punic defensive walls, used in the mid-3rd century BC, provides an example of such changes in practice. This area is occupied by a group of *hypogaea* graves, two of which – Tombs Steri 1 and 2 – have been recently excavated (Guirguis Unali, 2012; Muscuso, Pompianu, 2010). The accepted interpretation is that the new rituals were introduced in *Sulky* by a new ethnic group of Latin origin, identified with the *mercatores* who are believed to have started the process of Romanization of the area (Muscuso, Pompianu, 2010: 2059). However, such interpretation is based on a pure identification of practices with neat ethnic identities, whose theoretical premises have been criticised in Chapter 1. The same questions concern both the presence of traditional funerary practices – i.e. the persistence of Punic-period ones – in the Roman period, and their coexistence with new practices. These will be formulated in relation to Sulci's community identities later in this book. Answering these questions through an extensive analysis of Sulci's Roman-period necropolis is the main objective of this chapter.

3.2. The archaeological evidence from the Roman-period

The following sub-sections will look at the archaeological finds from the Roman-period sector of Sulci's cemetery: the Necropolina. The first subsection will introduce the nature of the Necropolina's archaeological sources. The second, bridging between Punic and Roman-period use of the site, will look at one specific Punic-period grave still used in Republican times. The third will focus on the Roman-period use of the Necropolina.

3.2.1. The data sources: strengths and limitations

The principal sources of data utilised are:

- Tronchetti's (1990) report on the excavation carried out in 1978;
- Sirigu's (1999) study of *ceramica comune* from 1978/79 excavations;
- the excavation journals[51];
- the photographs taken during such operations and the sketched map of the excavated area;
- the grave goods stored at the *Centro Operativo di Sant'Antioco*[52].

To start with, Tronchetti's report offers a clear description of the circumstances under which the archaeological operations were carried out by providing a general account for the burial typology and material culture categories and chronology. Sirigu's study is concerned with the development of a typology for coarse ware – *ceramica comune* – from the Necropolina, contributing greatly to the knowledge of coarse wares from Sardinia.

The black and white photographs taken during the excavations contribute to a clearer understanding of the necropolis by linking the raw data to the daily operations. They provide the only source of evidence on the human remains, the treatment of the bodies and their relation with the material culture, and are for this reason all the more precious. The excavation journals provide a source of similar information. The two sources complement each other, providing necessary data in relation to both the horizontal and vertical stratigraphy, of which there is no graphic documentation left.

Finally, the grave goods allowed me to undertake an analytical study of material forms used during the funerary practices of Sulci.

Despite the multiple perspectives they provide about the site, these sources have significant weaknesses that I ought to acknowledge at the outset. It was not possible to have access to

- any human (and animal) remain, some of which are under study, others of which have been lost;
- any stratigraphic plans or sections documenting the vertical succession of the overlapping layers exposed by the archaeologists (Tronchetti, 1990: 175).

The main drawback deriving from these gaps in the data is the impossibility of detecting precise age, sex, and potential diseases of the deceased. The age can only be approximately and indirectly detected from the size of the skeletons in the pictures. Future anthropological analyses could thus contribute to a more refined understanding of the funerary practices of Sulci.

The absence of stratigraphic documentation was partially overcome by accurately reviewing the detailed excavation journals and the information obtained from the field director, Carlo Tronchetti. Nonetheless, its absence results in the impracticality of establishing a secure relative chronology for some graves. In those cases, dating was attempted through the analysis of the grave goods alone.

Despite the acknowledged limitations, the sources available allow a sound analysis of the archaeological

[51] Sabrina Cisci gave access to photographs, excavation journals, and to the grave goods stored in the warehouse at Sant'Antioco.
[52] A branch of the *Soprintendenza Archeologia della Sardegna*.

finds as collective practices and offer important information on the way the individuals acted within the community, which is the main objective sought here.

3.2.2. Burials between the Punic and Roman period: bridging neat categorizations

The western extremity of Is Pirixeddus, outside the Punic defensive walls, used between the 4th and 2nd century BC, offers a link between the Punic phase of the necropolis and the period in which Sardinia was made a Roman province. A group of *hypogaea*, two of which were excavated recently, occupy this area. One of them, tomb *Steri 2*, offers valuable information fro the questions on identity asked here.

Its structure is similar to the other Punic-period graves cut into the tuff. The chamber, accessible via a 3.20 m corridor, provided with 14 steps, was opened several times in antiquity to house 12 inhumations that had been deposited through different periods (Muscuso, Pompianu 2010, 2036).

Tomb *Steri* 2 contains three rooms, asymmetrically disposed. The first time the community of Sulci used this grave was to inter eight inhumations, followed later by four cremations deposited b the entrance.[53] Some inhumations in the central room were laid in shallow pits – *formae* – cut into the floor and covered with sandstone slabs. Not many grave goods were introduced at this phase, showing that the community's efforts were more oriented towards the establishment of a rich architecture than towards providing the dead with an abundant funerary apparatus. Two *balsamaria* can be used to set the chronological limits of the grave. A small globular one, of a form widely distributed in the Punic Mediterranean (Bartoloni, Tronchetti, 1981: 1980-1; Sparks 1987: 67, table 98), found broken near the entrance and dated to the 4th century BC represents the oldest items of the grave (Muscuso, Pompianu, 2010: 2047, table 13.1). A 2nd century BC fusiform *balsmarium*, also found near the entrance is the most recent object. The wide chronological span of the grave – two centuries – is most likely the result of its continuous use, rather than a Roman-period re-use of abandoned Punic-period spaces (Muscuso, Pompianu, 2010, 2052-3). The majority of deposits in grave *Steri* 2 conform to the inhumation ritual followed almost uniformly in *Is Pirixeddus* (5th – 3rd century BC). Among the grave goods, two locally produced coarse ware items are the most popular. These are a small amphora with out-turned rim and flat base (Amadasi Guzzo, Brancolli, 1965: 95-121, nn. 44, 54, 87), and a small bottle with circular rim, small handle and flat base, a form diffused since 7th century BC (Bartoloni, 1996: 99). In terms of the disposition of the grave furniture, the most recurring pattern consisted in two bottles placed close to the upper body[54] (Bernardini 1999, 145), usually by the head, as in the case of the inhumation n. 5 of grave Steri 2 (Muscuso, Pompianu, 2010: 2056). Despite these similarities with the early Punic traditions, grave Steri 2 shows significant discontinuities in relation to these patterns. Personal ornaments, abundant in the majority of Punic period graves at Is Pirixeddus, are absent in grave Steri 2. The same is true of imported vessels, frequent within the Phoenician and Punic market, which were instead substituted with local products here (2010: 2057).

Muscuso and Pompianu maintain that the scarcity and reduced quality of objects in grave *Steri* 2 do not signify social and economic turmoil due to the Punic wars, but are a sign of the 'growing social inequality linked to the productive relationships within the society' (2010: 2058) due to the arrival of Roman people. These would be mainly the *mercatores* occupying the area between the sea and the necropolis (2010: 2059). The arrival of Italic people is suggested by Salvi to explain the rituals introduced in Tuvixeddu, Cagliari, within the discourse on Romanization (see section 1.2.4.). However, this fails to explain the richness of the funerary architecture. The way the communities of Sulci dealt with change through time and the way they related to past practices and earlier material remains is fundamental to address the identity questions that this work aims to tackle. Such question cannot be answered by pointing at neat ethnic identities that introduced change *ex nihilo*. Instead, looking systematically at the interaction with the past of the communities of Sulci is fundamental to articulate a proper answer.

3.2.3. The Roman period *Necropolina*

The area excavated in 1978-1979 has a sub-rectangular shape and is 21m long and 11 wide. More than 167 graves of different types occupy a small area at NW of the necropolis of *Is Pirixeddus*, the Necropolina. They are not laid out according to any clearly visible pattern (as we will see instead at Masullas in Chapter 4), but rather are mixed with each other.

The *Necropolina* was used for six centuries. It was set up around the end of the 1st century BC cut into the deposits that covered the north western area of the necropolis that had been used since the 6th century BC. The latest evidence of the use of the Necropolina dates to the 6th century AD. Many inscriptions come from this site. Among the 82 inscriptions found in the territory

[53] This is typical also in other examples of late Punic burials in the Mediterranean and Sardinia (Amadasi, Brancolli 1965, 100-1; Levi 1949).

[54] See Figure 3.7 here for an example of this use in the Imperial period practices.

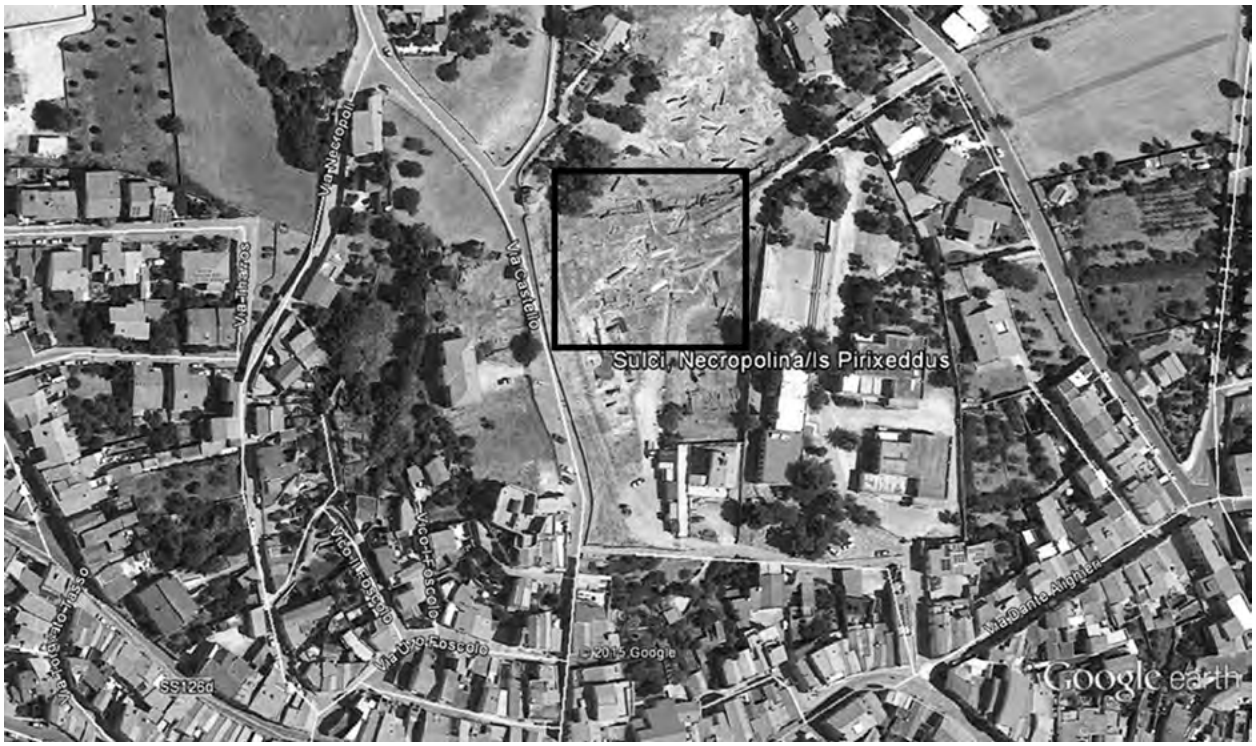


Figure 3.1. Aerial photography of the necropolis of Sulci (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).



Figure 3.2. Multi-context plan of the Necropolina (From the archives of the Unità Operativa di Sant'Antioco).

of Sulci, the majority of them[55] state an affiliation to the Roman tribe of *gens Quirina*. This could refer to immigrants from Latium at that moment in Sulci, but also to permanent citizens of Sulci (Kubitschek 1972, 127: *CIL* X 7518 = *ILS* 6764; *CIL* X 7519), whose people were inscribed in that *tribus* after its upgrade to the status of *municipium* in the 1st century AD (i.e. Cenerini 2004: 231, 232). These inscriptions give us some confirmation about the possible presence of people from mainland Italy and other parts of the Empire. However, as stated in Chapter 2, such evidence is not going to be the focus of this study, as it does not give any information on the practices that contributed to build group identities. In fact, in the majority of cases, the mention of the *tribus* in an inscription is associated to high status individuals, members of the senate, knights, or local aristocrats, whereas this study focuses on the subalterns who never reached such status (see Chapter 1) and who never produced an effort for their names and affiliations to be remembered, contrarily to those individuals buried with inscriptions.

The report of the 1978 operations registers the excavation of 152 graves (Tronchetti, 1990: 174). We also know that the 678 coarse ware pots were studied (Sirigu, 1999: 144) often not from precise contexts, allowing Sirigu to hypothesize a total number of 339 graves, based on a likely average of two vessels per grave. However, relying on excavation journals and on the plan in Figure 3.2, the number of graves in the Necropolina must have been smaller.

The excavation journals mention 204 contexts, only 167 of which have all the characteristics of burials (traces of human bones, burnt or un-burnt, contained within a limited surface). The remaining 37 mentioned in the journals in passing, are considered with attention in this section. The author of the journals has suggested that such extra-burial contexts result from the performance of different burial-related actions, not strictly associated with the deposition of corpses (i.e. rites of commemoration). Tronchetti, who directed the site's excavation, tends to exclude this interpretation, blaming the absence of any link between some objects and a funerary context on confusion during the post-excavation phase (personal communication, June 6, 2013).

Nonetheless, other factors speak in favour of the extra-burial contexts hypothesis. For instance, the material culture found in those contexts is often of specific types, such as miniature jars and *balsamaria*, whereas all other types found in the tombs are absent from the extra-burial contexts. The recognition of this type of deposits is in line with the theoretical frameworks outlined in Chapter 1, where necropolises are defined as the result of additional and varied actions beyond burial alone. Hence, these contexts will be investigated thoroughly in the next section.

Among the graves, 114 were inhumations and 53 cremations. Four types of inhumations are attested in the Necropolina: *alla cappuccina*, *enchytrismoi,* rectangular pits – *formae* – and simple depositions in a shallow niche on the ground (Figure 3.1). Out of them, 97 contexts had sufficient evidence to allow a precise chronology to be proposed.

In addition to burials and extra-burial contexts, around 60 objects lack precise contextual information. Hence, they are included in the following statistical analysis and general interpretation of the overall material culture coming from the Necropolina, but will be excluded from more specific discourses around the funerary practices held in *Sulci*.

The most commonly represented material in Sulci is ceramic, with 359 items out of 531, followed by metal, glass, and stone. The most frequent ceramic class is coarse ware, which outnumbers fine wares by 6:1. Looking at the ceramic typology, jugs are the most common items, followed by jars. These appear in both cremations and inhumations. However, jugs are more numerous in the latter, and jars in the former.

The precise relationship between body of the deceased and material culture within the graves could be detected in 17 cases only. All other graves are known only for the presence of particular items whose original position could not be retrieved. As noted in the theoretical outline, I reject the simple relationship between pairs of attributes, as any straightforward correspondences between any single class of materials and ethnicity. The point of view from which each element of the archaeological assemblages is understood in this research is always be explicitly presented as will be its connection with any other element of the same assemblage, creating the chain of interpretants as theorised by C.S. Peirce (E.P.: 13). Hence, each component of the archaeological record will be looked at contextually, in relation to other components of the same micro-contexts first (sections 3.3.2.4-3.2.6), to other contexts second (section 3.2.7), and to the general types and classes for which they stand, third (3.3.1).

The next three sections will deal with such contexts in detail, although a thorough chrono-typological analysis will be the main focus of the further section 3.3.1, where a comprehensive analysis of material classes and forms attested in the Necropolina will be provided, crosscutting any contextual division. The differences in use of certain forms will be again linked to their contexts in the concluding section.

[55] Other tribes are less attested. See Floris, Ibba, Zucca (2010) for a complete picture.

3.2.4. The cremation burials

The 53 cremations deposited in jars are scattered around the Necropolina without occupying any distinct zones within the cemetery, but rather mixed with the inhumations. This mixed disposition of different burial types is a common characteristic of other Roman-period necropolises in Sardinia, among which are Karales, and Tharros (Fariselli, 2008: 1708). Hence, spatial disposition seems not to be a tool used by communities to distinguish themselves from groups to which they did not belong. The major concentrations of cremations occur in the northern and southeastern areas of the *Necropolina.* Nonetheless, cinerary urns are also found in a smaller concentration in several other areas occupied mainly by inhumations. Before discussing those graves, a brief discussion of problems relating to cremation is given here.

As usual with cremations, only a few stages of a long and complex process are still visible in the archaeological record. The final one, the deposition of the cremated bones in a container, is generally the most commonly visible stage of such ritual. However, further features can signify how cremation took place, before this last stage. The remains of bones, ashes and wood at the location where the pyre was erected provide one of those, although they are difficult to detect archaeologically. New evidence allows the identification of a wider spectrum of material culture and actions involved in the cremation rituals practiced in the Roman period. In order to counterbalance our knowledge of the cremation process through its final stage alone, efforts have recently been made to identify the archaeological features of pyre sites, its initial stage. This has involved ethnographic (McKinley, 1994: 80) and archaeological studies (Polfer, 2000; Struck, 1993). Moreover, when looking at cremations, written sources look more consistently at the atmosphere that the ritual evoked than at the technical actions that took place around the pyre (Pearce, 2013: 27, 28). The only exceptions are the descriptions of monumental pyres set up for the emperors. Hence, recent scholarship has focused on noticing pyre-related elements (Airoldi, 2001; Cocco, Arru, 2009; Bel, 2002: 78-79; Blaizot, 2009) beyond the tomb itself, as well as on the terminology used to refer to such elements. The terms and categories of pyre-features used in this study are in accordance with the terminology discussed by Pearce (2013: 31-33), built on the scheme developed by Bechert (1980). They are:

- *bustum*, a pit where burial and pyre-site correspond: the burnt bones and any other associated elements lay on the ground keeping the same position in which they were laid on the pyre, although later disturbance can make them difficult to recognise.
- *Flächenbustum,* a *bustum* on the ground rather than in an excavated pit: these are difficult to detect, as the ashes and bones may spread all over the surface. None has been recorded in Sardinia so far.
- An urn containing the bones and ashes either sorted or unsorted is the most common cremation-related feature in the Mediterranean and in the provinces too, such as Britain (Pearce, 2013: 32).
- *Aschengruben* (Wigg, 1993, quoted in Pearce, 2013: 34): literally, a pit of ashes. It can contain any kind of burnt material except human bones. One is attested in Sardinia, at Cagliari (Locci, 2012).
- A quadrangular or subcircular walled enclosure, built in stones or bricks, which supported a platform upon which the pyre was built (Pearce, 2013: 29). No such structure has yet been found in Sardinia with the possible exception of an oval semi-hypogaeal building from Sanluri (see chapter 6, and Paderi, 1982: 67).
- Individual or a group of complete objects, mainly pottery, in association with animal burials, which are 'as likely to be products of cult practice rather than burial' (Pearce, 2013: 34).
- One more cremation-related feature consists of complete objects laid on the ground but with neither animal nor human burial associated. This is a frequent context-type in the Necropolina.

Investigating which cremation-related features are visible in the Necropolina is a task complicated by both the circumstances in which the necropolis was excavated in the 1970s (see section 3.2.1) and disturbance by intensive cultivation of the vineyards on top of the necropolis before the 1950s. Nonetheless, much information could still be recovered.

The 53 cremations from the Necropolina are all contained in ceramic vessels – among which are amphorae, jars and pans. The bones contained in such funerary urns were found buried in shallow circular pits. In the majority of cases, they were the only item buried. However, in some rare circumstances they were accompanied by other grave goods. In some cases, a roughly worked squared stone, visible from the surface, was set in the ground just above the urn, and was likely marking the location of the buried urn. It is important to recall once more that no analysis has yet been carried out on the bone remains, so it is not possible to say how many individuals were deposited in each urn or what kind of cremation process they underwent. In fact, some bones contained in the urns did not show signs of burning, perhaps due to the fact that workers involved in the 70s' excavation used urns as containers for other bones from the site, as suggested by Tronchetti (personal communication, June 6 2013).



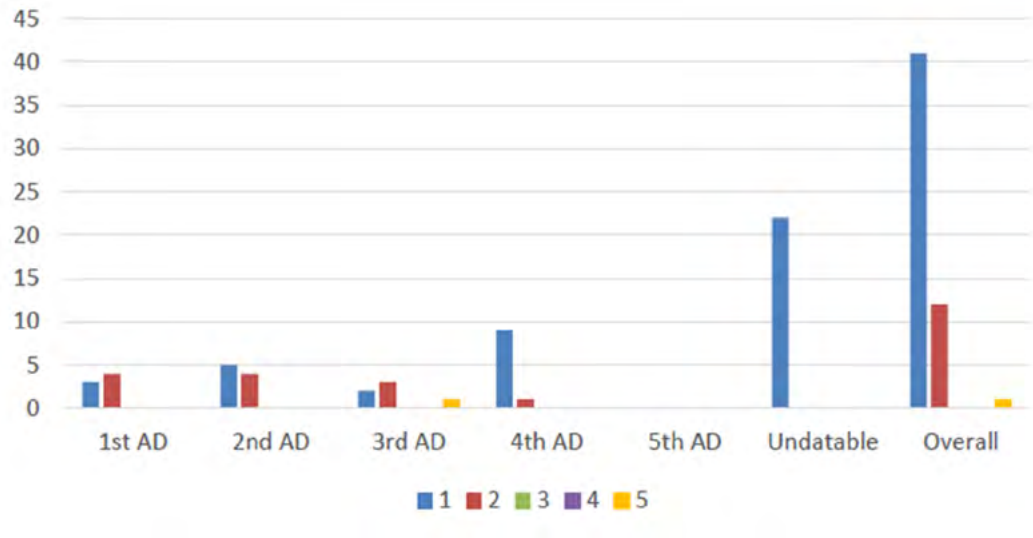


Figure 3.3. Graphic showing the number of items from cremations per century at Sulci.

Neither the *bustum* nor its variants are documented at *Sulci*: the excavation journals do not mention heavily burnt areas. This is certainly reliable information, as they often mention the colour and consistency of the layers, and hence would have certainly noted a dark brown layer with charcoal.

In the large majority of cases, the urn stood in the pit on its own (Figure 3.4). In 20 cases the urn was found together with another item, usually a lid, or a cup/dish functioning as a lid, placed on top of the urn. In five cases only, the extra item was another grave good accompanying the urn: these were one *balsamarium*, one *askos* and single mugs accompanying three urns. The remaining two, grave 208 and 173 are unique. The former was a circular pit burial with two coarse ware cinerary urns – the only case of two urns in contact with each other – with lids accompanied by a single glass *balsamarium* of Isings form 69a (Isings, 1957). The latter is a grave with one coarse ware urn accompanied by five nails, probably the residue of a small wooden box that originally contained the urn.

Let us look at the chronology of these contexts. Cremations are represented at Sulci until the 4th century AD. Seven cremations are dated to the 1st century AD, nine to the 2nd, five to the 3rd , and 10 to the 4th. This chronology is based on the typological analysis of the urns and, when present, of grave goods, with the aid of stratigraphic information. The dating range proposed is broad – between 50 years and one century – as the majority of items coming from those contexts are of coarse ware, a class that often shows a morphological conservatism that makes a more precise dating problematic (Olcese, 2003: 7; Sirigu, 1999: 137-38; Tronchetti, 1996: 103-108). However, the persistence of these morphological types should rather be treated as 'significant data to critically interpret' (Sirigu, 1999: 138) rather than a simple limitation to account for. The persistence in the use of forms and types of coarse ware will be looked at here in relation to the concept of practice and hence within their contextual use. In fact, only by confronting the persistence of a type of a certain class with other classes within similar contexts can we verify 'to what extent the morphological persistence is a peculiar feature of coarse ware in comparison with the other classes' (my translation of Sirigu 1999: 138). Moreover, the necropolis is one of most reliable sites in which persistence is evident. It is quite common to find, in a grave dating to the late 1st century AD, material culture likely to be used in settlement contexts around 50-80 years earlier, such as *Sigillata Italica* cups.

As concerns vertical stratigraphy, as mentioned in section 3.1, no sections or stratigraphic plans were available in the archives. Hence, it is hard to see if the cremation burials overlap or are cut by different types of graves or other deposits. Nonetheless, some original pictures taken during the excavations provide an overall perspective on the disposition of urns in relation to one another, giving a sense of the use of space.

The first and most obvious aspect that stands out from the two pictures below is the intensive use of the space. Numerous urns occupy a small area and are placed very near to one another and near other types of grave. The second is the use of squared stones adjacent to, or on top of the urns (i.e. Figure 3.5, right margin: urn with long neck and rectangular squared stone standing on top of it). This means that the majority of urns were made visible to the community of Sulci using this area. These tombstones do not have any inscriptions on them.



Figure 3.4. Urns of the Necropolina from south (From the archives of the Unità Operativa di Sant'Antioco).



Figure 3.5. Picture of excavation at Sulci (From the archives of the Unità Operativa di Sant'Antioco).

Their presence is indeed not a sign of commemoration or praise of the quality of the deceased, but rather a simple *signaculum* meant to indicate the presence of an urn underneath, likely inviting not to dig a pit too close to install another grave. Toynbee (1993: 83) states that such stones are a recurring characteristic of the humblest families. They might well have worked to warn community members not to disturb the deceased's remains buried underneath (i.e. digging a round pit to bury another urn), fulfilling their objective, as all of the pits containing urns were left undisturbed until recently, despite several graves were overlapping with each other.

The third evidence provided by the pictures above is the presence of buried urns at different ground levels, witnessing a continuation in the use of cremation practice through the centuries. This is confirmed by the chronology obtained through the typological analysis of both urns and grave goods.

Overall, Figures 3.4 and 3.5 display an area of the Necropolina, from S and SE, with many cremation urns placed in circular pits dug into the soil covering the tuff (pits destroyed during the excavation and no longer visible). This area cuts across the whole necropolis, mixing with different types of burial and materials involved in alternative practices. Nonetheless, despite diversity being a constant in the use of the Necropolina, some definite clusters in contexts occupied by urns grouped together exist. Their presence indicates a choice made by either the members of a single community who decided to perform their common funerary practices within the same portions of the cemetery, or by the wider community of Sulci that allocated specific portions of the Necropolina to a community that practiced cremation.

The majority of the 69 items are urns (Appendix 1: Table 2). The word urn, ordinarily, identifies any kind of vessel used to contain the deceased's cremated bones and ashes. 24 of the 47 vessels used as urns at Sulci were amphorae or jugs with narrow necks, rounded walls and a flat or rounded base; in 22 cases a jug with one or two handles fulfilled the function of an urn. In one case only the urn is a one-handled mug produced locally and inspired by the thin walled pottery class, imitating the form Marabini XXV (Frau, 1999: tav. IV, 24). A specific typological account of the urns and grave goods related to cremations will be provided below (Section 3.2.7). Some of the objects registered in the excavation journals, as mentioned above, were found close to cremation contexts, but not close enough to be considered as part of the funerary apparatus. The aim of the next section is to expand on this idea as the contexts it analyses are outside narrowly defined burial areas, but still have some relationship with them.

3.2.5. Extra-burial contexts: visibility as practice

The excavation journals report the existence of archaeological contexts where material culture is not associated with any burial specifically. The author of the journals refer to them using the expression 'objects found on a floor level', meaning not buried inside a pit-grave. Such extra-burial contexts are 34. This number is sufficient to suggest a significant presence of such contexts, and to question whether they form a pattern from which it may be possible to reconstruct funerary practices at the *Necropolina.*

The excavation journals communicate some sense of unease in finding well-preserved material culture outside the graves. This deserves further questioning. The Oxford Dictionary (1995: 777) defines a necropolis as a cemetery, especially a large one, belonging to an ancient city. The same dictionary defines a cemetery as a large burial ground. The definitions provided state that the only elemental unit to define a cemetery, or necropolis, is the grave. The presence of graves is, indeed, what makes a cemetery what it is. However, despite being a necessary condition for the existence of a necropolis, the presence of burials is not the only feature a graveyard. Rather, a cemetery is a place where various rites are performed mainly in relation to the people buried in it, beyond the action of burial itself.

Literature on extra-burial deposits has grown in the last decade, especially where specific methodological questions concerning their study and recognition have been asked. Scheid's (2008) book on archaeology of rite has several articles on the subject. Particularly, Ortalli (2008: 137) addresses the issue from both a theoretical and methodological perspective. By stating its organic unity, Ortalli suggests that all elements constituting a necropolis should be studied as a whole, in relationship with each other, even though it appears as an ensemble of empty spaces. This requires a change towards more scrupulous recording techniques that Ortalli acknowledges as expensive and time-consuming but necessary for obtaining more liable data. In the same book, Witteyer (2008) explores those principles, applied to the study of Mainz's graves, proposing a microstratigraphic excavation of graves and other features within funerary areas.

Such approaches would help to fill the cognitive gap noted by Tronchetti in Sardinian funerary studies too. For Tronchetti, usual funerary studies deal mostly with single graves, never looking either at the cemetery as a whole, or outside and beyond the graves (see section 1.3.4). This aspect is not limited to Sardinian scholarship: Montevecchi (2009: 5)[56] holds that, in

[56] Montevecchi's focus is on the funerary practices of the northern Adriatic region of Italy.

traditional studies, scholarly attention was focused mainly on funerary monuments with inscriptions, and at the typologies of both graves and grave goods. This overlooks their broader context, which is nowadays suggested to be put at the centre of attention.

The finest results from such a contextual approach have recently been provided by Van Andringa, Duday and Lepetz (2013) in the publication of the excavation of Porta Nocera cemetery, Pompeii. The authors attempted to reconstruct the sequences of actions from the burial (with a special focus being on the pyre stage in cremations) right through to commemorative actions. In this framework, particular relevance is given to extra-burial deposits that result from specific acts of commemoration not directly linked to the burial itself.

Accordingly, one aim of my research is to seek connections between elements often analysed in isolation, as interpretively self-sufficient – I.E. single graves – and look at the cemetery as a whole. One way of pursuing this aim is by looking at details inside and outside the graves and binding them together, comparing different sets of evidence and underlining where these elements do not appear, distinguishing differences in behaviour between communities both in space and time.

This contextual approach fits the semiotic and identity-oriented definition of necropolis formulated in Chapter 1, where I defined it as a space with no neat boundaries where practices of care and disposal of the dead, among others, are performed in connection with the traces of the past of the site (see section 1.3.5).

It is vital that remains and actions apparently unrelated to burial activities be thoroughly taken into account in the interpretation of funerary practices – and identity-related assumptions. In fact, the criteria of consistency and cohesiveness often sought when studying an apparently organic site as the necropolis is believed to be, can impose conceptual limits to its interpretation.

The definition of necropolis deployed here is closer to a rhizome, the unpredictable multiplicity theorized by Deleuze and Guattari (1980), than to that of a text, the latter being a coherent, closed, and cohesive entity. A necropolis is constituted by objects and actions that make it an open, contradictory and not cohesive system (see section 1.3.5), of which its single elements can often contradict each other without undermining their existence.

Burial is certainly one of the rites performed in a necropolis, but it is not the only one. Even modern Italian cemeteries are the theatre where so many actions that will never leave a physical trace are performed (changing the water to the vessels containing flowers, lighting candles, praying, mourning, chatting).

These practices do not belong strictly to funerals, but rather to a more mundane and ordinary sphere such as the maintenance of graves and other structures, cleaning, social gathering. Being the place where the deceased are disposed of, a cemetery is necessarily the venue where the encounter between the living and the dead happens. The way it happens, though, is through a set of rites that partly involve the deceased, but that mainly allow the living to engage with themselves and with the material remains produced by the past practices where they operate. This makes the past not past at all, but rather tangibly present.

In the case of the Necropolina, we have signs standing not only for rituals performed during the burial operations, but also for practices performed outside the burials, and often totally unrelated to them. The number of extra-burial contexts in the Necropolina is 34, with a total of 57 objects. Their importance is twofold: on the one hand, they show what practices were performed beyond the burial itself; on the other, they offer diachronic elements that can be used for a better understanding of the succession of activities in the Necropolina through time. Between one and three objects of different types constitute these contexts. In 19 cases, only one item is present. In 11 cases, two of them. In only four cases, the assemblage comprises three objects. Let us see a concrete example.

Necr-129 (Figure 3.6) is constituted by two cups and one jug close to each other. The original caption of the picture, taken *in situ* during the 1978 excavation, refers to it as 'grave n. 129', because every assemblage found at that time was believed to be part of a grave. Nonetheless, no burial was associated with it. The first item from the right is a small coarse ware one-handled jug with out-turned rim, long and narrow neck, with white surface and fabric (CW1). The second object is a thin walled cup (form Marabini,1973: XXV), likely locally produced as the thickness of the walls show, with an impressed roulette decoration covering the whole body. The last is a cup with ring foot and moulded rim (Ettlinger, 1990: form Conspectus 22.2.1) imitating the forms of Sigillata Italica produced in the first half of the 1st century AD and very well attested in Western-central Sardinia (see Chapter 4). The context, based particularly on the thin walled cup form and on the imitation of Sigillata Italica cup, can be dated between the end of the 1st century BC and the first half of the 1st century AD.

Among the 57 objects found in extra-burial deposits, 30 of them are open forms, almost exclusively cups. The size of the cups is a matter of interest. Only six of them are of average dimensions, found in other cemeteries as well as settlements, with a height between 5 and 8



Figure 3.6. Extra burial deposit: Necr-129 (From the archives of the Unità Operativa di Sant'Antioco).

cm, and maximum diameter between 9 and 12 cm. In fact, most of the cups coming from extra-burial contexts in the Necropolina (22 items) could well be labelled miniatures, with maximum diameter less than 9 cm and height less than 5 cm. These miniature cups come in a wide variety of fabrics, from the light grey with small and sparse inclusions (Appendix 1: Table 3: BGLI) to the light red (Appendix 1: Table 3: SITIM). The former is characteristic of local black gloss ware, known as *vernice nera a pasta grigia* (Tronchetti, 1996: 32-34), while the latter recurs in the imitation of *Sigillata Italica*. In addition, numerous coarse ware jars and cups (see section 3.2.7) constitute these contexts (Figure 3.7).

Among these contexts are also coarse ware closed vessels: 15 balsamaria, five jugs, one feeding jug and four lamps.

The items usually found in isolation are miniature jars and *balsamaria.* The span between objects of the same assemblage is often rather large. For example, context Necr-112 comprises a coarse ware jug with pale yellow fabric (Appendix 1: Table 3:CW1) dated to 1st AD, and the *balsamarium* form Cuadrado B V with long neck and ovoid body (Cuadrado, 1977: 3,4; Tronchetti, 1996: tav. 23, 1) dated generally to 2nd century BC (Tronchetti, 1996: 106; Camilli, 1999: 9-18). It would be interesting to verify whether such assemblages are the result of the persistence of certain items through centuries, or of a reuse of the same small portion of the necropolis with different items. This would be extremely significant in term of practices. Unfortunately, there are no other stratigraphic elements available to understand their connection to other deposits, beyond the fact that they were attributed to floor levels. Traditional excavations in the past gave less relevance to contexts that were understood as not from burials directly, both in Sardinia and in other regions such as Germany and England (Pearce, 2013: 34). Nonetheless, these contexts witness that the communities of Sulci performed practices beyond burial alone. Their good preservation state, compared to many grave goods, is certainly a sign of care and respect towards those contexts, as they were exposed on the ground and hence more prone to damage than the burial contexts themselves.



Figure 3.7. Miniature jar (Inv. Number 103709) from extra-burial context.

Visibility is the main characteristic of extra-burial contexts, along with the small size of their objects. Throughout the six centuries in which the *Necropolina* was used, the communities of Sulci did not limit themselves to performing practices whose signs ended sealed inside burials and hence whose visibility was lost after the funeral. Rather, they performed further practices that left powerful and enduring signs to Sulci's communities outside and beyond the time of the burial itself. This is a crucial aspect: we will see in the next chapters that the communities of Sardinia analysed here did not always leave signs of their practices visible outside the graves. The case of Masullas (Chapter 4) will be interesting in this respect.

When items are left visible something else than the care of the body of the deceased is at stake. The signs left by such practices, in addition to being traces of a funerary behaviour produced unintentionally in that particular way, may also become a way of intentionally communicating with present and future communities beyond the funeral itself and its partecipants. Indeed,

in a site where everything is buried after its use, including the remains of the deceased, individuals must have been fully aware of leaving behind visible signs of their practices when they did not bury something. The main example is the tombstone signalling the presence of funerary urns.

This helps practically to illustrate, drawn in Peirce's semiotic theory in Chapter 1 (see sections 1.1.4 for general concepts, and 1.3.5 for their application to identity and funerals), between generic signs, as traces, and signs produced in order to communicate to an audience. This difference occurs, for instance, between the disposition of grave goods that we, as archaeologists, try to interpret as significant in reconstructing the practices the community produced, and the tombstone, which was already charged with indicative meaning by the community that placed it over a grave.

Visibility was sought throughout the use of the cemetery, diachronically. Although not many of them are registered, the only 34 extra-burial deposits mentioned in the excavation journals cover the whole period of use of the necropolis. The latest of them, containing a *Sigillata Africana* dish, morphological type 4/8 of Sirigu's (1999) typology, dates to mid-6th century AD (Atlante I: tav LI, 7. Hayes 99/22), after the Roman empire had fallen and when the Vandals already ruled over Sardinia. The majority of extra burial contexts date to the 1st century AD. The rest date to the 1st and 2nd centuries BC, although some could not be dated with certainty.

Attempting an interpretations of these extra-burial deposits is necessary. They could stand for commemorative rituals. Such activities are neither often materially documented nor theoretically questioned. This is why recognising them at Sulci might help and provide a comparison with other cemeteries. This will also contribute to fill the cognitive gap pointed out by Tronchetti (2013) in Sardinian archaeology.

I will now provide a more detailed interpretation of the meaning of some extra-burial deposits that present similar characteristics. Numerous items within the extra-burial assemblages are miniature jars, many of which resemble the morphological types of the jars used as urns in this necropolis (Sirigu, 1999: 10/6.1-2). They differ mainly in the firing quality, but forms and fabrics are alike. The link between the miniatures and urns is made obvious by the morphological similarities between miniature and average-size jars, the frequency of average-size jars form Sirigu 10 used as urns in the 1st century BC -1st AD, and the significant number of contemporary small jars resembling that form from contemporary extra-burial contexts.

The extra-burial contexts left on the ground above burials are the material remains of commemorations – a symbolic re-celebration – of the cremation practice. They aim at reproducing its final act, the deposition of the funerary urn containing the cremated bones. The poor firing quality of the miniatures – some crumble easily – is a further sign that they did not have any function other than reproducing the aesthetic shape of such urns. Their contextual position outside any proper grave is a sign that they were not grave goods either. All of these signs together create a chain of interpretants (*sensu* Peirce) in which the miniature pans of Forma Sirigu 12 become an icon – a smaller reproduction of the formal characteristics – of the urns. Their iconicity combined with both their contextual position – within a cemetery and right above cremation pits but separated from them – and their use – they are empty – make them represent the urns. Such a commemorative aim that I am attributing to some extra-burial contexts is the result of a chain of interpretants that includes very significant signs such as the morphological similarities with the objects deposited along burials, and the absence of such miniatures from domestic contexts of Sulci. However, the extension of this interpretation to all other extra-burial contexts would be a guess, a motivated one, but weaker than the one involving the miniature jars.

I suggest that the large majority of them are the result of such commemorations but other practices may have produced them as well. This interpretation suggests that the communities of Sulci attributed a rather important role to their dead, so that they became involved in social – or rather individual – practices beyond burial. Such practices could well have represented a symbolic repetition of the funeral, hence of the transformation process from which the deceased were the starting point, and the urns the final product.

3.2.6. The inhumation burials

The inhumations in the Necropolina are double the number of cremation burials. They are characterised by a remarkable diversity both in the form and superficial appearance of the grave, and in terms of body and grave goods disposition.

The most common type of inhumation at Sulci is the simple pit burial – known as *forma*. It consists of a rectangular/elliptical pit cut into the ground, around 0,50 m deep. Pit burials are rarely longer than 1,80 m, and around 0,60 m wide. They are all single burials, although there is some information about a double burial from the 1978 excavation[57] that could not be verified. Sometimes the deceased was laid at the pit base in a wooden coffin, as it is evidenced by numerous

[57] Tronchetti (1996: 147) refers of the possibility of a double burial.

nails found along the edge of the grave; otherwise the body was laid directly at the base of the pit and then either covered with medium size stones or, more rarely, with large sandstone slabs. This type of cover is widely seen in the rest of the island, both in urban (Locci, 2012) and rural sites (Tronchetti, 1997).

The second type is the *enchystrismos*. The Greek word refers to a deposition inside an amphora, whose upper part was generally cut to place the body in. Frequently, the amphora was either covered with gravel or buried into a shallow pit. They are often severely damaged in *Sulci* because they were laid into very shallow pits and hence often affected by farming activities in the 1950s (Tronchetti, 1990: 178). The enchytrismos found in Sulci were generally without grave goods.

The third type is the burial *alla cappuccina*. This is very similar to the *formae*, from which it differs as its cover is made from either large roof tiles (four to six per side), or, more rarely, sandstone slabs. In either type, the cover forms a roof-shaped structure, whose ridge emerged from the ground. This burial type is seen all over the western Roman world, and it is quite common in Sardinia too. Grave goods were present in 13 *alla cappuccina* graves out of a total of 22, and were located either inside the burial or in a small pit beside it.

The last type of grave in order of numerical frequency in the Necropolina is the simplest one, consisting in a very shallow pit cut through the ground, similar to the *formae* but considerably less deep, with no material culture associated with the deceased.[58]

As noted above, the spatial organization of the necropolis does not show any specific dispositional pattern of the different burial types. Different types mix in diverse clusters of graves resulting from different rituals (Figure 3.8).

The burial types so far described, not only were mixed throughout the graveyard surface and were practiced along each other for centuries, they also provided a very uniform set of data independently from the rituals practiced. Often, the grave types adopted disclose a high level of innovation based on re-interpretation of what are generally distinct practices. As a result, it is not rare to find, in Sulci, burials enclosing characteristics that are generally attributed to neatly separated burials practices. Two examples of such creative intertwinement of practices are graves NECR-147 and NECR-117. The former (Figure 3.8) is a burial in amphora: the container is exceptionally treated in a way seen in *formae*, with two coarse ware jugs deposited on either side, either by the head or hips, as in grave



Figure 3.8. Enchytrismos 147 and Forma 148 (From the archives of the Unità Operativa di Sant'Antioco).

NECR-66 (Figure 3.9). In grave NECR-147 they are placed by the mouth of the amphora. Another example (Figure 3.11) is a practice, attested in both Roman and Punic periods (Muscuso, Pompianu, 2012: 2044, 2056), where two usually distinct types of burial, the *enchytrismos* and *alla cappuccina*, are blended into one type: large tiles are obliquely juxtaposed over the body of the amphora.[59] Further signs of creative use of usually distinct practices are also seen in the disposition of grave goods.

Looking at the way bodies are disposed inside the burial and at their relation with grave goods, some patterns emerge despite the variety of burial choices. One pattern is the presence of 28 graves with the body laid directly on the ground on its back or, more rarely, crouched on one side, unaccompanied by grave goods. This treatment cross-cuts the burial types, as it is present both in pit graves, *alla cappuccina* and shallow pits. Compared to other contemporary necropolises in the south and centre of the island (see chapters 4, 5,

[58] Sirigu refers briefly to three types of graves only, as no material culture came out from the fourth.

[59] See graves n. 2 and n. 3 at Poetto, Cagliari (Levi, 1936: 474-476 in Campus, 1991: 929) and Nora (Patroni, 1901: 371-375 in Campus, 1991: 929-930).



Figure 3.9. Grave NECR-66 with detail of two jugs by the hips (From the archives of the Unità Operativa di Sant'Antioco).

6), where burials with no grave goods are exceptional, Sulci's communities show a relatively consistent pattern of either not burying inside the graves any objects used during the ritual for drinking and eating, or not using any objects at all during the funeral. The first hypothesis is preferred here. Indeed, other elements such as those concerning the disposition of bodies deposited without goods – placed carefully at the base of the grave, with the hands folded to the chest and the head straight in the majority of cases – are signs of care bestowed by Sulci's communities to the deceased. These signs should probably lead us to interpret the absence of objects as a change in funerary custom – likely driven by economic factors – that made some members of Sulci's communities retain objects used during the funeral for later activities.

Counting all the burial types, the majority of the tombs were provided with only one item of material culture (Figure 3.12). Graves with two or three grave goods are common too, especially among cremations, *formae*, and *alla cappuccina*. On average, the latter type yielded the most items, even more than the *formae*, from which the majority of material culture in the Necropolina comes due to their larger numbers. Graves with 4-6 items are rarer. Only in two cases were more than seven grave goods present, most of which were personal ornaments and counters.

Among the grave goods, jugs predominate (Figure 3.14). Jars and balsamaria are also very well represented. By contrast, cups and dishes form a minority. Nails are frequent too, particularly in pit burials and *alla cappuccina,* where they were likely used to seal wooden

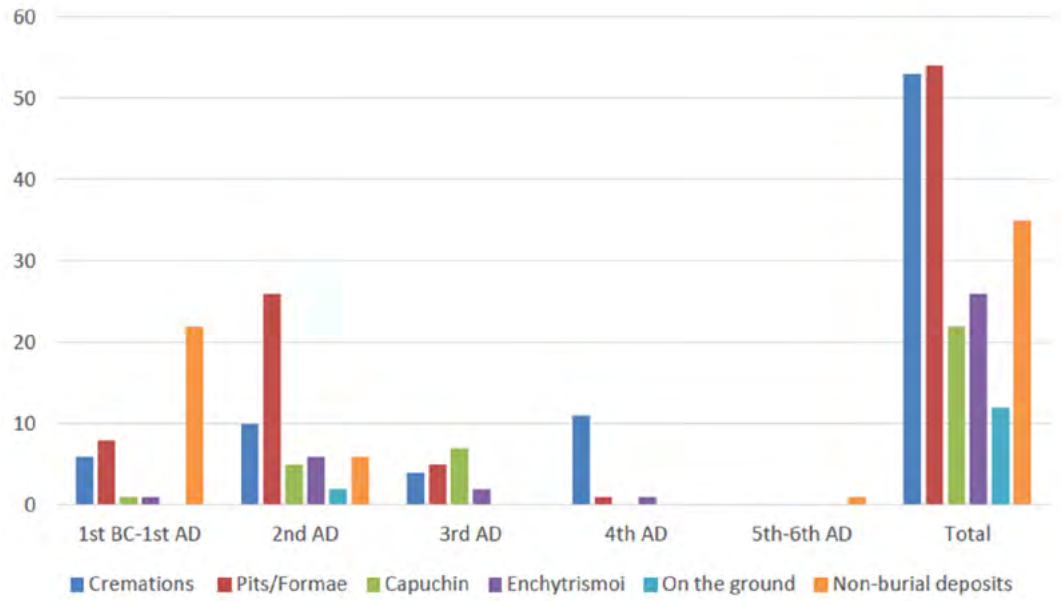


Figure 3.10. Number of context types per each phase at Sulci.



Figure 3.11. Enchytrismos NECR-147 covered by roof tiles (from the archives of the Unità Operativa di Sant'Antioco).

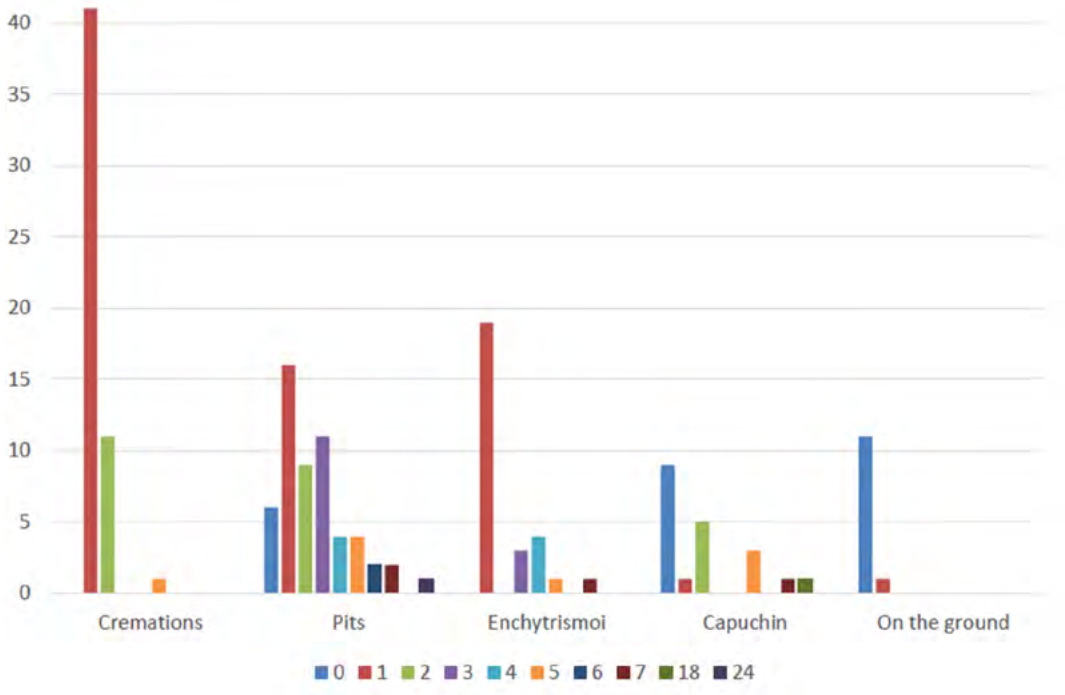


Figure 3.12. Quantity of grave goods per burial type at Sulci.

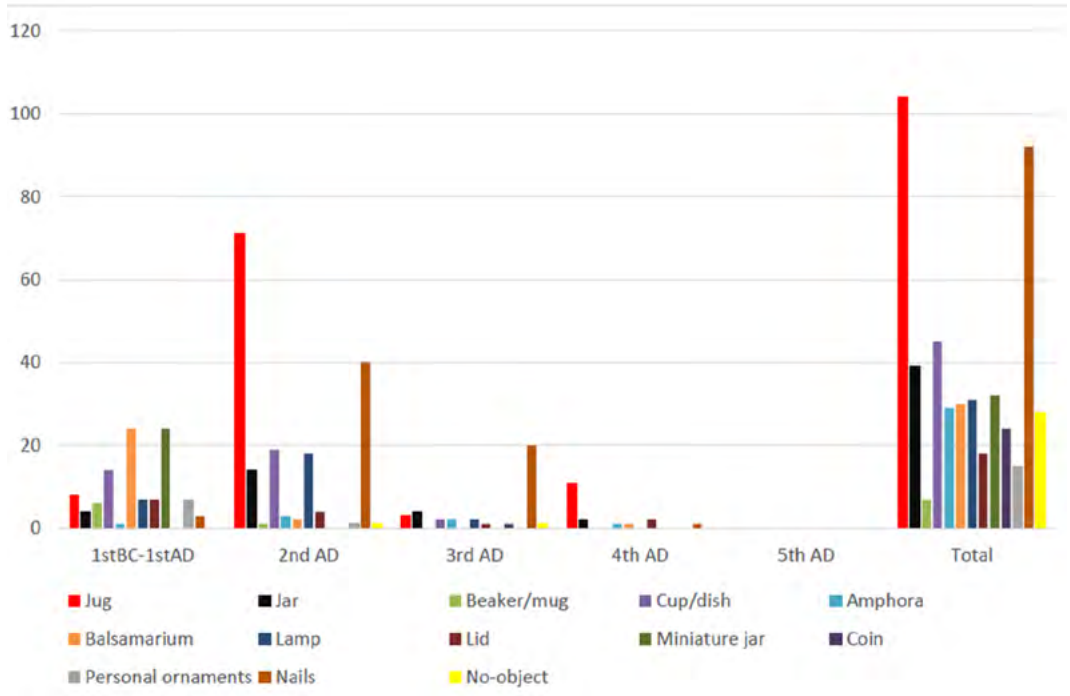


Figure 3.13. Types of material culture per phase at Sulci.

coffins. The same tombs yielded most cups and dishes, but no jars, which were almost exclusively found in cremation burials. Mainly small objects, such as miniature jars and *balsamaria*, are abundant in the extra-burial contexts. Lamps are found in all types of burial except cremations.

Looking at the position of the body in inhumation burials in relation to the material culture, some very clear patterns emerge and indicate the repetition of similar gestures over time. The data available to reconstruct these aspects of the ritual come from a total of 17 burials, two of them of the *alla cappuccina* type, and the others being pits. The terminology used here to describe the treatment of the body is in accordance with Sprague (2005), whose work provides a summary of current terms and concepts used in literature of English speaking countries. Sulci's inhumed individuals were mostly laid on the back, with extended legs, hands either on the pelvis or chest; the position of the head was variable, being registered both looking straight ahead and turned both left and right (Figure 3.15). The orientation of the deceased also varied, showing no preference for a specific orientation throughout the centuries. Less varied is the material culture found in association with the bodies.

This is the result of a uniform way of treating the grave goods into both pits *alla cappuccina*.

The most frequent associations are between a coin and the head. The coin was sometimes positioned behind the head, and some others close to the mouth. Figure 3.16 shows that coins are the only items positioned by the head at Sulci, with the majority of grave goods placed by the lower body. This pattern is rather different in the other case studies looked at in this research, where objects are generally spread around the body. The most common objects by the lower body were the white fabric coarse ware jugs (Appendix 1: Table 3: CW1). They were often present in pairs. Cups and jars tended to occupy the central area of the burial, near the hips. No objects were positioned nearby the knees or shoulders. These patterns are uniform. The uniformity in the treatment of the deceased and grave goods between pit and *alla cappuccina* graves is complete, allowing us to hypothesise that the two types of grave were set up by the members of the community practicing the same ritual, the only difference being in the grave cover. Grave goods were always placed either by the feet or by the hips.

3.2.7. Diachronic history of the Necropolina

The evidence highlighted so far shows that different burial types coexisted in the same space in Sulci. In this sub-section, this coexistence will be shown also to occur chronologically (Figure 3.10).

The *Necropolina* was used first in the last decades of the 1st century BC, a period characterised by a modest use.

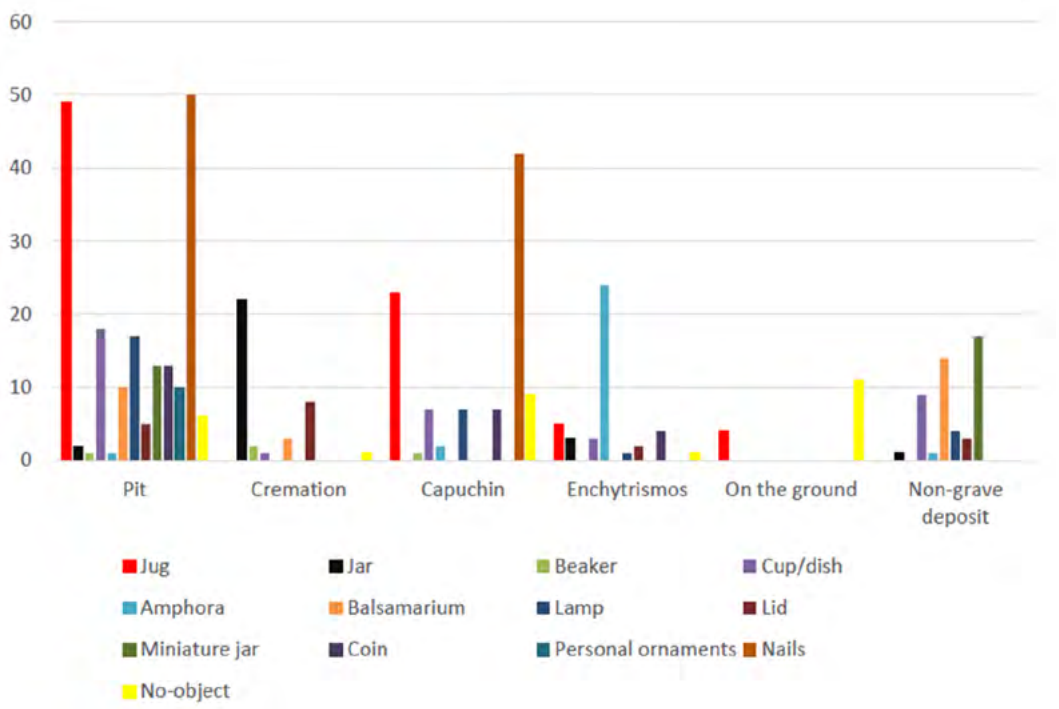


Figure 3.14. Grave goods distribution per burial type at Sulci.

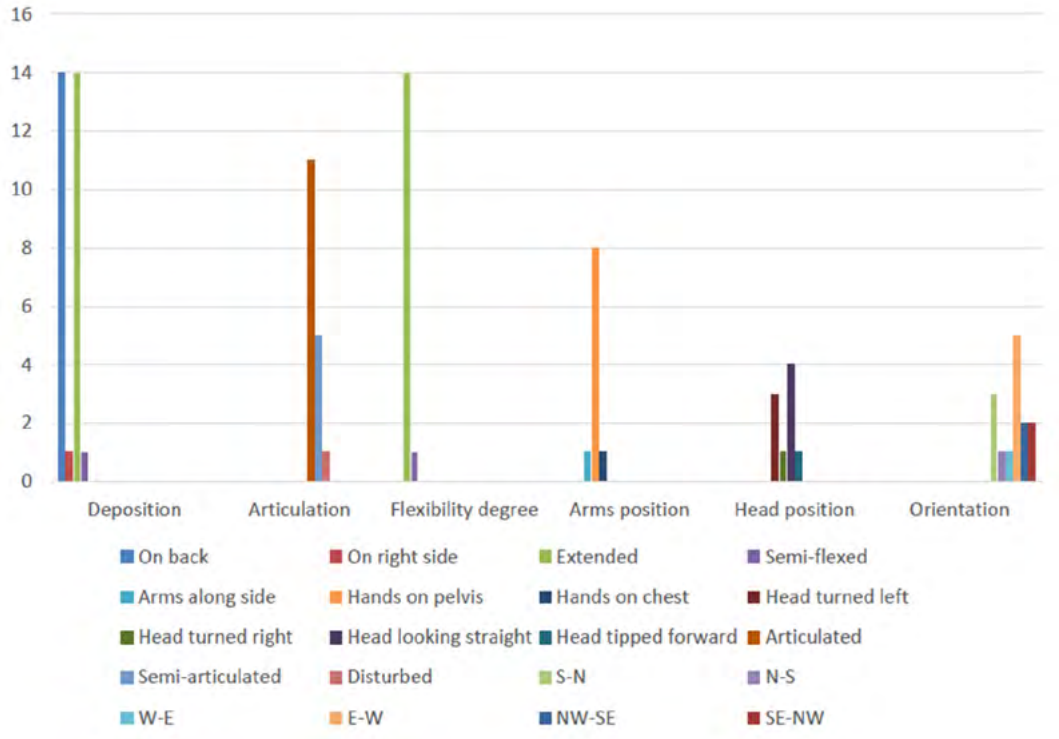


Figure 3.15. Position of the body and orientation of the deceased at Sulci.

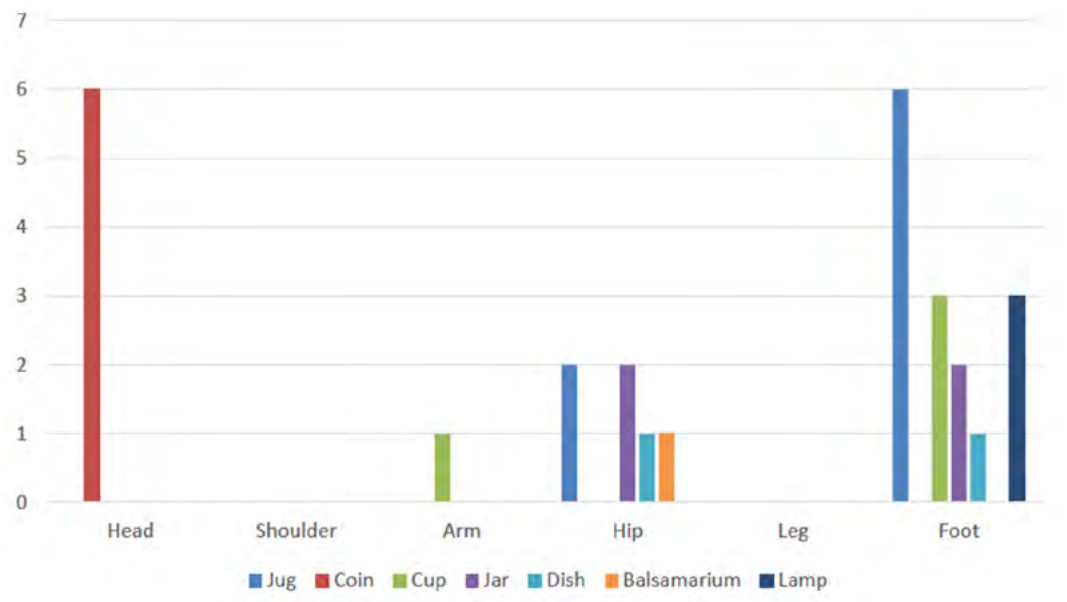


Figure 3.16. Recurrent associations of grave goods with specific body areas at Sulci.

This was followed by an increase in the 1st century AD, when *formae* and cremations became common. One grave *alla cappuccina* and one *enchytrismos* only were set up in this period. Extra-burial deposits are well attested.

The first change in the funerary practices performed at Sulci occurred between the end of the 1st and beginning of the 2nd century AD. It consisted of both a quantitative and a qualitative change. The number of burials doubled. This connects with a remarkable increase in the use of the pit graves, which triples compared to the earlier period. The presence of other burial types increased accordingly. *Enchytrismoi* and graves *alla cappuccina* started to acquire a consistent position in the cemetery. The extra-burial deposits are still present during this period but in smaller numbers.

In the 3rd century AD the main change is represented by the disappearance of extra-burial deposits alongside a drastic decrease of the number of pit graves. Conversely, the graves *alla cappuccina* and *enchytrismoi* maintained roughly the same big numbers throughout both the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD.

Cremation burials, frequent throughout the use of the necropolis, further increased in number between the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 4th centuries AD. Indeed, the majority of pottery used as urns during 4th century AD are coarse ware jugs and *fiammata* ware small amphorae, types very well distributed in Sardinia in this period. The burials are mostly cremations in the 4th century AD, with other burial types nearly absent.

The final use of the *Necropolina* is documented by one extra-burial context only, different from the practices performed in the previous centuries. It provides the only witness to the use of the site as late as the 6th century AD, with the context chronologically closest belonging to the beginning of the 5th century AD.

Overall, two main changes occurred in the *Necropolina* looking at the practices performed over time. The first occurs around the end of the 1st century AD, when the number of graves doubled. This quantitative change reflects a more intense use of the site. This can be related either to the higher concentration of graves in that particular area of the necropolis, to an increase in the exploitation of the funerary area, or to a population growth in Sulci after it acquired the status of *municipium* under Claudius.

The second change happened at the end of 3rd century AD when, after a two-century period of equilibrium between cremations and inhumations, the former became the almost exclusive burial type. Other changes occurred: the disappearance of extra-burial layers at the end of 3rd century AD and the peak of *enchytrismoi* during the 2nd century AD and of *alla cappuccina* graves in the 3rd century.

The preference for cremation ritual during the late Roman period becomes important in comparison with the behaviour of other communities of Sardinia that will be discussed in the next chapters.

3.3. Practice and grave goods at Sulci: a synthesis

3.3.1.Material culture: a chrono-typological study

I have underlined in section 1.1.4 how, within the post-processual turn, semiotic approaches to archaeology have become a synonym of symbolic approach completely disengaged from the material nature of things (Eckardt, 2015: 8). There I have noted that this Cartesian attitude reveals a deep Saussurian conception of sign that is not representative of all semiotics at all and in fact is not adopted in this study. On the contrary, the previous sections on contextual analysis of the Necropolina were deeply entrenched in materiality and so is this section, where the contexts presented above are linked with a traditional, yet necessary, chrono-typological analysis of Sulci's material culture. This allows linking the rituals with the provenance of objects, and hence connects Sulci to the rest of Sardinia and to the broader Roman world.

The majority of material culture from the Necropolina is coarse ware pottery. The observation of the fabrics showed the existence of two main coarse ware groups, CW1 – light yellow, almost white, with sparse uniform tiny black inclusions – and CW2 – orange with uniform and small white inclusions, well-fired (see Appendix 1: Table 3). The former, distributed around Sulci but rarer elsewhere, characterises 72 vessels, mainly jugs. Due to the high frequency of jugs in this fabric, Tronchetti (1996: 108, 118-119) has suggested that it may be a local production, also exported in central western Sardinia. The latter, CW2, characterising 32 vessels (to which nine vessels in the similar CW3 fabric could be added), mainly jars and miniatures,[60] is strongly represented in other necropolises and sites of different nature in Sardinia. For instance, CW2 is among the most popular fabrics in the necropolises of both Gesico (Tronchetti, 1999: 122-127) and Masullas (see Chapters 4 and 6). In the latter, numerous jugs – almost all of them – and some *balsamaria*, always present as grave goods, are in a well-fired and good quality CW2 fabric. The presence of the two fabrics in the same forms is a sign of a strong commercial relation between Sulci and the rural central western Sardinia. Fine wares are sporadically represented at Sulci, reaching a total of only 27 vessels among thin walled pottery, Sigillata Italica, and Africana, the latter being the most commonly represented with 18 items (Appendix 1: Table 3). Personal ornaments come from only two graves: a pair of ear rings, one ring and bracelet elements. Glass is represented by just two *balsamaria*.

Within *enchytrismoi*, despite the poor conservation conditions of the amphorae, few forms could be distinguished, all from North Africa. Types Tripolitana II (Bertoldi, 2012: 191) and African I (Tronchetti, 1990: 190, tav. III, 3), the former dated to the second half of 2nd century AD, the latter between mid-2nd and 4th century AD (Bertoldi, 2012: 179) are the most common on this site

Among the material culture from cremations, the most popular urn is morphological type Sirigu 10/11 (1999), with out-turned rim, straight wall, and convex base, and with dark orange fabric CW8 (Appendix 1: Table 3). This type of jar was also used for grave goods with inhumations. Similarly, jugs of morphological types Sirigu 1/5, 1/11 and 1/12, with pink and orange fabrics CW13 and CW3 are well attested in both cremations and inhumations, although they were more frequent in the latter. In addition, a group of five amphorae/big jugs belonging to the group of *ceramica fiammata* were used as cinerary urns. This set of well-fired and resistant vessels, both single and double-handled, is characterised by a distinctive pale yellow/white fabric CW1 and CW2, common to other jugs likely produced in Sulci, with a very distinctive red or dark brown painted decoration of curved features resembling flames, from which the name *ceramica fiammata* derives (Tronchetti, 2009, 2010). The debate[61] around this class is enriched by the fact that *ceramica fiammata* items bearing the same morphological and aesthetic characteristics were found elsewhere in Sardinia. Nonetheless, *ceramica fiammata* was used only for urns in Sulci, although it was found in households elsewhere. This use, coupled with the fact that vessels with CW1 fabrics are likely produced locally in Sulci, could be taken as a sign that the availability of *fiammata* ware in the *Necropolina* is due to it being a local product. This interpretation is in line with the one given above about the jugs Sirigu 1/1-5, placed in pairs in Sulci's inhumations, for which a local production is seen as a reason for their abundance in graves in contrast with imported fine wares used more largely in domestic contexts.

Miniature jars are the most common items in extra-burial contexts (see section 3.2.5.). Their fabric is characterised by variable firing conditions, sparse small black or white inclusions, and a range of colours from dark orange (Appendix 1: Table 3: CW2) to tones of brown (Appendix 1: Table 3: CW3, CW10 and CW11). The differences between these fabrics are minor, and their shared shapes and size allow us treat them as a group. Their shapes reproduce the features of some larger jars used as urns. They have a distinct and out-turned rim, rounded wall, and slightly convex base – more round in some of them, more flat in others. These are all variants of *Forma* 12 in Sirigu's coarse ware typology (Figure

[60] These fabric groups correspond with Gruppo 1 and Gruppo 7 of Sirigu's typology (1999: 147-50).

[61] The debate centres on the question whether it should be considered as part of the broader coarse ware class (Sirigu 2000) or as an autonomous one (Tronchetti 2009; Salvi 2005).

3.7), called *pentole miniaturistiche* (miniature pans). The morphological types 12/4 to 12/6 (Sirigu, 1999) are distinguished by their smaller size (Figure 3.7) than the other sub-types, and for the marked distinction between lower wall and base, less evident in the morphological types from 12/1 to 12/3 (Sirigu, 1999: tav. IX). In two contexts, these miniatures were found together with miniature lids made with the same fabric.

Overall, the study of the ceramic fabrics summarised in Appendix 1: Table 3 show that the local productions constitute the core of the material culture used by the communities of Sulci at *Necropolina.* Out of 533 items, only 41 are fine wares. The least represented is black gloss ware, with only four cups from 1st century BC, forms Morel 2737d1 and 2361a1, both from inhumations and extra burial contexts.

One example only of *Sigillata Italica*, a cup form Conspectus 25.1.2. (Bernardini, Tore, Tronchetti 1988: 251, fig. 24), imported from Italy was attested in an extra-burial context. Nonetheless, local imitations *Sigillata Italica* and black gloss are present in both inhumations and extra-burial contexts, connecting Sulci to western central Sardinia where it is likely that the so-called *Sigillata Sarda* was extensively produced, continuing – and apparently substituting – the local productions of black gloss (Tronchetti 2014: 292; 1987: 19). The imitations of *Sigillata Italica*/*Sigillata Sarda* attested in Sulci are forms *Conspectus* 23.2 (Sirigu 1999: morphological type 4/16), Conspectus 6.2, Conspectus 22.3 (Paderi 1982: tav XXXIX, 130). As concerns the local productions of black gloss, *vernice nera a pasta grigia*, the attested forms are the cups Morel F2981f1, F1221 b1, F1233b1, F2323c1, F2574a1, F2825d1, F5811/5812 a1.

Sigillata Africana is the most widely represented fine ware until the 6th century AD (dish form Sirigu 4/8. Atlante I: tav LI, 7. Hayes 99/22), witnessing an uninterrupted exchange of goods between Sulci and North Africa. The other forms are the cups Hayes 14/17 (Atlante I: tav. XVI, 7; Tronchetti 1990: 178, tav III,2), Hayes, 27,7 (Atlante I 1981: tav XVI, 6), Hayes 27 (Atlante I: XVI,5; Lamboglia 9a. Antioch 835), Hayes 14 b (Lamboglia 3a-b; Tronchetti 1990: 178), Hayes 9 b/12-13 (Lamboglia 2B. Atlante: tav XIV, 11), Hayes 16 (Lamboglia 3 C. Atlante I: tav. XVI, 14), Hayes 17 (Tronchetti 1990: 178). In addition, one jar, form Hayes 23 A (Lamboglia 10A-B. Atlante 1981: tav CVI, 12) and two dishes Hayes 27 (Lamboglia 9a. Antioch 835) and Hayes 50 (Lamboglia 40) are attested in Sulci. These *Sigillata Africana* vessels, the most frequently attested imported class at Sulci, are distributed chronologically throughout the whole use of the necropolis, from the first half of 2nd century AD to the 6th century.

The chrono-typological analysis of the material culture from the Necropolina shows a thick connection of Sulci to the wider Mediterranean. Nonetheless, a stronger link between Sulci and the African products is shown by amphorae and *Siglillata Africana*, present in the Necropolina with much higher numbers than products from Italy or Spain. Nonetheless, the dominant Roman-period connectivity that emerges from the study of the material culture classes and fabrics summarised in Appendix 1: Table 3, was that within the centres of Sardinia itself, among which coarse ware and local productions such as *Sigillata Sarda* (Tronchetti, 2014) and Sulci's products – mainly jugs with CW1 fabric – were exchanged across the centre of the island.

3.3.2. Sulci's funerary practices: Punic continuity and Roman-period diversity

The Roman-period cemetery of Sulci was used from the last decades of the 1st century BC to the end of the 4th century AD, followed by the sporadic presence of objects from late 5th-beginning 6th century AD. Few objects, mainly *balsamaria*, predate the first period of the cemetery, but they are likely to be residual from the 2nd century BC. Moreover, the same objects were used in the first burials of the Roman period occupying the chambers of the necropolis of Is Pirixeddus, laying beneath the Necropolina. A remarkable increase in the use of the cemetery took place between the end of 1st century AD and the 2nd AD. This change might have derived from the transformation of Sulci in a *municipium* under the Emperor Claudius, resulting in an economic growth that attracted more people from across the Mediterranean. The data collected show a rather differentiated set of practices.

The aesthetic outcome of the cemetery is a mixture of very different burials, mainly distinguished by their coverings. However, these superficial differences are much less reflected by the practices – I.e. treatment of the inhumed bodies, grave goods handling – performed in the formation process of such diverse burials. Moreover, some burial types show interesting examples of practice entanglement, above all that between enchytrismoi and graves *alla cappuccina* (Figure 3.10) and the treatment of an amphora (Figure 3.7) in a similar way to that reserved for the inhumed bodies in relation to the position of grave goods. The patterns that emerged from the analysis of disposition of grave goods, and relationship between the two, are characterised by the coexistence of a variety of practices.

Analysis throughout this chapter has demonstrated that different rituals, styles and material culture coexisted both spatially and chronologically in the *Necropolina.* However, within these diversities, common elements binding together different burial types are evident, and suggest that the Necropolina was used by a community, or an ensemble of communities, sharing

similar beliefs and funerary practices, who were not bound to any homogeneity, who were used to diversity, and whose members were allowed to take innovative personal and group choices. Nevertheless, a certain homogeneity took over throughout the 4th century AD, when inhumations decreased drastically and cremations became almost the only ritual practiced in the Necropolina.

However, inhumation practice did not disappear, but it was simply a characteristic of the contemporary Christian community of Sulci who started reusing Punic-period chambers as catacombs for their burials – today underneath the main town church dedicated to Sant'Antioco. In terms of practice, the material culture present in the graves – particularly jugs and jars – stands for activities of drinking and eating in which the members of Sulci's community took part during the funeral. By contrast, the absence of cups and dishes among grave goods, fundamental for drinking and eating during funerary libations and widely represented in other necropolises, is striking. Such absence can lead to one interpretation, of economic nature, which considers both the typological analysis of materials and their contextual study. The absence of cups and dishes from grave goods in contrast with the presence of jars and jugs is a potential sign that the majority of the members of Sulci's communities using the Necropolina were reluctant to dispose of items such as cups and dishes, mainly imported, and commonly used in the household. Indeed, what emerges from the study of one of the household areas of Sulci, the Cronicario (Unali, 2014; Mallica, 2008; Tronchetti, 2004, 1988) is that the imports from both Africa, central Italy and southern Italy were used alongside local productions.

Considering, together with the latter observation, that the majority of jars and jugs in each grave are Sulci's local products, and that only few imports accompanied the deceased, it is reasonable to assume that Sulci's communities using the Necropolina attributed a high value to the imports. What the nature of such value was, however, leaves room for at least two interpretations. Whether they were economically less affordable and hence the community members were less inclined to their consumption in the grave, or they were seen as culturally and socially less significant is difficult to say. Likely, the rare use of imports in Sulci's graves is evidence of both economic and cultural reasons, linked together within funerary practices in such a way that it is hard – and probably senseless – trying to distinguish them as if they were distinct and independent elements. What is certain is that such value made the community avoid the consumption of imports inside the graves. At the same time, locally produced jugs, morphological types Sirigu 1/1-5 (1999), numerous inside the graves, are much less frequent in domestic contexts (Tronchetti, 1996: 108).

This set of data suggests that the communities of Sulci chose to use mainly local products as accompaniment for their deceased, whilst they adopted both local ones and imports for their daily activities in the household. This interpretation leads to a broader identity-driven reflection. From it follows that Sulci's communities did not feel the need either to construct for their dead simplistic identity messages conveyed symbolically by products coming from the centre of the Empire, or to resist such association by making, on the contrary, symbolic use of local products alone.

The most sound interpretation of the use of material culture in the Necropolina is that the economic and cultural elements intertwined in determining the choices of Sulci's communities in relation to their practices. The consumption of local products was likely both more affordable to the majority of Sulci's community and more meaningful to its members' social identity in a continuous – synechistic, in Peircean words – way. The choices taken by their members, led Sulci's communities to blurred and overarching identities, signified by a plethora of practices , economic and aesthetic decisions taken around the graveyard that involved both the continuation of use of the Punic-period chamber graves in the Republican time, and the adoption of a set of diverse rituals in the Imperial period. Neither solutions were particularly resisted nor exclusively adopted and imposed to the members of the community of Sulci that result, from these study, very tolerant and open to the diverse. Deeper interpretations of Sulci's identities will emerge by comparing its communities with other Sardinian ones in chapter 7.

4. Funerary Practice and Rural Communities of Masullas

> Cinco siglos antes que la Gran Enciclopedia sovietica y que la novella 1984, de George Orwell, los incas praticaron la manipulacion del pasado en function de las necesidades politicas del presente.
>
> *Mario Vargas Llosa,* El Pais de la mil caras, (Lima, Agosto 1983)
> Sables y Utopias, 2009, 31-32

4.1 Introduction

The excavations carried out at Masullas, western central Sardinia, at the end of the 1990s, by the *Soprintendenza Archeologica di Cagliari e Oristano* revealed 54 graves, thoroughly documented by the excavation journals written during the digging operations. New data of major importance for Roman studies emerged from these.[62] Nonetheless, the site of *Sa Mitza Salida* has not yet received the attention it deserves.[63] This chapter highlights the site's potential within a chrono-typological perspective, in the context of an interpretation of its community identities.

4.1.1. Masullas and western central Sardinia during the Punic and Roman periods

The area of Marmilla and Monte Arci including Masullas has shown evidence of a continuous human presence since the Neolithic period (Lilliu, 1967: 21; Lugliè, 2010).

The necropolis of *Sa Mitza Salida* is located near the crossroads between the Roman road *Karalibus Turrem* and *Karales Olbia* (see Chapter 2, figure 3 and 10). The first road linked the cities of *Karales (or Carales)* – nowadays Cagliari – and *Aquae Ypsitanae,* (which became *Forum Traiani* under Trajan) – nowadays Fordongianus – to *Turris Libisonis* - known today as Porto Torres – the only Roman colony founded in Sardinia (Mastino, 2005: 273-283; Meloni, 1990: 317–330). The modern road SS 131 Carlo Felice follows the same path of the Roman one, partially described in the *Itinerarium Antonini.*[64] The reconstruction of this route is based on the modern names of towns close to the Roman road that can be linked with those of stations or crossroads in the itinerary (Meloni, 1990: 318). The name of Masullas is revealing from this perspective. Its etymology has been related to Latin words *mansiullas,* meaning small dwellings, and, more likely, *mansio*, meaning country house (Paulis, 1987: 513), or coaching station. The two Sardinian words *mitza salida* instead mean salty waterhole, a name connected to Punic origins (1987: 514). Nonetheless, excavations have not shown any signs of human activity before or after its funerary use, in contrast to other sites in the area such as Sardara, Gesico and Sanluri (see Chapter 6). Furthermore, there is not yet any archaeological evidence of dwelling sites near the necropolis.[65]

The relatively small size and self-contained shape of the cemetery, along with its proximity to one of the main roads suggests that it served a road station or small – undiscovered – settlement nearby, rather than a villa, although it is impossible to state this with certainty at this stage.

Masullas is located 58,6 km south of *Forum Traiani*, 21,7 from *Aquae Neapolitanae* – today Santa Maria de is Aquas, Sardara – both of which are among the 10 stations mentioned in the *Itinerarium Antonini* (Mastino, 2005: 358). It is just 9 km from Uras that lies on the route of the road that connected Karales to *Forum Traiani*. Masullas could well have been a rest station for people travelling along the road from southern to northern Sardinia.

A smaller internal road, *a Neapoli Usellum* (CIL X, 8008), perpendicular to the already mentioned *a Caralibus Turrem*, which used to link *Neapolis* – today S. Maria de Nabui – in the west coast, to *Uselis,* central Sardinia (Meloni, 1990: 352), 41 km long, passed just a few km from Masullas.

The position of Masullas at the intersection of these routes was strategic. Its position in relation to these three roads may explain the existence of the necropolis and of a hypothetical settlement. Considering that Sardinia was one of the main granaries of Rome during the Republic and that the Campidano plain was the most fertile area of the island, the proximity

[62] In 2010, anthropological analyses were carried out on few individuals buried in *Sa Mitza Salida*, and were reported in the form of a dissertation by Stefania Unida, who generously brought the results to my attention.

[63] Apart from the mention in a recent unpublished paper by Tronchetti (2013).

[64] For the problem of a unitary conception of the viability between northern and southern Sardinia see Mastino 2005: 356-364; Pais: 1984; Meloni, 1990: 269-274.

[65] News reported in regional newspapers, and by the mayor of Masullas, refer about the presence of another funerary site, Sa Roia de Sa Lua, disturbed by tomb riders. Dwelling sites, Ruinas, Santu Stevini, Su truncu de is orgius, Corrigas, Santa Maria di Fraus, Nuraghe Tamis, attributable to the Roman period have been reported, with no further information.

of Masullas to this crossroad likely made it a meeting place for people from different areas of Sardinia, and of the Mediterranean.

The rural area around Masullas has provided evidence from both Roman and Punic periods. 80% of the rural settlements during the Roman Republic were located on earlier Punic-period sites, showing continuity with them (Van Dommelen, 1998b: 593, 594; Van Dommelen, Bellard, 2008). The evidence for Roman-period settlements, flanked by baths, villas and small settlements, increases if we look at the Imperial age (1998b: 596). Then, Tharros (Mastino, 2005: 259-266; Meloni, 1990: 286-291), 63 km from Masullas, was the main centre of the area for both commercial trade and craft production. Some of the ceramics produced in Tharros are present amongst the grave goods in the necropolis of *Sa Mitza Salida*. Although the surroundings of the municipality of Masullas have not revealed other archaeological remains belonging to the Roman period apart from *Mitza Salida*, further sites have been found in adjoining municipalities. Examples come from Gonnoscodina, Mogoro, and Gonnosnò, where hoards of Roman coins were found in small pits in the ground (Taramelli, 1928: 116-126). In Leppara di Ales and in Marrubiu, archaeological remains have been interpreted as pavements and walls of Roman villas, some with mosaic floors (Angiolillo, 1981: 81).

These sites, together with the nearby necropolises of Sardara, Gesico, and Ortacesus – that will be object of study in this research – are signs of a presence in the central western part of the island from the Roman Republican period, some of them suggesting continuity with the Punic period, others indicating that change took place.

4.2. The archaeological evidence at *Sa Mitza Salida*

This section will examine the relationship between material culture and the body of the deceased with the aim of reconstructing those rituals that led to the final deposition of the materials. In other words, the investigation undertaken here is meant to highlight how much of the archaeology found at *Mitza Salida* is the product of a conscious, planned set of activities and how much, conversely, it is the result of individual decisions, unconscious actions, and how these attitudes may convey identity. The study of the site is at two scales: at the level of the single grave, and at that of complex and overarching structures. These scales will be considered with the aim of reconstructing the funerary activities performed by the communities of Masullas diachronically through five centuries on the one hand, and on the other as the result of activities of an individual – or small community – taking part in single funerary activities at a particular moment in time. The product of the first being the necropolis as a whole, that of the second the single inhumation. The two phenomena intertwine with each other.

4.2.1. The necropolis of Sa Mitza Salida *as an interconnected whole*

The site of *Sa Mitza Salida* consists of 54 graves containing 72 inhumations. They conform to a rather simple typology. The large majority is of the pit type, or *formae*, aligned to each other (Figure 4.1) covered by small stones and backfilled with earth. The others are cist graves, similar in structure to the pits but covered by three to five roughly squared sandstone slabs (Figure 4.2.).

Traces of burnt soil and charcoal were found in few graves but in minimal quantity and are not interpretable as signs of cremation activities. Five graves were completely empty: three of them were looted, two have never been used to contain a dead. The site covers an area of 200 m². The graves to the southeast side lay on a slope so that the water had periodically filled the graves situated at the base of the slope. All graves share the same orientation with the exception of grave 17bis, perpendicular to grave 17 (Figure 4.1). An uneven number of graves compose each line. The southwest side of the area has fewer graves, only two, whilst the central rows reach a maximum of six and seven graves. In total, seven parallel rows of graves constitute a circumscribed area.

Each grave consisted of a sub-rectangular pit between 1,70 and 2,10 m deep,[66] with an average length of 1,90m, and an average width of 0,70m. The graves were divided by corridors less than 0,50m wide that left a little room for people to walk and move between each row of burials (Manos, Floris 2005: 66; Unida, 2005: 30).

In contrast with the pattern seen at Sulci (see section 3.2.4), almost no *signacula* have emerged in Masullas except only a few vertical slabs of irregular shape standing outside the graves (Manos, Floris, 2005: 66). A circle of small stones to the eastern side of grave 35bis may also have functioned as a grave marker.

The first question concerning the cemetery, whose aspect is quite regular, is whether the overall shape and structure of the necropolis was planned at the outset or developed by chance through time. The problem concerning the investigation of cemeteries as a set of features connected with one another, including inter-burial spaces (see section 1.3.4), was raised by Tronchetti (2013), and is central here. As the analysis of grave structure and material culture will confirm, the site shows several signs that it was conceived as a

[66] Grave 1 only is different from the rest in shape and size, being closer to a small triangle.

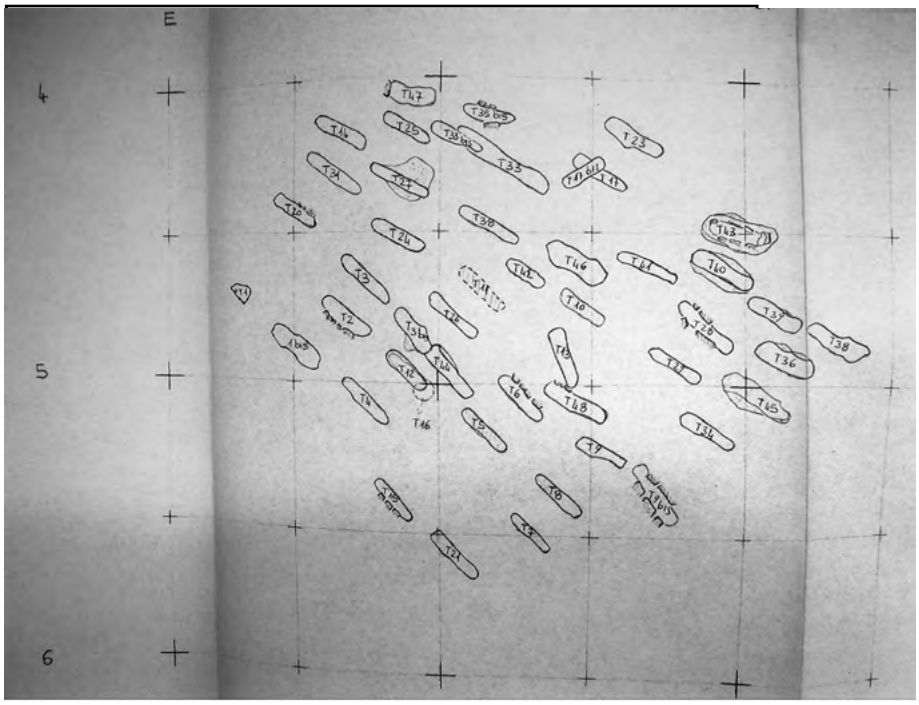


Figure 4.1. Plan of Sa Mitza Salida (From the archives of the Soprintendenza Archeologia della Sardegna).

planned cemetery at a very early stage. The evidence appears both in the relationship between the graves, the large majority of which are parallel and equidistant from each other, and in the activities of reopening graves and manipulating the corpses long after their burial. While the former is a sign of coherent planning and allocation of grave plots, the latter provides a further indication that the communities of Masullas assigned a high value to specific tombs, from which one can infer that the position of the graves was recorded or memorised. These interpretations are in line with the semiotic definition of necropolis given in Chapter 1 as a space where, among other parameters, practices of care and disposal of the dead were performed in connection with the past of the site (see Section 1.3.5).

Chronological analysis shows that the graves that circumscribe the perimeter of the cemetery were cut between the second half of the 1st century AD and the second half of the 2nd. All the graves that had been installed later than that in Masullas were laid within such older perimeter. This underpins the interpretation that the cemetery's limits were set in the first 150 years of use. This means that the community of Masullas was fully aware of operating in a site whose past mattered to them so much that it set the pattern of future activities, becoming part of their social structure and hence affecting their future practices. This evidence excludes any idea that *Sa Mitza Salida* was a site simply created by the random addition of graves, and confirms that it was the result of shared community practices.

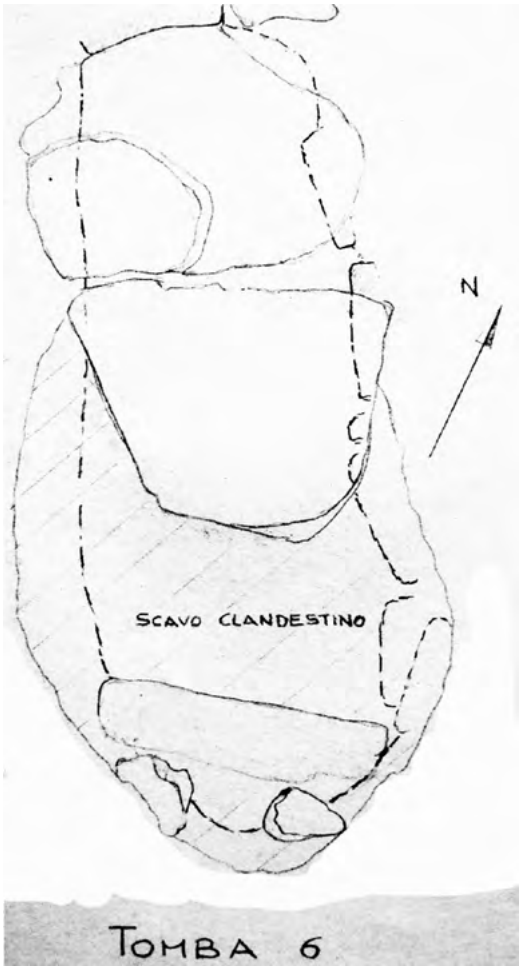


Figure 4.2. Example of cist grave, covered by roughly rectangular stone slabs, from grave MAS-6 (Drawing by Michele Sannia; From the archives of the Soprintendenza Archeologica dealla Sardegna).

The next sections will discuss the material culture from individual graves, and the physical relationships between graves and the necropolis as a whole.

4.2.2. The deceased and their anthropological remains

This section will look at the individuality of each burials – single, double, or multiple – at the deposition of the deceased in relation to grave structure, their articulation, and position of the body parts in relation with one another. This information is integrated with the available specialised anthropological analyses on sex, age, and palaeopathology.

All graves were most likely designed to hold a single individual, but several of them ended up containing more than one body, due to the reopening of the graves and performing of further practices after the funeral: the remains of around 70 corpses were found in only 52 tombs. This appears to be a result also of reductions and secondary depositions (Duday, 2009) that are widely attested at *Sa Mitza Salida*. These are witnessed primarily by the presence of human bones unconnected with the principal inhumation, which was likely the person most recently placed in the grave, and which occupies a central position in it (Manos, Floris, 2005: 66). Anatomically disconnected bones were generally found at the margins of the graves.

27 inhumations out of 52 are primary depositions; three graves were completely empty; the remaining 22 show signs of manipulation of the deceased at some time after their original deposition (Table 2). Actions of removing the bones of the deceased, collecting them and placing them to one side in the grave to make room for a newer deposition contributes to doubling, at least, the number of the deceased represented in certain graves. This is based on the evidence that the form of disposal indicates how many processes the deposition in a particular grave went through (Sprague, 2005: 28). A simple disposal results in just a primary inhumation (the most common at *Sa Mitza Salida*) whereas a compound disposal, resulting for example from the redeposition of parts of a previous inhumed body, will result in a secondary (tertiary and so on) inhumation, subject to the number of actions of disposal performed.

The excavation journals[67] report that among the manipulated burials, three were result of looting.[68] Other empty graves, on the contrary, showed no trace of use, meaning that they were left empty after being originally dug. Either such tombs were never used by the community, or they functioned as cenotaphs for those whose bodies were lost in various circumstances (Heller 1932: 193). Despite the hydrogeological conditions of the site that threatened the preservation of the human remains buried at *Sa Mitza Salida* (Manos, Floris, 2005: 65-66), the bones were preserved in good condition, allowing both archaeologists and anthropologists to obtain detailed information around their original deposition. In almost half of the graves, bones were articulated in anatomical order (Appendix 1: Table 5). When the human remains were disarticulated, two explanations should be considered. First, in cases where skeletons are still partially articulated, water infiltration and flooding of graves situated at the bottom of the hill slope to the southeast may have led both to the demineralization of the bones and to their movement within the tomb (Manos, Floris, 2005: 65). Second, there may have been tunnelling by small animals in the site (Duday, 2009). Where these two causes could be excluded, the disarticulated bones were interpreted here as a result of the deliberate funerary practices – or practices linked to it as reduction, manipulation, or compound disposal of the body.

From the analysis of the relationship between the graves a neat picture emerges. Almost all graves were aligned northwest-southeast,[69] set up next to one another following parallel lines. Looking at the orientation of the bodies, insitead, a less homogeneous picture appears, despite still framed by a well-ordered structure: thirty of them have their head at northwest, two of which at west-northwest and one north-northwest, nine at southeast, with three at east-southeast, and in only one case at southwest.

In three graves, all of which had been manipulated, the head is placed at the centre of the grave, on top of a pile of long bones, mainly femurs. In six graves, all of them containing articulated bodies, the head is missing.

The community of Masullas deposited its deceased inside each grave following a remarkably uniform ritual that resulted in an invariable depositional pattern in the archaeological record. This regular manner excludes only four individuals. These were laid on one side, in contrast to the majority who rest on their backs (Appendix 1: Table 6) following a precisely repeated pattern involving also the position of associated material culture. As regards the trunk and legs, the majority of those inhumed were in a full extended position (at both trunk and upper leg, and leg and knee joints).

This uniformity in the positioning of the bodies is even more evident when some fragile bones, prone to being lost, are examined. Where preserved, hands and arms are mostly laid over the pelvis (Appendix 1: Table 6),

[67] 21st March 1997.
[68] The grave's fill contained cigarettes and a *coltello a serramanico* (jack-knife).
[69] Exceptions are grave 13, roughly oriented N-S, and grave 17bis, oriented NE-SW.

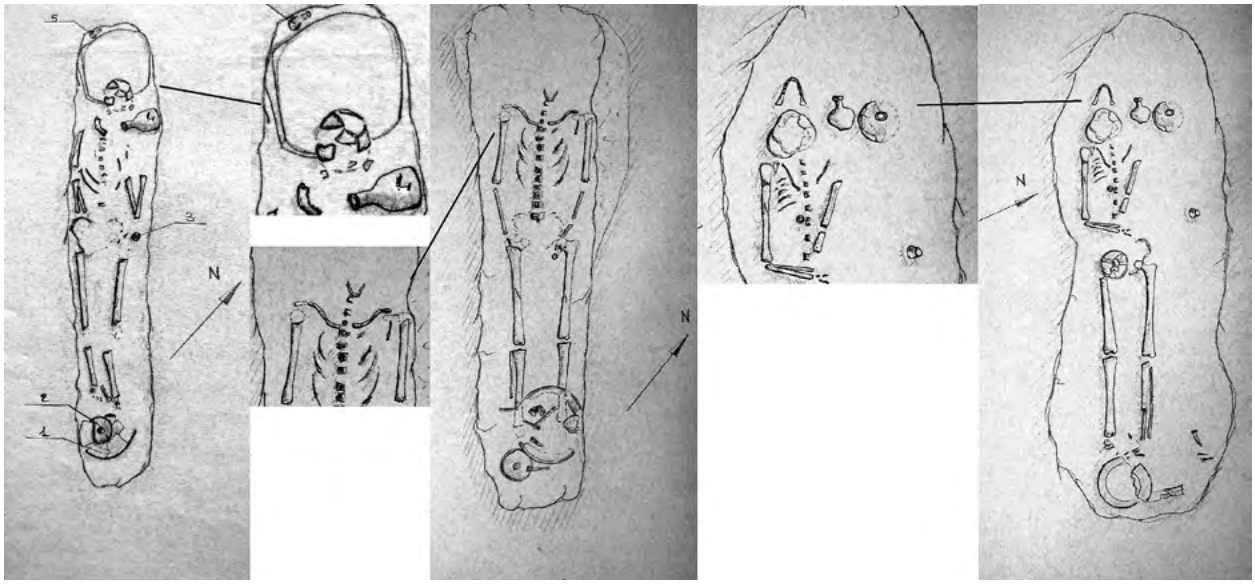


Figure 4.3. Taphonomy showing the absence of cranium (centre: MAS-44), and the effects of cushions decay (left: MAS-7, right: MAS-46); (Taken from original drawings by Michele Sannia, from the archives of the Soprintendenza Archeologica della Sardegna).

although in few cases only one rests on the pelvis and the other lies beside the body. In three cases, the hands are carefully folded on the chest. The most variable parameter of a body layout is the position of the head. In half the graves, the head was preserved in an anatomically natural position – either looking straight in front or turned to the right or left side. In few cases, the head had completely lost its connection with the spinal ligaments, and tilted in an unnatural position, with the side of the skull touching the tip of the shoulder. In these cases, and in the only one in which the head is tipped back, the cause can be identified in the decomposition of a support made of perishable material that left the head to roll due to the effect of gravity (Duday, 2009: 47). In several circumstances, the head-support is a small stone slab still *in situ* at the time of excavation. But it was often a wooden cushion. For example, in grave 44 (Figure 4.3), where the presence of a head-support in perishable material is indicated by the typical taphonomic position assumed by the mandible, flipped above the cranium after the decay of the support, due to the antecedent decay of the mandibular ligaments.

Anthropologists have identified sex, age, pathologies, and a few pseudo-pathologies of the deceased. The latter are due to alteration of the bones caused by both the direct and indirect action of the water in the grave, such as erosion, demineralization and growth of the thick plant roots, and by the pressure from the agricultural machines (Manos, Floris 2005: 66). Despite such damage, the bone analysis gave important and reliable results, and culminated with the restoration of some portions of bones. From these analyses, both average age and sex of the individuals were detected. The study by Manos and Floris (2005: 67) provides a good deal of general information but this cannot be related to specific graves. This is only available for three graves (Unida, 2005) that will be analysed in the next section, showing the high potential that a study of detailed anthropological data alongside the analysis of material culture might offer. For the time being, the population of the necropolis can only be assessed in general terms. It was balanced by gender (Appendix 1: Table 8), with only two more male individuals than female ones. The average age of women – 27 years old – was six years lower than that of men, 33 years old.[70] One child only, aged seven, could be identified, from grave MAS-42. A total population of 75 individuals was buried at *Sa Mitza Salida,* all of them inhumed following a common ritual practice. As noted above, the higher number of individuals than the 54 total graves is explained by the more than 20 cases of manipulated depositions (see Figure 4.3 and Appendix 1: Table 4).

The general uniformity seen in the disposal of the body shows an undifferentiated treatment irrespective of sex and age. 20 instances of manipulated depositions show that the community of Masullas interacted with its dead from the past repeatedly over time. Figure 4.5 below shows the different nature of such manipulations. The

[70] Manos and Floris (2005: 67) applied the tables of Manouvrier to calculate an approximate height of the individuals. As it requires a good state of conservation of the long bones, it was applicable to 11 male and 11 female individuals. An approximate average height of 1637 mm for the former, and 1577 mm for the latter were obtained.

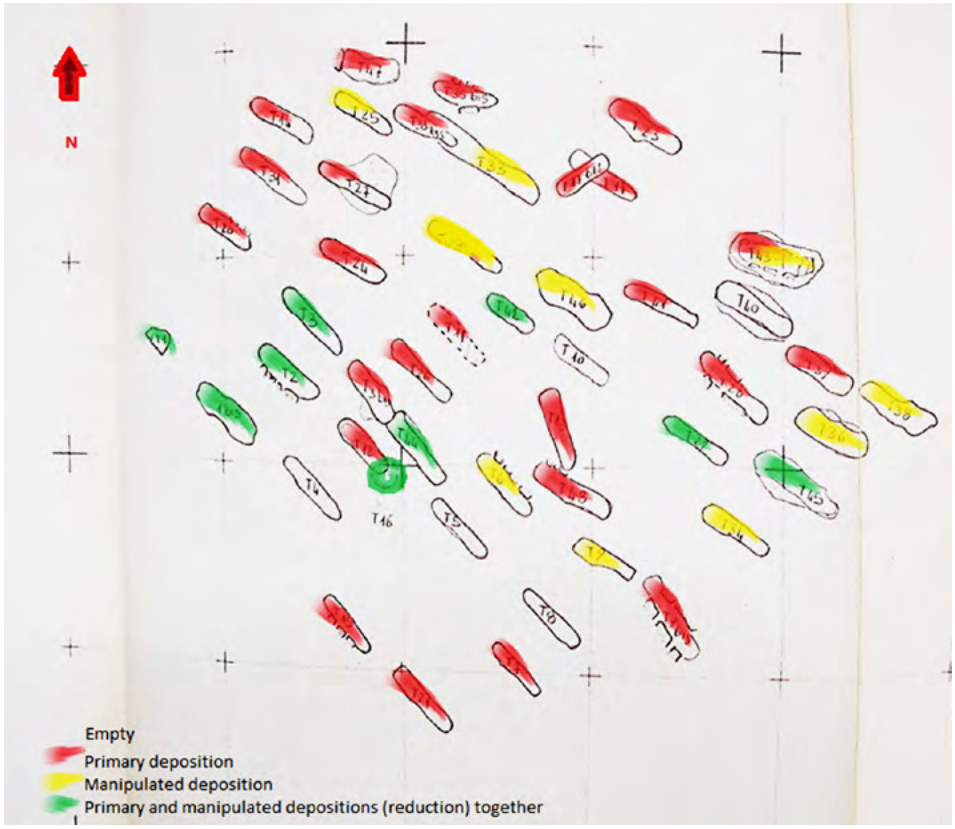


Figure 4.4. Plan of Sa Mitza Salida in relation to primary and manipulated inhumations (from the Archives of the Soprintendenza Archeologica della Sardegna).

two burials from the left, MAS-1 and MAS-3, show the presence of only selected skeletal parts such as long bones and cranial fragments, seemingly the remains of an old deposition removed from its original grave, as the small and circular pit that housed MAS-1 demonstrates. The example at the centre (Figure 4.5: MAS-25) shows the reduction of an older deposition – represented by long bones and some parts of the old grave apparatus only – alongside the new burial, from which the reduced bones were kept separate. The two plans from the right (Figure 4.5: MAS-9 and MAS-9bis) represent the full physical integration between bones from different depositions, mainly – but not exclusively – crania.

These three types of manipulation show that different actions took place at Masullas in different periods, providing evidence that can be used to understand potential changes in social identity. Such signs deserve fuller interpretations that will be provided throughout this chapter and particularly in the comparative analysis presented in Chapter 7.

In terms of the evidence from paleopathology, dental enamel hypoplasia is most widely attested, together with tartar and caries. An unusual development of the muscular insertions at the level of biceps was diagnosed in many individuals, evidenced by the thick tendon signs on the bones (Manos, Floris, 2005: 67). The most likely cause of such signs is hard physical work involving lifting heavy weights, such as that experienced through work in the fields. From the dental evidence, Manos and Floris infer a poor and unvaried diet. The anthropological results are significant for the interpretation of the community identity of Masullas attempted here. They provide evidence that the poor diet of those buried can be interpreted as a result of social and economic background, as the area is documented as being very rich in resources and also extensively cultivated. This leaves us with two hypotheses. Either the people buried at *Sa Mitza Salida* were excluded from the alimentary supplies which they contributed to produce because such supplies were destined for people from a different background, or they were simply used to nourishing themselves with different foods than what they produced.

In order to understand if cultural elements can be of any help in reconstructing both social and economic conditions of the deceased, it is necessary to look more closely at the material culture present in the graves and at its relationship with the bodies. A comparison

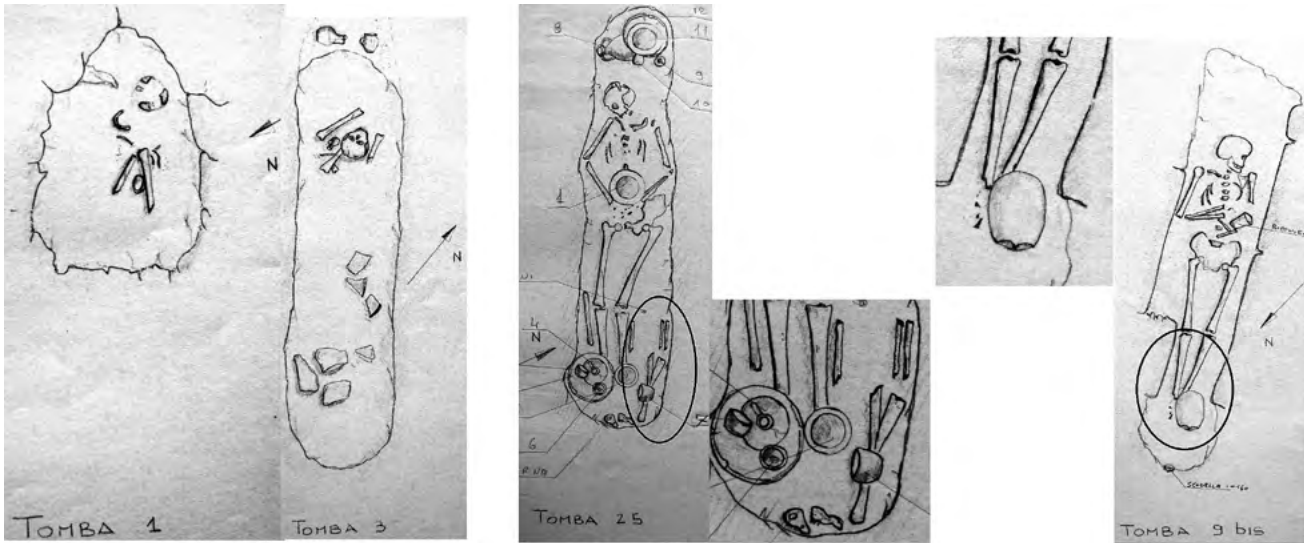


Figure 4.5. Examples of reductions and other manipulations from early graves at Sa Mitza Salida (from the archives of the Soprintendenza Archeologica della Sardegna).

between the patterns highlighted in each grave will be made. These aims are the subject of the next two sections of Chapter 4.

4.3. Material culture of *Sa Mitza Salida*

4.3.1. Grave typology and grave goods distribution

The signs of potential uniformity of practices inferred from the layout of the cemetery (Figure 4.1) and the disposal of the deceased in the graves analysed in the previous section is reinforced by looking at the grave goods in context.

Further signs of uniformity come from the cover of the graves. The 52 graves divide between 46 pits/*formae* covered with gravel and sand, and six cist graves, clad by stone slabs all around from top to bottom. However, 14 of them are only covered from the top with long slabs placed horizontally end-to-end, parallel to the ground, whereas no full cladding was provided. Although visibly identical from above,[71] the structure of these two grave types is the result of a very different set of practices and most likely of different both physical and economic efforts. Conventionally, tombs with full cladding are called cist graves, whilst those with only an upper cover of slabs are referred to as *tombe a cassone*, although no real distinction exists between the two names.

Figure 4.6 shows that the number of pit graves is almost double the number of cists and *tombe a cassone* – when considered them as the same general type.

More data emerged from inside the graves. In general terms, the number of items placed in each grave is greater than that registered at Sulci, seen in the previous chapter. Masullas boasts 246 grave goods contained in 52 graves only, whereas the necropolis of Sulci has only around 500 items contained in 204 graves. The average number of items per grave is almost five items at Masullas, compared to the only two/three in Sant'Antioco. The disparity is greater when looking at the number of graves with no goods: 28 at Sulci, where burials in shallow pits and no goods are a consistent part of the practices held there, and one only at Masullas.[72]

By looking at the presence of material culture in the necropolis through time, we can see a greater incidence of grave goods in the 1st century AD, and a reduction in the 4th (Figure 4.7). The majority of graves created between the 1st and 3rd century AD contained more than seven items, some others contained between two and six objects, and only few of them contained one item only.

Behind these figures, the number of grave goods per assemblage are highly varied (Figure 4.7). This happens in contemporary graves – I.e. graves MAS-8 and MAS-16, both interred in the first half of the 2nd century AD – with a completely different size of assemblage, a fact

[71] This explains why, at the beginning of the investigation of several tombs, the excavation journals report a discrepant number of *tombe a cassone* compared to the end of the dig.

[72] Three other graves were without objects because looted.

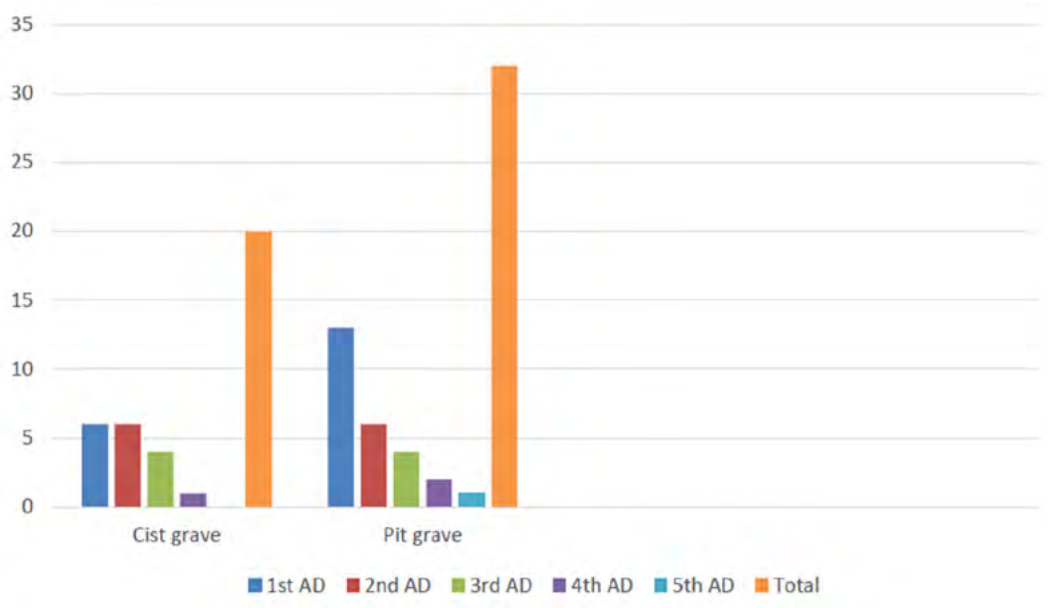


Figure 4.6. Number of cist graves (including the "tombe a cassone") and pit graves in Masullas through time.

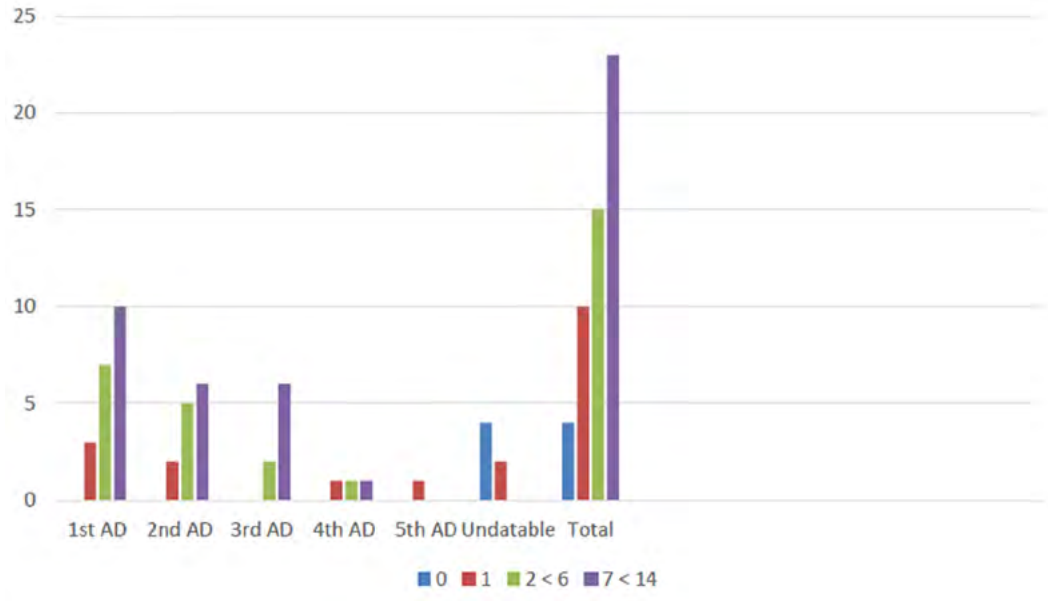


Figure 4.7. Number of grave goods per grave through time at Mitza Salida.

that must have been obvious to the community. This is the first feature that departs from the uniform pattern seen so far at *Sa Mitza Salida*. During the 4th century, when the use of the cemetery declines to its minimum number of graves, the imbalance in the richness of grave furnishing continues. A difference in treatment between some individual is evident.

4.4. Chrono-typological analysis of material culture

4.4.1. The grave goods classes

The first feature to emerge from the analysis of material culture is the preponderance of pottery: 194 grave goods out of 246 – 4/5 of the total (Figure 4.8). The remaining 52 objects are coins (31), glass, and other metal items such as rings and elements of shoes.

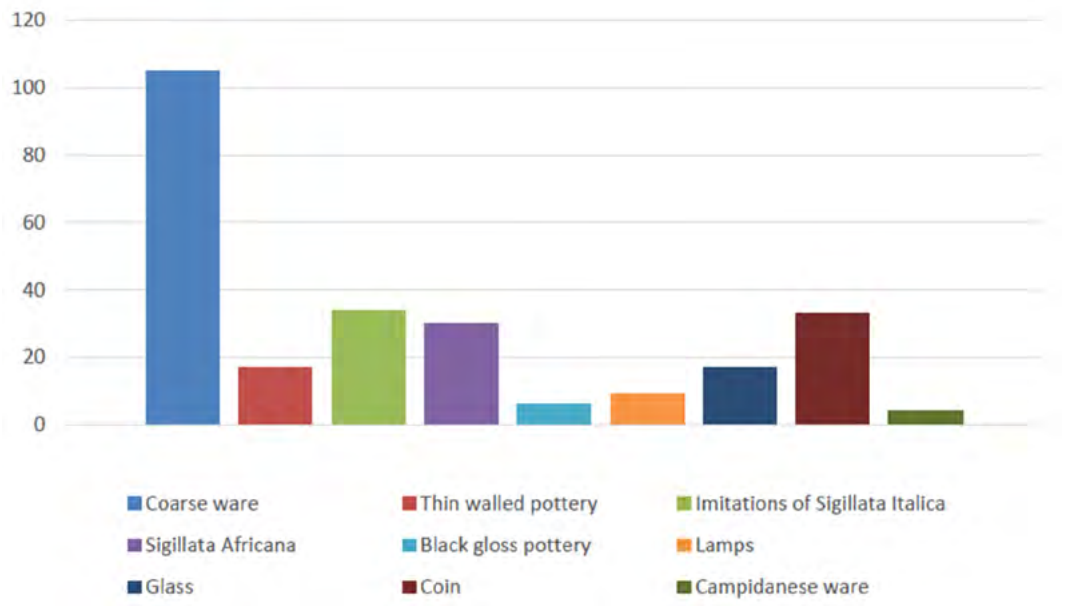


Figure 4.8. Material culture classes distribution at Mitza Salida.

Coarse ware is by far the most represented ceramic class at *Sa Mitza Salida*. Divided here in 14 fabric types, these coarse ware – *ceramica comune* – are grouped into two broader fabric classes, largely differentiated from each other by colour, inclusions, and consistency. These are the brown fabrics CW10 and CW11, and the orange CW2 and CW21, that together represent more than 50% of the coarse wares (Appendix 1: Table 10).

Other well represented classes of ceramics are the imitations of *Sigillata Italica* - which Tronchetti (2014) recently named *Sigillata Sarda* – *Sigillata Africana*, and thin walled pottery. Imitations of *Sigillata Italica* are present at *Sa Mitza Salida* with more than 30 vessels. Their fabric, SITIM (Appendix 1: Table 10) is light red, with none or rare and very small inclusions, and a light red surface, often covered in a dark red *engobbio,* large portions of which are still well preserved. The dark red gloss, obtained by immersion of the vessel in very diluted red clay slip, reproduces the aesthetic effect obtained by the vessels in *Sigillata Italica*, produced from the second half of the 1st century BC in central Italy. These vessels also reproduce some of the most common forms of dishes and cups typical of Sigillata Italica.

The imitations, noted by Tronchetti (2014: 285) in 1999 at Masullas, Nora, Sulci, Gesico, Ortacesus, are now – and surely were in the past – easy to distinguish from imports. Thus, they were probably destined for customers fully aware that they were buying and using vessels – likely produced nearby – that only tried to replicate the aesthetic and functional effects of the more well-known products, without any aim of forgery.

Also some vessels classified here as African Red Slip (*Sigillata Africana*) seem closer to local products imitating vessels produced in Africa, continuing a tradition of local imitations of imports that likely started with the black gloss – *vernice nera a pasta grigia* – and continued with the *Sigillata Sarda* (Tronchetti 1997; 2014).

Thin walled pottery is another ceramic class fairly well represented by several cups and by their local imitations. The latter are easily recognisable from the bigger thickness of their walls. The thin walled fabrics are different from each other both in thickness and in colour. TWAI2 (Appendix 1: Table 10) is characterised by a dark brown colour and a much thicker wall than the 2 mm of the TWA, the finest fabric of the assemblage. In this case also, there is a likelihood that we are dealing with local imitations of the more famous class. Black gloss, as mentioned above, is represented especially by local imitations, *vernice nera a pasta grigia* (Tronchetti, 1996: 32), characterised by a grey fabric that is rather different from the pink one typical of the imports.

Pottery outnumbers all other classes of goods. The most common pottery types are hemispheric cups, jugs – *bottiglie* in the Italian terminology (Pavolini, 2000; Sirigu, 1999) – and pans (Appendix 1: Table 11), followed closely by coins and *balsamaria.* There are very rare cases in which neither pans nor jugs are present, whereas the absence of cups is a little more frequent.

A recurrent assemblage of objects was adopted for the majority of funerals. Jugs and pans, despite being found in a slightly lesser quantity than cups, are present in each grave, rarely with more than one example.

The opposite happens to cups, which often occur in each grave in pairs or threes. By contrast, some grave goods are only present sporadically, or uniquely. This is the case of the mirror in MAS-27.2, a *unicum* in this necropolis, placed over the left side of the chest of the deceased together with a bronze coin. Now completely oxidized, the mirror is made of copper, has a roughly square shape, and is 9,4 cm long per side. The deceased in grave MAS-27 was also accompanied by another unique item: an oblong bone object, with one pointed end and a concave round one. It might be interpreted either as a hairpin, on the basis of its head, or as a small spoon, as its shape suggests. From grave MAS-27 itself came 16 bronze elements, found by the feet, of various shapes: one small chain no longer than 5 cm, six nails, two tiny discs – 2 cm radius – one symmetrically curved metal band finishing with one hook at each side, one ring, one straight metal band terminating with a small appendix with one hole, and few other small metal items. Because of the presence of the nails and their contextual association with the feet of the deceased, the interpretation suggested here is that such metal elements come from *caligae*, hobnailed boots worn especially by Roman soldiers.

4.4.2. The ceramic forms

Among the most frequent items at Masullas are open forms of *Sigillata Africana* pottery. The most common morphological types are the casseroles Hayes 23 A[73], Atlante CVI[74], characterised by an outward sloping wall and a slightly convex bottom, and Hayes 197[75], with vertical wall, curved convex bottom with concentric grooves, and out-turned moulded rim with a small internal hollowing to receive a lid. The dishes Hayes 3 B[76] and 3 C[77] with a shallow convex base, low ring foot and broad rim, the carinated dishes Hayes 16[78], 5 C[79], the flat dish Hayes 64[80], and the large dish Hayes 50[81], Atlante XXVIII[82] are amongst the most common forms. A unicum of this class at *Sa Mitza Salida* – but widely diffused in Sardinia[83] – is the jug Hayes 160[84], with body made of a double convex shape, long neck with few grooved lines on its upper part. Another is the mug Pallarès 28,[85] Hayes 136[86], whose shape and rouletted decoration resemble very closely the late thin walled pottery production form Marabini XLVI[87]. Other well represented morphological types are cups Hayes 9 B[88], Atlante XIV[89], with curved wall, plain rounded rim with two grooves on the outside, and low ring foot (Tronchetti, 1996: 72-73, tav. 9.7), and cups Atlante I[90]. They are both quite common in the island[91], as are the cup Hayes 14 A[92], Atlante XVI[93], and the cup with a broad flat rim Hayes 69[94].

These forms demonstrate that a very wide selection of imports from Africa reaches Masullas from the 2nd century AD onwards. This shows a link with a broad Mediterranean market, and particularly with North Africa, that did not characterise the site in the previous 150 years. In its first period of use, the community of Masullas preferred performing funerary practices with the aid of likely locally produced items along with only local imitations of imports from Italy (i.e. *Sigillata Sarda* and *vernice nera a pasta grigia*), never using imported vessels.

Less varied in terms of morphological types, but still fairly well represented by a few cups and mugs, is the thin walled pottery class. Among the most common forms is the double handled cup Mayet XXXII[95], Marabini LXI[96], Duncan 7,[97] one example of which has a fine decoration *a la barbotine* with four water-leaves. The type is quite common at Masullas and in the rest of the island[98] during 1st and 2nd century AD. As is the ovoid mug Mayet XXIV[99], Marabini XV[100] Vegas 31b[101], decorated by oblique incisions on the wall, and the cup Mayet XXVIII[102]. One example of the hemispheric cup Mayet XXXVII[103], characterized by very fine walls and a rouletted decoration, is attested in the necropolis. A few examples of the cup Mayet XXXIII[104], Marabini 52[105], with a technically accurate rouletted decoration, are attested too. This form finds comparisons in the rest of Sardinia, especially with some examples from Sulci, for which the provenience from Iberia was suggested, based on technical features and rouletted decoration (Frau 1999: 178, tav. I, 3). A few graves contained a small type of mug with a surface colour and fabric quite

[73] Hayes 1972: 45-48, form 23 A II.
[74] Atlante II, tav. CVI, 10. Tronchetti 1996, pp. 95-96, tav.16 n. 1.
[75] Hayes 1972, p. 209, fig. 36, form 197 I.
[76] Hayes 1972: 22, fig. 2 form 3 B, n. 22.
[77] Hayes 1972: 21, fig. 2, form 3 B/C, n. 88.
[78] Hayes 1972: 41-42, fig. 6.
[79] Hayes 1972: 26-29, form 6 C 41.
[80] Hayes 1972: 18, form 64, n. 2, pp. 109-111.
[81] Hayes 1972: 68, fig. 12, form 50 A/B, n. 55.
[82] Atlante I: tav. XXVIII, n. 12, p. 68.
[83] Boninu 1971: 336, 339, 340, fig. 33, 35, 36.
[84] Hayes 1972: 189-190.
[85] Atlante I: 39, tav. XIX n. 9.
[86] Hayes 1972: 180, form 136.
[87] Marabini-Moevs 1973: plate 47, n. 440.
[88] Hayes 1972, pp. 35, 37: fig. 4, forma 9 B, n. 20.
[89] Atlante I: 9-183, tav. XIV.
[90] Atlante I: tav. XVII, 2.
[91] Tronchetti 1996: 72,73 tav. 11 n. 7.
[92] Hayes 1972: 39-40.
[93] Atlante I: tav. XVI.
[94] Hayes 1972: 117, 119, fig. 20, forma 69, n. 1.
[95] Mayet 1975: 64-66, tav. XXXI nn. 241 e 255.
[96] Marabini 1975: 127-131, tav. XXI n. 209.
[97] Duncan, 1964: 56, 75, fig. 8, 32-33.
[98] Tronchetti 1997: 50, tav. 51 n. 10.
[99] Mayet 1975: 38 ff., tav. 27 n. 204.
[100] Marabini 1993: 76, tav. 29 n. 267.
[101] Vegas, 1973: 76.
[102] Mayet 1975: 61,tav. XXIX, n. 223.
[103] Mayet 1975: 73, tav. XXXIX n. 322.
[104] Mayet 1975: 67, 68, tav. XXXIV n. 274.
[105] Marabini 1973: 160, 161, tav. XVIII n. 188.

similar to African red slip, but different in details. The shape – provided with a rouletted decoration – more closely resembles the thin walled pottery form Vegas 47[106], Mayet XX, Marabini XLVII, and is attested in other contests from both the island. This form of mug, associated with a wall thicker than usual, is likely a local imitation[107] of the thin walled pottery imported from central Italy, which fits the wide range of imitation of imports found in Sardinia, highlighting further the centrality of Masullas and its cemetery in the circulation and consumption of pottery of regional provenance.

As concerns black gloss pottery, the necropolis has only nine items, the majority of which belong to the sub-class of *ceramica a vernice nera e pasta grigia* quoted above. The class has a gloss that resembles in appearance the black gloss of the original class, but the grey colour of its fabric is far from the pink colour that characterizes the latter. Among the most frequent morphological types are the two cups Morel 2278a1 and 2921a1, and the carinated dishes 2567a1 and 2277b1. Lamps are quite well represented, but only with a very limited variety of forms. Some of the most common forms are the variant 5 of Provoost 3 (1970)[108], with decorated shoulder and impressed concentric lines, and the discus with figure and heart-shaped nozzle. Form Dressel 19, with plain shoulder and discus, and nozzle separated from the body by a straight line, and form Dressel 20, with plain shoulder, mould decorated discus, and nozzle separated by a straight line, are fairly well represented too. Another form is Fabbricotti (1974) I-II,[109] with a curved channel that unites discus and nozzle, shoulder decorated by small blobs and curved rope motif. Only two of the lamps are provided with a stamp *in planta pedis*. The first, Q MEM PVD: Q(uintus) Mem(mius) Pud(ens) is on a form Dressel 20, probably produced in Tharros, one of the main production centres in the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. The fabric of Quintus Memmius Pudens is attested together with that of Quintus Memmius Karo (Sotgiu, 1968: 90, 95, 96). Another Dressel 20 shows a stamp with a letter D only.

Glass items at Masullas are 17, among which are mainly complete objects. Two chalices that resemble form Isings 36 b[110] for the shape of ring foot and rim, although the rest of the body displays numerous differences that make it closer to the hemispherical cup Isings 108.[111] An hemispheric cup in yellow glass, decorated by blue blobs, recalls the form Isings 96[112], although this is generally attributed to 3rd - 4th century contexts in the western Empire, whilst that at *Sa Mitza Salida*, grave MAS-9, does not date later than the 2nd century AD. The tubular *balsamarium* with constriction, form Isings 8,[113] is the most common at Masullas, together with a beaker that recalls the form Isings 34[114] and 108,[115] with evident spiral coils or wheel incisions. A bulbous, short-necked and out-turned rim *balsamarium* resembles the form Isings 6 or 26a,[116] dated to the 1st century AD. Finally, a tall conical beaker, with no foot, and four long oval indents on the side, is very close to the form Isings 32.[117] Although not numerous, the examples of glass products show a good variety of forms, in line with the *Sigillata Africana* products, and a remarkable quality, given the excellent preservation of the majority of the pieces despite difficult environmental conditions.

Alongside the ceramics and glass, thirty-one bronze coins were used as grave goods. All coins weigh between 11 and 12,4 g. Half of them are too oxidised to be readable before conservation. Of the readable ones, 16 date to the 1st century AD, seven to the 2nd, five to the 3rd and one only to the 4th century AD. This shows that the use of coins as grave goods was far more popular during the early Imperial period, although one must also consider that this may be linked to the high number of graves in the 1st century AD.

The last class of materials to be discussed in this section is coarse ware –*ceramica comune*. This was divided in 14 fabric groups (Appendix 1: Table 10). Coarse ware typology is distinct from Sulci. Hence, I created the typology summarised in Appendix 2.[118] This was necessary to provide a chronology, to appreciate the cultural meanings of the most popular classes of materials used by Masullas' community, and to understand the relationship between different centres of Sardinia and the Mediterranean in terms of the circulation and consumption of material commodities. Such typology helped to reveal strong connections between Masullas' ceramics – likely produced in Tharros – those from Sulci and Karales, and Sigillata Italica from Italy.

The most popular item was the one handled jug Atlante XX[119], with out-turned rim, rounded body and upper part, and polished neck with oblique lines (Appendix 2: I.A.1.a.α.0, and I.A.1.a.α.00). The type is attested in 11 graves at Masullas and is present in the rest of the island (Tronchetti 1999: 110, tav. 122 n. 4; Salvi 1991: 89 n. 15;

[106] Vegas 1973: 111-112.
[107] Pinna, 1985: 291.
[108] Brooner, 1930: XXV; Ponish 1961: IIIc; Deneauve 1969: VIIIB
[109] Provoost 4, Dressel 30
[110] Isings 1957: 50-52.
[111] Isings 1957: 134, form 108.
[112] Isings 1957: 113-116, 131-132.
[113] Isings 1957: 24.
[114] Isings 1957: 48, form 34.
[115] Isings 1957: 134, form 108.
[116] Isings 1957: 22, 40.
[117] Insings 1957: 46.
[118] Each form was given an alpha-numerical label made of six digits, each of which – allowing for new entries – identifies a specific variation of a definite part of the vessel – rim, wall, handle, foot, etc. In such a way that the first symbol identifies the object as a morphological type: i.e. a jug, Form I, or a cup, Form IV.
[119] Atlante 1981: 100, tav. XX n. 12

Sirigu 1999: tav. IV, forma 2/5). The miniature bottles, probably *balsamaria,* I.C.2.b.α and the bottle I.C.2.a.γ (Appendix 2) are frequent too. Pans, the most common morphological type in Masullas, are almost exclusively part of the coarse ware class – with the exception of a few African red slip examples. Interestingly, most coarse ware pans have individual characteristics so that almost all of them are unique types. Among them, one of the most regular forms is III.A.1.a,[120] with a regular, flat, down-bent rim and uplifted base. Form III.B.6.b, with oblique wall, triangular rim, and flat base, is widespread, and the examples similar to each other although not as faithfully replicated as in the case of the pans III.A.1.a. Others – such as the III.G.4.c and III.G.6.d – are less easy to take into account in a general way, as they are unique forms, despite few shared characteristics. As Tronchetti suggests (personal communication, 2014), the pans from *Sa Mitza Salida* – a total of 31 – seem to be hand-made, individually, and show no intent by the potter to reproduce precise forms. Nonetheless, they are commonly employed for the funerary practices.

Imitations of *Sigillata Italica* are included here within coarse ware class. The local reproduction of imported pots becomes more widely recognised as the study of Sardinian ceramics advances. Hence, it is a common phenomenon within such a heterogeneous class as coarse ware. Imitations replicate easily recognisable forms of the 'original class', but display their peculiar status as local imitations. Thus, they were classified both by using the well-known *Conspectus* types, and by inserting them into the coarse ware typology in Appendix 2. The commonest morphological type of SITIM at *Sa Mitza Salida* is the cup with rounded rim, vertical upper wall separated from the flaring lower wall by an external strip, and low ring foot, Conspectus 34 (Appendix 2: IV.A.1.a). This type presents small variations regarding the size of the external strip, and the presence of a roulette decoration. The carinated dish/*patera* Conspectus 6 (V.C.3.b) was one of the most popular forms. In grave MAS-3bis it was uniquely deposited, broken into two halves and laid covering the feet of the deceased.

This morpho-typological account highlights the regional connections of commodities between Sardinia and the Mediterranean, and also between the Central-western and Southern Sardinia. The question around the coarse ware imitations of certain classes deserves full discussion which requires looking at both their productions and distribution, providing an informed critique of the definition of these classes too. This is one of my longer term-objectives. However, this work focuses on the contextual interpretation of the archaeological remains of funerary practices, rather than on the issue of production. Hence, the crucial argument of coarse ware and the imitations of imports will be looked at in another work. The next sections will focus on the relationships between grave goods and the bodies of the deceased.

4.5. Grave goods and bodies in context

4.5.1. Material culture in context

For a full understanding of the funerary practices performed at *Sa Mitza Salida* let us now focus on their archaeological context. In the first sub-section, the material categories included in each grave will be looked at in relation to each other, within their assemblages, highlighting the most frequent patterns spotted. The second sub-section will discuss the relationships between individual items and the body of the deceased, identifying recurrent associations with the aim to reconstruct the practices performed by Masullas' community as a set of small gestures. This analysis aims to identify a pattern common to the majority of graves, helping us to understand what the values and practices performed reveal about group identities among the members of its community. Assessing the association of grave goods should allow to identify the elements which made up more complex grave rituals, focusing on both the small details and broader complexities. This contextual analysis seeks to define the limits within which the members of the community of Masullas considered the funerary practices acceptable and recognisable as part of their group identities. In synthesis, this analysis aims to answer the question: did the people of *Sa Mitza Salida* follow specific ideal models of deposition? If so, what were they, and to what extent were they changeable?

This analysis has highlighted the following results. The most frequent association of grave goods (Figure 4.10) involves jugs and pans, which occur in pairs more than 20 times, and dishes and cups, which have the same frequency. These two pairs represents the minimum size of assemblage at *Sa Mitza Salida*, and is likely to have considered by the community the indispensable material set used to signify that the deceased and the mourners belonged to the same community. Let us now look at how the grave goods associate in threes and fours. Four triplets were composed from the association of three items from the jugs, pans, cups, and dishes, occurring between 15 and 18 times, that is in one grave out of three.

Having discussed groups of two, three and four objects most represented in Masullas, the next step is to identify the maximum quantity in the associated group, showing how many times these occurred in the necropolis. In other words, what was the maximum level of shared material culture at Masullas? Several quadruplets of associated items were tested. The most

[120] From now on all tags with six digits will refer to Appendix 2.

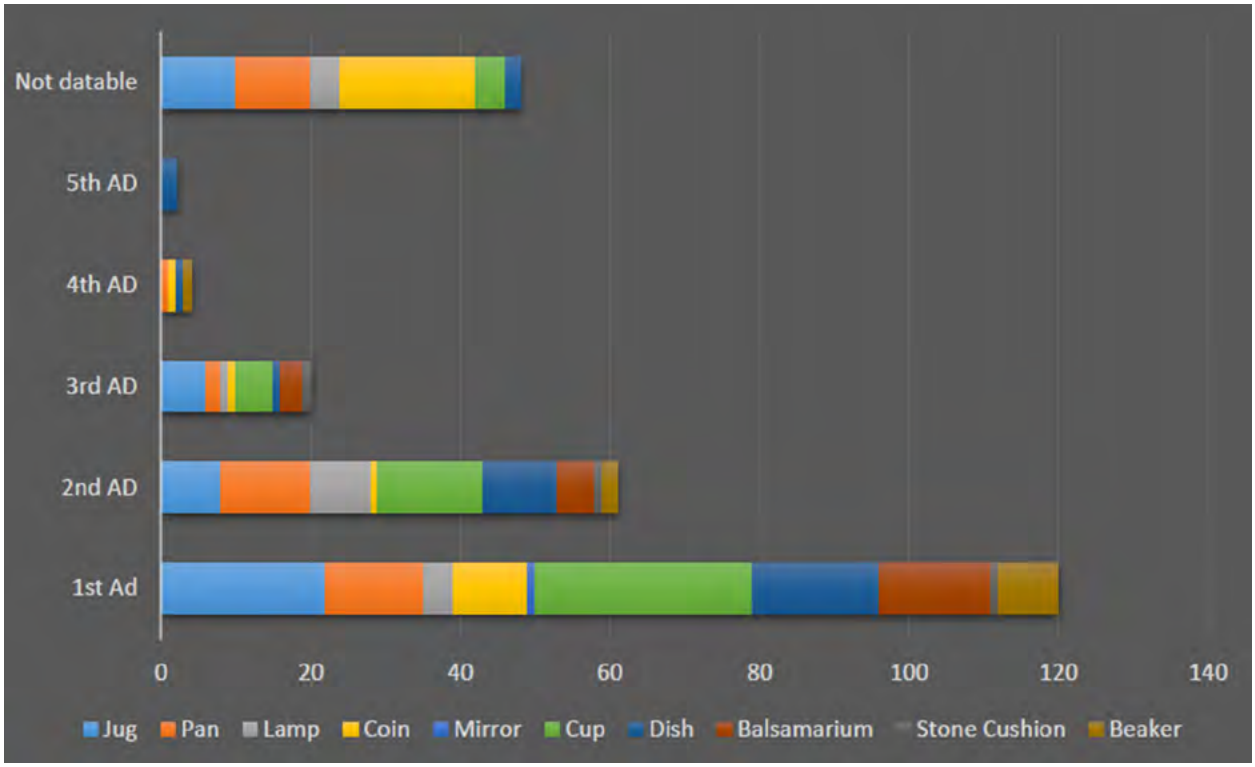


Figure 4.9. Material culture types per century at Mitza Salida.

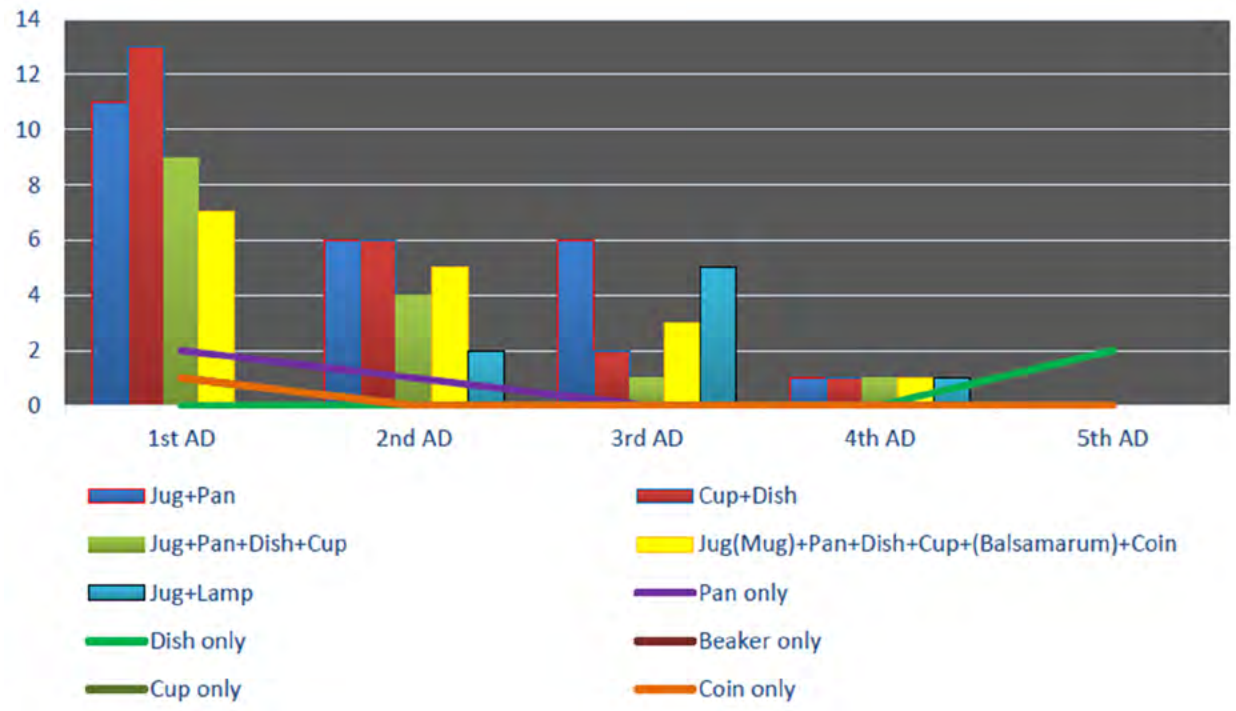


Figure 4.10. Assemblage of grave goods at Mitza Salida through time.

common assemblage consists of jug, cup, dish and pan. Larger associations of items were tested, and the maximum value identified is of six items in the same grave, comprising jug, cup, dish, pan, *balsamarium*, and coin. This combination is registered seven times (represented by the yellow column in Figure 4.10), which is a very frequent occurrence. The latter figures increment if certain elements are replaced by others which probably had the same function, for instance sometimes a mug is present rather than a jug. The lines in Figure 4.10 represent the number of graves with one item only as grave goods, showing how the presence of one pan or one coin only were attested in the early phase of the site, whereas one dish only is attested in the latest.

In summary, since jugs, pans, cups, dishes, and *balsamaria* have been attested both individually and in association, and since a coin is rarely absent from the grave, the assemblage constituted by these six items represents the highest level of material culture shared by a group of graves. Thus, this grouping can be defined as an ideal type of grave assemblage used by the community of Masuallas when burying their deceased. However, it was not only these shared elements that were relevant in the construction of community identities, but also rare or unique items that tended to differentiate each grave and blur this widely shared, neat model.

Before focusing on these differences, it is useful to look at the patterns so far identified against chronology. The most frequent assemblages, jug/pan and dish/cup, are widely represented throughout the entire use of the necropolis. A significant decrease of both types of assemblages occurs in the 2nd century AD. The numbers of dishes/cups continued to diminish during the 3rd century, whilst the jug/pan combination remained stable. By contrast, associations between jugs and lamps became more important in the 2nd century AD, and increase in frequency during the 3rd . The larger assemblages of grave goods including jug, pan, coin, dish and *balsamarium* were well represented in the 1st century AD, and decreased between the 2nd and the 3rd centuries, along with the cup/dish associations. A diminution of grave goods occurs during the 4th and 5th centuries, continuing a trend registered in late antique graves. This phenomenon can be linked to the interruption in the use of cups and dishes imitating *Sigillata Italica*, the absence of which leaves a gap replaced only partially by the *Sigillata Africana* vessels. If we accepted the local production of the former, we can advance the hypothesis of a break in the production of local workshops pause taken by the workshops in the island, whose cups and dishes were replaced form the end of the 2nd century by imported products from North Africa.

4.5.2. Bodies and material culture: a contextual synthesis

The patterns highlighted so far take into account only the links between items of the same type and forms found in association around the cemetery. Let us now look at grave goods in their context. The relative position of each item inside the individual graves will be particularly valued here. Looking at the association between specific objects and particular parts of the body of the deceased has shed new light on the actions taken by the community, clarifying the extent to which they were standardized, or diversified and independent from each other. Clearly, the validity of such study will increase farther when detailed information on age and sex of the deceased will become available from bone analysis.[121] Nonetheless, seeing how the treatment of the body and its involvement in the creation of the grave apparatus changed over the centuries is highly significant for understanding the process through of community identities articulated in Masullas.

A first glance at Figure 4.11 shows two main patterns. The areas of the body near which grave goods were mostly deposited are the upper body, including head and shoulder, and the lower body, including feet and low legs. The other areas, including chest, hips, and legs above the knee, show lesser concentrations of items. A further characteristic is the concentration of more common artefact types by the lower and upper body, whilst rarer ones occur most frequently in the central area.

The two most frequently attested types – jugs and pans, both associated and on their own – (Figures 4.9 and 4.10) tended to occupy opposite locations within the grave. Jugs were almost exclusively placed near the head and shoulders of the deceased, whilst pans were close to the lower limbs – especially to the feet. Thus, not only are jugs and pans the most common grave goods at *Sa Mitza Salida*, but they also occur in distinct positions. The other two most common ceramic forms, cups and dishes, cover commonly recurring locations too, although not as exclusively as jugs and pans. Cups' positions divide between head/shoulders and feet/lower legs, whilst dishes are found almost exclusively near the lower half of the body, equally distributed between the area of hips – over them – and feet. *Balsamaria* are found exclusively by the head – like jugs, although the former tend to appear closer to the top of the head, and the latter by the side. Another of the larger group of six items (see previous sub section), coins, also had recurrent locations, either held in the hand, or laid on the chest. Lamps were placed both in the lower and upper areas of the grave.

[121] Only the sex and age data relative to graves number 46 (female, 20 years old), 47 (female, 20-25), 43 A (female, 20), 43 B (male, 25-30), 43 C (female, 20-25) were available from Stefania Unida's (2005) unpublished dissertation.

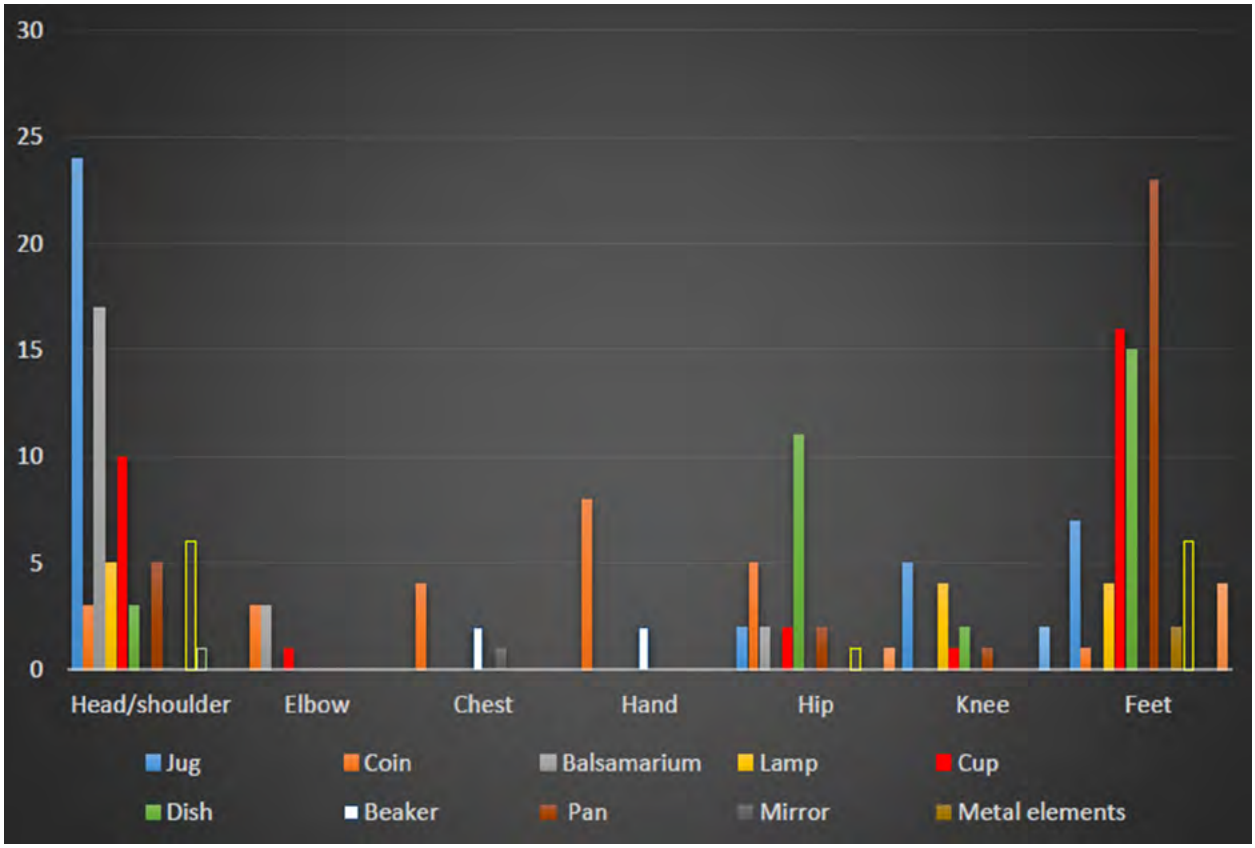


Figure 4.11. Recurrent association between material culture and body parts at Mitza Salida.

Other uncommon items were present only in a few graves. Grave MAS-43, for example, set up in the second half of 4th century AD, displays a series of features that distinguish it from the patterning distinguished so far. Four skulls are positioned in a line across the legs of the inhumed, starting from the pelvis. The other elements, in particular a coarse ware jug and two African Red Slip dishes, occupy the usual positions highlighted above. Grave MAS-43, thus, provides evidence for variation of the standard rituals followed at Masullas. But its specific features require further discussion that will be developed later in this chapter and in Chapter 7.

4.5.3. Shared practices of Masullas' communities

The sources investigated proved to be very heterogeneous and offer different perspectives on the site. The site plan, the drawings of each grave, the excavation journals, and the archaeological materials make the necropolis of *Sa Mitza Salida* an ideal case study in terms of source accessibility and variety. A planned foundation of the necropolis is suggested by the diachronic analysis of the graves. This has been confirmed by its neat organisation and the small distance between the graves that never disturb each other. No *signacula* were found, but manipulations of the graves' content happened from the 3rd century onwards. This suggests that Masullas' people relied on their capacity to remember where their dead were buried, and must have used the necropolis well after the funeral itself. This can be interpreted as a conscious continuation of use of the same area, while respecting the old graves, in relation to which the new ones stood. Old burial manipulations were widespread at *Sa Mitza Salida*, and this reinforces the interpretation, advanced above, about the social acknowledgement of the ancient graves, to which the community of Masullas referred throughout the centuries relatively to their position, orientation, and ritual. For this reason, it is crucial to provide a diachronic reconstruction of the practices performed.

In the1st century AD, the community of Masullas set-up 21 graves along parallel lines running NW-SE. These created a roughly rectangular area within the limits of which new tombs were dug afterwards. The community buried the majority of its individuals following the same scheme, supine, with their head at NW, with rare exceptions. Primary inhumations were the majority in that first phase, but three manipulated depositions occurred then, two consisting in the removal of old depositions from their original graves to make room to host new inhumation, and one – grave MAS-44 (Figure 4.3) – where the cranium is missing, with no evidence of

cuts on the vertebrae, sign that the removal happened well after the body had decomposed. A further element shows the time elapsed between the excavation of tomb MAS-44 and its manipulation: this is the presence of the mandibular bone, evidence that the ligaments of the mandible – one of the most persistent (i.e. see Di Maio, Di Maio, 2001: 32) – had already decayed at the time when the manipulation happened, likely years. The topic will be discussed more deeply later in this chapter. In terms of grave goods, coarse ware pans and jugs, cups and dishes imitating Italian Sigillata, black gloss cups, and thin walled cups and mugs were constantly employed and were positioned in consistent ways in relation to the body. In the 18 primary depositions, jugs and *balsamaria* were by the head, in opposition to pans and dishes, laid by the feet. Cups were mainly by the head. A coin was present in almost all graves either held in one hand, on the chest, or on the hips.

In the 2nd century AD, the community set up another16 graves between the centre of the area previously constituted and its eastern side. Tomb structure, burial orientation and position, and grave-goods organization followed the patterns established in the previous century. In contrast to the past, the community started to reuse previously occupied graves for new funerals and hence to reduce the bones of the previous occupiers. Four old depositions were the object of a careful selection of bones, which were tidily put to one side of the new one along with the original grave goods. Grave NECR-27, set up in this period, is one of the rare tombs where personal items formed part of the funerary assemblage in addition to the usual pots: a bone hairpin by the head, a mirror over the chest, and some metal elements by the feet (probably belonging to shoes) complete this unique grave assemblage.

The burials set up in the 3rd century AD occupied a small portion of the necropolis. The community set up a cluster of five graves very close to each other at the NW, probably to bury members of the same family, since wide areas were still available elsewhere. This hypothesis is corroborated by other elements, such as the use of the same type of slabs used as grave covers. A number of burials dug in this phase show different orientation, with the head of the deceased often placed at SE and not only at NW as in the past. Tomb MAS-18 is the first and only grave set perpendicular to the rest. The general trend of grave-goods disposition is in tune with the past, but unique ritual elements also appeared then. There was a trend to manipulate the remains of previous depositions in a new way. For example, in tomb MAS-9 (Figure 4.4), the legs were placed into a pan, together with the long bones belonging to another individual. A large dish in *Sigillata Africana* was placed over the hips of a few individuals, and lamps were often part of the grave assemblage.

From the end of 3rd century AD to beginning of the 5th, when the last burial was interred, some important changes occurred at Masullas. The most evident concerns the manipulation of the deceased. This involved the inclusion of three crania within the assemblage of grave MAS-43B and one in MAS-9bis. Such a level of manipulation was not witnessed during the previous three centuries, hence it is relevant for understanding the fluidity of Mausllas' identity through time.

The four extra crania can result either from reduction of older graves, from other contexts outside the necropolis, or from other graves from the necropolis. The first hypothesis is challenged by the taphonomic evidence. The recognised signs of reduction – bones left aside, bone variety, remains from previous grave goods – are not present in these two cases. As for the second hypothesis, there are no useful elements to be tested yet. The third hypothesis is the only testable by looking at both the physical details of the crania introduced in MAS-43B and 9bis and at other graves for potential sources of crania.

Noticing the absence/presence of the mandible with the buried crania is crucial to understand when they were removed from their original grave: the mandibular ligament is amongst the most persistent in the human body. It decays after around 12 months from death – despite this varies depending on a whole range of environmental (Di Maio, Di Maio, 2001: 21-41) and cultural features such as coffin type and depth of burial (Pinheiro, 2006: 87). Grave MAS-9bis was arranged laying a cranium – without mandible – in upright position, at the feet of the dead. MAS-43B had three crania laid over the body of the main deceased. One only of the three crania present in grave MAS-43B had the mandible still in place, meaning that the skull was removed from a relatively recent burial (less than one year old), before the mandibular ligament had decayed.

Skeletal analysis (Unida, 2005) proved that this skull, together with the femurs at the bottom of the burial, belong to a woman in her mid-twenties, likely a deposition previously occupying grave MAS-43B. Its arrangement though, is not classifiable as reduction as it is adapted to the treatment of the other two crania placed over the latest primary inhumation. Those two crania, and the one in MAS-9bis did not preserve the mandible. If these crania were separated from their original skeletons after the ligaments decomposed, it is necessary to look at signs of potential removal of crania in the other graves of Masullas. Out of the eight graves where the skull is missing, graves MAS-44, 33, and 36 – respectively from 1st, 2nd and 3rd centuries AD – show neither further signs of disturbance nor the removal of other bones. Hence, they could be held as potential sources for the crania introduced in graves MAS-9bis

and MAS-43B. However, there is no biological certainty as no skeletal analyses have been carried out with the aim of understanding the moving of bones through graves yet.

The manipulation of older graves that involved the set up of the last two tombs in Masullas offers few signs that can be linked to the likely mutated needs of the community. One historical event affected the people working in the fields of Sardinia during the mid-Imperial age. Following the arrival of many colonisers from central Italy (Mastino, 2005: 178), workers reportedly moaned about their conditions in the fields (Sirago, 1992: 239-47). The colonization following the introduction in Sardinia of *enfiteusis*[122]– the juridical right that implies the temporary assignation of the land in exchange of a fixed annual canon (Meloni, 1990: 212), with the aim to improve the land's productivity – caused in some cases a division of resources and the expropriation of lands from previous workers (Mastino, 2005: 178-179; Colavitti, 1996: 643).

Constantine had to deal personally with the problems brought about to Sardinia's communities with the ruthless use of *enfiteusis.* Probably in the year 325 AD (Meloni, 1990: 211), he took measures that were meant to reunite the families of the workers whose members had been separated among the various administrators – *conductores*, often acting like proper *domini* (Masi, 1971: 60) – to whom the divided lands were given (*Cod. Theod.*, II, 25, 1). This division involved also that of the workers in the lands,[123] making them highly unhappy, and consequently creating problems both to the agriculture and to the province administration (Meloni 1990: 213). The fact that Constantine decided to change the legislation to fix the social situation is a sign in this direction.[124]

This 4th century AD historical background of workers' division could be one reason laying behind the unusual practices performed in the graveyard of Masullas in that century. This division, occurring at local or regional level, has all the potential to have caused a change in the social structure, causing a group identity distress that the community tried to solve, among other ways, performing new funerary practices that involved manipulation of older burials, the detachment of the cranial bones, and followed by their merging with the new burials. If correct, this hypothesis would enhance the image of a cohesive group identity expressed by the people of Masullas in different ways compared to the past.

This diachronic account shows that, from the perspective of the material culture typology, assemblages from each burial signify a community well settled in a Sardinia and in the broader Mediterranean culture by receiving, using and consuming commodities from the biggest *municipium* of the area, Tharros, from *municipia* further away – Sulci, Karales – and from both Campania, eastern Spain, and North Africa.

The material culture does not show signs for a passive reception of imports. Local artisans engaged actively with them, creatively manufacturing vessels that reproduced selected features of imported goods, satisfying people's needs locally. The high quantity and the aesthetic level reached by the more than 30 cups and dishes – that we could well name *Sigillata Sarda* – provide the clearest example of such engagement. Moreover, such 'up-to-date' artefacts are found alongside numerous coarse ware hand-made pans, each individually different from the others, produced in identical ways for four centuries. Such signs, looked at in connection with each other, form a chain of complementary meanings that point towards a model of self-aware and selective engagement of Masullas' community with the flow of goods circulating in the Imperial Age Mediterranean. The contextual use of such artefacts, however, rather than their mere presence, is what allows us to grasp the mutable nature of its identity.

The stratigraphic analysis of the assemblages allows distinguishing different actions involving such objects in relation with the bodies of the deceased. The nature of the archaeological depositions implies a lengthy

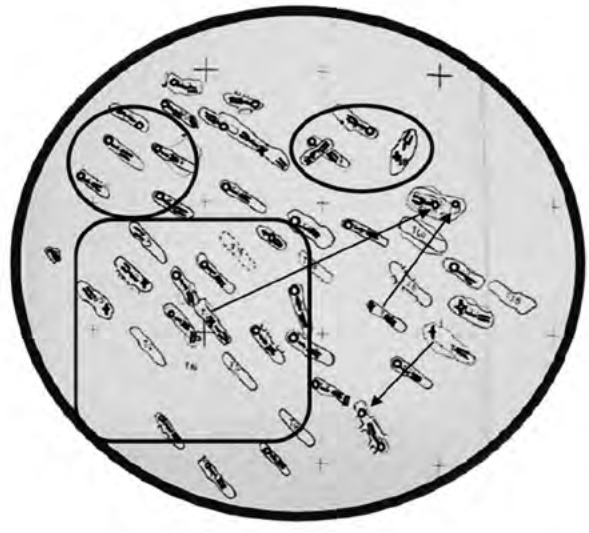


Figure 4.12. Clusters of graves with similar features, with arrows indicating the potential movements of crania from and to graves.

[122] On the introduction of *enfiteusis* see Vera, 1986: 267.
[123] Meloni (1990: 213) talks about *mano d'opera servile*, proper slaves.
[124] The interest of the Emperor could be motivated by the fear that tensions undermined agricultural productivity, rather than by the sorrow for dividing family members similarly to Gaul and Africa (Dossey, 2010: 173).

ritual, with each participant retaining a series of vivid impressions in their mind at the end of each funeral. Witnessing these rituals more than once in their life, enabled the participants to reproduce the same actions.

The repetition of actions constitutes the most archaeologically and anthropologically significant practice in terms of group identity in Masullas. Such practice shaped a widely shared social identity among the members of the community. This happened by using identical techniques of burial excavation, using the same material culture, treating the deceased in very similar ways, performing alike acts of sharing drinks and food, and finally laying the grave-goods in a specific order, decade after decade, for almost 300 years, showing a formidable continuity with the past.

Later, signs of change in the ritual appeared. The first signs started in the mid-2nd century with small variations in the composition of the grave assemblage. Further, more consistent signs, but limited to two graves only, showed intense bone manipulation, still signifying a form of cohesiveness. The same cohesiveness built up through three centuries of performing funerals in a uniform way, was sought later was sought later by establishing a physical connection with establishing a physical, connection with remains from old burials as the cases of MAS-43B and MAS-9bis show.

5. Funerary Practices and Urban Communities in Karales

'No, esa e la trampa. El presente no existe'

Gaspar Galaz, Astronomer,
Nostalgia de la luz, 2010, by Patricio Guzmàn

5.1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the funerary sites of Roman-period Karales, modern Cagliari. As in the previous chapters, both anthropological data and material culture will be presented, aiming at reconstructing the funerary practices that the communities of Karales performed at different sites in a city continuously inhabited from the 7th century BC until today. Archaeologists have identified two separate urban nuclei of Karales since their earliest investigations. Several funerary sites have been found around those nuclei, primarily on Tuvixeddu hill to the west and Bonaria hill to the east. The picture resulting from these archaeological finds is fragmented, with eight investigated sites, as a result of the occupation of modern Cagliari. This is interpreted as the product of two separate Roman-period cemeteries serving people from the two different nuclei, one associated to a Punic ethnic and cultural background – Tuvixeddu – and the other to a Roman one – the eastern necropolis, where a military diploma was found together with burials (Taramelli, 1929). New excavations, carried out for the last 20 years on sites first investigated as early as the end of the 19th century offer an ideal opportunity to update the study of funerary practices at Karales and to evaluate the supposed binary polarization between Punic and Roman realms.

5.1.1. Karales during Punic and Roman periods

Karales is believed to have been the seat of the governor (*praetor*) of the *Provincia Sardinia et Corsica*, making of it the *caput provinciae* (Mastino 2005: 217). A mosaic inscription of the age of Septimius Severus (AD 193-211) found in the 21st *statio* at the Piazzale delle Corporazioni, Ostia, mentions the *navicul(arii) et negotiantes Karalitani* (*CIL XIV,* 4549, 21) demonstrating an established commercial link between Karales and Rome. Historical sources confirm the existence of a much older link, dating to before the establishment of the Roman province. For instance, in 216-215 BC, Karales was the base for the Roman army fighting against the anti-Roman rebels of Sardinia who gathered around the city of Cornus, in central western Sardinia, fired by the victory of Carthage in Canne (Mastino 2005: 218). Whether this harbour was the NW one located by the shores of Santa Gilla – the first Punic settlement – or the more recent one at the SE – distinct from the Punic KRLY – is not clear from historic sources. The second option forces us to hypothesise that from the first decades of the 3rd century BC a Roman Karales was newly founded by the south shores of the modern city, had its own port and did not interfere with, nor exploit, the previous settlement to the north-west which originated in the Punic period. The central question asked with this work will necessarily intertwine with the debate on Karales' urban system, specifically questioning the split nature of the city appearing in traditional historiography as a reflection of the divide between neat Roman and Punic identities.

To understand the traditional interpretation of Karales we need to place it within a broader historiographical context. The roots of the traditional interpretations of Roman-period cities lie in early 20th century studies mainly based on Roman historians' accounts. These are often centred on the foundation of a new city *ex nihilo* – for instance a colonial foundation – even in those territories, the majority perhaps, where a community had settled previously. An example of this is the way Livy writes about the origins of the Roman relationship with the Greek colony of Neapolis. Livy reports that Julius Caesar founded the Roman city of Ampurias[125] in 45 BC with the troops that he had dismissed after the battle of Munda, by means of *deduction* (*Ab Urbe Condita,* XXXIV,9). Livy also reports that after the arrival of Rome the people of Neapolis, both Greeks and Spanish, became part of the same community with the citizens of Ampurias, all of them receiving Roman citizenship. Livy's account is an instance of the Roman propaganda that depicts, in this case, the magnanimity and efficiency with which Rome resolved its relationships with locals without conflict, in a positive, homogenizing, and rapid way. The archaeological excavations have shown a much more complex urban history of the settlement of Ampurias, with different phases of relationship between ancient settlements and Rome, starting at least from Cato's arrival in 195 BC (Borgoñoz, 1997: 712), undermining the traditional

[125] The site on the east coast of Spain where two Greek colonies – *Palaiapolis* and *Neapolis* – were founded respectively in an islet and in the mainland during the 6th century BC, and where a Roman *municipium* was established too.

framework of a simple dualism between two cities and subsequent homogenization.

5.1.2. The archaeological background

Archaeological investigation of the eastern area of the city, so-called Roman Karales, confirmed that Republican Karales was set up in a previously uninhabited area (Mastino, 2005: 219; Tronchetti 2004), as no earlier finds came to light from the area between Piazza del Carmine and Via XX Settembre. This area remains central to the modern city, leading to problems in understanding the structure of the ancient city typical of urban archaeology. Early and mid-20th century archaeological studies emphasised the foundational narrative of Roman provincial cities, confirming first an opposition between the older pre-existing settlements and the new Roman foundations, and then the abandonment of the former in favour of the latter.

Accounts on Karales share some aspects with the previous example of Ampurias. First, the earliest information on it comes from authors[126] who wrote at the same time as Livy, as reported by *Consentius* in the 5th century (Mastino 2005: 217). Second, the Roman army used both Ampurias and Karales as military bases to attack their enemies during the Punic Wars. The former was used from 218 BC (Borgoñoz 1998: 27), whereas the latter served as a strategic headquarters in 216-15 BC, first for Attilius Reglus' troops, and later for those of Q. Fulvius Flaccus, during the suppression of the revolt that arose in Cornus (Pais, 1923: 52), as reported by Polybius (II, 27).

Historic accounts down to the end of the 20th century tended to underscore the urban development of Roman Karales as a town whose administrative and economic centre shifted eastward from the old Punic area of S. Avendrace (Meloni, 1990: 250) to the area of today's Piazza del Carmine. Archaeologically, stratigraphic evidence emerged in the area of present day Via Brenta, Via Po and via Santa Gilla. Settlements in this area go back to the 6th century BC, a period in which contacts with Phoenician culture intensified and continued during the following Punic and Republican Ages (Tronchetti, 2004: 19; 1990: 33). The stratigraphic evidence of such excavations ends in the early Republican period, when an eastward shift is thought to have occurred towards the area of the temple-theatre of Via Malta (Figure 2.11: n. 5), the present day area of Marina closer to the end of the modern harbour (Ibba, 2012; Angiolillo, 1987). Fieldwork confirms the presence of funerary activities performed around these two settlements. What emerges from the study of funerary sites, though, is not a neat and unproblematic picture of monolithic identities reflecting the divided nature of the city.

The traditional interpretation of the Roman Empire as an authority that tried to change the territories and communities that became part of its administrative system leaves space today for a more complex understanding of the multiple and mutable interactions that involved Rome and its provinces. It is within such search for less monolithic narratives that this chapter examines the interactions that took place between the communities of Karales in sites that have too often been treated by past scholarship as purely either Punic or Roman: its necropolises.

5.1.3. Karales' necropolises and their excavations

The eight excavated funerary sites of Cagliari were investigated at different periods, and only those excavated more recently benefit from a modern scientific methodology. This is reflected in an unbalanced picture of these sites, as information on skeletons, grave goods and relation between graves sought here are often missing. This gap was filled partially using the more general data available.

The excavations carried out by Donatella Salvi in Tuvixeddu at the end of the 1990s and by Maria Carmen Locci underneath the Hotel *La Scala di Ferro* between 2007 and 2011 offer some of the most detailed and reliable data. The data used in this work are from different sources: publications, excavation journals, pictures of both skeletons, overall graves, and grave goods. However, the majority of grave goods were being transferred to the new storerooms of the Soprintendenza recently and I could not view them directly. Thus, data concerning the physical features of material culture, such as fabric and surface of ceramics generally rely on the information reported in the excavation journals only.

The few graves at Vico III Lanusei, located between the cemetery of Bonaria and the Hotel *La Scala di Ferro*, are looked at through the publication of the comprehensive study (Martorelli, Mureddu, 2006) of the whole site's excavation. This allows its contextualization alongside other burials taking place in the same area. The recent excavations in Via S. Gilla and San Lorenzo, north of the necropolis of Tuvixeddu, complete the picture with only few data extrapolated from information given by the archaeologist in charge and a brief publication.

Even if very fragmented, these data integrate well with the broader picture provided by the two main case studies presented here: the necropolis of *Tuvixeddu* and that of *La Scala di Ferro*. In terms of epigraphic

[126] Several authors debate whether Consentius refers to Publius Terentius Varro or Cincius Alimentus. See Mastino (2005: 217) and Pais (1999: II: 68).



Figure 5.1.a Map showing the perimeter of Republican period Karales (wide rectangle) as revealed by excavations (Piazza del Carmine within a small rectangle and Via XX Settembre highlighted by a straight line). (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).

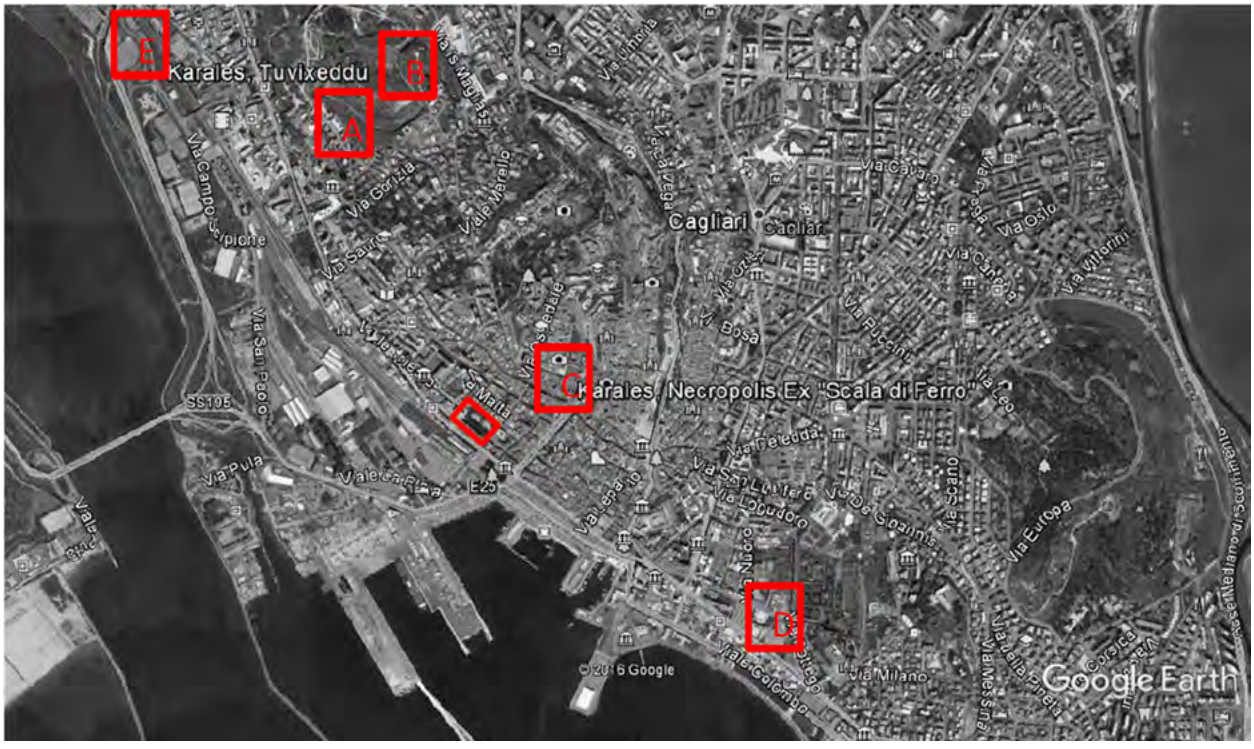


Figure 5.1.b Map showing the area of the forum of Karales and the necropolises mentioned in this book. A)Necropolis of Tuvixeddu, Sant'Avendrace Side; B)Tuvixeddu, via Is Maglias; C) La Scala di Ferro; D) Bonaria; E) Santa Gilla (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).

evidence,[127] Karales represents, together with Sulci, the most abundant source. As in the case of Sulci, numerous inscriptions attest the presence in Karales of people linked to the *tribus Quirina*. Karales' citizens became affiliated to it in the 1st century BC, for showing their support to Caesar during the civil war. This behaviour granted the city an upgrade to the status of *municipium* (Porrà 2007: 45-69) around a century earlier than Sulci. As stated in Chapter 3 for Sulci, these inscriptions can represent a credible sign of the presence of people from Rome – or broader Latium – in Karales. Such tribal affiliations were bestowed on those political elites, such as senators or cavaliers, whose narrative and history have been the focus of numerous traditional studies so far. However, this study skips programmatically the evidence on the few elite representatives, and attempts to give attention to the subaltern majority that was buried, with a certain degree of security, with no epigraphic monument. The same perspective will be applied to Kareles' necropolises.

5.2. The necropolis of Tuvixeddu

5.2.1. History of the excavations and general account

The necropolis of Tuvixeddu is part of one of the most visible landmarks of Cagliari. The hill was more visible in the past than today, since a controversial development scheme – including the use of the hill as quarry (Angiolillo, 2000: 21) – has radically changed its landscape.[128] The area, 12 hectares in extent, is located between via Montello (Puglisi, 1942), to the N, Viale S.Avendrace in Predio Ibba, (Taramelli, 1912) to the W, Via Is Maglias to the E, and Via Montixeddu to the south.

The hill is composed of calcareous sedimentary rocks that display multiple traces of past human activity.

The aerial photos showing Tuvixeddu's pit graves from above have become a symbol of the modern city. Angiolillo, though, noticed that the use of *Tuvixeddu* was not only funerary; two Republican period houses with mosaics have been found in the area (Angiolillo, 2000: 21), confirming Carroll's (2006:1; see section1.3.5) statement quoted above and the semiotic definition of necropolis provided in Chapter 1. Certainly, the relationship between funerary space and settlement needs further investigation, although the treatment of the deceased and the organization of the spaces dedicated to them is the theme of this study. From the first excavations, scholars, such as Crespi and Elena noticed numerous graves dating to the Punic period, along with a few contemporary wells. These graves, well attested in the Punic world, consist mainly of hypogaea with a vertical access shaft – 4 to 5 m deep – leading to a narrow rectangular chamber, measuring between one and two m per side. Ceramic sherds of Greek, Punic and Roman provenance were found all over the hill.

Further chambers belonging to the Roman period, columbaria for the cremated, and architectonic graves, were discovered on the rocky margin of the hill overlooking via Sant'Avendrace. Among these graves are several hypogaea in which Italic people such as *Attilia Pomptilla*, *Cassius Filippus*, *Vinius Berillus* and *Rubellius*, exiled to Sardinia by Emperor Nero, were buried. The most famous and most widely investigated is the hypogeum whose front was sculpted in the rock reproducing the facade of a temple (Figure 5.3) with two columns (see Angiolillo, 1987: 99) *in antis* facing viale Sant'Avendrace, dedicated to the *memoriae Atiliae Pomptillae* (*CIL* X: 7563). Giovanni Spanu refers to other monumental graves at *Tuvixeddu* as early as 1862 (Angiolillo, 2000: 20). These were taken as further proof of the dominion of both the Punic and Roman people and cultures over the island.

Exception made for the architectonic tombs, the Roman period graves were not cut directly into the rock as they used to be in the Punic period. The majority were simple rectangular pits dug into the thick soil layer covering the north-facing slope (Loddo, 1907: 428). This portion of the site corresponds to the area between Via Montello and Via Is Maglias. The next sub-sections will deal with the two sites of *Tuvixeddu* – via Is Maglias and via S. Avendrace

5.2.2. Tuvixeddu – Via Is Maglias (north side)

Three types of graves were set up in *Tuvixeddu* between the Punic and Roman period:

- Punic-period funerary chambers accessible by a vertical shaft cut into the calcareous sedimentary rock;
- monumental Roman-period graves cut in form of Ionic temples *in antis* to the west side;
- Roman-period graves dug into the soil layer on the north side of the hill.

The necropolises of Via Is Maglias and Via Sant'Avendrace, recently investigated, fit in the latter group. This section focuses on the 30 tombs excavated in Via Is Maglias (from now on indicated by the code ISM) in 1955 (Stiglitz, 1999: 11; Salvi, 2000a: 57-58). Its grave goods were reconstructed and studied by Zaru (2002): at the moment of Zaru's stuy, all grave goods were filed in plastic boxes, of which only one had a tag with a precise indication of the excavation date – 24.03.1955. A statuette portraying the god Bes, dated

[127] See Floris, Ibba, Zucca (2010) and, more in detail, Floris (2005) for a complete picture of the epigraphic evidence of Karales.
[128] Stiglitz (1999), Salvi (2005, 2000a) give an account of *Tuvixeddu* in terms of cultural heritage safeguard in relation to the development industry in the area.



Figure 5.2 View of the hill of Tuvixeddu overlooking the lagoon of Santa Gilla to the west. (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).



Figure 5.3. Early 20th century photograph of the grave of Attilia Pomptilla, known as Grotta della Vipera, Via Sant'Avendrace From Angiolillo 2000).

either to the 4th (Pesce, 1961) or to the 2nd century BC (Bartoloni, 1981: 42), comes from the same area (Zaru 2002: 261, note 4). The presence of this statuette of the Egyptian deity, the household protector for the Phoenicians and Punic people shows either the use of this sector of the necropolis in the Punic period or the Punic background of the later graves. Unfortunately, no information concerning either the structure of the bodies or associated grave goods is available. Early 20th century sources report that ISM yielded a set of poor graves, both inhumations and cremations, excavated into the soil covering the calcareous rock (Loddo, 1907: 28). This description was confirmed recently during the excavation of further graves (Salvi, 2000a), in the area of Via Sant'Avendrace (see next section). Among the ten contexts from ISM recovered by Zaru, eight have been identified as proper graves. The other two were considered extra-burial contexts. Tables 12-14 (Appendix 1) show the number of each class and type of objects found in ISM, divided between burials and extra-burial contexts. They also show that only pottery survives from the 1955 excavations. This may be due to either the division of the artefacts found in 1955 by material, as is most likely, or to the actual character of the assemblages. This is less likely, as similar assemblages in Via Sant'Avendrace contained non-ceramic items.

In terms of classes, the large majority of ceramics from ISM are coarse ware and black gloss, followed by a good quantity of thin walled pottery. Looking at the classes and types of grave goods from the 10 contexts of ISM, not much diversity either between graves or between graves and extra burial contexts emerges, very differently from what witnessed at Sulci (see section 3.2.5). It follows that the goods classified as extra-burial here might well also have been part of grave assemblages, but their tags from the 1955 excavations had been lost by the time Zaru looked at the materials.

Among the grave goods, *balsamaria* were the most common, being twice as frequent as dishes and cups. Each type of object is almost exclusively associated with a specific class at ISM. *Balsamaria* from ISM were exclusively made in coarse ware (Appendix 1: Table 14), whereas dishes and cups are only present in black gloss, and beakers in thin walled pottery. Interestingly, no coarse ware dishes and cups were present in the ISM portion of *Tuvixeddu*, although they were common at Via Sant'Avendrace (see next section). No urns were present in the ISM assemblages, showing that cremation was mostly not practiced. Out of 145 pots, there were only two casseroles, both with a deep groove to house a lid.

A significant pattern emerges from the analysis of fine wares. Table 14 (Appendix 1) shows the presence of only one piece in *ceramica vernice nera a pasta grigia* – B GL I – characterised by a grey fabric, seen also at Sulci and Masullas (see Chapters 3 and 4). On the other hand, fabrics BGL and BGLB, almost absent at Masullas and Sulci, are the majority in ISM. This is highly significant in economic terms. Black gloss cups and dishes introduced in this area of the necropolis were imports from Campania or other areas of central and southern Italy. The local production of such class was yet to take off in the period to which these graves belong. Other local productions (i.e. Cagliari 1), abundant in other necropolises of Cagliari, are still poorly represented here. Only one cup belongs to the group of fine wares painted in red and known under the name of Cagliari 1.[129] This class, close to black gloss shapes as cups, dishes, and *piatto da pesce*, was produced between the mid-3rd and the first decades of 2nd century BC by local ateliers at Karales (Salvi, 2000b: 63; Tronchetti, 2001: 275-276) and exported elsewhere in Sardinia. As pieces from the Cagliari 1 class are rarely associated with Attic ceramics (Salvi 2000b: 58-59), Tronchetti assumes that the origin of this local production has to be caused by the interruption of the arrival of the black gloss – widespread in the 5th and 4th centuries – from the early 3rd century BC. Tronchetti does not explicitly state the cause of such a sudden interruption, but he implies a connection with the Punic wars. This fine wares' picture highlights a pattern – where imports outnumber local productions – that is meaningful when compared to the other necropolises of Cagliari. Coarse wares, mainly represented by *balsamaria*, prove more varied than fine wares. Three fabrics, CW91, CW11, CW12, light brown and yellowish colours with very small inclusions, are the most common at ISM.

The chrono-typological analysis of grave goods from ISM shows the presence of objects dating from as early as the first half of the 3rd to the 1st century BC. *Balsamaria* – of fusiform, ovoid and globular types – are the most numerous, with 88 pieces. Several fusiform *balsamaria* Ampullae B.31.1.14,[130] with high shoulder (Camilli, 1999: 90), generally produced in Spain between the late 3rd and early 2nd century BC, come from grave C (ISM-C). The chronology is confirmed by via Sant'Avendrace, SCF (see sections below) and other Sardinian sites such as Ortacesus, San Sperate, Tharros and Gesico (Tronchetti, 1997). As many as 36 archaic *balsamaria,* form Ampullae B.33.7,[131] dated to the early 3rd century BC, were placed in the graves, ISM-A, D, F, and G (Zaru, 2002: tav 1, A3). Contemporary with the latter is the *balsamarium* with shoulder painted with a dark brown gloss, form Ampullae A.23.12[132], resembling the form of a lekythos (Zaru, 2002: tav. V, I 1).

[129] The class reunites three distinct classes: KTV1, Via Brenta Tipo 2, via Brenta Tipo 1 (Tronchetti 1992; Tronchetti 2001).
[130] Cuadrado 1977: type BII.
[131] Cuadrado 1977: CII.
[132] Cuadrado 1977: BIII.

36 cups and dishes, belonging to the black gloss class come from three different subclasses: Campana A, another from Etruria, and a local one, *a pasta grigia* (Zaru, 2002: 238), are distinguishable by their fabrics. Campana A has a fabric of a light pink colour, with no inclusions. The so-called *etruschizzante*, corresponding to the Campanienne B class proposed by J.P. Morel (1981: 47), has a yellowish, or very opaque red coarse fabric with small visible inclusions. The last class has a grey fabric. The first was exported from Naples and Ischia (Morel, 1981: 47) from the last quarter of the 3rd century BC until well into the 1st century BC. The second, fabric B GLB (Appendix 1: Table 14), from southern Etruria, Latium and Picenum, was exported around the beginning of the 2nd century BC. The local production *a pasta grigia* appears in large quantities in Karales and central Sardinia from the end of the 2nd BC (Tronchetti, 1996: 32-34), at least a century later than the imports. From this perspective, the presence of black gloss, both of the *etruschizzante* and *Campana* A sub-classes, in the most ancient graves in ISM is certainly a sign of substantial trade with central Italy from an early stage. Among the most widespread forms is the *piatto da pesce*, form Morel 1122[133] dating from the beginning of the 2nd century BC, contemporary with examples from Nora (Falezza, 2009: 636) mainly with fabric BGL B from Etruria. Dishes form Morel 1312 and 1315.a.1[134], dating from the last quarter of the 2nd century BC, are also well attested. Cups form Morel 2621[135] with ring foot and out-turned rim, and the hemispheric Morel 2913.a,[136] both dated to half of 3rd BC are the most common and oldest black gloss examples at ISM. The most recent is form Morel 2611.a.1[137], and the hemispheric cup with triangular rim and thin groove underscoring it, Morel 2983.a.1,[138] widespread throughout Sardinia in the 1st century BC, especially in the local variety *a pasta grigia.*[139] Deep cups with high walls and sharp rims such as form Morel 2950, mid-2nd century BC, are also present.

Particularly interesting for the understanding of the impact of Carthage and Rome on Karales' commercial links is the askos G14, form Morel 2811.b.1, with a buff colour fabric BGLB (Appendix 1: Table 14). Shape, fabric and handle attachments show that it could be an imitation of an Italic type (Zaru, 2002: 238) from Carthage (Bisi, 1977: 38, tav XI : 3). Based on comparisons from central Italy, Volterra (Morel 1981: 427; Montagna Pasquinucci 1972: fig. 17: 108 109), and Carthage, the askos dates to the late the 3rd century BC.

This vessel is symptomatic of the cultural environment within which ideas and objects circulated in the Mediterranean. Stimuli, in the form of material culture, inspired by Hellenistic models, such as the black gloss askos, reached Sardinia through the mediation of both central Italy and North Africa. Such sources are often impossible to distinguish. This fact undermines any attempt to draw conclusions on identity based on material types only (see Chapter 1). One casserole, ISM-D1, with a convex base and groove for accommodating a lid resembles the many miniatures found at Sulci (see section 3.2.) and in the oriental necropolis of Karales. A series of cups from graves ISM-I and ISM-H suggest the existence of a hybrid between coarse ware and black gloss. These cups are made of a pink fabric with no inclusions, typical of black gloss ware, and come in such typical forms as Morel 2621. By contrast, their surface is not glazed as the original black-gloss pottery (Zaru, 2002: 240). The single-handled jug ISM-F8, with pear shaped body, long conical neck and out-turned rim shows exactly the same shape and reddish-yellow fabric (Zaru 2002: 252, F8; and Sirigu 2000: 148, impasto n. 3; CW11 in Table 14: Appendix 1) of the jugs form Sirigu 2/4 (Sirigu, 2000: 170, tav. IV; Tronchetti, 1997:119, tav. 21, n. 2) from Sulci (see section 3.2.7). These forms are dated between the end of the 1st century BC and the 1st AD, being as such the most recent items at ISM. Thin walled pottery in graves C and D, particularly the beaker form Marabini I, dated to 160 BC at Cosa (Marabini –Moevs, 1973: 49), support the idea of an already strong commercial relationship between Karales and the Italian peninsular already at the beginning of Sardinia's history as a Roman province. The same chronology is confirmed from other sites in Cagliari, as Vico III Lanusei (Defrassu, 2006: 99), in Sulci (Frau, 1999: 179, 186, tav. III n. 16, 17), in Nora (Francheschi, 2009: 147, 148) and in other centres (Tronchetti, 1997: 50, 51, tav. 5: 1, 2).

After seeing the main types of material culture individually, it is time to look at them in the context of their assemblages. The 10 contexts from ISM extend from the late 3rd century BC well into the 1st AD. The oldest graves of Is Maglias are characterised by a remarkable numerical presence of *balsamaria.* Grave ISM-A has only four *balsamaria,* but their early fusiform type and a black gloss cup date the assemblage to the beginning of the 2nd century BC. 21 *balsamaria* of the same form were in grave ISM-D and suggest the same chronology for an assemblage enriched by three beakers Marabini I that bring the chronology down to the second half of the 2nd century BC. Two hypotheses may be suggested: either the use of many *balsamaria* is not exclusive to an early stage of the cemetery, or two contexts from different graves were mixed when the cemetery was excavated in 1955. The same logic applies to grave ISM-C, where six *balsamaria* are found with one beaker Marabini I.

[133] Morel 1981: 84, 85.
[134] Morel 1981: 103-105.
[135] Morel 1981: 191.
[136] Morel 1981: 235.
[137] Morel 1981: 191.
[138] Morel, 1981: 244.
[139] Tronchetti, 1997: 95.

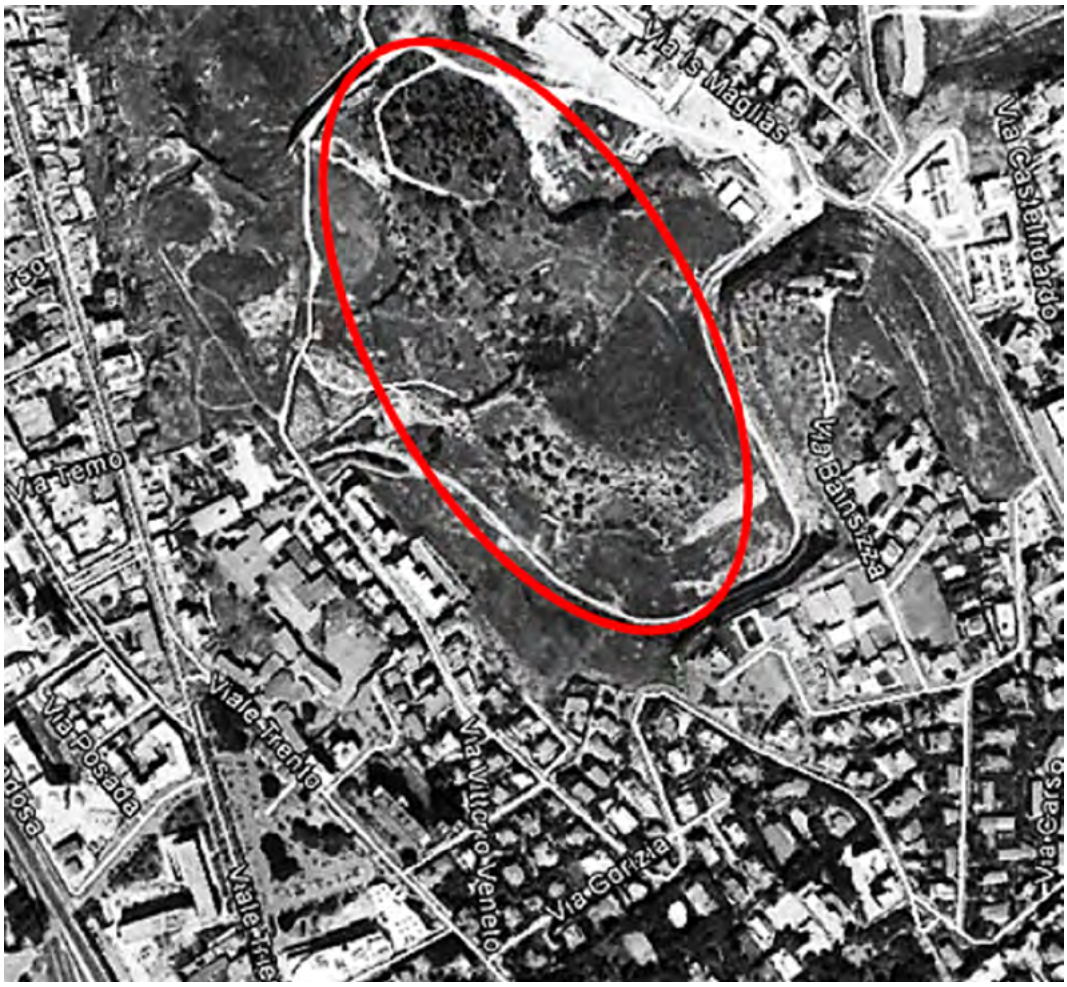


Figure 5.4. Aerial photography of Tuvixeddu, showing the formae excavated in the limestone. (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).

Twelve cups and dishes outnumber instead the only two *balsamaria* in grave ISM-B, dating to the last quarter of the 2nd century BC. The pattern is confirmed by the assemblage of grave ISM-E where among nine items, no *balsamaria* appear, but only black gloss cups and dishes, the earliest of which is the well attested cup Morel 2983.a.1, dated to the 1st century BC (Morel 1981: 244). The assemblage of grave ISM-F is less coherent, as the 1st century AD jug ISM-F8 is found alongside some archaic *balsamaria* form Ampullae B.33.7, and a 3rd century BC amphora.

The ceramic assemblages from ISM show few patterns. First, the period from the 3rd until the early 2nd century BC is characterised by a funerary ritual that makes wide use of *balsamaria,* whose relevance in funerary practice becomes clearer when examined in contrast with other necropolises. Second, from the early 2nd to the early 1st century BC, the communities of ISM made abundant use of black gloss dishes and cups, implying an increase in the practice of drinking and eating among people present at the funeral, and an improved commercial relationship between Karales and central Italy. Third, containers that could be used as urns are almost absent, except the two in graves ISM-A and ISM-D, dating to the beginning of the 2nd century BC. Fourth, objects for pouring liquids are almost absent at ISM, excluding jug F8. These aspects will be interpreted further in comparison with other necropolises from Karales, starting from the *Tuvixeddu* side of via Sant'Avendrace, to which I now turn.

5.2.3. Tuvixeddu – Via Sant'Avendrace (west side)

The area of the hill overlooking via Sant'Avendrace has an irregular geo-morphology due to the alternate rock outcrops and wide flat zones. Hence, the terrain offered different options to the communities using the site for funerary purposes, providing both vast layers of soil – similar to the ISM side – and calcareous rocks. In common with the rest of the hill, this area has attracted the interest of archaeologists and looters whom we have tracked in 19th century documents already. Although the archaeological investigation of Via Sant'Avendrace

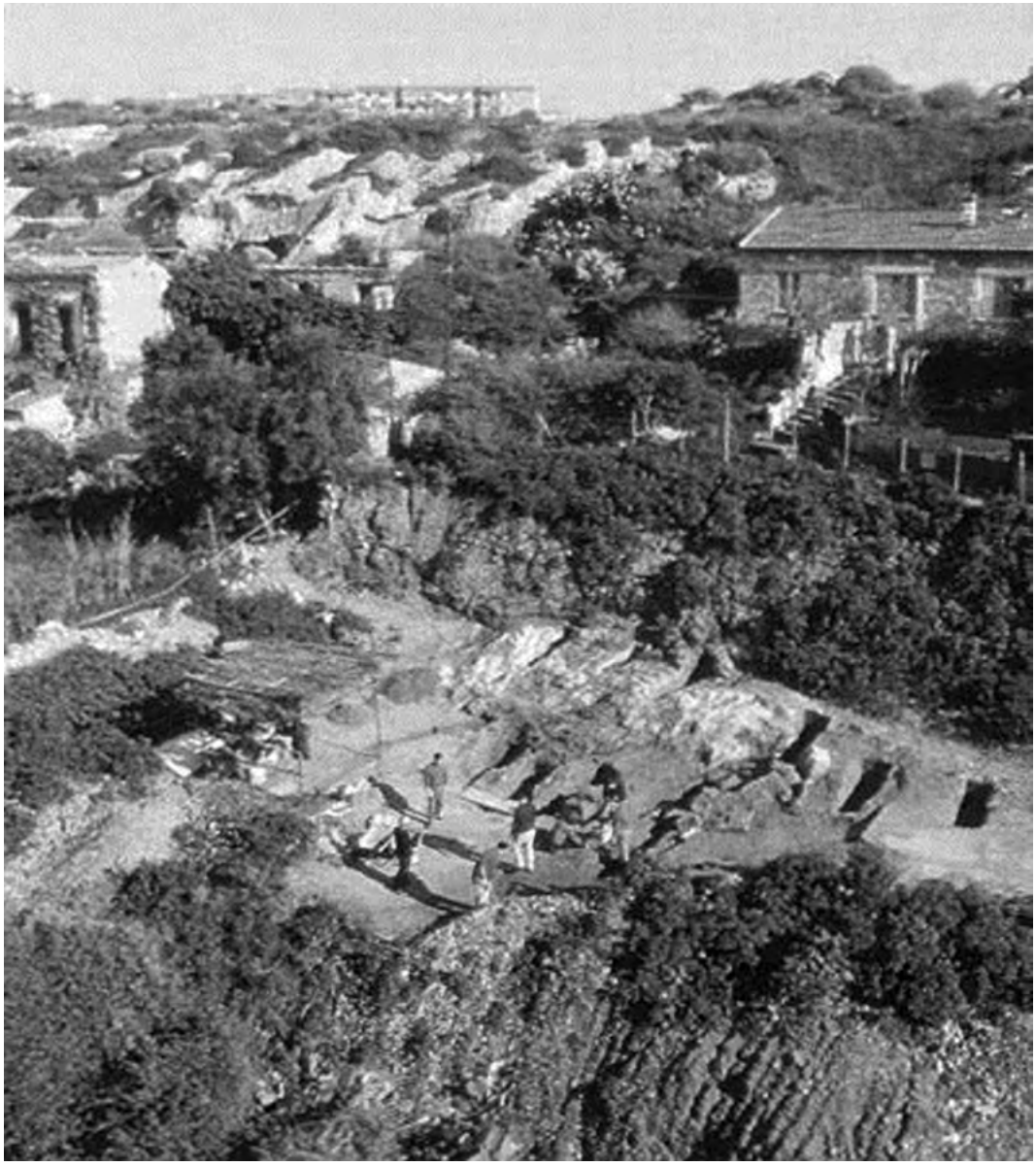


Figure 5.5. Panoramic view of the excavations in Tuvixeddu, Sant'Avendrace side (From Salvi 2000).

also started as early as the 19th century, we are left with very poor contextual information. From July 1997 however, during the operations for the construction of a parking area, a new portion of the necropolis emerged. Its stratigraphic excavation, carried out by Salvi, clarified the stratigraphic succession of events in the area, and yielded 39 graves laying on a steep slope. This investigation, on which this section of the book centres, provides a thorough account of the relationships between graves and a preliminary one of grave goods.

A. The graves at Sant'Avendrace and their associations

The chronology of the 39 graves ranges from the 5th century BC to the 1st AD. The first graves installed in the area have a vertical access shaft linked to a lateral funerary chamber, cut into the calcareous rock. To a second phase belong the pit graves/*formae* and enchytrismoi, both cut into the soil layer covering the rock. The last stage had the communities of Karales introducing cremations, both in *busta* (see section 3.2.4 for *bustum*) and in cinerary urns (Salvi 2000: 58-9). This separation into three phases is made more complex by the presence of several grave goods of a later period within some older burials. Salvi interpreted their presence as the result of practice of purification, explained as an action following the accidental disturbance of an old burial. To put remedy to this, for Salvi, those responsible for the disturbance offered additional grave goods to the deceased whose burial had been disturbed. If correct, Salvi's interpretation

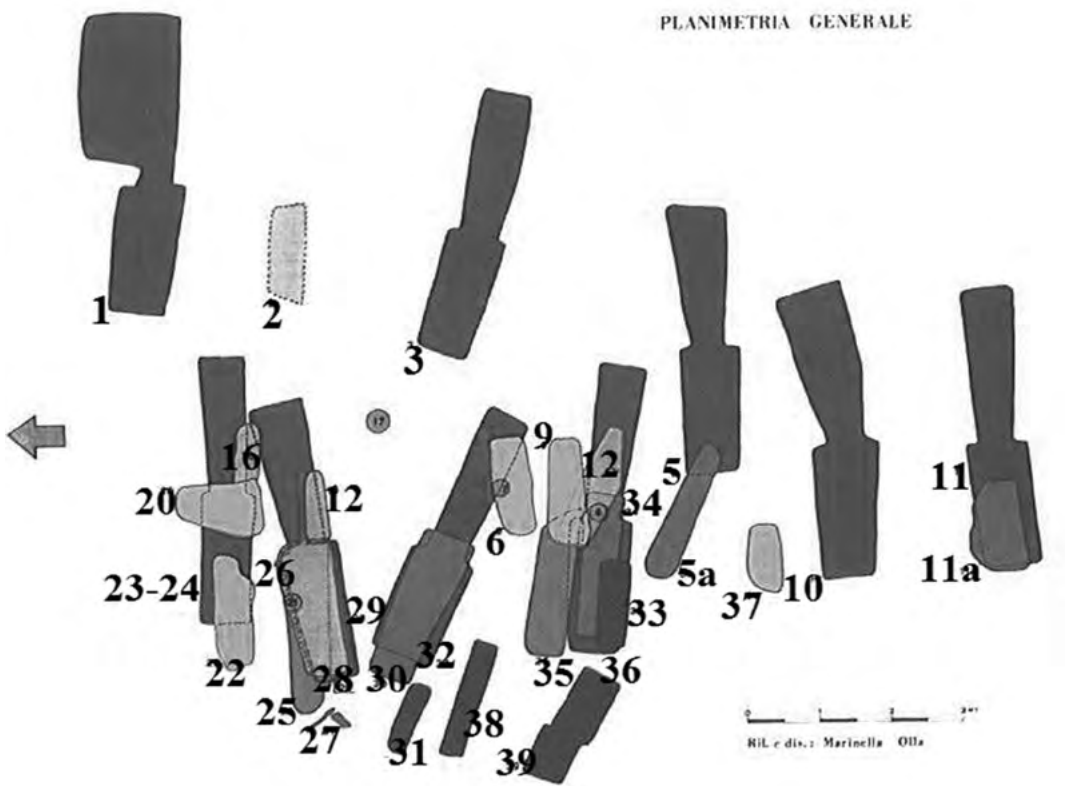


Figure 5.6. Plan of Tuvixeddu, Sant'Avendrace side, drawn by geom. Olla (From Salvi, 2000: tav. VII).

would also go against the belief held in the past that Punic graves were the target of looters in the Roman period (Salvi, 2000b: 59), due to their known abundance of jewels. What is significant for the argument sustained here is the fact that ancient graves were known to the new users of the area.

Grave AVN-10 introduces the funerary activities at *Sant'Avendrace*. A vertical shaft around 2m deep led to the funerary chamber closed by a sandstone slab. It contained three bodies. The first, at the centre of the chamber, was deposited on a wooden bed, surrounded by grave goods, with the head supported by a wooden[140] cushion (Salvi, 2000b: 70). Two deceased, one infant and one adult, were deposited on either side. The funerary equipment was grouped at the centre of the room and by the end wall of the chamber. Some objects were close to the bodies: one dish was on the hips of the adult, bronze fragments and a bronze amulet representing Horus-Ra were on its chest. One black gloss feeding jug and two small casseroles were close to the right shoulder of a young woman, together with a necklace and small animal bones at her side. The small statuette of a woman, playing a timbrel, stood behind the cushion. Some pots were intact, although a few appear to have been broken in antiquity during the funeral, as no signs of later disturbance were detected. A small amphora, sealed with a lump of raw clay, was by the entrance. One lekythos, one amphora, the terracotta statuette and three small cylindrical pans with handles are among the grave goods found in this burial housing three individuals. Grave AVN-10 is representative of the use of *Tuvixeddu* during the Punic period. Let us now turn to the period when Sardinia becomes a Roman province and to the transition between the two phases.

The stratigraphic relationship between graves AVN-5 and AVN-5a helps us understand the succession of different rituals through time. Grave AVN-5 is a chamber at the end of a vertical shaft, accessible through a sandstone-covered hatch. The grave goods, apart from personal items such as one scarab-shaped amulet and one silver earring that were deposited by the feet, were two amphorae and two jugs. To the side of the shaft, cutting it half way along its length, was a rectangular pit grave with rounded sides. Grave AVN-5a, contained one inhumation oriented SE-NW, covered by gravel and sand. The goods were tidily placed around three focal points: by the head, hips and feet. Unusual is the presence of one *balsamarium*, broken in two halves, whose upper part was placed upright by the head of the deceased, whereas its lower half by the feet. Two mugs and one cup were also by the head; one dish, one *piatto da pesce* and one lamp were by the feet. One coin was above the hips. The majority of ceramics are

[140] Sanna's work on the cushion in the laboratories of the Soprintendenza of Cagliari revealed it was made from a conifer.

characterised by a pink/beige fabric and decorated by a soft red gloss, part of a local production known as Cagliari 1 (see previous section).

A similar stratigraphic relationship to AVN-5 and AVN-5a is the one between graves AVN-12 and AVN-34 and chamber grave AVN-36, whose access shaft was cut by them. AVN-36 dated to the Punic period, had one inhumation oriented E-W, with four grave goods, two amphorae and two mugs, similarly to grave AVN-5. Grave AVN-12 was cut into the calcareous rock following the slope in such a way that the head was at a much higher level than the feet (Salvi, 2000b: 64). Its grave goods were one coarse ware dish, one *piatto da pesce* class Cagliari 1 and one mug by the right leg and two jugs, one cup and one lamp, again belonging to the class Cagliari 1, behind the head. All items but two were broken, most likely intentionally and during the funeral – that happened at the end of 3rd century BC – as the rest of the grave was undisturbed (Salvi 2000: 64). Grave AVN-34 was cut into the fill of AVN-36's shaft, and was set up at a lower level than grave AVN-12 without disturbing it. The deceased was laid on its back, the grave goods were by the feet, with the exception of one cup class Cagliari 1 by the head and a coin over the chest. By the feet were one *piatto da pesce*, two cups belonging to the class Cagliari 1 and in black gloss ware and two thin walled beakers. The coin, a *triens* dating to the beginning of 2nd century BC, and the thin walled beakers Marabini I suggest a date around the second half of the 2nd century BC. A similar assemblage come from another necropolis of Cagliari, Bonaria (Tronchetti, 1997: 184-5).

Particularly interesting is the assemblage of the *forma* AVN-35, dated to the late 3rd century BC. The deceased was on its back, arms by its sides, accompanied by a single *balsamarium* broken into three pieces distributed underneath the head, under the left shoulder, and over the chest. The grave setup was completed by a big stone placed over the hips of the inhumed (Salvi 2000: 65).

The group of graves AVN-6-AVN- 9, close to the last group analysed and setup above the inhumations AVN-12 and AVN-34 – confirming the stratigraphic succession seen in the whole area – offers further insights. They are both *busta,* with most bones *in situ* and in anatomical order. It is important to note here that all the *busta* discussed in this book were identified in details at Karales, and that the two authors who identified them, Salvi at AVN and Locci at SCF, are well aware of the scholarly scepticism around their authenticity and they made it explicit in their publications. In fact, they show with precision that all the features that they classified as *busta* – both in AVN and SCF – have the unmistakeable characteristics that define that specific burial type: burnt bones still in articulation, burnt grave goods, the remains of the pyre underneath the cremated body.

However, signs of continuity between the two set of graves exist. Many grave goods were found broken and deposited in different areas of the *busta*, likely as part of the ritual (Salvi 2000: 65), as seen in AVN-35, showing continuity with older practices. Some grave goods and stones had acquired a black colour, due to the lack of oxygen, a sign that the cremation continued when the burial had already been closed (Salvi 2000: 65) and that the body did not entirely burn before the eyes of the community. Yet, remarkable differences exist. One strigil appears by the right arm in grave AVN-9, along with one thin walled beaker and black gloss dishes and cups. A similar grave assemblage characterizes grave AVN-6, likely containing a woman, with the addition of a few other items. One *Ampuritan* grey mug was also at Is Maglias (see previous section; Cerda, 1987: 237), some small bronze nails, one bronze mirror and a small cylindrical bone element, possibly a distaff (Salvi, 2000b: 66; Salvi, 1998: 240). A double headed Janus coin confirms that this *bustum* dates to the second half of 2nd century BC.

The practice of *bustum* burial, associated with the presence of items mainly from Italy, suggests, as Salvi (2000) argues, that the change of practice is a sign of a community that had migrated from Italy was performing its rituals at Karales (*ibid*). Evidence from this necropolis provides details useful for understanding how cremation practice, especially in the case of *busta,* occurred, integrating the more generic data from Sulci (see section 3.2.4). Signs of burning on grave goods and stones show that wood for the funeral pyre was prepared at the base of the grave, alongside some grave goods, on top of which the individual was placed, followed by other grave goods. Those deposited near the fire showed clearer marks of the flames than those farther from it (Salvi, 2000b: 75-76).

A further change in practice is witnessed by the two cremation in urns that were setup in graves AVN-7 and AVN-8 above *busta* AVN-6 and AVN-9. The soil beneath the cinerary urn of grave AVN-7 was red, due to contact with burnt objects. The two coarse ware globular urns, with convex base, correspond to form Sirigu 10/5 (Sirigu 2000: 174, tav. 8) from Sulci, and to its fabric (Sirigu, 2000: 149, impasto 7) – CWA2 here – dated from the end of 2nd century BC onwards. This fabric, CWA 2, became one of the most used in the necropolises of central Sardinia, constituting the majority of fabrics in Masullas (see Chapter 4).

More information on the practices held at AVN comes from graves AVN-30 and AVN-32. The latter is a chamber grave with a vertical access shaft. The former is a rectangular *forma* cut to one side of the access shaft to grave AVN-32. Grave AVN-30, the *forma*, contained a few remains of one inhumation, along with grave goods including one lamp of Punic tradition with two nozzles



Figure 5.7. Grave goods assemblage from grave AVN-32. Picture by U. Virdis (From Salvi 2000: tav. XVI).

(*bilicne*), and a more recent *balsamarium* decorated by parallel red bands. The grave goods belong to different periods. Among them are a small amphora decorated with red bands, belonging to a Punic period, mid-2nd century BC, thin-walled beakers, black gloss dishes and cups, and Republican period coins. These are all associated with the remains of one individual only. This contextual association allows us to exclude the hypothesis of the merging of two different grave apparatuses linked to the reuse of a burial with another deposition and the reduction of the older. Conversely, the original grave was likely excavated between the late 4th and the beginning of the 3rd century BC and, two centuries later, it was revisited either by chance or with ritual aims, just as it happened in Masullas much later in time, around the 4th century AD (see chapter 4 and section 7.7). What beliefs supported these practices remains uncertain, but they were certainly based on the opening of the old grave, holding practices of collective drinking and eating, as shown by the pottery deposited as grave goods amongst the ancient deposition. They could have been the result of an accidental opening of the old grave, followed by the deposition of new offerings to excuse the involuntary intrusion – as often stated by Salvi – or they can be linked to an intentional search of connection with the dead buried in the past to rebuild or reinforce the community's identity around something ancestral. What can be safely said is that in either cases the respect shown from the community to the ancient graves in Tuvixeddu is total, as no disturbance of the bones or of the grave goods was registered during the excavations.

The cluster of graves AVN-24, 16, 22, 20 offers further insights into the intertwining of practices from different periods. Grave AVN-24 has the typical Punic-period structure, with a funerary chamber accessible by a vertical shaft. It contained one individual only. Nonetheless, a chronologically heterogeneous assemblage of grave goods was found, including two Punic period small amphorae decorated with red bands (as in grave AVN-32), black gloss dishes, one Cagliari 1 cup, Republican-period coins, and broken *balsamaria.* This assemblage too can be interpreted as deriving from the reopening of a 5th-4th century grave in the 2nd century BC, as attested above. This makes what could have been thought of as a sporadic event a repeated practice established amongst the community of *Sant'Avendrace*.

Grave AVN-14, in an amphora, type Bartoloni D7, partially occupied the vertical access shaft of grave 24. Nearby was a small *forma* with a coin dating to 174 BC. The *enchytrismos*, was cut by two later *busta*, graves AVN-20 and 22. The offering placed in *bustum* AVN-22, dated to the mid-2nd century BC, included small animals, miniature pans, fusiform *balsamaria,* and pinecones. Underneath it, grave AVN-24 was filled with sand and broken *balsamaria,* and had some dishes lining the wall opposite to the entrance of the chamber, with several dishes and cups placed vertically and some others

flipped upside-down, with a pair of scissors underneath. The presence of items that were contemporaneous with *bustum* AVN-20 in the fill of grave AVN-24's shaft beneath has two possible explanations. It could be either the result of a slip of earth-fills that caused an intrusion of grave AVN-20's fill into grave AVN-24, or, as seen in several other graves at AVN, a way of paying tribute to the dead of the past civilization, after their casual – or less casual – discovery by the Roman period communities (Salvi, 2000b: 59-60).

The group of graves AVN-29, 28, 26, 25, 19, 21 confirms the stratigraphic information highlighted so far. The oldest grave of the group is again a chamber grave with access shaft and the most recent a cinerary urn, with in between pit graves, enchytrismoi, and *busta*. *Enchytrismos* AVN-19 contained an infant, as did grave AVN-25, a simple shallow pit. The grave goods of the latter comprise of two fusiform *balsamaria,* one bronze ring, one shell – a cowrie – and one amulet, likely once part of a necklace. The amphora of the *enchytrismos,* grave AVN-19, form Bartoloni 7 like that of grave AVN-14, was broken at the bottom and the fracture smoothed with an abrasive tool. Another cowrie and several amulets and necklace fragments were part of the grave assemblage, together with a miniature coarse ware globular pan similar to those found – and likely produced – at Sulci (see section 3.2.5), one feeding jug by the mouth of the amphora and one lead box.

It is noticeable that the majority of graves provided with jewels from *La Scala di Ferro* are infant inhumations too, as well as at AVN. Pit graves AVN-26 and AVN-28 were cut in the early Republican period into the fill of the shaft leading to the chamber of Punic-period grave AVN-29. Unlike the large majority of graves, the individual buried in grave AVN-26 was oriented W-E, although the position of the body, laid on its back, was like the others. Five *balsamaria* and one black gloss dish were amongst the grave goods. Here too, the *balsamaria* were broken in two parts, with the upper halves laid by the head, and the lower between the legs and by the left side of the deceased. A black gloss dish, with bird bones, was by the right arm, while on the chest was a quartz stone and a Punic coin. Grave AVN-28 was only a few centimetres deeper, with the grave goods positioned behind the head. The deceased was laid on its back, with the left hand, bearing an iron ring, folded over the abdomen and the right hand holding a coin, by the side. The chamber of grave AVN-29, as many others here, was revisited in antiquity, as items contemporary to early 2nd century BC grave 28 were found inside, tidily positioned by the right arm – the only bones preserved – of the deceased, likely an infant. The grave goods are miniature objects, such as one *skyphos,* two small cups and two small pans, a ceramic dove and a small part of an ostrich egg. Several golden fragments from a necklace – Horus, one horse's head, and a lotus flower



Figure 5.8. Grave AVN-27, one of the latest archaeological layers (From Salvi 2000: tav. XII).

– silver from a bracelet, one earring, were personal ornaments of the infant deposited on a wooden bed.

Several other graves at AVN were superficial and were damaged during construction works.[141] Grave AVN-17, a cinerary urn, gives us interesting information about the phases following the cremation of the deceased. It was micro-stratigraphically excavated in the laboratory of the *Soprintendenza di Cagliari*. The analysis showed that, after cremation had occurred in an *ustrinum*, the bones were collected and positioned in the urn in a precise order: first the cranium, followed by long bones, and then by vertebrae, hands and feet-bones, together with one coin (Salvi, 2000b: 73). The urn was then closed using a lid reversed over the urn's rim. This is just an example of how a detailed excavation of the micro contexts can produce a valuable set of data that can generate insights around the precise set of gestures that made that specific context happen. Those would certainly benefit further interpretations on the identity of the community and individuals within it who performed those gestures.

Among the objects found during the surface collection at AVN were 1st century AD ones, showing that the last time the cemetery was used was the early Imperial period. Contemporary with these finds is pit grave AVN-27, the latest setup in the cemetery. It contained an infant, underneath whose hips was a coin dated to Tiberius' reign. Several glass *balsamaria* form Isings 8 were positioned between the legs and over the abdomen of the deceased, and one lamp by its feet. The grave of the infant AVN-27 ends the evidence of burial activity in this area of Tuvixeddu, by Sant'Avendrace side.

B. Entangled funerary practices at Sant'Avendrace

A discussion of the grave sequence is provided in this sub-section, before comparative interpretations are

[141] I.e. enchytrismos AVN-37, and AVN-39, 38.

offered in the next. Salvi (2000: 76) argued that the second phase of use of AVN, dating to the mid/late-3rd century BC, occurred when there was no trace left of previous rituals or of earlier graves in the memory of the community that started reusing the cemetery. To support this, Salvi draws on the fact that the excavation of the 3rd century graves involved only the superficial layers of the rock and the fill of the Punic period vertical shafts, that were easy to dig to install new graves. This conclusion is debatable for several reasons. First, the data collected show that the bodies buried in the 3rd century BC are oriented E-W, exactly as those of the 5th century and of the 2nd, despite this can also be due to the diggers following the natural slope of the ground. Second, the presence of broken grave goods around the bodies in both 5th, 3rd and 2nd centuries BC – and not in one of those periods exclusively – suggests that the communities that used the funerary area of Sant'Avendrace kept performing a practice centred on the repetition of a past ritual, linking in some way the Punic-period communities with the Roman-period ones. Third, 2nd century items were repeatedly found in Punic-period graves, providing evidence of the performance of rituals in the Republican period in the presence of deceased from the ancient graves. These elements prove that the practices performed by the communities of AVN in the 3rd and 2nd centuries represent a link – maybe a loose one but still a visible and accountable one – with those practised in the 5th century. This link was kept alive through both the memory of certain practices and the direct experience of the ancient graves, observed by the members of the community who re-excavated them and decided to place new grave goods inside them.

The frequent presence of Republican-period items inside Punic-period burials shows that the Roman-period communities knew that the area had been previously used for the dead, and they were aware that their own burials would have had to interact necessarily with those buried in the past. Drawing on these elements, the Roman-period community decided to create new graves performing their own practices with full awareness. There were certainly practical reasons for this – the soil was easy to excavate – but there were also ideological motives. The members of the Roman-period community of Sant'Avendrace could have taken the decision to distance themselves from previous funerary tradition not just in terms of practices but also spatially, but they did not have any reason to do so. The interment was often followed by further manipulation of the ancient grave with which they interact during the excavation of the new grave. Such interaction, in several cases, consisted not only in the addition of new grave goods, but also in the removal of older bones, as occurs in grave AVN-30. There, only the bones of one foot and one hand and humerus were present, despite all grave goods were *in situ*. This fact needs to be accounted for as a voluntary action (in accordance with Salvi 2000: 67), and cannot be dismissed only by reference to poor conservation conditions – as the other material culture is perfectly preserved in its original position. Instead, it requires the interpretation of a more active engagement of the Roman-period community of AVN with the past of the funerary area. The topic will be expanded further in the comparative section in Chapter 7.

Although the treatment of the deceased laid in the graves was quite uniform in the inhumations from both 5th, 3rd, and 2nd centuries BC, the graph in Figure 5.9 below shows a change in terms of both grave and material culture types.

The 13 chamber graves (Figure 5.9) cut into the calcareous rock and accessible via vertical shaft, 1-1.90 m deep, were constructed between the first half of the 5th and the end of the 4th century BC. The chamber, once the deposition of the bodies had occurred, was sealed with a sandstone slab, likely brought from elsewhere as sandstone was not present in the area. Some of the chambers show signs of visits/disturbance during late 3rd and 2nd centuries BC: the presence of recent grave goods, out of context in relation to the original ones, is one of them. *Enchytrismoi* were buried, generally superficially, both during the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC, as were the *formae*. These were cut in the majority of cases into the soft fill of the ancient shafts until the 1st century AD.

The biggest change appears during mid-2nd century BC, and consisted in the introduction of cremation, *busta* first and later cinerary urns, after 350 years of inhumations. Nonetheless, inhumation continued to be used alongside cremation. For Salvi (2000), this change is due to the arrival of people from central Italy after Sardinia became a Roman province. However, Salvi does not state whether she means a change adopted by the locals or a change attributable only to immigrants from central Italy. In this work, the appearance of cremation at AVN is given a meaning of integration of people from elsewhere. This is signified on one hand, by the fact that inhumations continued being practiced alongside the newly introduced rite, and on the other by the fact that the same items were used within the two different practices.

It is crucial to look at the material culture placed in the graves to understand whether other diversities in the practices performed emerge or if they make use of the same objects. Examining the material culture from each grave type, several patterns emerge.

First, although the presence of the same type of objects make chamber and pit graves appear similar, the proportions of their use show that a remarkable

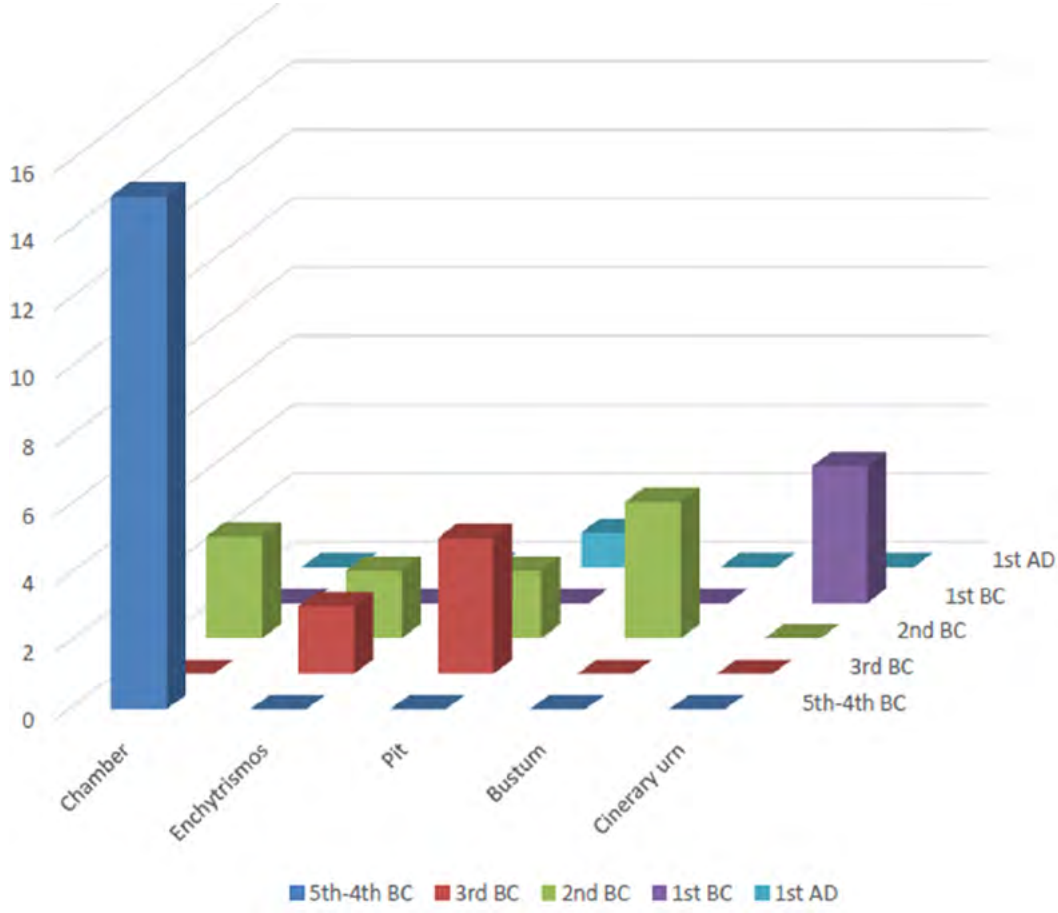


Figure 5.9. Use of each grave type per period in Sant'Avendrace.

difference existed between the funerary practices performed in the 5th and 4th century and those performed in the 3rd . In the older practices, the community of AVN handled a large quantity of amphorae and ornaments such as rings, earrings, necklaces, amulets and bracelets that are used very rarely in later times. On the other hand, *balsamaria*, cups and dishes became the main elements in 3rd century pit graves but were rarer in 5th– 4th century chambers graves. The graph in figure 5.11 compares the chronology of grave goods deposited in chamber tombs. It shows that the chambers originally contained bodies deposited especially with ornaments and amphorae, whereas *balsamaria* and coins resulted from their reuse in the 3rd and 2nd centuries BC.

These observations demonstrate a drastic change in the funerary ritual in the 3rd century BC. This change is indicated, first, by the abandonment of chamber grave types, second, by the actions performed during the funeral and by the items adopted. Personal ornaments used in the chamber graves and balsamaria in the pit graves can be used to represent two very different treatments of the body. The former helped to embellish the deceased before the eyes of the participants, whereas the latter signify a less visible care aimed at modestly washing and perfuming the grave and the deceased that was going to be housed in it. Yet, despite these differences, the similarities occurring in the treatment of the bodies in different grave types are numerous: for instance, the orientation and position of the deceased remained the same through time, independently from the practice adopted. Moreover, the communities of AVN placed deliberately broken objects in both chamber and pit graves, and positioned them similarly around the body. D

Despite the change that the cremation practice brought into funerary ritual, elements of continuity between pit graves and *busta* persisted. The common presence of *balsamaria* – broken or complete – coins, and objects connected to drinking and eating, such as jugs, dishes, and cups is among these. The main activities performed around the dead body, including the spreading of perfumes, stayed the same.

There are striking similarities in the treatment of infants in the *enchytrismoi* and in the chamber graves, despite the two centuries that separate them. This illustrates, on one hand, continuity in the treatment of

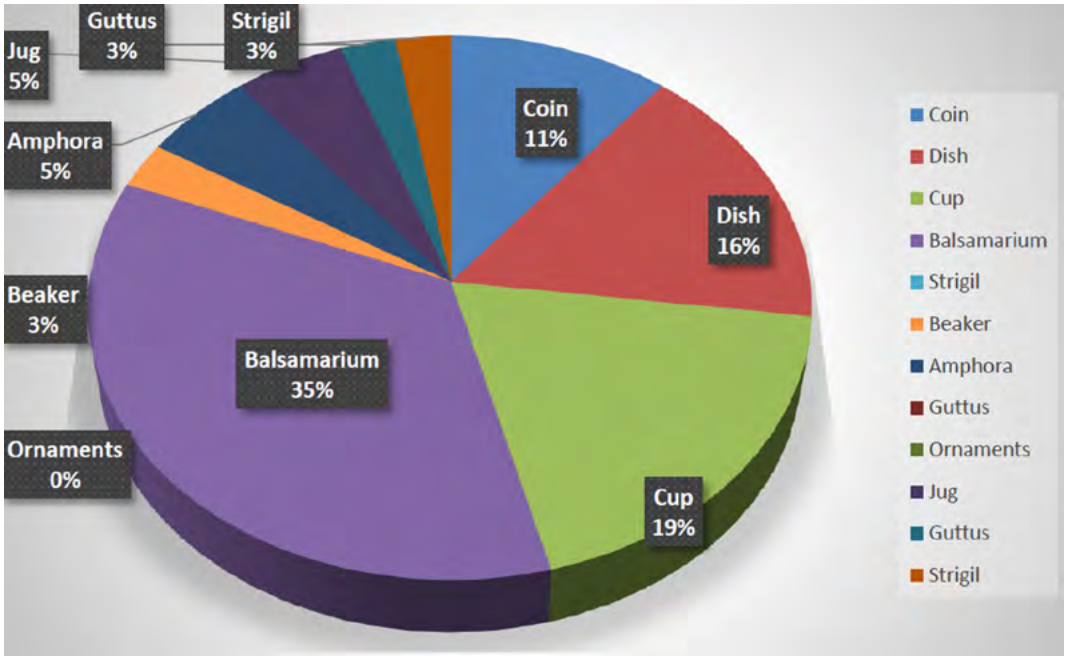


Figure 5.10. Material culture from *busta* in Tuvixeddu-Sant'Avendrace.

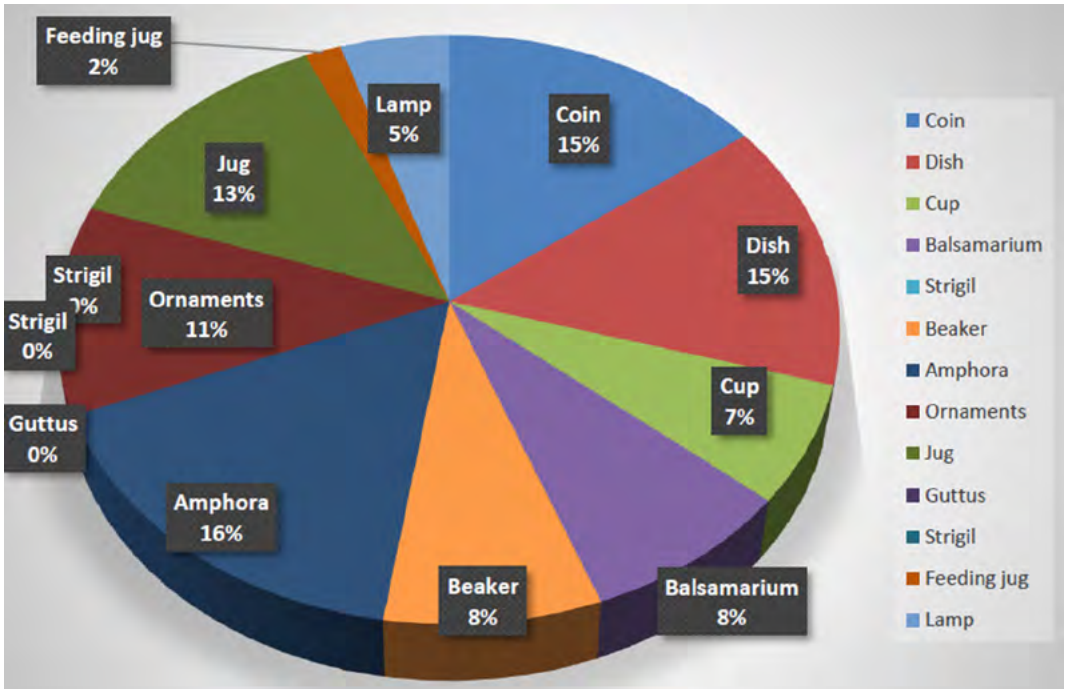


Figure 5.11. Material culture from chamber graves at Tuvixeddu-Sant'Avendrace.

infants between the 5th and 3rd century BC and, on the other, a remarkable discontinuity, as the infants were deposited in the same chambers as the adults in the Punic period, whilst they were buried separately in the 3rd BC.

The last phase of the necropolis, represented by burial AVN-27 only, shows a further change from cremation to inhumation occurring in the 1st century AD, but, as when cremation took over, the material assemblage does not show much change. The individual in grave 27, a young person, was buried with four glass *balsamaria*, some by the head and some by the feet, one lamp by the feet and one coin over the hips. Similar patterns, and in particular similar numbers of *balsamaria*, characterised the *busta* assemblages 150 years earlier, proving once

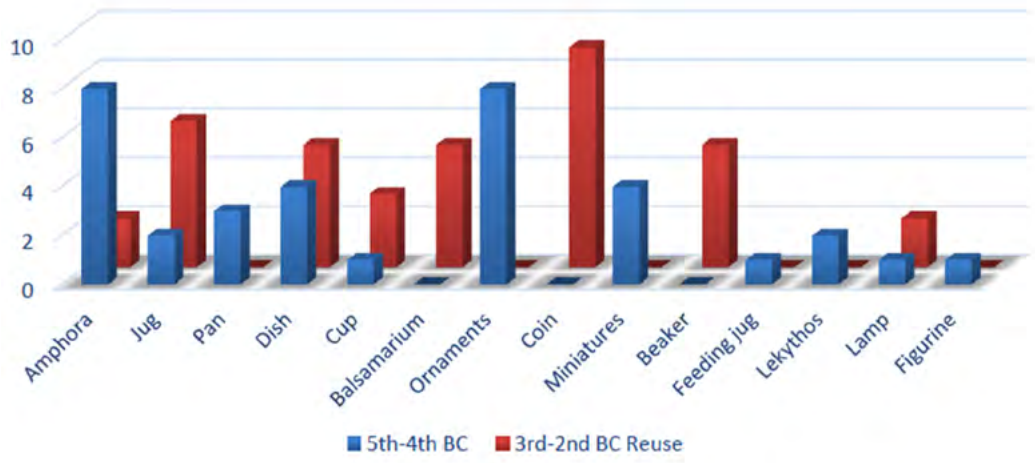


Figure 5.12. Material culture from chamber graves at Tuvixeddu-Sant'Avendrace: 5th/4th centuries BC original assemblages (blue) and 3rd /2nd century BC additional ones (red).

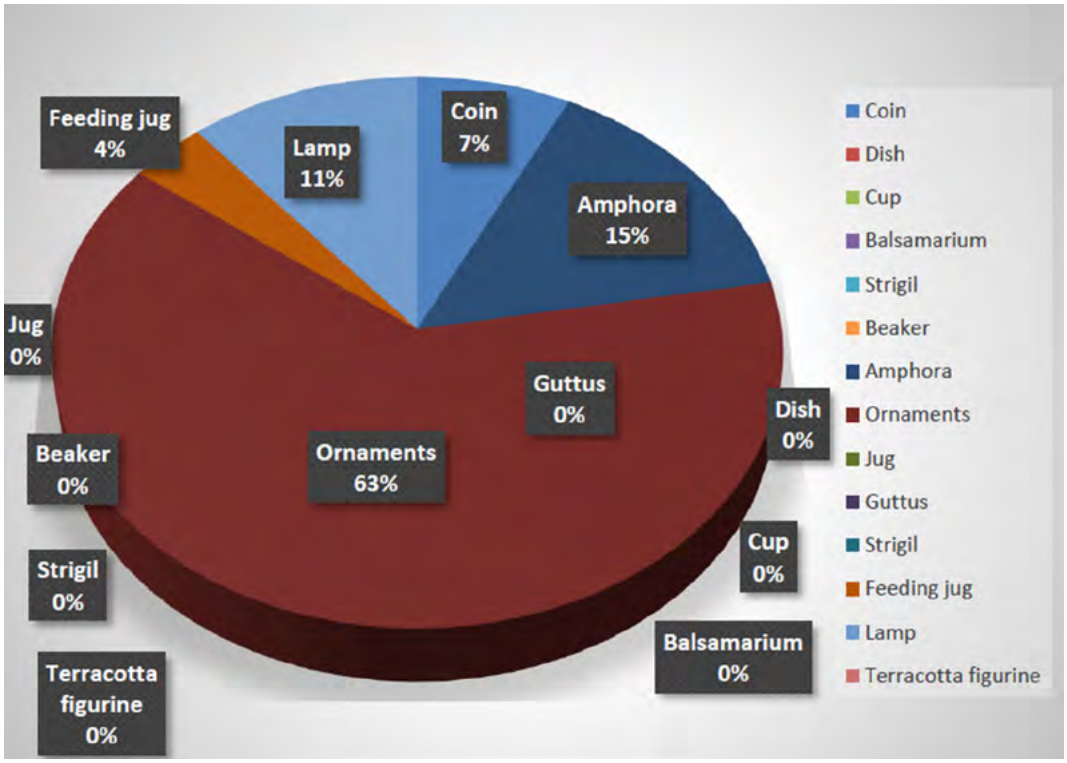


Figure 5.13. Material culture from burials in amphorae at Tuvixeddu-Sant'Avendrace.

more that continuity and discontinuity between different ways of dealing with the dead coexisted in practices that we would superficially judge as very distant from each other.

Material culture at AVN is similar to that found at ISM, although we should recall that if AVN was used from the 5th century BC, ISM was in use only from the 3rd BC. One main difference between the two concerns the classes of materials adopted, where black gloss pottery was more common, and with a wider variety of form at ISM (Appendix 1: Table 13) than at AVN (Appendix 1: Table 16).

The community that used the site of ISM had access to a wider variety of imported black gloss from both Etruria and Campania, in addition to *vernice nera a pasta grigia* produced locally, absent at AVN. *Balsamaria*

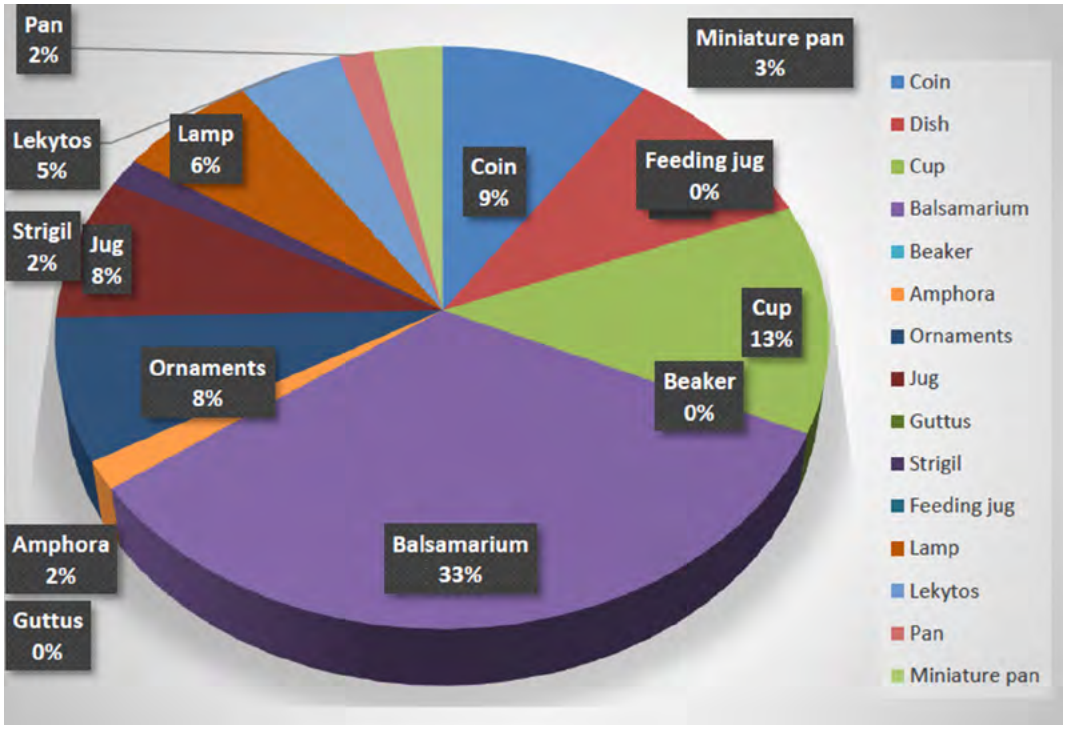


Figure 5.14. Material culture from pit-graves at Tuvixeddu-Sant'Avendrace (3rd BC-1st AD).

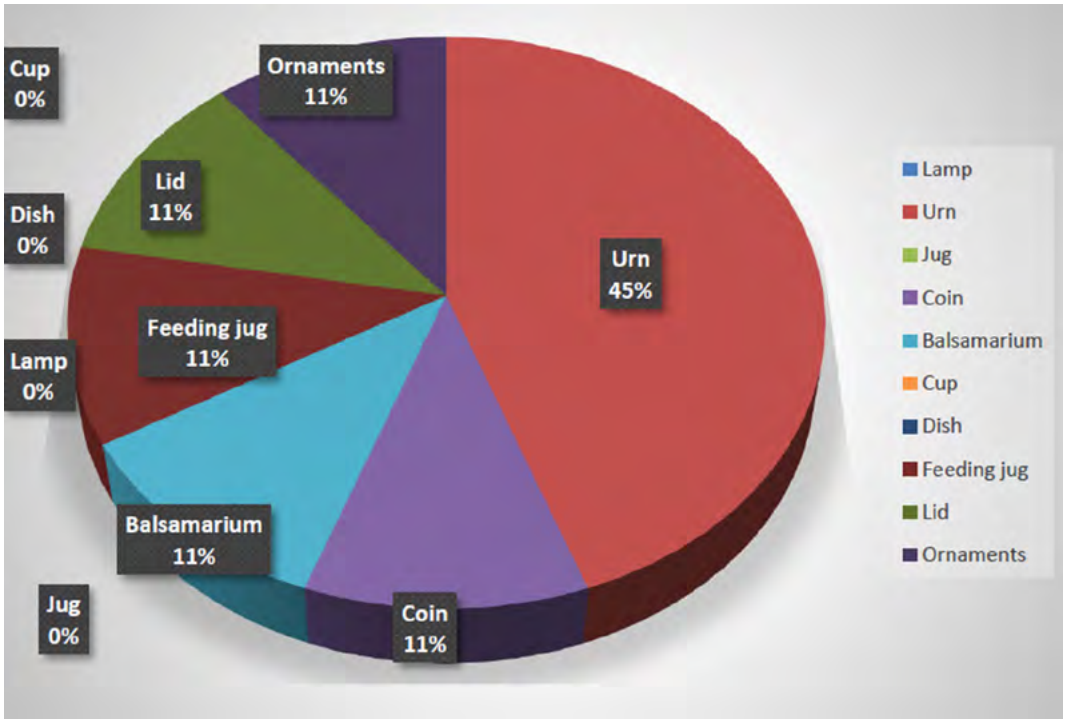


Figure 5.15. Material culture from cremations in urn at Tuvixeddu-Sant'Avendrace.

are well represented at both sites, being fundamental in the practices performed from the 3rd century BC onwards. A wider variety of forms characterizes ISM. The class Cagliari 1 was present at ISM with only one cup, whereas 13 cups and dishes of this class were placed in the 3rd and 2nd century BC graves at AVN. In both cases, some of the latest pieces are the thin walled beakers with an everted, moulded lip, form Marabini-Moevs 1 (1973: 49), dated to the mid-2nd century BC. Jewels and personal ornaments are well represented

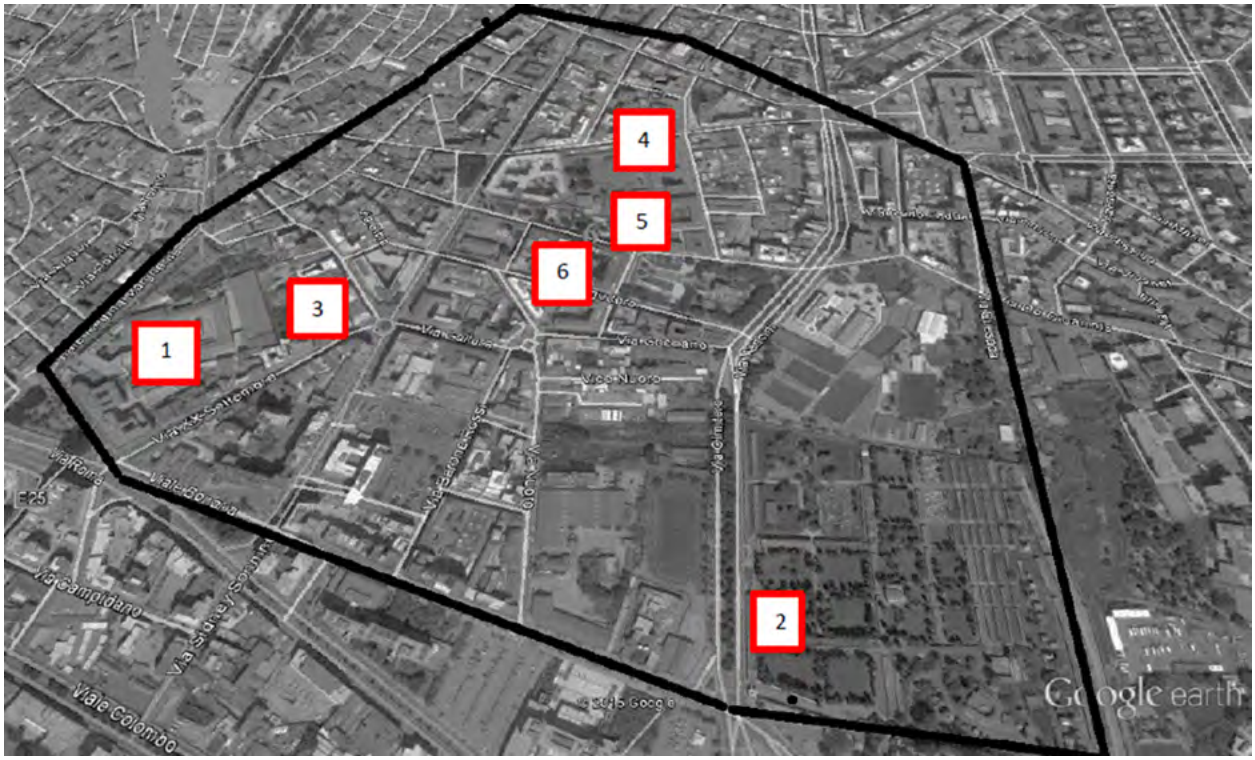


Figure 5.16. Area of the eastern necropolis of Karales with excavated sites: 1-"Ex Albergo La Scala di Ferro" 2-Cemetery of Bonaria; 3-Vico III Lanusei; 4-Corner between Via Frassoi and Via Delitala; 5-Via Deledda; 6-Chiesa di San Lucifero. (Source: www.google.co.uk/earth).

at AVN, whereas none is recorded at ISM. Looking at coarse ware, a remarkable difference emerges between the sites. Jugs, pans and jars are absent at ISM, but appear more consistently at AVN. This means either a wider variety of practices performed at AVN, or that the AVN communities consumed items placing them in the graves after performing the funeral, whereas ISM communities did not.

Diversities in ritual, and both differences and similarities in contingent actions define the funerary practices performed at AVN throughout six centuries. They reveal the introduction of cremation practice, a foreign one at the time in Karales, likely signifying the arrival of immigrants from Italy, who integrated well in the structure of the sites that had been used by Karales' communities for several centuries before. The study of the oriental necropolis sites, to which I now turn, will provide further elements for a comparative understanding of Karales' communities in Roman time.

5.3. *La Scala di Ferro*: the eastern necropolis of Karales

5.3.1. The eastern necropolis: sites and discoveries

The *municipium* of Karales was served by another funerary area of around 17000 square metres, situated between the hill today located beside viale Regina Margherita and the hills of Bonaria and Monreale, parallel to the coastline running SE-NW (Mureddu, Salvi, Stefani, 1988: 63-88; Salvi, 1998: 235; Tronchetti, 2004: 22, 23). This area, at present completely urbanised, includes several sites of archaeological significance that have yielded numerous funerary remains. To the north is the church of Sant'Agostino, underneath which are several Roman-period graves, as they were to the west, close to via Deledda, via Iglesias and via Sonnino.[142] The 1952 excavation yielded both cinerary urns (Salvi, 1998: tav. III: 1, 2, 3), inhumations in *formae*, and enchytrismoi (Salvi, 1998: tav. III: 4). The only data Salvi (1998: 238-9) obtained from the original notebooks from the 1952 excavations show that the inhumations were set on layers that were sealing the one where the cremation pits cut through. More cremations are located between via Lo Frasso and via Delitala, north of the church of San Lucifero. Salvi (1998: 240) dates the cremations to 1st century BC and the inhumations roughly to 2nd-4th centuries AD, as confirmed from the sketch (1998: 250, Tav. IV) depicting a rectangular pit grave and one large pitcher with a long cylindrical neck, pear shaped body and intro-flexed foot, Campidanese class (Figure 5.17.), usually from 3rd -4th century AD contexts (Tronchetti,

[142] For a full account of the 19th century excavations see Salvi 1998: 236.

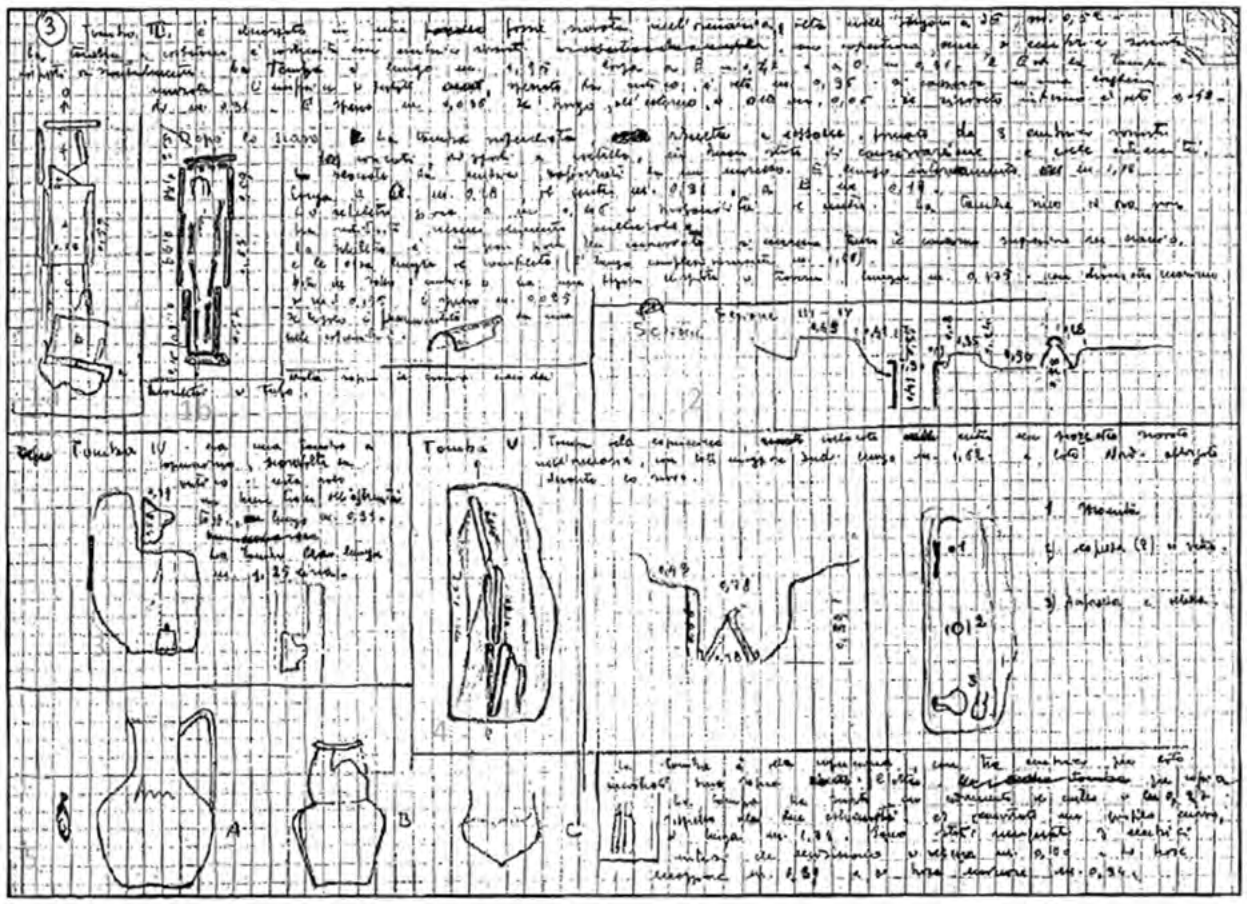


Figure 5.17. Sketches of graves from via Frassoi (from Salvi, 1998: tav. IV). The sketch shows: 1a: plan of cist grave III closed; 1b: plan of cist grave III open; 2: section of the features housing one grave *alla cappuccina* and one pit grave; 3: plan of grave IV; 4: plan, section and grave goods distribution of grave *alla cappuccina* V (from left to right); 5: sketch of grave goods from grave 5.

1996: 120-121), as noted in Masullas (see Appendix 2: forms II.M.2.g.δ.02, II.M.3.f.δ).

A few blocks away from San Lucifero, underneath the church of San Saturnino, recent excavations have yielded inhumations in pit graves and *alla cappuccina* ones dating from Republican to late antique period (Salvi, 2002b: 215). It is important to remember that these graves were excavated for the first time in the 17th century, when during the Counter Reformation, catholic bishops commanded digging into late Roman-period burials in search of the *'corpi santi'*, the bodies of the saints that would have proved in a physical way the legitimacy of the Catholic Church (see Mureddu, Salvi and Stefani, 1988). Little detailed information could be gathered from this, although Christian and pagan burials likely coexisted (Salvi, 2002b: 217). Inscriptions were reused and incorporated in the Byzantine walls (*Ibid*).

5.3.2. The necropolis under the ex hotel *La Scala di Ferro*

The interpretative limits imposed by the fragmented evidence for the *necropoli orientale* convinced me to use scattered data from different areas only to contextualise the recently excavated necropolis laying underneath the 19th century hotel *La Scala di Ferro*, on which this section focuses. Its study draws on the following sources:

- the publication of a group of graves excavated in 2010 by Carmen Locci (2012);
- the excavation journals;
- some of the grave goods excavated and available;
- the photographs and drawings of the excavation;
- the few anthropological data available that, in tune with the general trend of the necropolises analysed here, unfortunately rarely include gender and age details.

The excavation of the necropolis of *La Scala di Ferro* (from now on SCF) has yielded 164 contexts, including 128

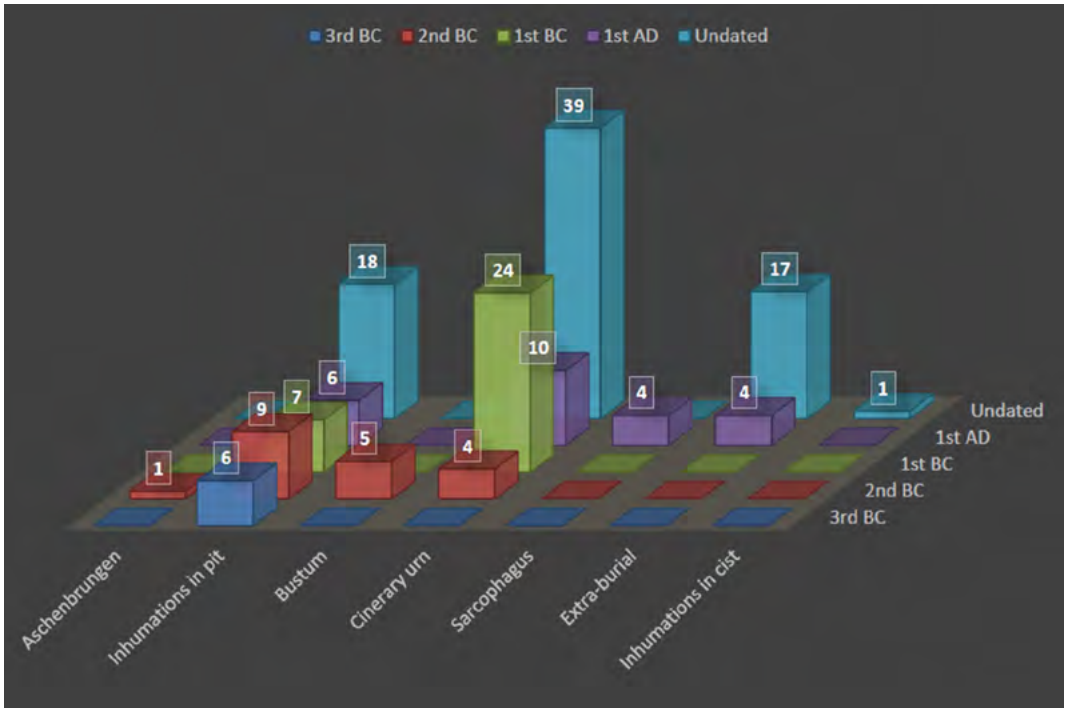


Figure 5.18. Grave types at SCF from the 3rd century BC - 1st AD (included).

burials (Locci, 2012: 108) divided between cremations and inhumations, and 36 extra-burial contexts, with a total of 868 items whose chronology goes from the 3rd century BC to the 1st century AD. The site is on the hilly area where today's Viale Regina Margherita ascends from the sea towards the NE. Its geology, a limestone crag overlapping layers of marl, is similar to *Tuvixeddu* (Locci, 2012: 108). The grave typology is varied and inhumations and cremations coexisted for a long period.

From these first data emerges the following chronology of the cemetery of SCF.[143] The earliest graves set up at SCF are inhumations, followed in the stratigraphy by a layer cut through by *busta* first and cremations in urns second, then by inhumations, common until the end of use of the cemetery. The first cremations – in five *busta* – were introduced between the late 3rd century BC and the early 2nd BC. Their identification, not easy on the ground (see section 3.2.4), is important here because of their stratigraphic relation with inhumations (Locci, 2012: 111) that allows us to reconstruct the succession of rituals adopted in this area of Karales. More arguable is the gap in use in the 1st century BC highlighted by Locci (2012: 111), as several pieces of material culture such as *balsamaria*, coarse ware lids and black gloss cups suggest that the site could have been still in use. At the end of that century, the area underwent a profound transformation with the creation of walls delimiting the graves (Locci, 2012: 109). In order to contextualise these changes of practice let us look at the site in detail, starting from the grave typology.

The oldest graves at SCF are inhumations in sub-rectangular *formae* from the 3rd century BC. The majority contained infants. Their form was homogeneous. The body was laid on its back accompanied by jewels and amulets in glass beads plus animal bones. Some objects are of Levantine or Egyptian provenance, such as the head wearing a turban and the hand making overlapping the fingers (Acquaro, 1977: 16, 83, n. 70, 72-74) from grave SCF-360 (Locci, 2012: 127, tav. III). Few ceramics were deposited in the infants' tombs, including rare *balsamaria*, coarse ware and black gloss cups. Interestingly, the assemblage of the infant inhumed in grave SCF-360 was held in a lead box contemporary with those from chamber tomb 24 at AVN and from *enchytrismos* AVN-19, deposited outside the amphora (Salvi, 2000b: 71). The adults' inhumations shared recurrent features, particularly the presence of *balsamaria*. They are attested both in the small fusiform form Ampullae B.33.7 (Camilli, 1999: 106), and in the *lekythos* form Ampullae A.23.6 (1999: 64), both attested in the 3rd century BC and beyond. *Balsamaria* are represented by more than few units in each grave. Black gloss *askoi* are well attested too, although in lesser numbers. Coarse ware cups and jars complete the assemblage of materials from this period. They testify to a difference in treatment between adults and infants, attested contemporaneously at AVN. The

[143] Exceptions are 38 cremations, 15 pit inhumations, and 17 extra-burial contexts.

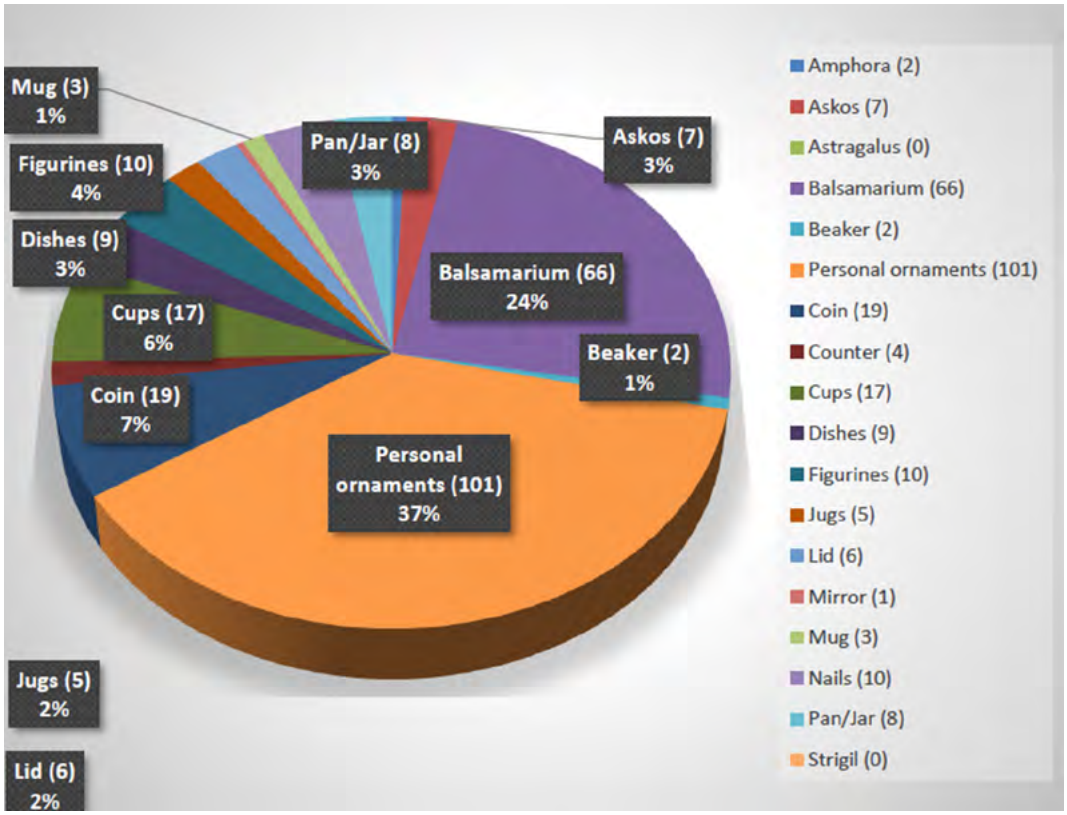


Figure 5.19. Material culture (300) from pit graves at Scala di Ferro.

latter are accompanied by personal ornaments, almost enhancing their personal identity and downplaying their social one, which is underscored in the adults.

The first change detected at SCF is the appearance of cremation in the form of the *bustum* (see sections 3.2.4 and 5.2.3.A for its description). The bodies seem to have been left untouched since the cremation occurred (Locci, 2012: 111), meaning that the body was completely buried, covered by stones and sand while the cremation took place, as witnessed at AVN (see section 5.2.3.A and Salvi, 2000b: 65). Despite the radical change of practice, the objects accompanying the deceased remain the same as those with inhumations. *Balsamaria* were still the most common represented grave goods. The earliest, with globular shape, form Ampullae B.33.7[144], and with *lekythos* shape, form Ampullae A.23.6 and A.22.2[145], and the more recent elliptic ones, Ampullae B.62.3[146], come respectively from southern Italy, central Italy and the Spanish coast of Ampurias. In continuity with the previous phase, adults' graves contain an assemblage composed also of black gloss cups and dishes, *askoi*, coarse ware pans and metal elements, such as the strigil from grave SCF-543 (Locci, 2012: 110). However, *balsamaria* in *busta* were accompanied by personal adornments rather than by utilitarian vessels. In addition to the numerous rings and necklaces common to the tombs of infants noted in the previous phase, there are numerous glass beads and astragals/knuckle-bones. *Busta* SCF-294 and SCF-296 contained more than 20 knuckle-bones – cubic animal bones used for games in classical antiquity and often found accompanying infants (Locci, 2012: 113), especially in the Hellenistic Mediterranean (Mazzorin, Minniti, 2012: 214, -15; De Nardi, 1991: 75). Although the ritual adopted, grave type, location and cover were the same for adults and infants, the grave goods assemblage and the ceremony that such assemblage conveys are different. This highlights a social distinction that was like driven by age at Karales.

Busta were used alongside inhumations. Despite this diversity of ritual, the same material culture formed the core of the grave apparatus of both *busta* and inhumations. In particular, ornaments and gaming pieces, such as the astragals, were also frequently deposited in the infants' inhumations. The same type of *balsamaria* and black gloss cups and *askoi* characterise adult burials from the end of 3rd century throughout the whole 2nd century BC. *Busta* and inhumations occupied the same areas of the cemetery. The orientation of the pits was mainly E/SE-W/NW, although the orientation of the deceased inside each grave was less consistent.

[144] Camilli, 1999: 106.
[145] Camilli, 1999: 64, 60.
[146] Camilli, 1999: 114.

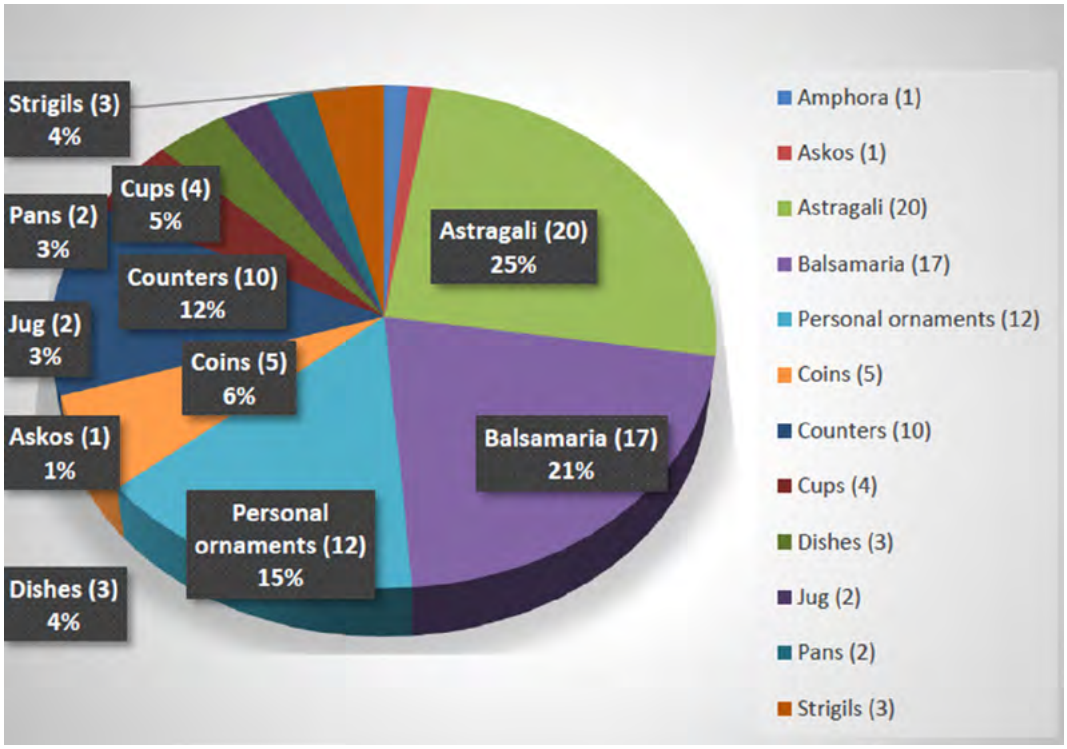


Figure 5.20. Material culture types from *busta* at SCF.

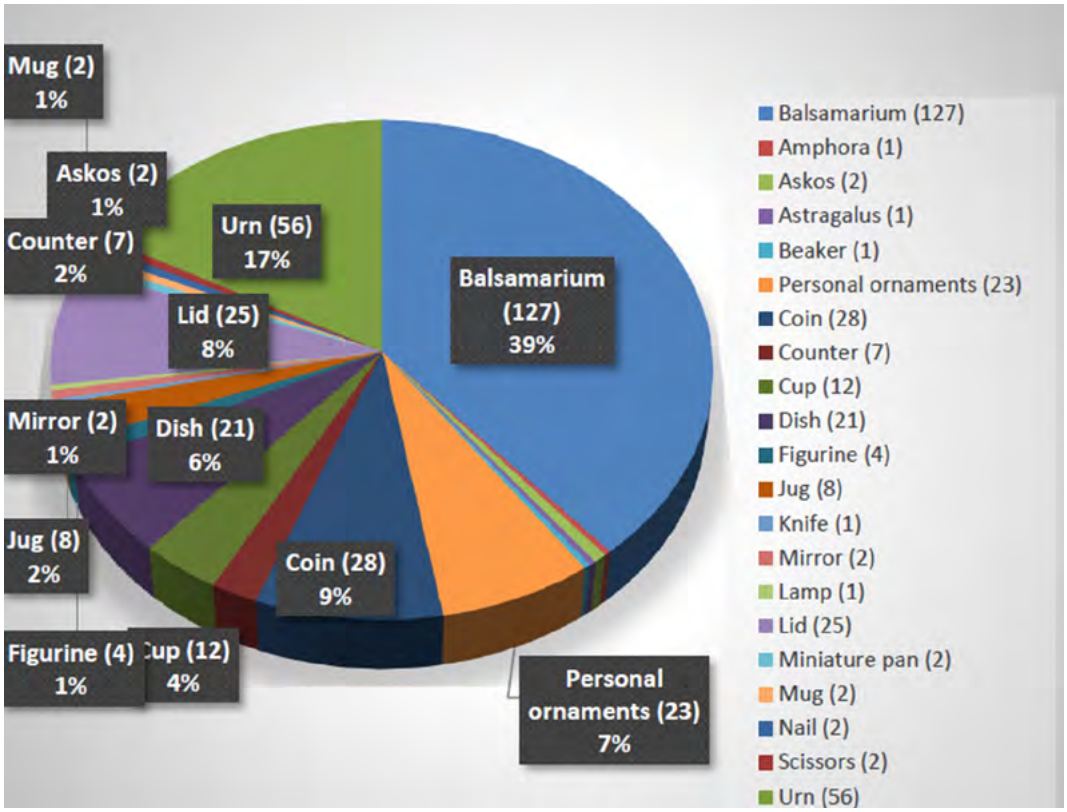


Figure 5.21. Material culture types from cremations in urn at SCF.

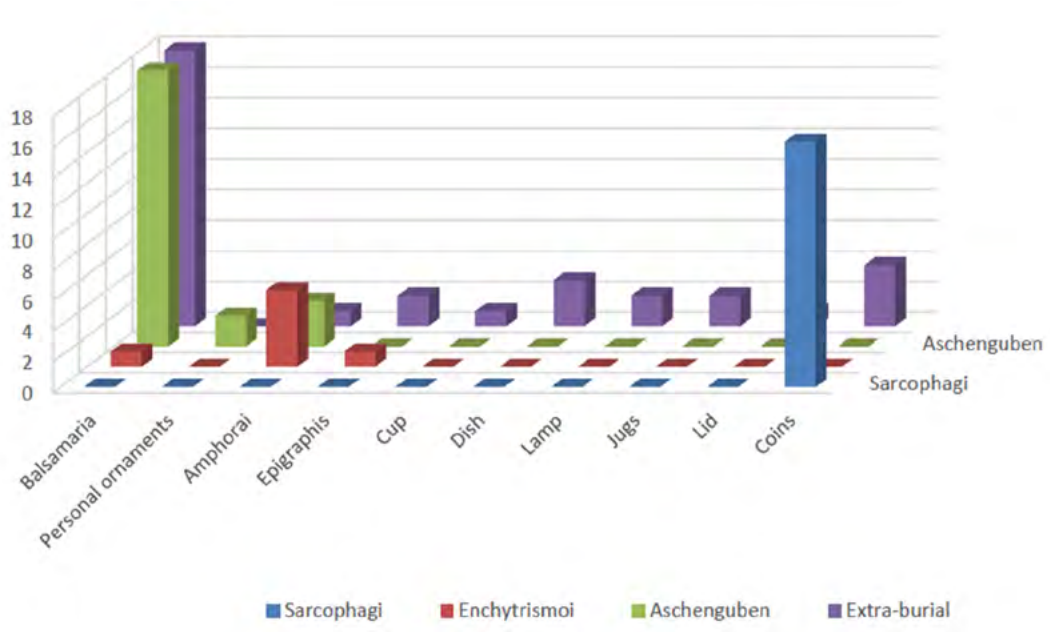


Figure 5.22. Material culture from extra-burial contexts at SCF.

Only gradual change in funerary practice took place through the 2nd century BC. This mainly concerned a broadening of the variety of grave goods, particularly black gloss forms. A couple of amphorae appeared used as proper grave goods: one amphora Greco-italica (Tronchetti, 1997: 151, 159 n. 1) from grave SCF-319 (Locci 2012: 114) covering an infant inhumed in a pit grave. Around mid-2nd century BC thin walled beakers form Marabini I[147], and Mayet II appeared in both inhumations and *busta*, likely signifying an increase in drinking activity taking place during the funeral.

At the end of 2nd century BC the *bustum* ceased being used. The bones cremated in a common *ustrinum* were in that phase collected into a coarse ware urn deposited in a small square pit. One of them was identified during the excavation of *La Scala di Ferro* in the feature SCF-US282, in the proximity of the pits containing cremation urns. It consisted of a thick layer of ashes found along a large quantity of small bones and numerous fragments of 1st century BC *balsamaria*, form Ampullae B.62.4.[148] SCF-US282 was likely one of the places where, between the end of 2nd and 1st century BC, individuals were cremated, and afterwards their bones deposited into cinerary urns in a distinct place. Cinerary urns are jars and pans, the most common type of which is the globular form with small horizontal handles, round base, flared wall and thick out-turned rim with internal groove to accommodate a lid, similar to the 1st century BC examples from Sulci (Sirigu, 1999: type 10/2) and Is Maglias (Zaru, 2002: 169, tav. 5, I15).

Between the 1st century BC and 1st AD, 24 graves were dug at SCF, including both cinerary urns, and inhumations in both *formae* and in sarcophagi. The latter seem to have been at the centre of quite different practices. At the moment of their stratigraphic excavation they revealed to be used to contain multiple burials, whereas originally they were likely meant to house only one individual. Coins were the only grave goods introduced into the sarcophagi, with the absence of utilitarian vessels. In general terms, the grave apparatus changes a little in this last phase. *Balsamaria* diminished quickly at the turn of the millennium. Conversely, more cups, mugs and dishes appeared along with the spread of the *Sigillata Italica* class and thin walled pottery. Although the inhumation ritual never ceased being practiced at SCF, the practices associated to it and mediated by material culture changed several times over four centuries. Emphasis is on the care of the body and its personal identity, signified by the abundance of *balsamaria* and personal ornaments, from the 3rd to the 1st centuries BC. More emphasis was placed on the collective practice of drinking and eating between 1st century BC and 1st AD. The scarcity of beakers is notable compared with other necropolises of the area. Hence, gradual changes and continuities characterise the funerary practices of SCF. The introduction of cremation was certainly a big change in the history of the necropolis, and it is to consider evidence for the mobility of people in the Mediterranean, hence, not unlikely, a possible sign of the arrival at Karales of people of Italic origins taking with them their customs (see previous section on Salvi's conclusions on AVN). Such customs did not spread among the communities of Karales. They continued to bury their dead in *formae*,

[147] Marabini Moevs, 1973: 49.
[148] Camilli, 1999: 114, 15, 16.

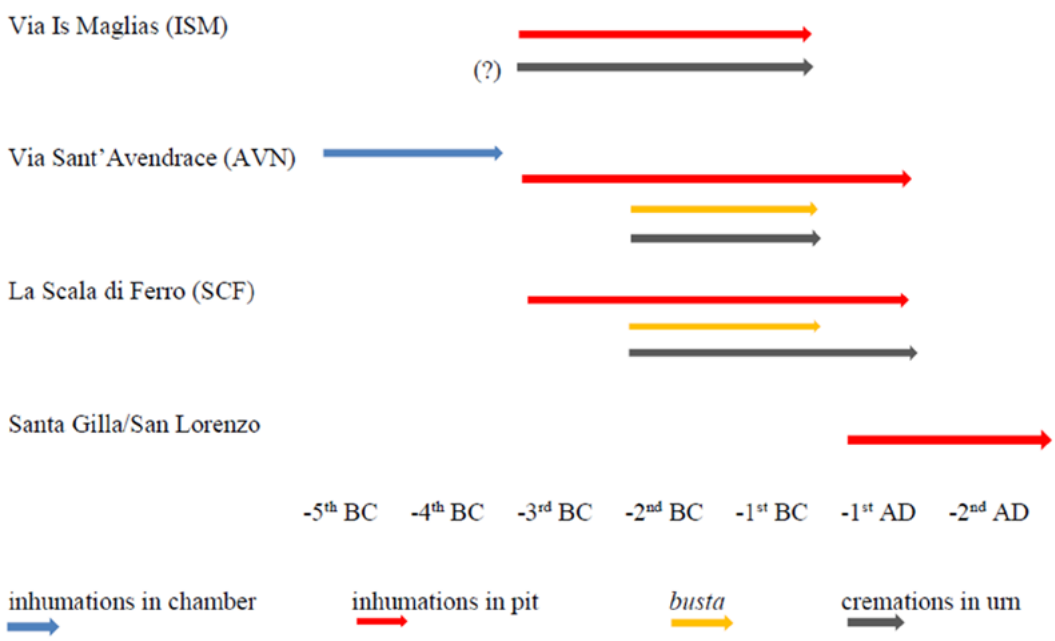


Figure 5.23 Timeline of the different periods of use of the sites in Karales (each ritual is underlined with a different colour), underlying each ritual with a different colour.

until cremations in urns appeared at the end of the 2nd century BC, gaining popularity, despite the use of inhumations continued.

5.4. The Imperial period western necropolises: *Santa Gilla* and *San Lorenzo*

The only two funerary sites dating to the Imperial age in Cagliari – beyond the only grave from AVN and the few from SCF – lay to the north of *Tuvixeddu*. The graveyards of San Lorenzo and Santa Gilla were set up in the area historically assumed to be Punic. The site of San Lorenzo, object of repeated investigation between 1987 and 1992, yielded 20 graves: 17 *alla cappuccina* graves, two *formae,* and one *enchytrismos*. Information is limited but there were only inhumations, all single depositions, some of them provided with ceramic grave goods – so far inaccessible to study – dated to the 1st-3rd century AD. Donatella Salvi recently excavated the site of Santa Gilla, nearby the former Agip gas station. [149] The excavations brought to light ten inhumations, divided between *alla cappuccina* and simple pits. Among this group, the majority of depositions were single ones, although two were doubles. The presence of grave goods has been reported there, but it was not possible to collect more details around them.

[149] The excavation sprung from a didactic collaboration between the Soprintendenza and the high school Liceo Siotto, Cagliari (Salvi *et al.*, 2006).

5.5. Urban communities and complexity in funerary practices at Karales

The data on Roman-period Karales provide scope for a comprehensive interpretation of the funerary activities performed by its communities. Material culture from *Tuvixeddu* – both ISM and via Sant'Avendrace – and the oriental necropolis – *Scala di Ferro* – show numerous similarities, but also remarkable discontinuity. The Imperial period sites of San Lorenzo and Santa Gilla, recently excavated, add new potential for a better understanding of Karales. The contribution of this book to the debate around the funerary practice of Karales, also affects the interpretation of its urban development, blurring the neat Punic/Roman divide.

Looking at the material culture from Karales, Table 23 (Appendix 1) shows that the proportion of ceramics between AVN and SCF is on a 1:5– the same ratio of the number of graves. By contrast, the number of bone and glass objects at SCF, especially glass beads for necklaces, outnumbers those from AVN 1:10. Consistently, other decorative or personal elements such as shells, coral, and colourful pebbles, present but rare at AVN, are way more frequent at SCF.

Looking at pottery more in detail, mixed patterns arise. The coarse were proportions between *Tuvixeddu* and SCF is again 1:5. The two largely differ in the presence of imported ceramics. Black gloss coming from both Campania, northern Latium and southern Etruria, are frequent at ISM, but not at SCF and AVN. 19 different

forms among cups, dishes, and *askoi* are attested at ISM, only eight at AVN, and 15 at SCF, despite the very small size of the ISM sample. Thin walled pottery, fairly represented in *Tuvixeddu*, is not so common at SCF, as it is found in only ten graves out of 152, compared with its presence in eight tombs out of 30 at AVN and in five out of ten at ISM. This marks a discontinuity between the sample of the eastern necropolis and that of *Tuvixeddu*. The phenomenon is inverted if one looks at *Sigillata Italica*: 12 pieces were found at SCF, against only one at *Tuvixeddu*, showing that the communities of the latter stopped using imports in burials before the 1st century AD.

The depositional patterns – relation between grave goods and body parts – underlined in Karales are much less rigorous than those in Masullas: they seem to originate from recurrent tendencies than from accurate choices determining uniformity, in a more similar fashion to Sulci. Table 21 (Appendix 1) shows the different chronological span of use of the sites. While the first graves excavated at *Sant'Avendrace* date to the first decades of the 5th century BC, those at SCF date to the end of the 4th. This difference shows in both the architecture and the material culture.

Chamber graves are only in *Sant'Avendrace*, and they stop being built between the late 4th century and the early 3rd. From this period on, tombs are rectangular pits cut into the fill of the vertical shafts used as entrance of the earlier chambers. Pits are the first graves at SCF. The chamber graves accessible via vertical shafts characterize the Punic world from Carthage to Spain, and Sicily, as well as Sardinia. The same architectural choice characterizes the first few centuries of the necropolis of Sulci, Sant'Antioco, on top of which Roman-period graves sit. However, the interactions of the Roman-period communities with the older graves dug following the Punic tradition could not be more different in the two sites.

In Sulci, the chambers were reused until filled up, while at Karales there are no traces of such reuse, but only of new offerings and manipulations. The 3rd century BC rectangular pit graves represent the second phase of activity at AVN but the first at SCF. Similarities are striking. *Busta* began being used at both sites from the mid-2nd century BC. The way the pyre was set up is the same: the wood was placed at the bottom of the grave, and the body of the deceased was deposited over it; grave goods were deposited over and around the body, at last, the tomb was covered with earth and small stones. This sequence was identifiable due to the gradual diminution, in the stratigraphy of the grave, of the effects of the fire detectable from the bottom of the grave to its top. Objects near the bottom display traces of burning, whilst those at the top show no such signs. The objects deposited in the five *busta* at SCF and in the four at AVN are consistent. *Balsamaria* in variable numbers – usually more than three – jugs, dishes, cups, and coins are present in roughly the same number at both sites.

Beyond these similarities, elements of continuity with the respective previous inhumations distinguish the two sites. The presence of ornaments in 2nd century BC at SCF, in continuity with previous customs, sets apart its graves from AVN, where these elements do not appear, consistently with the past. Moreover, numerous knucklebones and counters are in the infants' graves at SCF, enhancing the difference with AVN, where they are absent. The introduction of a new funerary ritual with similar features appears at the same time at SCF and AVN. Nevertheless, the individual, or rather its identity, was much more personalized at SCF than at AVN. It follows that elements of continuity were maintained even within a ritual newly introduced in both sites, setting apart the two communities despite the similarities both in the material culture used and in the practice performed.

At a broader level, Karales shows continuous interaction with the Italian peninsular and Rome, in the transitions between the Punic period and the transformation of Sardinia to a Roman province, and from this to the Imperial age. A wide variety of materials from northern Latium, southern Etruria, Campania, and Rome, but also from North Africa and Spain, demonstrates this. The funerary rituals show a similar pattern. The newly introduced cremation ritual existed alongside traditional inhumations that gradually changed too, due to interaction with these novelties.

One of the most significant introductions is the *bustum*. Its presence, limited to only few examples here, needs to be addressed. Let us start form the authors of the excavations where the *busta* were found. Salvi (2000) interpreted the presence of few *busta* at *Sant'Avendrace* as the sign of migrations of Italic people to Sardinia during the end of the 3rd century BC, when Rome created the new province. Locci (2012: 109) shares Salvi's hypothesis explaining also the diminution of graves in the 2nd century with the Sardinian resistance to Roman rule. Overloading of some areas of the necropolis, proposed as an alternative by the same author, seems a preferable explanation. Manuela Struck (2000) has provided helpful insights into ideas about the value of *busta* in the provinces. Her work, aimed at investigating the burial's status, is underpinned by Tainter's (19878) energy expenditure theory – the more the energy and effort put into a practice, the higher the status of the burial – although she admits the involvement of other factors. From this perspective, being the *bustum* a shallow pit where the dead was cremated and then buried, it required its own *ustrinum*, which equals more space, effort and care (Struck, 2000: 86). This logic works

fine in a cemetery where numerous cremations in urns used a common *ustrinum* in contrast to the *busta*, which required greater effort and care, signs of their status. At Karales, however, all *busta* represent a new element in a tradition where the only practice until then was inhumation. Only decades later, did cremations in cinerary urns appear alongside inhumations and *busta*. The first *busta* are contemporary or slightly later than 225 BC, when the Roman army led by *Attilius Regulus* first, and then by *Q. Fulvius Flaccus*, landed at the port of Karales to fight the rebels gathering at Cornus.

The archaeological evidence, crossed with the historical background, suggests that the *busta* in Karales likely belonged to people moving from Rome or central Italy to Sardinia, along with their traditional funerary practice, which is not considered here evidence of status.

What is concluded here results from the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 1. The use of culture historical – or processual – approaches would likely have brought conclusions linked to a neat separation between Punic and Roman – or Local and Roman – identities; in the first case this would have been linked to specific objects that would have been seen as cultural signatures; in the second, to an evolutionary process – Romanization, intended as becoming Roman, adopting different social behaviours. Postprocessual approaches would instead provide interpretations of less monolithic identities, based on the concept of practice performed in the necropolises. However, section 1.1.5 has warned against the underlying risk of identifying people too narrowly through descriptive definitions of what they do; this would just substitute practice to the objects of culture historical tradition in creating those 'signatures of culture' that archaeologists have tried to avoid since the processual turn in the 60s'. In fact,the many aspects looked at here help building a chain of interpretants that ties together the choices taken each time by the communities in relation to the material remains of previous practices.

What defines the community using the cemetery of AVN in the Roman period is not just their practice of burying their dead in rectangular pits – be them inhumations or cremations – as it happened in SCF. Along that set of practices, it is their decision to interact with the chamber graves in the cemetery in a specific way that characterizes its community's identity. The choice of the members of AVN not to use the Punic period graves to bury their dead , but instead to leave objects inside them, as if to acknowledge and pay tribute to those ancient dead, characterizes the members of AVN's communities in a way that distinguishes them from other communities of Karales, despite performing the same rites. On the other end, several elements – *busta*, knucklebones, astragals – make plausible that people from the Italian peninsular were buried in SCF, giving to similar archaeological record a completely different set of meanings from AVN.

Looking at these interpretants helps interpreting the identities of the communities of Karales avoiding the use of monolithic categories, rather attributing high value to their relationship with the past practices and their material remains.

6. Connecting the Dots: Between Sulci, Masullas and Karales

> Rather than the manufactured clash of civilizations, we need to concentrate on the slow working together of cultures that overlap, borrow from each other, and live together in far more interesting ways than any abridged or inauthentic mode of understanding can allow.
>
> Edward Said, Preface (2003) to *Orientalism* (1978), xxii

6.1. Sardinian funerary practices and continuity along the road *a Karalibus Turrem*

The case studies analysed so far are not meant to be understood in isolation. Looking at them in relation with other funerary sites – in geographical proximity within Sardinia first, and with the rest of the Mediterranean second – is the scope of this chapter.

From this perspective, the sites located along the road *a Karalibus Turrem* are the most helpful. They allow us to assess difference and similarity in funerary practice moving from the coastal and urban sites of Karales towards the inland and rural areas around Masullas. This linkage permits us to break free from the interpretive isolationism that so often typifies accounts of archaeological sites, in particular when it comes to necropolises.

Of course, such separateness is somehow inherent in the nature of archaeological evidence, as there is a widespread feeling – occasionally accompanied by theoretical awareness – that funerary sites are independent, self-contained, and complete entities enclosed within neat boundaries (Sirigu, 2009: 1231), and as such they are charged of meaning by themselves (see Chapter 1.3.5). Isolationism also affects the study of each necropolis, as they are often looked at in detail from specific perspectives – be it the grave goods, grave architecture, anthropology, landscape, and so on – that not rarely work separately from one another.

To counterbalance this tendency, this chapter contextualises the three main case studies analysed so far with several necropolises situated in between them, attempting to cover more broadly the area of South and Central Sardinia that this book tackles. Ortacesus, Sanluri, and Gesico, moving from south to north, are ideal sites for this purpose as they allow to look at practices and identities in the area shifting continuously and gradually from the urban and coastal south to the rural hinterland. The sites of Bithia and Santadi (Figure 2.2, n. 3, 4, 5) would also help to connect Karales to Sulci, but not enough information on these sites has yet been released. Also, it must be admitted at the outset of this chapter that there is no archaeological evidence of necropolises in the are between Sulci, to the southwest, and Masullas in the centre, fact that leaves a bit of a gap in the southwestern area of the island.

Sa Mitza Salida, *Tuvixeddu* and the eastern necropolis of Karales, and Sulci seen in the previous chapter are certainly geographically apart – as 70,8 km separates Cagliari from Masullas, 74 km Masullas from Sulci, and 58 Km Sulci from Karales. Moreover, they are also historically, chronologically (see Figure 7.1), and, only to a certain extent, culturally distant. Nonetheless, the connection between the three sites, and other sites in between, was smooth and frequent, as the amount of items circulating among them shown before can prove (see for instance Section 4.4.1). Such connections extend also to a cultural level and involves the practices and identities of the communities of the cemeteries central to this book.

Funerary practices in the three centres have proven distinct, but also show remarkable similarities. The differences occurring between the sites studied is the principal reason why it is fundamental to look at what happens to the areas in between them. They will make easier to understand if there is a neat cut between the areas studied so far, or if change occurs gradually not only in a chronological way, but also in a spatial dimension. The numerous graveyards along the Roman period road *a Karalibus Turrem* – nowadays SS 131, Carlo Felice – are ideal for the purpose. These are:

- *Mitza de Siddi*, Ortacesus (Figure 2.2: 13), 15 km E of the road,
- *Bidd'e Cresia*, Sanluri (Figure 2.2: 11.1), 1km E of the road,
- S. Lucia, Gesico (Figure 2.2: 54), around 17 km E of the road,
- Gilba Onidi, San Gavino Monreale (Figure 2.2: 11), 2km W,
- Sardara (Figure 2.2: 57), 900 m E of the road,
- Lunamatrona (Figure 2.2: 14), 10 km E or the road.

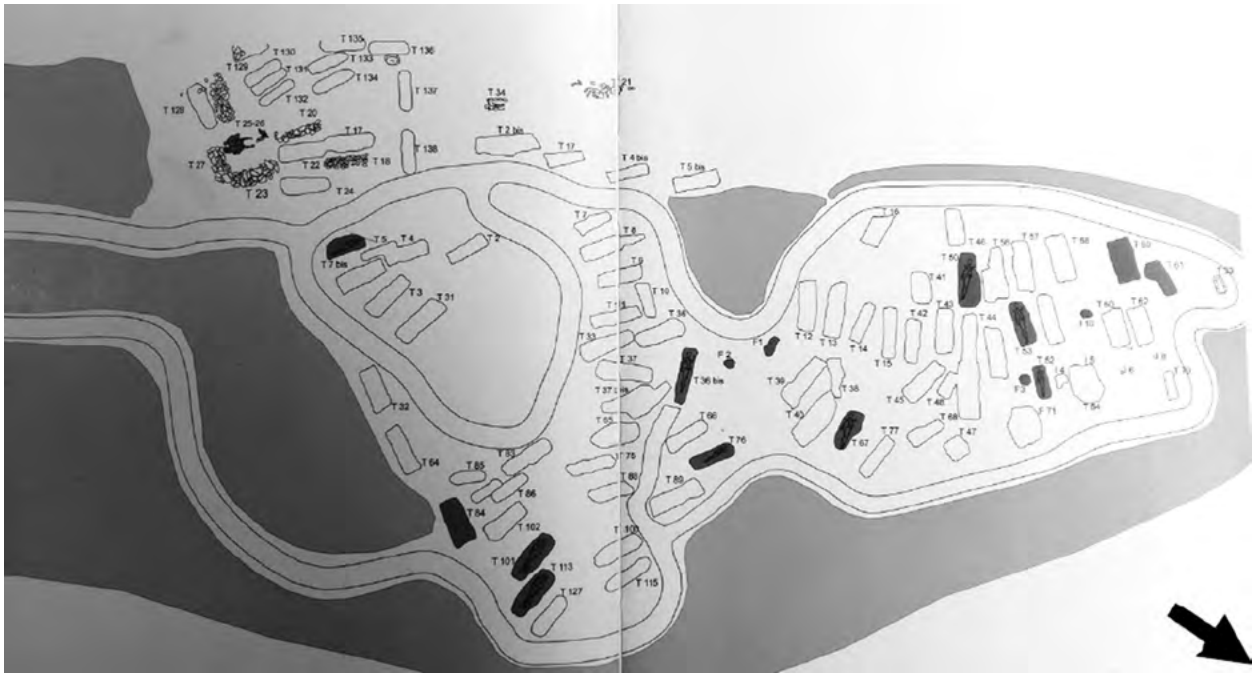


Figure 6.1. Map of the necropolis of Sa Mitza de Siddi, Ortacesus (from Cocco, Arru 2009: 6-7)

The better documented and available sites selected for the purpose are the necropolises of Ortacesus, Gesico, and Saluri.

6.2. *Sa Mitza de Siddi*, Ortacesus

The sources for the necropolis of Ortacesus are the excavation journals of each campaign, integrated with the graphic and photographic documentation of each grave and some single objects[150], the publication of 18 graves (Arru, Cocco,Floris, Usai 2009), and some grave goods. The site – whose name perhaps derives from the Latin *Hortus Caesaris* (Cocco, Arru, 2009: 9) – is in an area highly cultivated during both the Punic and Roman periods, on the slope of a gentle hill. The site is only 38 km north of Cagliari and 56 km southeast of Masullas. An area of 1300m² investigated from 1994 onwards does not cover the whole necropolis, as graves continue to the southwest and northeast of the excavated area (Cocco, Arru, 2009: 9). The excavations yielded 200 graves dated between the late Punic period and the 6th century AD, the large majority of which belonging to the Roman period. The bulk of graves are 111 *formae*, seven of the cist type, covered in slabs – but there are also *busta*, *alla cappuccina* graves, cinerary urns, burials in amphora and some deceased deposited directly on a rocky layer (Appendix 1: Table 24).

The pit graves are very similar in size, all excavated directly into the limestone bedrock around 0.70 m deep (Cocco, Arru, 2009: 10), and covered in rubble and sand, just as in Masullas and Karales, when not by slabs. In addition to these grave types there is a different one: a pit grave with a lateral niche, similar to the chamber graves seen at Karales (Chapter 5) with regards to the space where the dead was laid, to one side of the vertical access shaft. In contrast to the chamber graves seen at Karales, though, the niche graves of Ortacesus are covered by terracotta tiles set obliquely, making the access shaft resemble the rectangular shape of a regular *alla cappuccina* grave. The burial chamber was cut laterally and separated from the shaft by a vertical terracotta slab (Cocco, Arru, 2009: 10) (Figure 4). This grave type is seen nowhere else in Sardinia except in the necropolis of *Pill'e Matta*, Quartucciu (Salvi, 2005), 28 km from Ortacesus and six only from Karales. Interestingly, the material culture, grave-type, way of treating the body, registered at Pill'e Matta have been considered all together as a potential ethnic indication of the use of the area by the a population sent *Sarmates Gentiles* (Salvi, 2015), sent by the Emperor Constantine from the area of today's Iran to several areas of Italy to intensify the cultivation of the land (on this and late-antique funerary archaeology of Sardinia see also Puddu, 2019 forthcoming).

The cemetery is composed by eight different clusters (Figure 6.1), each of them comprising a variable number of parallel graves. The group on the west side is the largest, with all its tombs oriented S-N. The

[150] Donatella Cocco and Maria Graziu Arru granted me access to all registered data from the excavations and guided me through the objects stored in the museum of Ortacesus, while sharing information about the problems that emerged during the excavations.

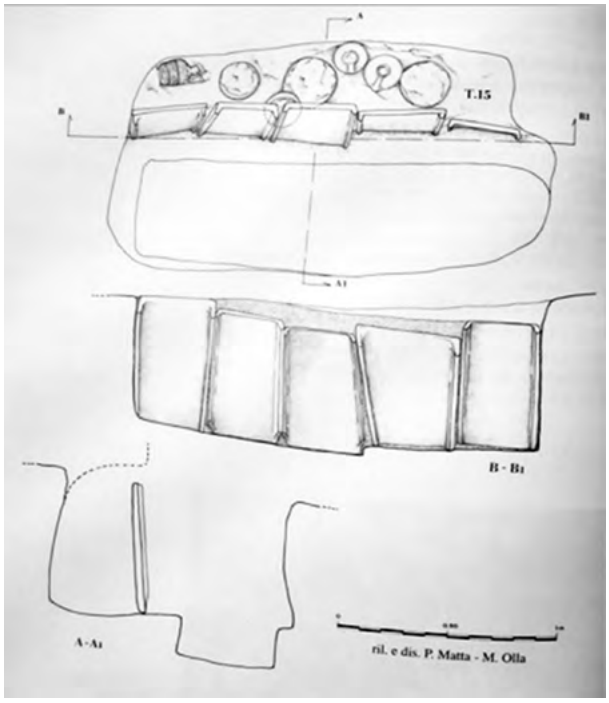


Figure 6.2. Grave 15 at Pill'e Matta (from Salvi 2005).

other smaller clusters follow different orientations, adapting to the slope of the ground. The graves were in some cases very close to one another. Yet, despite their dense distribution, in only three cases were older graves cut by new ones. The different types of burial are spread across the site, mixing with each other, with the majority of urns concentrated to the west side of it.

The excavation journals provide evidence for the preponderance, among the inhumations, of primary depositions, although some secondary ones are attested too. Moreover, several graves were empty, some unused, and some others looted.

Manipulated burials occurred in three cases: when the cremated bones are collected into a cinerary urn; when bone remains of earlier graves were included within a new one – reductions; and when a new grave cuts an older one modifying its content. This can be due to the long life – nine centuries – of the site, as the memory of the precise position of each grave might have been lost. However, there is no evidence here for the systematic manipulation similar to that of crania and long bones attested at Masullas (Chapter 4). The only clear example of a manipulated deposition is the 2nd century AD pit grave ORT-I5. It consists of a cinerary urn containing the cremated bones of one individual, close to which were placed one cranium and one tibia belonging to an inhumation. Explained by the excavators as the result of a reduction of a previous inhumation, this case seems to have all the features of a conscious manipulation of an ancient skeleton. The rest of the reused grave is clean of other bones, and the cranium is upright and aligned with the urn, as part of the burial of the cremated individual. The burial has similarities with *Mitza Salida*'s inhumations with crania added to the grave goods – graves 43B and 9bis. However, the grave goods are undated, making it more difficult to hypothesise a connection with the site's past, as done for Masullas.

The rituals followed in Ortacesus are of a great variety, but each of them is followed uniformly. However, some remarkable data allow, on one hand, to single out exceptional graves, and, on the other, to distinguish certain practices in relation to gender and labour. The chronological succession of rites follows what registered in Karales: *busta* appeared in the 2nd century BC and are substituted by cremations in urn in the 1st century BC, whereas inhumations appeared throughout all the period of use. The majority of the inhumed were laid on their backs with extended legs, arms mainly along the sides and more rarely one hand on the pelvis or on the chest. The disposition of grave goods around the body followed regular patterns, such as the usual presence of jugs by the head, and of open vessel forms by chest and waist, similarly to what seen at Masullas (Figure 6.4). Grave goods are less numerous in *busta* – mainly balsamaria, as in Karales – than in inhumations.

Cremations in urn had seldom any grave goods. A roughly square or circular pit, with a diameter of less than 1m, deep less than 0.5m, housed the urn – either a jug or a small amphora – with or without grave goods. More rarely, the urn was housed in a double pit, with a small circular one inside a larger rectangular one, as attested at Sanluri too (see section 6.1.3).

As concerns inhumations, where the majority of grave goods were placed, certain features at Ortacesus offer a unique perspective on the treatment of the bodies and show great care to the depositional details. In many inhumations, the feet are set pointing upwards, an evidence – not witnessed in other necropolises – that the dead were wrapped in a tight shroud, since the ankles' and fingers' ligaments tend to decay rapidly and lose their anatomical position, unless the bones are physically constrained. Few graves had an exceptional treatment: ORT-20bis, where the individual was crouched on its left side; grave ORT-36ter with the hands wrapped around the neck; and ORT-131 with the hand inside a cup laid over the chest. The variation from the normal pattern is evident in the last three cases but it is also exceptional within a very uniform set of gestures.

Information on gender and age, available on 22 cases (Cocco, Arru, 2009), shows a good balance of male and female individuals, whereas, as usual in the other necropolises, children are under-represented.

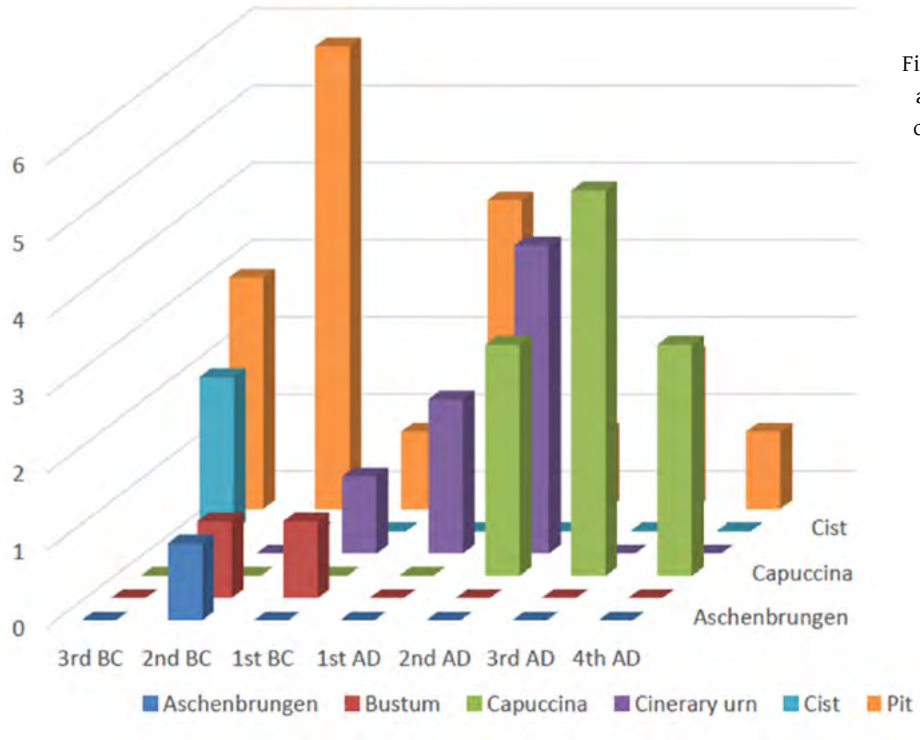


Figure 6.3. Burial types per period at Sa Mitza de Siddi – Ortaceus, considering a total of 40 graves.

This analysis allows further understanding of the community of Ortacesus.

Despite the treatment of the bodies is, gender wise, quite uniform, there are objects exclusively associated with female individuals. These are the necklace elements in 3rd century BC tomb ORT-43, one strigil and one ring in 3rd BC ORT-101, one bronze mirror and rhomboidal whetstone in 1st AD tomb ORT-54, one bronze needle and one whetstone in the contemporary grave ORT-52, one needle in ORT-10, and one shell in 1st AD ORT-53. These metal and stone elements are associated either with the care of the body and its adornment – mirror, strigil, and necklaces – or with specific activities that might have characterised the individuals in life. Particularly interesting in the latter sense are the two rhomboidal whetstones, generally used for sharpening the blade of a knife or of a sickle. Unless symbolic meanings that are now obscure were attached to them, their exclusive association with female burials – and the total absence in male ones – acquires some significance. They may be associated to specific activities that the women buried in graves ORT-54 and ORT-52 carried out in life, such as sharpening the blades of tools used by other members of the community in the harvest. Other objects such as the long bronze needles – associated with the whetstone – may relate to weaving activities, with the community wanting to restate an important element of the personal and social identities the two women held in life.

Following the semiotic framework of identity discussed in Chapter 1, it is not enough to link a generic object to the individuals' identity. However, other elements contribute to create a chain of interpretants involving the whetstones and the needles, among which the fact that they were included in women's inhumations only. This allows looking at the community of Ortacesus as one in which women's identity was highlighted in some cases, together with their relevant role potentially related to agricultural labour.

6.3. Santa Lucia, Gesico

The case study of Gesico is particularly useful as it is the most inland site looked at in this book, far from both Cagliari – 100 km – and Masullas – 48 km. The 1984 excavation of the necropolis of Santa Lucia, Gesico, by Sannia of the *Soprintendenza Archaeologica di Cagliari e Oristano* involved a limited area, yielding 30 graves dating to the Punic, Republican, and early Imperial period (Tronchetti, 1999: 107). Both cremations and inhumations were found, although there were fewer of the former. Most were simple pit graves covered either by stone slabs or by small stones and rubble, of the same type of those found few km N, at *Sa Mitza Salida* (Tronchetti 1996: 993). Data availability varies. There is no information available about the treatment of the body, its disposition, orientation and eventual manipulation. On the other hand, there is plenty of information on the grave goods' typology of both Punic and Roman periods, allowing us to compare Gesico's material culture to the main case studies. These data

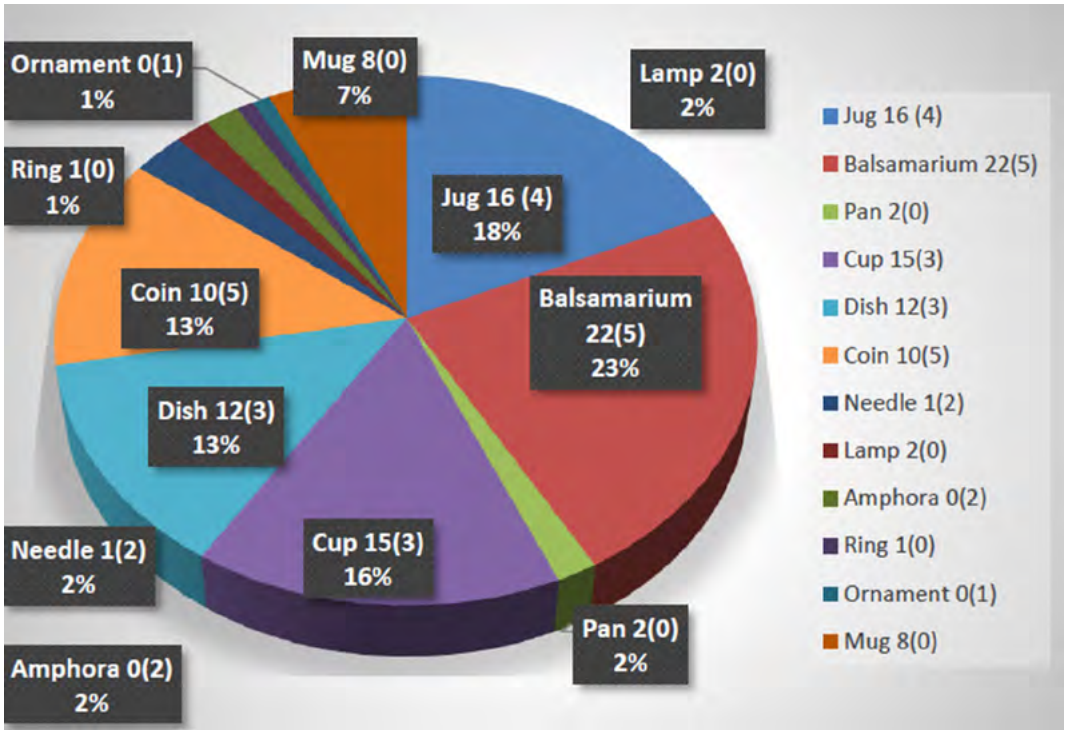


Figure 6.4. Material culture types from pit burials at Ortacesus-Mitza de Siddi. (Between parentheses, the number of items from Punic-period graves, outside parenthesis those from Roman-period ones).

assess the continuity of use of the graveyard from the early 3rd century BC to the second half of the 2nd century AD.

The published sample of only 10 graves is too small to allow me to advance a precise hypothesis about the chronological development of the cemetery, but it still offers interesting material evidence. Several ceramic classes were found at Gesico, from coarse ware to the imitation of *Sigillata Italica*, from black gloss to thin walled pottery. There is no evidence of *Sigillata Africana*, although the latest tomb dates to the late 2nd century AD, when this class was widely available.

The total number of 73 grave goods, with an average of seven per grave, demonstrates an abundant use of material culture. Beyond the usual grave goods, the knife found in grave GES-5 is significant. It dates to the early 3rd century BC, as the four coins issued prior to 264 BC – with head of *kore* on the obverse and horse's head on the reverse (Manfredi, 1987: 12, 17) – with which it was found, together with dishes, cups, and one askos. Tronchetti has interpreted the knife as a *machaira* (Tronchetti, 1996a: 995). This is an instrument whose use is associated with collective gatherings at banquets where the knife was used to cut the meat than served on the dishes and shared among the participants. Therefore, the cups and *askos* of the same assemblage were probably in the same grave as indexes of the complementary activity of drinking. The same interpretation of similar assemblages may also be true for other cemeteries, although the *machaira* is present only at Gesico.

The grave goods assemblages are uniform at Gesico. Notwithstanding the number of pieces per assemblage – varying between three and nine – cups, dishes, and jugs were present in each graves. In addition, pans are also well attested, being present in four out of ten graves. Conversely, there is no trace of personal ornaments, but only of objects that stand for collective acts of sharing food and drinks. The discourse can go further, as no objects other than utilitarian pottery are present at Gesico, with the exception of the knife mentioned above, and the four coins, from the Punic-period grave GES-5. In comparison to Karales (Chapter 5), the necropolis of Gesico shows much less emphasis on items that signify either the personal identity of the deceased or the care of its body. The material culture introduced inside Gesico's graves stressed instead the importance of the community. Change emerged in the mid-2nd century BC, when numerous *balsamaria* were introduced and thin walled pottery from southern Latium appeared. This class is represented by one of its most ancient forms, the beaker Marabini I/Mayet II, dated to the half of the 2nd century BC from the early layers of Cosa. These features make the material culture used at S. Lucia, Gesico, from the end of the Republican into the Imperial period, similar to what seen at Masullas (Chapter 4). Numerous locally produced

cups and dishes imitating *Sigillata Italica*, coarse ware jugs – particularly the forms Atlante XX – and the abundance of *vernice nera a pasta grigia*, all being the core assemblages at Masullas but absent at Karales, are important elements of Gesico's assemblages.

Not only individually, but in their recurrent associations, the grave goods from Gesico are very close to those assembled at Masullas. These usually comprise, both at Gesico and Masullas, either one or two jugs, one hand-made pan, either one or two *balsamaria* (or miniature jugs), and three to five cups and dishes. Contemporaneously, elements alien to the ritual held at Masullas, but constituents of those at Karales, are witnessed at Gesico: these are the cremation ritual and the notable quantity of balsamaria. Constitutive components of the funerary rituals at both Karales and Masullas are, in different periods, an integral part of those performed at Gesico, in some ways signifying the site's geographical position halfway between the two, and thus indicating a strong interaction with both.

6.4. *Bidd'e Cresia*, Sanluri

The necropolis of *Bidd'e Cresia*, Sanluri, is one of the closest – less than 1 km – to the road a *Karalibus Turrem,* along which lay the other necropolises investigated in this section. Located halfway between Gesico to the southeast and Masullas to the northwest, the graveyard was excavated in the early 1970s. The excavation yielded 76 burials, among which were 40 inhumations and 36 cremations (Paderi, 1982: 67). Paderi's preliminary – and only – results of the excavations that have been published provide the main source of this chapter, supplemented by the consultation of the excavation journals. Similar to Masullas, Gesico, and Ortacesus, the site was at the base of a low hill, with the graves at different heights. It was used continuously from the 4th century BC to the 4th AD.

Inhumations were housed in rectangular *formae* cut into the marl, often covered by rubble and sand, in one case by stone slabs, and by broken tiles in another (Paderi 1982: 67). Concerning the cremations, the bones of the deceased were collected into an amphora or a jug that was then placed into a circular pit, 0.40 m deep. In some cases, the circular pit was cut within a larger rectangular one (Paderi, 1982: 67), similar to those used for the inhumations, as also attested at Ortacesus (see Section 6.3). The inner margins of the rectangular pits hosting the circular ones have traces of burning. This is a sign that the body was laid on the bottom of the rectangular pit together with the pyre. Once the body was cremated, the ashes and bones were collected and placed inside the urn housed in the circular pit (*Ibid.*). Despite different from the *busta* signalled in Karales – where the burnt body was left untouched, in anathomical position, inside the pit where it was burnt – those burials at Sanluri can still be considered *busta* as they were contained inside the pit where the pyre was erected.

The cemetery comprises two clusters of burials, one to the north, the other to the south, both showing a certain degree of uniformity in terms of both material culture and practice. All graves of the two clusters are aligned north-south. The large majority of the inhumations have their head to the north, with only one exception. The bodies were always setup on their backs, with extended legs, and arms beside the body (Paderi 1982: 72-79).

One element only in the cemetery of Sanluri, Bidd'e Cresia, is unique among the sites discussed here. A Small portion of the funerary area was occupied by a big elliptical space – with two diameters of around 4m and 6 m – partly cut into the marl, inside which was a pile of stones that created another elliptical, or oval, shape (Paderi, 1982: 67). Within the pile of stones were an hemispherical one, distinct from all others, and a few potsherds. We can exclude the interpretation of the feature as an *ustrinum* based on the evidence that each cremation had taken place inside the rectangular pit containing the urn. Hence, there was no need of a collective space for cremations. Paderi (1982: 67-68) prefers to interpret this elliptic area as a place in the cemetery where the community gathered to drink and eat, although the scarce remains of both pottery and animal bones within the precinct make it difficult to support her idea. However, the absence of pottery may still fit Paderi's hypothesis if one supposes that all the vessels used for collective banqueting were placed in the graves, as suggested throughout this study. An alternative to Paderi's interpretation is that the participant in each funeral held such practices beside the particular tomb containing the body whose funeral was being performed. However, this interpretation does not help explaining the elliptic space. Either interpretation sees the grave goods as the items used for communal activities getting people together before burying the departed, rather than being exclusively offerings to them.

From the study of the material culture emerges that the same objects were used in both cremations and inhumations, and that only a few deceased were buried without grave goods. The large majority of such grave goods were pottery (Appendix 1: Table 30), whereas metals were very rare at Bidd'e Cresia.

Figure 6.6 shows the variety of grave goods in cremations. They come from tombs of the 1st century BC to 3rd AD. Jugs and cups are the most common, followed by lamps, *balsamaria,* mugs, and, of course, urns. Compared to the material culture from cremations at other cemeteries the frequency of lamps is notable. In contrast, there

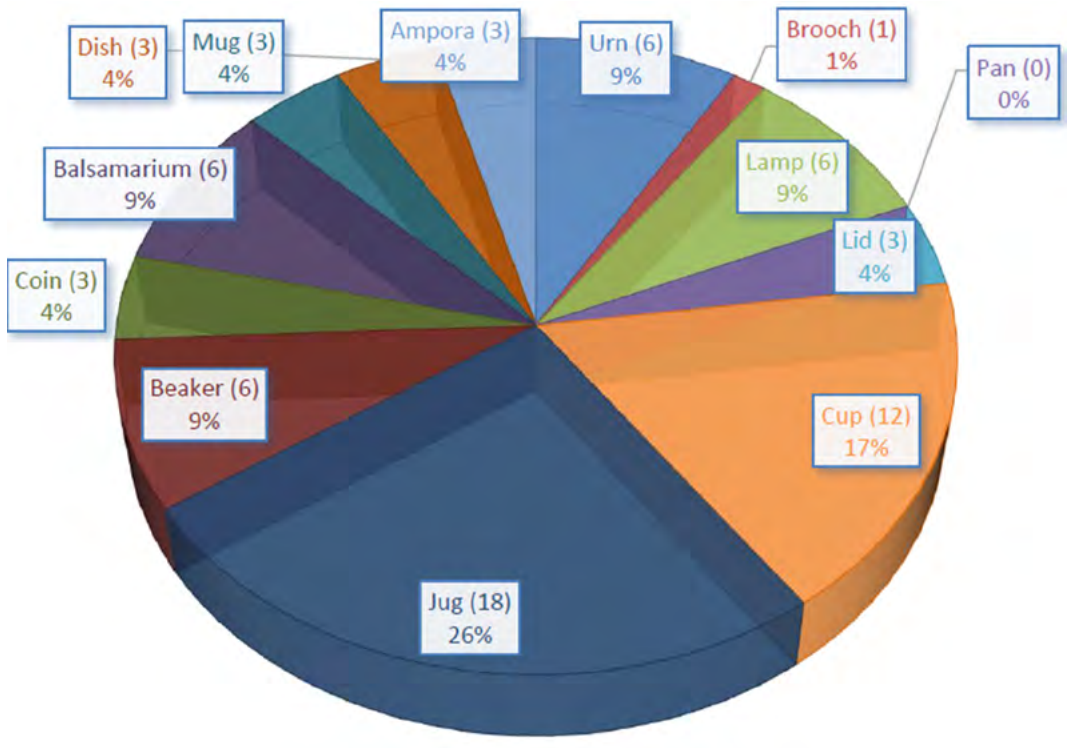


Figure 6.5. Material culture from cremation burials at Bidd'e Cresia, Sanluri (data from a nine burials sample elaborated from Paderi 1982).

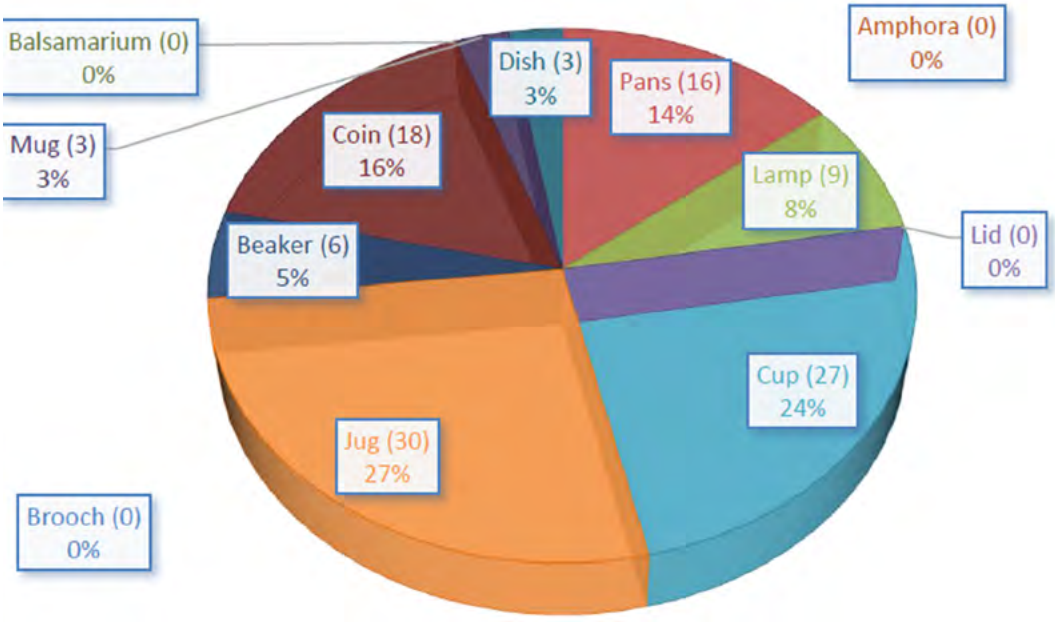


Figure 6.6. Material culture pieces from inhumations at Bidd'e Cresia, Sanluri (data from a 15 tombs sample).

are fewer than one *balsamarium* per grave, far below the average of four to five seen both at Karales and at Ortacesus.

Concerning inhumations, the vessels associated with the pouring and drinking of liquids outnumber all other objects. Both the total absence of *balsamaria,* and the rarity with which dishes are used, contrasts strongly with the patterns highlighted in the necropolises of Masullas and Gesico that are located nearby Sanluri. Conversely, pans are a constant feature of the inhumations at Sanluri, as they are at Masullas and Gesico. The few photos stored at the archives of the Soprintendenza show that some of the grave goods, particularly pans, were deposited by the legs, whilst others, particularly jugs, were found by the upper body, similarly to the patterns observed at Masullas and at Ortacesus. However, an additional feature was detected in Sanluri: the body surrounded by grave goods was covered by loose soil mixed with broken tiles and broken vessels, of the same classes, types, and forms as the grave goods surrounding the body. This element will be fundamental in the comparative interpretation of the identity of Sanluri's community (see Section 7.5.2).

Both the cremations and inhumations excavated at Sanluri exhibit repetition of several elements of the ritual. In both cases, the deceased was laid at the bottom of a rectangular pit cut in the marl. In one case, it was laid on the pyre without grave goods around, then the cremated bones were collected, placed inside the urn and finally positioned into a circular pit. Only then, the cups and jugs, likely used to drink by the participants to the funeral, were included in the tomb in contact with the urn. This is evident from the absence of signs of the fire on the grave goods. In the case of inhumations, the body also laid at the bottom of the pit was accompanied by the same grave goods, among which jugs and cups, also accompanied by coarse ware handmade pans. All graves were usually covered with a fill of sand and gravel.

In one case only, the late 4th century AD grave SAN-16C, the burial was covered by stone slabs that created a sort of cist (Figure 6.8), of the type registered at Masullas (Chapter 4, Figure 4.3). In this case, the deceased was accompanied by a Campidanese jugs, with pear-shaped body, *Sigillata Africana* cups and dishes, one coarse ware pan, and three coins, together with several crania from other depositions, interpreted as cases of reduction from earlier graves laid by the side wall (Paderi 1982: 78). This grave, though, deserves further analysis as it recalls the contemporary cist grave 43B at Masullas (see Section 4.2.2). In that case, though, the two crania and one skull were aligned over the body of the main burial. More clear images or drawings and information about the presence or absence of the mandible of these



Figure 6.7. Grave SAN-16C, Sanluri. (From the archive of the Soprintendenza archeologica della Sardegna)

remains would be needed in order to understand this phenomenon either as part of a deliberate ritual or because of the accidental cutting of an earlier grave followed by the reduction of its remains. Information concerning the presence of other inhumations without heads are not recorded either. One aspect is highlighted by the excavators: this is the integration, in late 4th century grave SAN-16C, of one 2nd century AD coin. This is believed originally to have accompanied the earlier burial; Paderi (1982: 78) records that whilst the crania were aligned with the side wall, separated from the main burial, the coin was reused among the grave goods with the new inhumation. This integration of grave goods was not seen elsewhere when reductions occur. At both Masullas and Ortacesus, where reductions of older graves occur, they involve both grave goods and bones. This supports the interpretation of grave SAN-16C as the result of an intentional manipulation and reuse of an ancient grave by the community performing their ritual in the late 4th century, likely aiming to seek a physical connections with the past of the site (see Section 4.5.3).

6.5. Sardinia and funerary practices in the rest of the Mediterranean

This section looks briefly at how the case studies analysed here compare broadly to those from the rest of the Mediterranean. Its main scope is twofold: looking at how funerary practices and identities have been linked by archaeological studies in the regions surrounding Sardinia; and estimating what the state of the art in such regions is and how this work fits in it. Sicily is the first parallel for both geographical, historical, and academic reasons alike:[151] as well as Sardinia,Sicily has always

[151] See Marino, 2006 for a discussion of stereotypical exegetic readings of Sicily as a bridge towards something, or a crossroad (contra Pinzone, 1999: 259), not rarely applied to Sardinia too.

been considered a crossroad.[152] The excavation of the cemetery of Palermo, *Caserma Tukory* (Spatafora, 2010), for instance, has yielded evidence of the same Punic-period traditions of Karales and Sulci, with chamber graves being laid out in the 6th-5th century BC, despite some differences such as the cremations dating to the first half of 6th century BC, absent at both Karales and Sulci. Similarly to Sardinia, though, the tradition of study of Roman period funerary practices is much overlooked at in Sicily than the previous period, and not many parallels for Sardinia are available, despite they would make exceptionally fitting comparative case studies.[153] Similar gaps in funerary studies have been highlighted all over Italy.[154] Exceptions be the analysis of funerary spaces linked to the understanding of urban plans, carried out particularly in central Italy. From this perspective, Karales has numerous counterparts in Campania. For instance, *Puteoli*, close to the gulf of Naples, was accessible via a road, oriented east-west, run by graves on both sides (Giannella, Di Giovanni 2001), as was Karales to the northwest (Angiolillo, 2010: 18-20).[155] Contextual and material culture-related similarities exist too, such as the use of numerous *balsamaria* in cremations (Giannella, Di Giovanni, 2001: 162-63; see Sections 5.2.2 and 5.2.3).

Further comparable contextual data come from Lombardy, the ancient Cisalpine Gaul. The recent excavation under Università Cattolica revealed both cremations and inhumations with abundant grave goods, consisting of pans, cups, jugs, linked to collective drinking, vessels of the same types as those from the settlements (Grassi, Airoldi 2011: 102), for the majority locally produced (2011: 104), as attested in Sardinia. Recent investigations of the rural necropolises of central-western Lombardy, where ancient sources locate distinct ethnic groups,[156] have attested numerous sub-regional characterisations rather than a unifying funerary model (Grossi, Knobloch, Lumacone, 2008: 34).[157] One of the main signs traditionally looked at in Roman-period funerary practices is the presence of the *bustum*. This is rarely found in the Mediterranean, but was found both in Karales and in some rural cemeteries such as Ortacesus.[158] Interesting links are provided by the evidence in North Africa, with which Sardinian sites share numerous features. Common features include the style of Punic-period hypogaea, though they were constructed until the late imperial period in Africa, unlike in Sardinia, where their construction stopped much earlier (see Chapter 3.1.3 and 3.2.2).[159]

Among the numerous sites in North Africa, the urban necropolises of Sétif, Tunisia, excavated in the mid-60s, represent a valuable comparison. Differently from Sulci and similarly to Karales, many cremations in Sétif were setup in *busta*.[160] Sétif is a relevant instance here to exemplify the identification, which often occurs in archaeology, between material culture/practice and ethnic identity. As it was a colony of veterans deduced by Nerva[161] at the end of the 1st century AD, the *busta* were initially interpreted by archaeologists as a sign of the arrival of veterans at Setif (Février, Guéry, 1980: 123). Nonetheless, the deceased buried in a *bustum* could often just be an African veteran going back to the native land, as it was proved at Sétif (*Ibid*: 121). Considering the presence of *busta* on their own as a secure trace of the presence of Roman people has to be refused as too reductionist. However, looking at them through what happens in Sétif, the *busta* from Sardinia can be interpreted as a sign of the presence of people that could reasonably be linked to Roman institutions. The necropolis of Sétif is closer to Karales in terms of the appearance of *busta*. Nevertheless, it shows similarities with Sulci too, given the variety of grave types, the un-interrupted use of chamber graves in the Roman period, and way of disposition of the grave goods around the body (see Figures 3.5, 3.7, 3.8 here, and Février, Guéry 1980: fig. 19, 17, 13).[162] Once more this shows the complexity of social choices and the risk of reductionism hiding behind any attempt to draw neat lines to connect or separate areas of the Roman world.

Further parallels for the necropolises of Sardinia studied here come from the Iberian peninsula, itself with a strong Punic background. Malaga, with its diverse practices and commemorations (Vaquerizo Gil, 2007), is a particularly significant comparison, as are the more southern sites of Córdoba, Baelo Claudia and Castulo. The three urban centres are used as case studies of a postcolonial research by Jimenez (2008), finalised to the criticism of essentialism and to the development of the hybridisation model. In particular, some examples of specific material culture from Córdoba – such as the miniature pans (Jimenez 2008: 287) and the change

[152] See Van Dommelen (1998: 11).
[153] See the similarities from the topographic study by Bejor (1975).
[154] See Montevecchi (2009) and Ortalli (2008) for the Adriatic area, where they highlighted, similarly to Sardinia (See Section 3.2.5), that the focus of attention is mainly on funerary monuments and grave goods, at the expenses of overarching contextual data.
[155] Other parallels are Misenum (Miniero, Di Giovanni, 2006) and Pompeii (Giannella, Di Giovanni. 2001: 162, note 11).
[156] For the names of the ethnic groups and their sources see Ardovino (2001: 95-96).
[157] See for instance the use to fill the grave with earth mixed with broken pots (Grossi, Knobloch, Lumacone 2008: 35), as in Sanluri (see Section 6.4).
[158] It has not been found at Padua, for instance, where one of the most systematic excavations in Veneto has been carried out recently (Cozza, Serafini, 2005: 65).
[159] See, for instance, the hypogaea of Leptis Magna built in the 2nd century AD and used later on (Di Vita-Evrard, Fontana, Munzi, 1997).
[160] See also the necropolis of Tipasa (Baradez, 1957: 162-167)
[161] Col(onia) Nerviana Augusta Martialis veteranorum Sitifen(sium), C.I.L., VIII, 10362.
[162] Similar insights come from Pupput, Tunisia (Ben Abed, Griesheimer, 2001)

in the use of certain grave types (*Ibid*: 239) resemble those seen at Sulci (see Chapter 3.5 and Figure 3.7) and Karales (see chapter 5.2.3.A).

The comparison between Mediterranean necropolises helps examining the degree to which material culture and practices are significant in the construction of community identities, and is as such worth exploring further in future research. However, such broad comparisons acquire meaningfulness only if preceded by a thorough contextual and comparative study at a local and regional scale, such as the one pursued here on Sardinia. A problem worth underlying is that such regional and local comparative studies are often missing for many regions. They can help us understand a Mediterranean world that, during the Roman rule, was certainly connected through both materials and practices. Comparisons at a wider scale give us evidence that people moved around the Empire and integrated in different areas. However, what is at stake here for the understanding of past societies is their relationship with material remains from past practices held at the same sites. Hence, the general model of Romanization remains valuable and necessary - provided that it is defined thoroughly (see Chapter 1.2) – although is not sufficient to understand antiquity at the community level, where identities are shaped.

Romanization gives us a valuable dimension of the Roman provinces, their broad connectivity spatially perceived. However, other dimensions, locally are affected by the material remains of past practices. This connections have been sought in this work. Nevertheless, this section has shown that there are not many similar studies available for comparison, highlighting a gap in the funerary studies that needs being addressed.

7. Sardinia's Communities and the Mediterranean at Large

Una volta però concesso tutto ciò che si deve concedere alle ragioni dell'identità, l'unica via praticabile sembra davvero quella dell'uscita rigorosa dalla sua logica. Se le società praticano, in modi molteplici e vitali, il ricorso all'alterità, occorre ammettere non solo che l'identità è frutto di rappresentazione, ma che essa stessa proietta una rappresentazione riduttiva e – diciamo pure – mortificante rispetto al mutamento (A) e alle possibilità alternative (B).[163]

Francesco Remotti, *Contro l'identità* (1996), 103

7.1. Broadening comparison: synechism applied

Comparing the case studies discussed so far will show the validity of the semiotic theory of interpretation *ad infinitum* (see Chapter 1.1.4) – *synechism* (EP: 312-33) – in action, contributing to a relational understanding of Sardinia's Roman-period identities. This is the main aim of this chapter, that will eventually provide an historical interpretation of the community identities going beyond both funerary practice and the archaeological filter. It will do so by verifying the applicability of the rhizome model (see Chapter 1) to the material evidence of Sardinia, assessing the contribution of a systematic semiotic approach to the study of archaeology, while underlining its possible drawbacks. The last aim of this chapter is to outline the next stage of research.

Identity has been approached from a semiotic perspective throughout the whole book (see Chapter1). This allowed for developing its relational nature, looking at the interaction between practice, agency – or decision-making – and social structure. This semiotic triangulation aimed to overcome the risk of confusing identity on the one hand, and identification with practice or material culture on the other (see Section 1.1.5.). Within the theory of synechism, identity was used here to reduce the gap – highlighted by Roman archaeologists – between material culture and practice that are often simplistically attributed to either 'Local' or 'Roman' identities. This action re-established the continuity between elements that constitute the core principle of the rhizome model. The detailed study of material culture has shown the potential to detect a wide set of actions that differentiate those that we would often consider apparently homogeneous practices. The following sections will make this potential more explicit.

7.2. The case studies compared

A. Republican period practices in the urban communities: Karales and Sulci compared

Less than 100 kilometres apart, Karales (Chapter 5) and Sulci (Chapter 3) offer a remarkable chance to compare two both urban and coastal centres. Both Karales and Sulci had necropolises on hilly areas used in the early Punic period as hypogaea (see Bernardini 2007: 151; 2005: 63 for Sulci; Salvi, 2000b and Locci, 2012 for Karales). However, Chapters 3 and 5 showed that the extensive re-use of multiple graves at Sulci contrasts with the single graves left undisturbed at Karales. Burials set up following the Punic tradition were used at Sulci, well into the Republican period.[164] The community of Karales made different decisions. The Punic-period graves contained the original depositions only (see 5.2.3.A). Nonetheless, the evidence shows that the Roman-period community left several objects – of the same types of those introduced in the new graves – either outside or inside the Punic-period chambers (see graves AVN-30 and AVN-32: Salvi, 2000b: 41, 43).

The early-Republican remains from the two sites show that the Roman-period communities at Karales were as familiar with the Punic-period funerary traditions as those at Sulci. However, their attitude towards them could not be more different. The funerary function of Tuvixeddu remained intact, from which it follows that the Punic-period burials were available for use. Yet, the choice of the Roman period community of Karales was not to use them for their dead. They probably respected - and recognised a clear separation from - the previous users of the site. The communities of Sulci, on the other hand, did not cease integrating previous rituals and spaces, evidently rooted in the territory, within new practices and beliefs that grew up in the city during the Republican age, although other practices and expertises – such as carving the tuff – went lost. What

[163] Once conceded everything that can be conceded to the reasons of identity, the only route to follow seems that of quitting its logic. If societies practice the search of alterity in multiple and vital ways, one ought to admit not only that identity is a product of representation, but also that it is itself a reductive representation, and – let us say it – demeaning compared to the change (A) and to the alternatives (B).' (My translation)

[164] Muscuso and Pompianu (2012), on Grave Steri 2, speak rightly about continuity of use rather than re-use of Punic structures in Roman period.

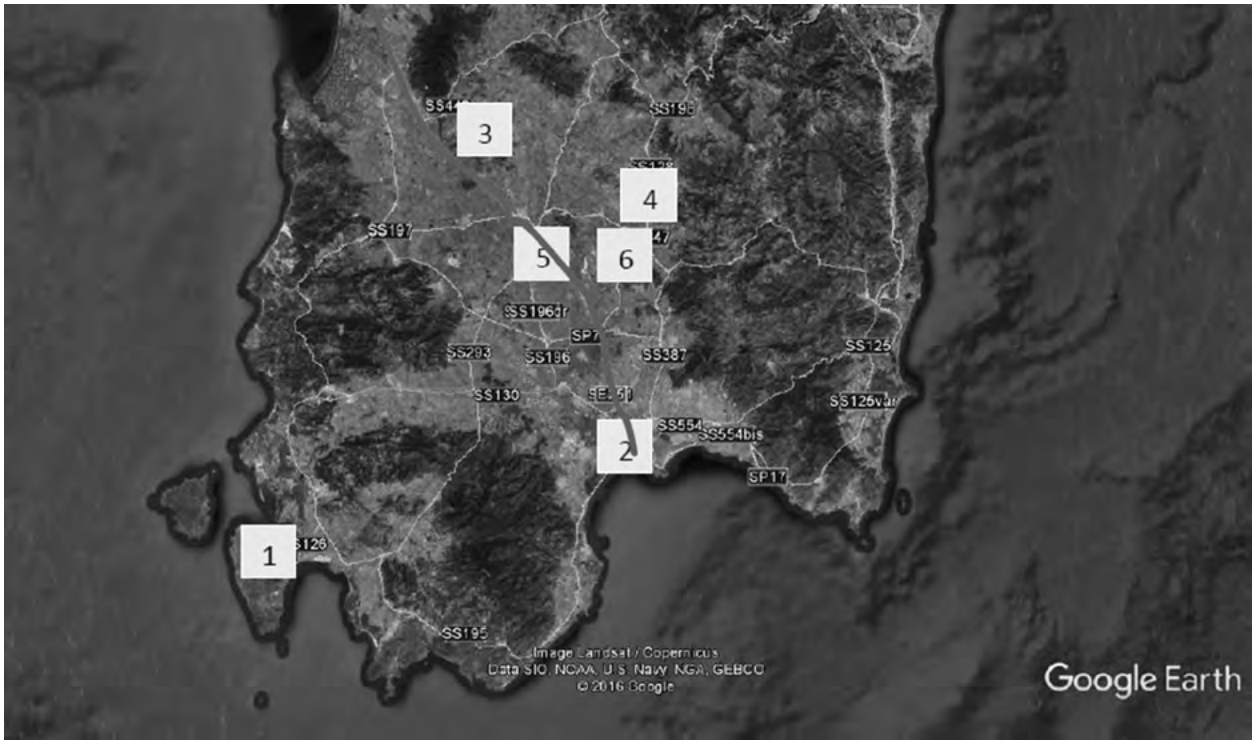


Figure 7.1. Map of south-central Sardinia showing the location of the sites analysed in this study and the trajectory of the main road a *Karalibus Turrem*.

Table 3. Summary of major trends highlighted in the sites under study.

	Total graves	Inhumations in Pits / Sarcoph / Chambers / Enchytr	*Busta* (of which in urn)	Cremations in urn
Cagliari La Scala di Ferro	133	46 / 5 / 0 / 0	5 (0)	77
Cagliari Tuvixeddu (AVN)	36	10 / 0 / 14 / 4	4 (0)	4
Cagliari Tuvixeddu (ISM)	10 (?)	0 (?)	0	10 (?)
Masullas	52	52* / 0 / 0 / 0	0	0
Ortacesus	50	29** / 0 / 2 / 0	6 (0)	13
Sant'Antioco	145	54+12***/ 0 / n / 26	0	53
Gesico	13	13 / 0 / 0 / 0	0	0
Sanluri	72	29+15****/ 0 / 0 / 4	2 (2)	22

* See Appendix 1: Table 9 for a breakdown of inhumation types from Masullas.
**See Appendix 1: Table 25 for a breakdown of inhumation types from Ortacesus.
*** See Appendix 1: Table for a breakdown of inhumation types from Sulci.
****See Section 6.4 for a breakdown of inhumation types from Sanluri: 15 are cappuccina graves.

remained was the attitude to use those spaces with familiarity and comfort.

Signs of both continuity and discontinuity coexist at Sulci, but only signs of discontinuity appear at *Tuvixeddu*.[165] It is remarkable that this disaffection towards Punic traditions at Karales did not translate at all into the destruction or eradication of the material signs of the earlier structures. While the previous structures at Sulci remained current, similar structures were a distant memory with which to relate respectfully and with cultural distance at Karales.

B. Diversity in rural inland communities: Masullas, Gesico and Sanluri

The study has provided much evidence against the paradigm of a homogeneous Romanised coastal area of Sardinia distinct from a mainly indigenous interior (Pais 1881, 1900, 1911; Meloni, 1990; Mastino, 2005). Chapters 4 and 6 showed how the communities of Masullas, Gesico, and Sanluri, in central and southern Sardinia, made similar choices about both the treatment of the body and material culture. Nonetheless, differences emerged locally.

The first difference concerns the use of personal ornaments: none appeared at Sanluri and Gesico, whilst a few came from Masullas, where the accepted ideology allowed the personal characterisation of the deceased, distinguishing a small group of individuals from the majority.

The second difference, distinguishing Masullas and Gesico from Sanluri, is the covering of the body with loose soil mixed with broken tiles, and fragmented goods in the latter (Paderi, 1982: 72-79). This signifies an additional stage in the funerary ritual performed at Sanluri in comparison with neighbouring communities. This difference could be attributed to divergent perceptions of death. If the grave goods in Masullas mainly stand for the collective practices of drinking and eating performed before the deceased, and they are rarely offers to them – exceptions could be dishes with animal bones – then those at Sanluri could stand as offerings for the afterlife, provided that those mixed with the earth fill were the remains of collective practices that went destroyed after their last use.

Despite chrono-typological similarities, a lengthier ritual and a visible distinction between objects destined to the dead and those destined to the activities of the community characterises Sanluri in opposition to Gesico and Masullas. Such distinctions must suggest the existence of distinct local identities within the wider area that shared material homogeneity (see Table 10, 11, 28, 29, 30, 31).

C. Inhumations and cremations at Karales and Ortacesus: identities versus *ethnicities*[166]

Similar details emerge comparing Ortacesus and Karales. These communities had a strong material connection (see Figures 5.14, 5.19, 6.5): inhumations are predominant at both, *busta* appear around the early 2nd century BC, and are then substituted by cremations in urn. However, the choices of practices relate locally to both cultural and economic nature.

The communities of Karales and Ortacesus shared a core of material culture (see Figure 5.14, 5.19, 6.5). Yet, they differ widely if one looks at the contextual details. Such differences can be exemplified referring to the knucklebones from infant graves at Karales (Section 5.3.2), and to the whetstones from three female burials at Ortacesus (see Section 6.2). Although not contemporary, each of these elements highlights the distance between the practices and the identities that they convey, in a mutually exclusive way. No knucklebones were ever introduced in the graves at Ortacesus, and most likely no whetstones were made part of the grave goods assemblages in the necropolises of Karales. And if they were, the communities significantly decided not to use them in funerary contexts.

These objects, whetstones and knucklebones, are not representative of two opposite funerary practices. They should never signify opposite community identities, as through this process we would incur in the risk of identification that has been criticised and avoided altogether in this study, as it is semiotically not rigorous, and anthropologically and politically dangerous (see Section 1.1.5). Rather, the aim is to distinguish whetstones and knucklebones from the wider material culture to be used as indexes of how the agency of the urban and rural communities under analysis could achieve different identities.

The three women buried at Ortacesus were likely seen by their community as individuals who played a role in the hard-working lifestyle of which the sharpeners whetstones were a fundamental part, as were the bladed tools that they were use to sharpen and make more functional and productive. In this little synechistic chain adopted for these few graves at Ortacesus and Karales, the absence of any other personal ornaments can play the role of the interpretant (see Sections 1.1.4.-1.1.5) that will end up justifying the interpretation provided. The knucklebones introduced in few *busta*

[165] This diversity requires historical perspective. Karales is known as a port city used early by Roman fleets (Mastino, 2005: 217-218).

[166] The word ethnicity is used here in its meaning of a group of people with emphasis on their provenience as a distinctive trait of their specific behaviour and material culture used, and it is contrasted by the semiotic definition of identity (Chapter 1).

at Karales can act as a further interpretant mediating the previous one towards a further meaning, and can be seen as signs of a choice to represent the deceased with items used for games rather than in working activities. They are symptomatic of communities for which time had a different structure. Members of the urban communities of Karales used to pass part of their time socialising and playing games, activity that was so important that some of the dead were remembered through the inclusion of game items in their graves, suggesting that Karales' communities perhaps led a less work-centred life than that led by the communities of Ortacesus.

D. Sulci's variety and Masullas homogeneity: collective ideology in funerary practice.

An apparent contrast emerges when Sulci and Masullas are compared. A strong sense of a cohesive group identity, which did not preclude the expressions of personal identities, emerges at Masullas, whereas a collage of multiple identities appears at Sulci. However, the two communities were linked by a visible material continuity due to trade between south-western and central-western Sardinia (Table 3, Table 10, Figure 4.8). Imitations of *Sigillata Italica* – or *Sigillata Sarda* (Tronchetti, 2014) – are abundant at both. However, typological analysis is only a part of archaeological enquiry, but the excessive application of non-flexible typologies (see section 1.2.3) to provincial settings has caused the equation of modern typologies, created for scholar purposes, with ancient cultural identities (Roth, 2007: 61). This has happened also in Sardinia, by considering hints of Romanization some classes of pottery such as both black gloss ware and *Sigillata Italica* and their imitations. Of a total of 91 *Sigillata Italica* – 76 *Sigillata Sarda* – vessels studied here, almost half come from Masullas; seven from Sulci; five from Gesico; three from Sanluri; eleven from Sardara, 29, mainly original, from Karales. This distribution shows a pattern of consumption of imitations – and likely their production too – in the area around Masullas. Products from Masullas reached Sulci too, possibly via the west road *a Tibula Sulcis* that ended in *Neapolis*, 30 km from Masullas. Fewer products from the area of Masullas reached Karales, where original items from Italy arrived in larger numbers. Via the same channel several common ware jugs, likely produced at Sulci, arrived at Masullas.[167]

These elements show that a two-way exchange happened between Sulci and the area around Masullas.[168] Significantly, while some original pieces of imported *Sigillata Italica* are both at Sulci and Karales, there are none at Masullas[169] nor at Gesico. A few appear at Sardara and Sanluri. It can be hypothesised that the communities of central-southern Sardinia, likely composed mainly by peasants, could either not afford imports because more expensive than locally produced imitations, or they were more comfortable with producing similar vessels locally. Within this logic, the abundance of imitations does not necessarily mean that the community using them was more prone to Romanization (*contra* MacMullen, 2000) than Sulci's or Karales' communities. Other factors, such as a pottery-making tradition,[170] apparently very strong in the area around Masullas, and different economic possibilities, plaied an important role in the construction of different community identity.

E. Burial tradition and change: overcoming structural tensions in Masullas

Chapter 4 (see Section 4.2.2 and 4.5.3) has provided evidence of a sudden change in the traditional funerary ritual at Masullas, likely affecting – or being affected by – community identity. The evidence provide an example of how the approach followed here can connect the performance of specific practices to group identities, beyond broad ethnic labels. The historical background showed that the application of the *enfiteusis* to Sardinia affected both locals working the land, settlers from Italy, slaves, and *conductores* (see Section 4.5.3).

The analysis of 4th century AD practices at Masullas displays valuable elements to the interpretation of community identities only if looked at against their cultural background – e.g. previous burial customs – and the social structure with which the community of Masullas had to relate, creatively attempting to overcome the appearance of a radical structural change. In this case, the provenance of the individuals, and their wide ethnic affiliations are not signified in the new practices because they are less relevant than the historical circumstances that the community faced. The community's past and present came into dialogue when problems within its social structure erupted, bringing with them a discontinuity in group identity. It is against this social, political and cultural background that new practices arose, seeking a deep re-connection – attempted physically with the manipulation of crania – with the community's past. It is only through the comparison with past ways of doing things, and without confining them in ethnic categories, that those practices could be archaeologically interpreted in terms of social agency and group identity.

[167] Appendix 2: type I.H.2.e.ε.01, corresponding to Sirigu morphological types 1, 1/2.
[168] This observation acquires more value if one considers that, from the late Republican period, Sulci was opposed to Karales on the political parties supported during the civil war (Mastino, 2005: 243).
[169] Tronchetti mentions one piece of terra sigillata italic at Masullas but I could not verify its presence among the materials studied.
[170] See Section 4.4.2 for some examples: i.e. the lamps produced by Quintus Memmius Pundens in the area of Tharros (Sotgiu, 1968: 90, 95, 96).

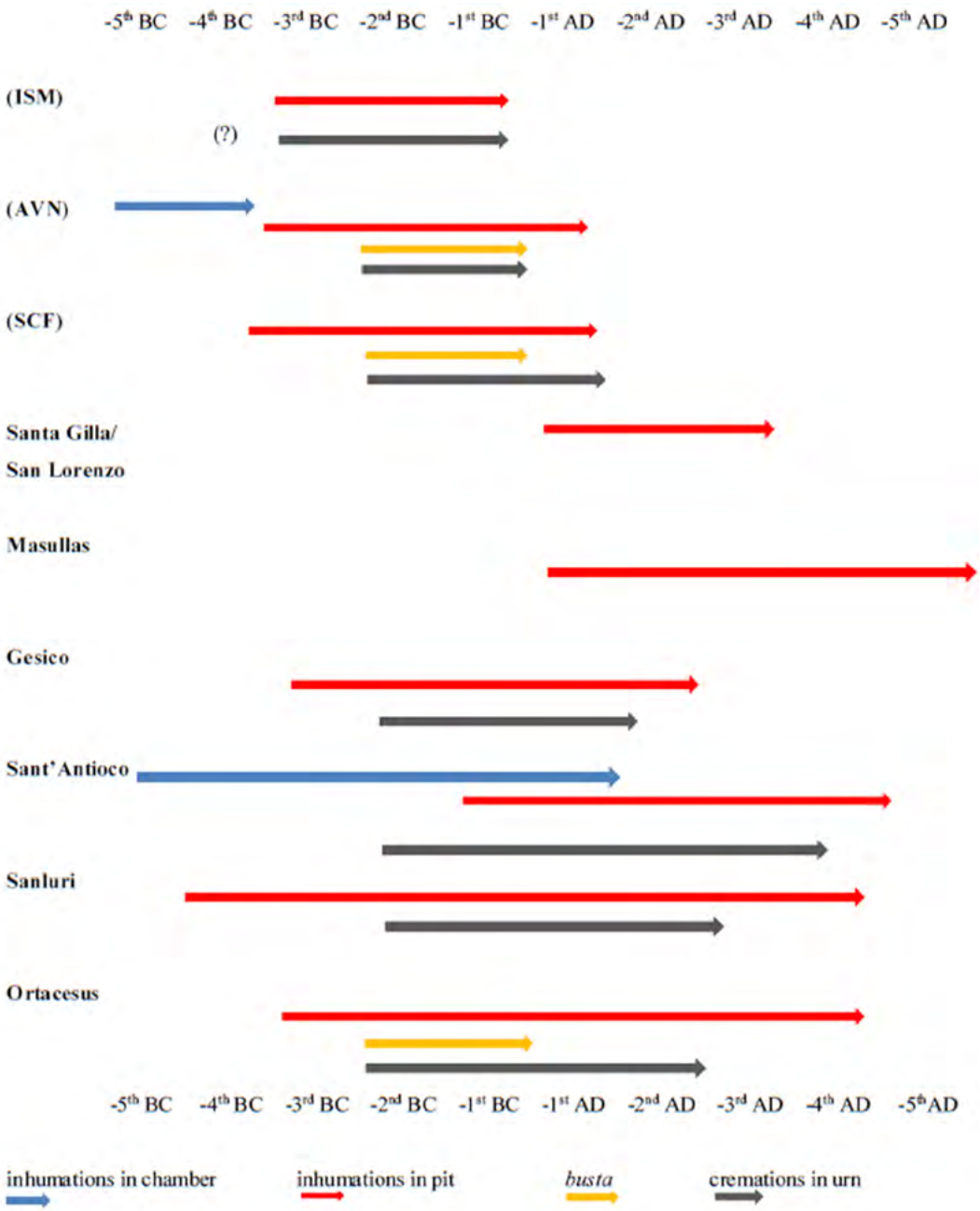


Figure 7.2 Timeline of sites analysed and relative trends.

7.3. Beyond funerary contexts: indications from other spheres

Before providing a synthesis on community identities of Roman period Sardinia, it is necessary to look at what patterns have emerged from the study of other contexts within the region. The first indication comes again fromTronchetti (2004b: 19), and it is a methodological premise: 'Sardinia has almost never been the site of a territorial survey' with a few exceptions (see Van Dommelen, Annis, and van de Velde, on the Riu Mannu Survey Project). This is problematic when attempting to answer questions concerning the relationship between funerary areas and other spaces. However, some data could be extrapolated.

To start with, we know the legislation imposing cemeteries outside the urban area (*Cic, De Leg. 53-58)* does not vigorously apply to the case studies presented here. In Karales, the necropolis of the ex-hotel *La Scala di Ferro* (Figure 2.11: 6) is only one km to the southeast of the centre of the Roman-period town, the temple theatre in Via Malta (Figure 2.11: 5). Similarly, the Roman-period graves of Sulci are only few hundred metres from the acropolis (Tronchetti, 1990: 173). Karales and Sulci are not an exception: evidence for the presence of a

necropolises inside the urban area was also frequent in Italy, i.e. at Pompeii (Antico Gallina, 1997: 216-220) and Sarsina (Picuti, 2008: 44).

A consistent work on Centreal-western Sardinia by Van Dommelen (1998c; 2001; and Tronchetti, 2005) offers a valuable chance of comparison. Looking at the whole 1st millennium BC, Van Dommelen (1998a: 211) concludes that 'the historical context constituted an important structuring element' in people's practices, referring to previous colonial influences – Phoenician and Punic – visible in the Roman period. This constant intertwining between different historical traditions brought Van Dommelen to individuate blurred colonial categories in material culture. An example comes from the Marmilla region (Figure 2.4): in the Republican period were used, on one hand, traditional settlements associated with *nuraghi*, and, on the other, 'numerous typically 'colonial' elements' (Van Dommelen, 1998a: 214) such as the ceramic roof tiles also used in the house nearby the nuraghe Marfudi (Lilliu, Zucca, 1988: 51-54). Material elements from different past traditions and innovative ones intertwined locally in the evidence provided by Van Dommelen. The conclusions provided by this study are in line with Van Dommelen's ones.

The recent study by Roppa (2012) about the dynamics of settlements in Sardinia is also helpful for the aim of this study. In surveying Gesturi, also in the Marmilla territory, Roppa has identified a twofold phenomenon: on one hand, the continuity of use of isolated nuragic structures uphill throughout the Punic and Republican periods, and on the other, the formation of new aggregated small settlements downhill during the Punic period. This confirms what witnessed in other areas of central southern Sardinia, particularly in Sanluri (Salvi, Usai, 1990; Paderi,1982). Roppa's study aligns to Van Dommelen's conclusions: the historical social structures formed before were still materially present in the Roman-period communities of the Marmilla area. Conversely, those more to the south were closer to Rome in both political attitudes and material culture, due to a closer proximity to Karales, but also to a different social structure of those communities (Roppa, 2010: 33) that have to be studied and individuated also on its own.

These studies go along the ideas proposed by several studies on Punic-period Sardinia by Bernardini. For Bernardini (2006: 61), Sardinia remained deeply permeated by Punic traditions in both its cultural traits and organisation of land, long after becoming a Roman province in 238 BC (Bernardini, 2006: 62).[171] Nonetheless, Bernardini believes also that this Punic cultural persistence was not a resistance to the Roman domination but rather a sign that the physical and social structures formed over the previous four centuries held well, probably aided by the arrival of North African colonisers when Sardinia became a Roman province (Bondì, 1990; Van Dommelen, 1998c: 161-209). A synthesis between architecture, material culture, and settlement techniques during the Punic and Republican periods brought Bernardini to reject the model of a passive and nostalgic resistance to Rome, but rather to propose one of a vivid Punic tradition enriched with new codes and ideologies.

Bernardini's general paradigm found mild confirmation in Nervi's recent research on the area around Nora – *municipium Norensium* – south Sardinia. She highlights how the material culture at Nora was particularly multiform, showing a strong commercial link between southern Sardinia and Roman North Africa, but also less evident signs recalling materials and daily practices of a Punic cultural substratum (Nervi, 2015). As Nervi puts it, the Punic origin of Nora was present in the Roman city and it possibly favoured the commercial contact with North Africa in the Imperial period through those developed in the Punic period (Tronchetti 2008: 1719-1730).

The studies carried out by Van Dommelen, Roppa, and Nervi, are roughly in line with the results of my research. However, a few differences between them and the aims of this book exist. These are, first, the almost total focus of the scholarship on the so-called transition period between the Punic and Roman colonialism, that instead mostly overlooked the imperial period or any other period that is not considered a transitional one. Second, despite the valuable progression offered by the application of the postcolonial lens, the ethnic dichotomy Punic-Roman – often transformed in a trichotomy with the addition of the hybrid Romano-Punic – is still intact in scholarship of Sardinia, not differently from Brtian, Spain, Germany, and so on.

Van Dommelen (1998c: 213) himself acknowledges that the relativity of the colonial encounter at a local scale has to be the focus of our understanding of Sardinia within the Mediterranean. However, it is not by assigning a comparative degree of indigenisation or of colonization to each site that this agenda can be pursued. The approach proposed here was to look at the local articulation of material culture and practices resisting the temptation to attach an ethnic tag to the identities under study. Answering questions such as: 'after all, was this very distinct community Punic or Roman in its essence?' will not help understanding ancient communities archaeologically, and must be avoided.

[171] See also Lilliu, 1990 and Pala 1990.

7.4. Archaeological rhizome and data limitations: present and future of the study

The argument of this research developed two main threads that intertwine numerous times throughout seven chapters. Both threads are nourished by a semiotic understanding of human practice and identity.

One thread, centred on the role of the archaeologist, is the idea that practice – particularly funerary practice – needs to be understood by questioning the numerous gaps and bridges that emerge – both geographically and chronologically – within the material evidence, going beyond the often tacitly applied textual analogy.

The other thread is based on the proposition that the specific practices followed by the Roman-period communities of Sardinia studied here require us to move beyond models bound to questions of ethnicity alone, overcoming the duality Roman/Locals that so often is the result of Roman studies.

Although these two threads are sound in theory, they had to be tested against the archaeological evidence analysed in Chapters 3-6. Their intertwinement around the materiality of funerary practices brought the following results.

The semiotic perspective used here to interpret the archaeological finds of Roman-period Sardinia proved beneficial for a contextual study of funerary practice, despite the fragmentary nature of the available data. The first advantage of this approach is the theoretical acknowledgement of archaeology as a discipline inevitably bound to identity (see Chapter 1). This helped me formulate a definition of identity as relational, mutable, and materially detectable, useful in overcoming the binary stagnation (Puddu, 2018) that springs from the textual metaphor (Hodder, Hutson, 2003: 204) – or textual analogy – that generates the identity-identification confusion (see Sections 1.1.4 and 1.1.5). A specific advantage for funerary archaeology is that a thorough semiotic approach provides a valid escape from the static representational one that sees the grave apparatus as a text readable through a codified grammar representing the either the departed or their society. It has forced us to see grave goods as dynamic traces of past actions in context, disclosing gestures and practices, and advancing ideas on social structures, materially evident problems, and the choices made by each community to overcome such issues.

The second advantage comes from the way that such a semiotic account forces the interpreter to remain open to alternative and often contradictory explanations. From the outset, the main point of view was a postcolonial one,[172] looking at ordinary remains often not taken into account in broad narratives (see Section 1.2.4). This prevented me from falling into the trap of approaching another polarised and homogeneous interpretation of the past, through models such as that of indigenisation. Rather, it allowed me to look for better explanations, building a chain of interpretations that, in several cases, revealed identity to be too simplistic if used in a monolithic way. In doing so, I linked group identity, in certain periods, to factors other than ethnic belonging,[173] looking, for instance, for relations with labour that necessarily reconnects with the distribution of power.

These approach can allow archaeologists who engage in a thorough semiotic analysis to see subalterns[174] – *sensu* Gramsci[175] – and elites interacting rather than as isolated independent entities. These are aspects on which my research would focus in the future, aiming at reducing the wide and unsustainable distance between the archaeology of identity and that of the ancient economy. This aim is in line with the search for continuity that permeates this research, and that is valid both in the reconstruction of the past, and in the methodological divisions in present academic research. This needs to be pursued in small and coherent steps.

The first step, hopefully achieved here, was that of freeing the concept of identity from monolithic, hierarchic, and ethno-centric identifications. To do so, I chose the interpretation of the archaeology of funerary practice, since burials are historically seen as contexts meant to communicate some – often-simplistic – identity. This work illustrated the contradictory and heterogeneous identities of Sardinia by fundamentally disclosing the rigorous semiotic nature of both identity and archaeology.

The second step will be looking at identity of Roman-period Sardinian communities integrating data from funerary sites with wider contexts, reducing the gap between the world of the dead and the world of the

[172] Meaning Said's (1978) critical approach to the way knowledge and broad narratives are constructed.
[173] The recent work on the necropolis of Sucidava-Celei, Romania, is indicative of one trend of funerary archaeology as concerns ethnic identities (Popilian, Bondoc, 2012). Dismissing traditional interpretations (Toropu, Tatulea, 1987: 97-98, quoted in Popilian Bondoc, 2012: 259) that linked grave types to ethnicities, the new interpretations, based on the absence of 'a single hand-made vessel' and on the 'Roman origin' (Popilian, Bondoc 2012: 260) of the majority of material culture, still draw conclusions on ethnic identity, revealing a culture-historical essence.
[174] I refer to the original meaning attributed by Gramsci in the second paragraph, entitled Methodological Criteria, of his *Quaderno 25. Ai margini della storia. (Storia dei gruppi sociali subalterni)* ([1934: (16)] 1975: 2283,2284), where he talks, rather than about subalterns themselves, about how the history of subalterns is disaggregated and sporadic. This definition is in tune with – and has been pursued in – the search for continuity attempted in this study.
[175] See footnote 2, page 1 of this book.

living, which, as should come out clearly from this work, has no reason to exist. Data from future analysis will be examining alternative ways through which communities define themselves fluidly, among which are the concepts of labour and power that have emerged even here (see the manipulations at Masullas, Chapter 4, and the material culture at Sanluri, Chapter 6).

The following steps of my research will direct the previous two towards an engagement with a joint semiotic definition of community identity and economy[176] as two interacting entities.

The gaps in the nature of data, after being acknowledged and investigated, have to be taken into account as a meaningful part of the disaggregated and episodic history of subaltern social groups, rather than being classified as an obstacle and as such put aside. It is self-evident that the lack of systematic bone analysis from burials and contextual organisation of the graves cannot be separated from the bias of previous research, or from the academic agenda pursued in the past which aimed at collecting data on the dominant class.

The same data limitations are at the base of the results of my study, and allowed me to draw some general visions of Sardinia in the Roman period. I agree with Dyson and Rowland (2007: 14) that 'an historical model of two 'Sardinias' developed, with a coastal region that had been much influenced over the centuries by foreign invaders, and the 'true Sardinia' of the interior that largely resisted those outside influences and clung to its traditional culture'. This vision of a split Sardinia, applied also to its prehistory and to the Middle Ages, is influenced by the methodology of data collection followed in the past, and does not fit the results of this work.

The model of a divided Sardinia resembles too much the model of the reservations to which Native Americans were confined by colonisers, a topic of great interest in the late 19th and early 20th century, when Roman archaeology started to develop in Sardinia. Lilliu, for instance, wrote in his *La Civiltà dei Sardi* about the authentic Sardinians of the interior (Lilliu 1963: 281). The data gathered here are more in tune with Van Dommelen's interpretation that the basis for Punic and Roman colonisations of Sardinia were laid by the entanglement of colonial and indigenous elements (Van Dommelen, 1998a: 211). His analysis allowed Van Dommelen to interpret the local context as the element that creates the conditions for the structuring role of history (Van Dommelen, 1998: 146-157), referring to Sahlins' structure of conjuncture (Sahlins, 1985: xiv; 152-154).

The analysis of funerary practices provided here has led to the certainty that the interpretation of the past created by Sardinian communities through funerary practice is, on one hand, the principal way that constructs their identities, and on the other, the first justification for their fluidity.

From this study emerged that Roman-period Sardinia resembles more of an archipelago of interconnected, remifying and contrasting identities than an island split into two neat identities. In fact, if continuity between neighbouring communities appeared from the material culture, both continuity and discontinuity emerged from the reconstruction of practices held by both neighbouring and distant communities. The image of the archipelago derives both from the community identities expressed in Sardinia, and from the nature of the evidence itself. The way I tried to face the incomplete nature of archaeological evidence in this research was by reducing the gap between two entities – pieces of evidence – through their relation to a third one, applying a constant semiotic framework.

Both human behaviours and the nature of the archaeological record have tended to increase the gap between sites, communities, regions, producing items often attributed to hierarchic and divided categories that do not reflect the reality that was once without solution of continuity. I think that the task of the archaeologist, as I have attempted here, is that of 'linking what is separated, aiming at connecting the thick net of already existing relationships that are not evident at a superficial glance' (my translation of Paolucci 2010: 304).[177] The semiotic framework applied to this study helped me to get closer to this task. Interestingly, similar methods to those applied by me here have also appeared throughout the book among those adopted by the Sardinia communities under scrutiny. This is where the two main threads mentioned at the beginning of this section come together after intertwining and separating throughout the book.

The rhizome, as theorised by Deleuze, Guattari (1980), and Eco (1983: 358-359; 2007) is a multiplicity in constant ramification (Paolucci 2010: 60-61). The semiotic framework adopted in this book allowed the sites analysed to emerge, chapter after chapter, as constitutive parts of a rhizome. A system of actions made by the communities in the attempt at both widening and reducing the distance either with the past or between themselves. This distance adjustment was put into practice by Sardinian communities by either manipulating graves or leaving them untouched, abandoning entire areas or recovering them, using

[176] The semiotic nature of economy has been exemplified in 1.1.4.B.

[177] *'...connettere ciò che è separato, al fine di districare e connettere quei fili che costituiscono una trama di rapporti non immediatamente percepibile a prima vista.'*

imports or producing local imitations. In doing so, the communities of central-western and southern Sardinia left signs standing for either the creation – or the bridging – of gaps with heterogeneous continuities, comparable to the task I have attempted to undertake here as an archaeologist, not far from that attributed to the philosopher by D'Alembert.[178]

7.5. Community identities of Sardinia as a Roman province: the layers of a long-lasting interaction

This work attempted to take the archaeology of Sardinia within the broad theoretical debate around the interpretation of the Roman world. Apart from few exceptions – notably Van Dommenlen's work – most publications on Sardinian archaeology have long been imbued in a culture-history approach, with scholars 'still very much driven by nineteenth century models of artefact classification and historical periodization' (Dyson and Rowlands, 2007: 13, referring to Willey and Sabloff 1980: 83-180). For this reason, Sardinia – along other Mediterranean islands falling into similar tradition of studies – makes an ideal case for postcolonial interpretation, able to go beyond the traditional narrative of the island as a Roman province.

This study showed the communities in exam going through different archaeologically visible layers of interaction with the Roman world. The most superficial layer regards material culture. As reported by numerous studies on Roman period Sardinia, objects linked to the Roman world are widespread across the island in the millennium between the 5th century BC and the 5th AD. Black gloss appears especially in the early sites until the 1st century AD, leaving space to the *Sigillata Italica* during the first Imperial period, and later to the diffusion of *Sigillata Africana*. Locally produced pottery inspired to those classes was also abundant, showing an active participation of local artisans to the wide production of commodities circulating in the Roman world. This layer of interaction, despite fundamental, is a static one: it concerns the mere presence of certain objects on sites., and it has to be taken as such, without drawing any identity-driven conclusions.

A deeper layer consists in the way such objects were embodied in local practice. At a general level, Sardinia's communities showed consistency with the rest of the Roman world, as shown, for instance, by the appearance of cremation in the 2nd century BC. Such practices have been detected in different geographical areas – i.e. the use of *busta* at Karales on the coast, and at Gesico inland. This undermines the reliability of an historical model of two Sardinias (i.e. Mastino, 2005: 168; Dyson and Rowlands, 2007: 14), a coastal region influenced by foreign people, and the 'true inland Sardinia' clung to its traditional culture and resistant to the influence from outside. This layer helps advancing the knowledge of Sardinian communities based on what they used to do.

However, to avoid identification between group identities and objects/practices, this study has looked at the way they articulated with the remains of objects and actions undertaken in the past in the sites under exam. The importance given to such relations has highlighted the crucial role played by memory and agency in the formation of group identities. Memory, unveiling the value given by a community to the material remains of the past, underscores the decisions taken by its members around the preservation, manipulation, integration, destruction, abandonment, of such past, in line with new practices adopted.

Considering what stated so far, some major conclusions on the history of identity in Sardinia as a Roman province can be drawn. All the communities analysed in this study adopted different solutions in different periods. However, all of them showed full awareness of the materiality of the past surrounding them. Different patterns distinguish the Republican-period identities – 3rd /2nd century BC – from the Imperial period.

During the Republican period, Sardinian communities dealt with the materiality of the Punic tradition, visibly evident long time after Sardinia became a Roman Province. In this respect, opposite attitudes were detected at Karales and Sulci, where the evidence of Punic period graves dug in the tuff was monumental. Karales' communities marked a discontinuity towards those practices already from the 3rd century BC (see Chapter 5), despite the dead buried in them were respectfully left untouched but acknowledged through the deposition of offerings. In contrast, Sulci's communities showed a continuity with the Punic-period remains that allows to conclude that they were still part of their practices even in the mid-Repubblican period. Evidence of the relationship with Punic-period remains in Republican-period rural sites of inland Sardinia is more subtle. Ancient graves were not object of re-use in Gesico, Ortacesus, and Sanluri, but the same funerary spaces were used in continuity with the ancient graves. No evident signs of discontinuity were found. Rather, objects diffused during the Punic period are found in early Republican-period graves. The emergence of new practices such as the *bustum* across all sites analysed is consistent with central Italy.

During the Imperial period, the interaction with Punic-period remains became less central. Nonetheless, it is still the relationship with past practices and their material remains the key to understand Imperial-period community identities. Sulci's communities obliterated the Punic-period chamber graves re-used in the Rblican

[178] See the opening epigraph of this work.

period when they were filled up, and buried their dead following a number of diverse practices. Inhumations in pit, in amphorae, on the surface, cremations in urns, and hybrid combinations of two of these burial types were side to side in the same space. A wide diversity of practices characterizes Sulci. In contrast, the inland communities of Ortacesus, Sanluri, and Masullas, buried their dead following uniform practices in the Imperial period. Particularly significant is the cohesiveness that emerged from the study of Masullas' practices, where every depositional details concerning the set up of the bodies and of the grave goods around it, were rigorously followed for around three centuries. This cohesiveness acquires even more relevance when it is put in relation with later practices of manipulation of ancient graves in the 3rd and 4th centuries AD, as this allows us to hypothesise a change of social conditions and needs for the local community to know which further investigation is required.

These elements helped to understand the articulation of community identities of Sardinia locally. The communities under exam shared a common ground, which is a collective participation to the broad circulation of material culture in the Roman world. In the same way, there are not traces of resistance to the widespread culture of the Roman period, despite Republican-period practices are very much imbued in the Punic-period ways of doing things. Of course, resistance to the Roman authority are registered several times during the Republican period, but this did not translate in the refusal of objects and uses linked to such authority.

This work shows how the adoption of a semiotically informed postcolonial theory in the study of the archaeology of Sardinia generated a radical change in the interpretation of its identities, undermining some commonly accepted paradigms. The people of Sardinia's communities investigated participated to a general culture widespread in the Mediterranean and did not resist it, but articulated their identities at a local scale, dealing with material and social conditions that can be appreciated only locally. Their gestures, identifiable only in the scrutiny of the details of the archaeological record, were not only aimed at changing their present, but also at shaping their past by connecting to it.

It does not make a big difference if this past was imbued in the memory of a pan-Mediterranean, broadly recognised, Punic-period tradition – as in Karales and Sulci – or in the memory of a locally contained, but strongly cohesive, small community as that of Masullas. Such bridges towards the past are of different forms and were created to respond to different needs that can be perceived mainly at a local level.

Neither a strong Romanization as a diffusion of a uniform culture nor a resistance to Roman authority could be detected from the archaeological remains of Sardinia's communities. These paradigms do not become more applicable if applied via a geographical discrimination.

The funerary practices of Sardinian communities analysed here belong to people who were leaving their lives with no concern towards their affiliation to one of the biggest powers dominating the Mediterranean at that time. In fact, if the affiliation with the political power was sought by individuals and families of the local or foreign elites, there is no evidence that the same was true for the subalterns that are the focus of this study. This is not to deny political value to the practices observed here – rather the opposite is true – but to undermine the assumption that such actions were, at a local level, engaged in sustaining monolithic powers and identities as the Roman and Punic ones. In fact, some signs as those registered in Masullas in the 3rd and 4th centuries AD have been linked here to a possible political action finalised to defend the social structures, identity, and unity of its community members. But this has relevance at a local scale.

The people looked at in this study are representative of those subalterns whose ethnic affiliation – Roman, Punic, local – is bypassed by their ways of dealing with the material conditions of life: these were, in the majority of cases, the conditions of a life of work in the fields. Signs of neither high status – objects of peculiar economic value in the graves – nor of active participation to political authority – inscriptions stating the roles exercised in life – characterize the communities studied here. They constitute the large majority of the population of Sardinia, whose gestures tell about an island constituted by several interconnected, but distinct, cultural islands that articulated their identities locally, with no signs of attention to what their gestures could mean in terms of broad ethnic affiliation. Sardinia in the Roman period emerges from this study as an archipelago of communities connected with each other, open to materials and practices coming from overseas, but focused onto their local territories, their past, and their constant, identity-shaping, dialogue with the dead.

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APPENDIX 1

List 1. Necropolises from west central and south Sardinia.

1. Sant'Antioco. Is Pirixeddus. Tombs: 152. Ritual: cremation/inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
2. Carbonia. Campo Frassoi. Tombs: 2. Ritual: inhumation. 1 -476 AD.
2.1. Carbonia. Sa Cresiedda. Tombs: 3. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 200 AD.
3. Santadi. Tombe a tegola. Tombs: 4. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
4. Pula. Cala di Ostia. Tombs: 8. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
4.1. Pula. Sepolcreto di Santa Margherita. Tombs: 3. Ritual: inhumation. 238 – 1 BC
4.2. Pula. Chiesa di Sant'Efisio. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. 300 – 476 AD.
4.3. Pula. La Guardia di Perdas de Fogu. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Provisional dating: 121 – 467 AD.
5. Cagliari. Bonaria cemetery. Tombs: 21. Ritual: cremation/inhumation. 100 – 400 AD.
5.1. Cagliari. Bonaria cemetery. Tombs: 32. Ritual: cremation/inhumation. 100 – 300 AD.
5.2. Cagliari. La botanica. Tombs: /. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
5.3. Cagliari. San Lorenzo. Tombs: 20. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 300 AD.
5.4. Cagliari. San Saturnino. Tombs: /. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
5.5. Cagliari. Scala di Ferro. Tombs: 106. Ritual: cremation/inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
5.6. Cagliari. Viale Santa Gilla. Tombs: 10. Ritual: inhumation. 200 – 400 AD.
5.7. Cagliari. Poetto. Stabilimento Ausonia. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
5.8. Cagliari. Vico III Lanusei. Tombs: 37. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
6. Elmas. Bau 'e s'Ulmu. Tombs: / Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
7. Villasimius. Isola dei Cavoli. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
7.1. Villasimius. Riu Trottu. Tombs: 1. Ritual: cremation. Roman period.
8. Quartucciu – Cagliari. Baulanu Simbirizzi. Tombs: 4. Ritual: inhumation. Roman period.
8.1. Quartucciu – Cagliari. Pill'e Matta. Tombs: 298. Ritual: inhumation/cremation. Punic/Roman.
9. Santadi. Tombe a tegola. Tombs: 4. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
10. Vallermosa. Pau Cungiau. Tombs: 5. Funerar ritual: inhumation. 200 – 600 AD.
11. San Gavino Monreale. Gilba Onidi. Tombs: 15. Ritual: inhumation. 100 – 200 AD.
11.1. Sanluri. Bidd'e Cresia. Tombs: 72. Ritual: inhumation and cremation. Punic and Roman Age.
12. Masullas. Mitza Salida. Tombs: 55. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
13. Ortacesus. Mitza de Siddi. Tombs: 100. Ritual: cremation/inhumation. Roman Age.
14. Lunamatrona. Corrazzu de Friaxiu. Tombs: 30. Ritual: inhumation. 1 –476 AD.
15. Las Plassas. Molinu. Tombs: 2. Ritual: cremation. Roman Age.
15.1. Las Plassas. Su Accu e S'Ena. Tombs: 3. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 200 AD.
16. Barumini. Siali di Sotto. Tombs: 10. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
16.1. Barumini. Sanzianu. Tombs: 7. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
16.2. Barumini. Su Luargi. Tombs: 3. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
17. Olzai. Giaruzzedda. Tombs: 3. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
18. Bonorva. Chiesa di Santa Lucia. Tombs: 5. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
19. Florinas. San Francesco. Tombs: /. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
19.1. Florinas. Sa Serra. Tombs: 450. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
20. Sassari. Sant'Anna. Tombs: /. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
20.1. Sassari. Monte Rizzu. Tombs: 6. Ritual: inhumation. 100 BC – 1 AD.
21. Porto Torres. Angolo Via Petroni – Via G.M. Angioy. Tombs: 17. Ritual: inhumation. 266 – 268 AD.
21.1. Porto Torres. Balai. Tombs: 12. Ritual: cremation/inhumation. 350 – 400 AD.
21.2. Porto Torres. Piazza Mameli. Tombs: 117. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
21.3. Porto Torres. Scoglio Lungo. Tombs: 4. Ritual: inhumation. 200 – 400 AD.
21.4. Porto Torres. Via Azuni 95a. Tombs: 30. Ritual: cremation/inhumation. Roman Age.
21.5. Porto Torres. Fossa Romana. Tombs: /. Ritual: inhumation. 1-476 AD.
21.6. Porto Torres. Via Carducci 5. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. IV century AD.
21.7. Porto Torres. Via Petronia. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
22. Valledoria. Ex Summer time. Tombs: 23. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
22.1. Valledoria. La Teula. Tombs: numerous. Ritual: cremation/inhumation. Roman Age.
23. Santa Teresa di Gallura. Istmo di Capo Testa. Tombs: 3. Ritual: inhumation. 300 – 476 AD.
24. Olbia. Abba 'e sa Ide. Tombs: 31. 1 – 476 AD.

24.1. Olbia. Acciaradalza. Tombs: 176. 230 BC – 476 AD.
24.2. Olbia. Cortile di Giovanni Pippedda. Tombs: 7. Ritual: inhumation. 1 –476 AD.
24.3. Olbia. Cuguttu. Tombs: 393. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
24.4. Olbia. Iscia Mariana1. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
24.5. Olbia. Iscia Mariana2. Tombs: 8. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
24.6. Olbia. Iscia Mariana3. Tombs: 18. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
24.7. Olbia. Necropoli di Cares. Tombs: 9. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
24.8. Olbia. Necropoli di San Simplicio. Tombs: 39. Ritual: cremation/inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
24.9. Olbia. Provania. Tombs: 3. Ritual: cremation/inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
24.10. Olbia. Villanova. Tombs: /. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
24.11. Olbia. Cabu Abbas. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Provisional dating: 1 – 476 AD.
24.12. Olbia. Campu Longu. Tombs: /. Ritual: inhumation. Provisional dating: 1 – 476 AD.
24.13. Olbia. Chiesa di San Paolo. Tombs: 1. Ritual: cremation. 1 – 476 AD.
24.14. Olbia. Parriciatu. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
24.15. Olbia. Riu Giadduresu. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman age
24.16. Olbia. Via Acquedotto Romano. Tombs: 27. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
24.17. Olbia. Via Mameli. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
25. Telti. Domma Muscas. Tombs: 4. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
25.1. Telti. Terreno del pastore Pancrazio Miata. Tombs: 6. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
26. Torpè. San Pietro. Tombs: 2. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
27. Serramanna. Bia Serra. Tombs: /. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
27.1. Serramanna. Bruncu Murus. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
27.2. Serramanna. Is Gibas. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
27.3. Serramanna. Santa Marina. Tombs: 20. Ritual: inhumation. 253 – 268 AD.
28. Setzu. Bingia Molinu. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
29. Decimoputzu. Campusantu nou. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
30. Nuragus. Conca de Ortu. Tombs: 15. Ritual: cremation/inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
30.1. Nuragus. S. Elia di Nuragus. Tombs: 3. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
31. Cornus. Cuglieri. Tombs: 100. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
31.1. Cornus. Riola Sardo. Tombs: /. Ritual: cremation/inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
32. Settimo San Pietro. Cuccuru Nuraxi. Tombs: /. Ritual: Inhumation. Roman Age.
33. Cossoine. Donnigazza. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. 250 – 200 BC.
34. Semestene. Funtana. Tombs: 1. Ritual: incineration. 200 – 300 AD.
35. Dorgali. Grotta Aldebaran. Tombs: /. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
35.1. Dorgali. Sos Dorroles. Tombs: /. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
36. Siddi. Is Arroccas di Codinas. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
37. Ittiri. Monte Orchila. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. 300 – 1 BC.
38. Monserrato. Necropoli Romana. Tombs: /. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
39. Siligo. Nuraghe Pala e Molinu. Tombs: /. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
40. Torralba. Nuraghe Santu Antine. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. 300 – 500 AD.
41. Samassi. Palazziu. Tombs: /. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
41.1. Samassi. Su Strintu. Tombs: 2. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
42. Sorgono. Pastoreddu. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. 200 – 100 BC.
43. Serrenti. Perdalba. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
44. Serrenti. Sa Tumba. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
45. Gergei. Prabazzedda. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. 150 – 200 AD.
46. Capoterra. Rio Santa Lucia. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
47. Ossi. S. Vittoria. Tombs: 9. Ritual: inhumation. 238 BC – 1 AD.
48. Dolianova. Sa Cora. Tombs: 2. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 350 AD.
49. Villasor. Sa forada de is campanas. Tombs: 6. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
49.1. Villasor. Sant'Efisi. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
50. Villaspeciosa. San Cromazio. Tombs: /. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
51. Sestu. San Gemiliano. Tombs: 4. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
52. Siliqua. San Giacomo. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
53. Sant'Andrea Frius. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. 1 – 476 AD.
54. Gesico. Santa Lucia. Tombs: about 30. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
55. Alghero. Sant'Imbenia. Tombs: Indefinite number/. Ritual: inhumation. 238 – 1 BC.

56. Orgosolo. Su Sercone. Tombs: 22. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.
57. Sardara. Terr'e Cresia. Tombs: 100. Ritual: cremation/inhumation. 1 – 300 AD.
58. San Sperate. Tomba punica di Via Monte Sirai. Tombs: 1. Ritual: inhumation. Roman Age.

Table 1. Context types from Necropolina, *Sulci*.

Capuchin Tombs	Cinerary Urns	Enchytrismos	Floor level	On the ground	Pit	Total contexts
22	53	26	36	12	54	204

Table 2. Quantity of material culture types from Necropolina, *Sulci*.

Type	No. of objects from cremations	No. of objects from inhumations	No. of objects from floor contexts	No. of objects overall
Amphora	0	28	1	29
Askos	1	0	0	1
Balsamarium	4	18	8	30
Beaker	0	2	1	3
Bracier	0	0	11	11
Coin	0	24	0	24
Counter	0	6	0	6
Cup	1	21	14	36
Dish	0	7	2	9
Ear ring	0	2	0	2
Inscriptions	0	0	5	5
Feeding jug	0	1	1	2
Jug	0	78	4	82
Jar (urns)	0(24)	5	9	38
Jug (urns)	0(22)	75	5	102
Lamp	0	25	6	31
Lid	8	7	3	18
Mask	0	1	0	1
Miniat. cup	0	0	3	3
Miniat. lid	0	0	1	1
Miniat. jar	0	13	19	32
Mirror	0	0	0	1
Mug (urn)	1(1)	5	2	9
Nail	5	87	0	92
Ornament	0	18	0	18
Ring	0	2	0	2
Figurine	0	2	2	4
Not determined	1	1	2	4
Total	**69**	**347**	**111**	**531**

Table 3. Quantity of pottery by fabric-type at Necropolina, *Sulci*.

Ware group	Fabric code	Description	No. of vessels Cremations/Inhumations
Amphorae	AAF	Red	0/15
	AAF1	Red with sparse white incl.	0/7
	AAF2	Grey with sparse white incl.	0/4
Black gloss ware	BGL	Light red	0/0
	BGLI	Light pink/greyish	0/3

Ware group	Fabric code	Description	No. of vessels Cremations/Inhumations
Coarse ware	CW1	Light yellow with black incl.	9/63
	CW10	Dark brown	3/4
	CW11	Light brown	0/5
	CW12	Yellow with sparse black incl.	0/10
	CW13	Pink	5/12
	CW14	Sandwich, black interior, orange outside	1/0
	CW2	Orange with sparse white incl.	7/24
	CW3	Dark orange with sparse white incl.	4/5
	CW4	Dark orange with sparse black incl.	0/4
	CW5	Dark orange easily breakable	1/4
	CW6	Dark orange w/ dense white incl.	2/2
	CW7	Dark orange	9/9
	CW8	Light orange w/ sparse brown incl.	7/1
	CW9	Grey/black	1/2
Fiammata ware	FW2	Light pink	3/1
Sigillata Africana	SAFA	Light orange	1/2
	SAFC	Orange	0/1
	SAFD	Light brown	0/14
Sigillata Italica	SIT	Light brown/pink	0/0
	SITIM	Light red	0/1
Thin walled ware	TWA	Light orange	0/0
	TWAI	Light orange thicker than TWA	2/2
	TWAI2	Dark red/brown	0/2
Total			**54/198**

Table 4. Processes of disposal of the deceased and their individuality[1] at *Sa Mitza Salida, Masullas.*

Form of disposal			Individuality	
Primary inhumation	**Secondary inhumation**	**Empty (of which emptied)**	**Single**	**Double**
47	21	3 (2)	40	7

Table 5. Anatomical order and position of the skeletons at *Sa Mitza Salida, Masullas.*

Articulation			Deposition		
Articulated	**Semi-Art.**	**Disarticulated**	**On back**	**On left side**	**On right side**
23	15	7	38	1	3

Table 6. Position of articulations at *Sa Mitza Salida, Masullas.*

Trunk	Knee			Arms		
Extended	**Semi- flexed**	**Extended**	**Semi-flexed**	**Along sides**	**On chest**	**On pelvis**
39	2	37	4	6	3	23

Table 7. Position of the head at *Sa Mitza Salida, Masullas.*

Head				
Straight	**Turned right**	**Tipped back**	**Tipped forward**	**Turned left**
10	4	1	2	5

[1] This expression indicates the number of individuals contained in each grave (see Sprague, 2005 in Bibliography, and page 109 in the main body of this Thesis).

Table 8. Number of individuals by gender and age[2] at *Sa Mitza Salida, Masullas.*

Gender			Age Average		
Males	**Females**	**Undetermined**	**Males**	**Females**	**Undetermined**
27	29	18	33,5 y.o.	27 y.o.	19 cases

Table 9. Grave types at *Sa Mitza Salida, Masullas.*

Cist graves	*Tombe a cassone*	Pit graves	Total graves
14	6	32	52

Table 10. Quantity of pottery by fabric-type from *Sa Mitza Salida, Masullas*

Ware group	Fabric code	Description	No. of vessels per fabric in Pits/Cists
Amphorae	AAF	Red	2/0
	AAF1	Red with sparse white incl.	0/0
	AAF2	Grey with sparse white incl.	0/0
Black gloss ware	BGL	Light red	3/0
	BGLI	Light pink/greyish	5/1
Coarse ware	CW1	Light yellow with black incl.	2/0
	CW10	Dark brown	10/3
	CW11	Light brown	8/4
	CW12	Yellow with sparse black incl.	1/1
	CW13	Pink	2/1
	CW14	Sandwich, black interior, orange outside	1/0
	CW2	Orange with sparse white incl.	14/13
	CW21	Dark orange with dense black and white incl.	6/1
	CW3	Dark orange with sparse white incl.	1/0
	CW4	Dark orange with sparse black incl.	2/1
	CW5	Dark orange easily breakable	0/1
	CW6	Dark orange w/ dense white incl.	7/9
	CW7	Dark orange	0/0
	CW8	Light orange w/ sparse brown incl.	6/5
	CW9	Grey/black	5/4
	CW91	Yellow, light orange, big white incl.	2/2
Fiammata ware	FW2	Light pink	0/0
Sigillata Africana	SAFA	Light orange	5/7
	SAFC	Orange	2/1
	SAFD	Light brown	1/4
Sigillata Italica	SIT	Light brown/pink	0/0
	SITIM	Light red	21/9
Thin walled ware	TWA	Light orange	3/3
	TWAI	Light orange thicker than TWA	1/0
	TWAI2	Dark red/brown	6/4
Total			**122/74**

[2] The data in this table have been entirely obtained from Manos, Floris, 2005: 67.

Table 11. Quantity of material culture types from *Sa Mitza Salida.*

Type	No. from pit graves	No. from cist graves	No. from the whole necropolis
Amphora	1	1	2
Balsamarium	11	13	24
Beaker	9	7	16
Coin	17	14	31
Cup	27	22	49
Dish	17	15	32
Ear ring	1	2	3
Jug	25	21	46
Lamp	9	8	17
Mirror	1	0	1
Mug	6	2	8
Necklace fragm.	1	1	2
Pan	20	18	38
Ring	2	1	3
Stone slabs cushion	2	1	3
Total	**148**	**125**	**273**

Table 12 Quantity of pottery by ceramic class at Tuvixeddu, via Is Maglias (ISM) side, Karales.

Material	No. from tombs	No. from extra-burial contexts
Amphorae	1	0
Black gloss	26	10
Coarse ware	64	42
Lamps	0	0
Sigillata italica	0	0
Cagliari 1	1	0
Thin walled pottery	5	0
Total	**97**	**52**

Table 13. Quantity of grave goods from Tuvixeddu, via Is Maglias (ISM) side, Karales.

Object type	Pits	Extra-burial contexts	Total
Amphorae	1	0	1
Askos	1	1	2
Astragali	0	0	0
Balsamaria	53	35	88
Beaker	5	0	5
Bracelet/necklace fragm.	0	0	0
Cup	26	13	39
Dish	4	1	5
Ring/Ear ring	0	0	0
Feeding jug	0	0	0
Inscription	0	0	0
Jug	2	0	2
Lekythos	0	0	0
Jar	0	0	0
Urn	0	0	0
Pan	2	1	3
Lamp	0	0	0
Lid	0	0	0
Total	**94**	**51**	**145**

Table 14. Quantity of pottery by fabric-type from Tuvixeddu, via Is Maglias (ISM) side, Karales

Ware group	Fabric code	Description	Burials	Extra- burial
Amphorae	AAF	Red	0	0
	AAF1	Red with sparse white incl.	1	0
	AAF2	Grey with sparse white incl.	0	0
	A DR	Reddish brown	0	0
	A GI	Pink, beige	0	0
Black gloss ware	BGL	Light red	12	1
	BGLI	Light pink/greyish	3	2
	BGL B	Yellowish red w/ small incl.	14	8
Coarse ware	CW1	Light yellow with black incl.	3	0
	C RE	Red	0	4
	CW10	Dark brown	0	0
	CW11	Light brown	14	8
	CW12	Yellow with sparse black incl.	9	6
	CW13	Pink	5	5
	CW14	Sandwich, black interior, orange outside	0	0
	CW2	Orange with sparse white in	1	0
	CW21	Dark orange with dense black and white incl.	3	0
	CW3	Dark orange with sparse white incl.	1	0
	CW4	Dark orange with sparse black incl.	0	0
	CW5	Dark orange easily breakable	3	0
	CW6	Dark orange w/ dense white incl.	0	0
	CW7	Dark orange	1	1
	CW8	Light orange w/ sparse brown incl.	0	3
	CW9	Grey/black	9	1
	CW91	Yellow, light orange, big white incl.	7	0
		Light orange	11	0
		Yellowish with grey surface	2	0
		Light orange Orange	1	0
		Light brown	1	0
		Light brown/pink	0	0
		Light red	0	0
Thin walled pottery	TWA	Light orange	5	0
	TWAI	Light orange thicker than TWA	2	0
			1	0
			0	0
	TWAI 2	Dark red/brown	1	0
Total			**109**	**40**

Table 15 Quantity of grave goods by material class from Tuvixeddu, Sant'Avendrace side (AVN), Karales

Material	# from pits	# from *busta*	# from chambers	# from cremations in urn	# from enchytrismoi	# from extra-burial contexts
Organic (Animal bone/Ivory/ shells)	2	0	0	0	7	0
Ceramic	49	22	19	5	4	14
Coin	2	0	0	0	0	0
Glass	5	0	0	0	9	0
Iron/Bronze	7	6	3	1	2	1
Total	**65**	**28**	**22**	**6**	**22**	**15**

Table 16 Quantity of pottery by ceramic class from Tuvixeddu, Sant'Avendrace side (AVN), Karales.

Material	**# from pits**	**# from *busta***	**# from chamber**	**# from cremations in urn**	**# from enchytrism oi**	**Extra- burial**
Amphorae	1	1	3	0	2	0
Black gloss	5	10	3	0	0	1
Coarse ware	30	21	13	5	3	14
Lamps	0	0	0	1	0	0
Sigillata italica	0	0	1	0	0	0
Cagliari 1	11	0	0	0	0	0
Thin walled pottery	3	3	3	0	0	0
Total	**50**	**35**	**23**	**6**	**5**	**15**

Table 17 Grave goods by type from Tuvixeddu, Sant'Avendrace side (AVN), Karales.

Object type	**pits**	***busta***	**chamber**	**cremation in urn**	**enchytrism**	**extra-burial contexts**	**Total**
Amphorae	1	2	10	0	4	0	17
Askos	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Astragali	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Balsamaria	17	13	5	1	0	5	41
Beaker	0	1	5	0	0	0	5
Bracelet/necklace fragm.	2	2	2	0	14	0	6
Coin	7	4	9	1	1	0	22
Counters	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cup	8	7	4	0	0	0	19
Dish Ring/Ear ring	6	6	9	0	0	0	21
Feeding jug	2	0	4	0	3	0	9
Inscriptions	0	0	1	1	1	0	3
Jug	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lekythos	5	2	8	0	0	0	15
Jar	3	0	2	0	0	0	5
Urn	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Pan	0	0	0	4	0	0	4
Lamp	0	0	3	0	1	1	5
Lid	4	0	3	0	0	0	7
Loom weight	0	0	0	1	0	3	2
Miniature pan	0	0	0	2	0	0	0
Strigil	0	0	0	0	0	3	3
Needle	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Pebble	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Miniature	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Skyphos	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Mirror	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Nail	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total	**56**	**38**	**66**	**8**	**24**	**16**	**210**

Table 18 Types of context from La Scala di Ferro (SCF), Karales.

	Inhumation in pit	Cinerary urn	Bustum	Extra- burial contexts	Aschengruben	Sarcophagus	Cist	Total
3rd BC	6	0	1	0	0	0	6	
2nd BC	9	4	4	0	1	0	19	
1st BC	7	24	0	0	0	0	31	
1st AD	6	10	0	4	0	4	24	
Undated	18	39	0	17	0	+1	75	
Total	**46**	**77**	**5**	**21**	**1**	**5**	**155**	

Table 19 Quantity of pottery by ceramic-class at La Scala di Ferro (SCF), Karales.

Material	# from pits	# from *busta*	# from aschengruben	# from cremations in urn	# from Enchyt.	# from sarcophagi	# from extra-burial contexts
Amphorae	6	0	0	1	5	0	1
Black gloss	21	8	0	30	1	0	0
Coarse ware	114	14	18	219	1	1	31
Lamps	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Sigillata italica	4	0	0	9	0	0	3
Thin walled pottery	7	0	0	3	1	0	2
Total	**152**	**22**	**18**	**263**	**7**	**1**	**38**

Table 20 Quantity of pottery by ceramic-type at La Scala di Ferro (SCF), Karales.

Object type	Pits	*busta*	aschengruben	cremation in urn	enchytris m	extra-burial contexts	Sarcoph
Amphora	6	0	0	1	5	1	0
Askos	7	1	0	2	0	1	0
Astragali	13	21	0	1	0	0	0
Balsamarium	66	17	16	127	1	18	0
Beaker	2	0	0	0	1	0	0
Bracelet fragm.	98	3	2	15	0	2	0
Coin	19	5	0	28	0	4	16
Counter	4	9	0	7	0	0	0
Cup	18	3	0	12	0	1	0
Dish	9	3	0	21	0	3	0
Ring/Ear- ring	11	1	0	8	0	0	0
Inscription	0	0	0	1	1	2	0
Jug	7	0	0	8	0	2	0
Knife	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Jar	4	0	0	5	0	1	0
Urn	0	0	0	56	0	0	0
Pan	8	1	0	6	0	0	0
Lamp	0	0	0	1	0	2	0
Lid	6	0	0	25	0	1	0
Loomweight	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
Miniature pan	0	1	0	2	0	0	0
Strigil	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Scissors	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Figurine	10	0	0	4	0	0	3
Total	**288**	**68**	**18**	**332**	**8**	**42**	**19**

Table 21 Quantity of pottery by fabric-type from La Scala di Ferro (SCF), Karales.

Ware group	Fabric code	Description	pits	*Busta*	aschen gruben	enchytrismoi	Cremations in urn	Extra-burial
Amphorae	AAF	Red	0	0	0	0	0	0
	AAF1	Red with sparse white incl.	0	0	0	0	0	0
	AAF2	Grey with sparse white incl.	0	0	0	0	0	0
	A DR	Reddish brown	1	0	0	0	0	0
	A GI	Pink, beige	1	0	0	0	0	0
Black gloss ware	BGL	Light red	4	6	0	0	0	0
	BGLI	Light pink/greyish	2	0	0	0	1	0
	BGLB	Yellowish red w/ small incl.	2	0	0	0	0	0
Common ware	CW1	Light yellow with black incl.	0	0	0	0	0	0
	CW10	Dark brown	0	0	0	3	0	0
	CW11	Light brown	9	0	17	4	17	0
	CW12	Yellow with sparse black incl.	1	0	0	1	0	0
	CW13	Pink	3	4	0	1	0	0
	CW14	Sandwich, black interior, orange outside	0	0	4	0	0	0
	CW2	Orange with sparse white incl.	1	0	0	13	3	0
	CW21	Dark orange with dense black and white incl.	0	0	3	1	0	0
	CW3	Dark orange with sparse white incl.	2	1	0	0	0	0
	CW4	Dark orange with sparse black incl.	0	0	0	1	0	0
	CW5	Dark orange easily breakable	0	0	0	1	0	0
	CW6	Dark orange w/ dense white incl.	0	0	0	9	0	0
	CW7	Dark orange	2	0	0	0	2	0
	CW8	Light orange w/ sparse brown incl.	9	1	0	5	0	0
	CW9	Grey/black	2	1	1	4	0	0
	CW91	Yellow, light orange, big white incl.	1	1	1	2	0	0
Fiammata ware	FW2	Light pink	1	3	3	0	0	0
Sigillata Africana	SAFA	Light orange	5	0	0	7	0	0
	SAFC	Orange	2	0	0	1	0	0
	SAFD	Light brown	1	0	0	4	2	0
Sigillata Italica	SIT	Light brown/pink	1	0	0	0	0	0
	SITIM	Light red	0	0	0	3	0	0
	TWA	Light orange	7	0	0	3	2	2
Thin walled ware	TWAI	Light orange thicker than TWA	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TWAI 2	Dark red/brown	0	0	0	4	0	0
Total			**122**			**74**		**2**

Table 22 Grave goods types from the three necropolises of Karales.

Object type	Is Maglias	Sant'Avendrace	La Scala di Ferro
Amphpora	2	17	10
Askos	2	0	11
Astragali/Counter	0	0	21/21
Balsamarium	88	40	245
Beaker	5	6	3
Bracelet/necklace/ ring/ear-ring	0	27	138
Cup	39	19	35
Dish	5	21	36
Feeding jug	0	3	0
Inscription	0	0	4
Jug	2	15	17
Lekythos	0	5	2
Jar	0	3	0
Urn	0	0	3
Pan	3	5	15
Miniat. pan	0	4	3
Miniat. *skyphos*	0	1	0
Lamp	0	7	3
Lid	0	4	32
Coin	0	22	72
Terracotta dove	0	1	0
Terracotta, human figurine	0	1	17
Guttus	0	0	0
Mug	0	1	0
River pebble	0	5	7
Knife+Scissors	0	1	0
Strigil	0	0+1	1+2
Urn	0	2	2
Loomweight	0	4	57
Mirror	0	0	4
Nails	0	0	3
Needle	0	1	12
	0	1	12

Table 23 Grave goods per material class from the three necropolises of Karales.

Material	Is Maglias	Sant'Avendrace	La Scala di Ferro
Amphora	2	11	8
Black gloss	37	30	60
Coarse ware	106	99	404
Sigillata italica	1	1	16
Cagliari 1	5	13	2
Thin walled pottery	5	8	11
Metal	0	38	38
Glass	0	16	86
Shells	0	2	13
Stones	0	2	16
Animal bone	0	7	92
Coral	0	0	5

Table 24. Grave types compared at Sant'Avendrace and La Scala di Ferro, Karales.

Necropolis	5ht-4th BC	3rd BC	2nd BC-1st BC	1st AD	Overall
Scala di Ferro					
Chamber	0	0	0	0	0
Pit	0	6	15	6	27
Bustum	0	0	5	0	5
Cinerary urn	0	0	29	9	38
Enchytrismos	0	0	0	0	0
Sarcophagus	0	0	0	4	4
Extra-burial	0	0	1	4	5
Total	0	6	60	23	79
Sant'avendrace					
Chamber	10	0	3	0	13
Pit	0	3	6	1	7
Bustum	0	0	4	0	4
Cinerary urn	0	0	5	0	5
Enchytrismos	0	2	2	0	4
Sarcophagus	0	0	0	0	0
Extra-burial	0	0	0	1	1
Total	10	5	16	2	32
Total	**10**	**11**	**76**	**25**	**111**

Origin: Data from Salvi 2000 and excavation journals from fieldwork at the ex hotel "La Scala di Ferro"

Table 25. Grave types at Ortacesus, Mitza de Siddi (as indicated in Arru, Cocco 2009: 10).

Simple pit	Cists with stone slabs (+terracotta tiles)	Lateral niche	*Alla cappuccina*	*Busta*	Cinerary urns
102	7 (+2)	2	20	6	13

Table 26. Process of disposal of the deceased and individuals for each grave at Sa Mitza de Siddi, Ortacesus.

	Form of disposal			Individuality
Primary inhumation	Secondary inhumation	Empty (of which looted)	Single	Double
101	27	17 (4)	118	4

Table 27. Number of individuals at Sa Mitza de Siddi, Ortacesus divided by gender and age.

Gender of adults (>15 y.o.)		Gender of young individuals (<15 y.o.)			
Adult Males	Adult Females	Undetermined	Young Males	Young Females	Undetermined
9	9	120	2	2	2

Table 28. Quantity of pottery by fabric-types from Santa Lucia, Gesico

Ware group	Fabric code	Bals.	Askos	Mug	Jug	Beaker	Pan	Cup	Dish	Lamp	Amphora
Amphora	AAF	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	AAF1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	AAF2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	AGI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Black gloss ware	BGL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
	BGLI	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	3	0	0

Ware group	Fabric code	Bals.	Askos	Mug	Jug	Beaker	Pan	Cup	Dish	Lamp	Amphora
Common wae	BGLB	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	0	0
	CCA1	0	1	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0
	CRE CW1	2	0	0	6	0	0	1	0	0	0
	CW10	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	CW11	4	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
	CW12	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
	CW13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	CW2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
	CW21	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	1	0	0
	CW3	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	CW4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	CW6	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	CW7	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
	CW8	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0
	CW9	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	CW91	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
		0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Fiammata ware	FW2	0	0	0	O	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sigillata Africana	SAFA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	SAFC	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	SAFD	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sigillata Italica	SIT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
	SITIM	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0
Thin walled ware	TWA	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
	TWAI	0	0	2	1	2	0	0	0	0	0
	TWB L	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
Total		**9**	**1**	**6**	**19**	**3**	**4**	**16**	**11**	**2**	**1**

Table 29. Quantity of grave goods by type from S. Lucia, Gesico (figures from Tronchetti, 1996 and Tronchetti, 1999).

Object type	Pits
Amphora	1
Askos	1
Astragali	0
Balsamarium	7
Beaker	2
Bracelet/necklace fragm.	0
Coin	4
Counters	0
Mug	5
Cup	15
Dish	11
Ring/Ear ring	0
Feeding jug	0
Inscription	0
Jug	19
Lekythos	0
Jar	1
Urn	0
Pan	4
Lamp	2
Lid	0
Loomweight	0
Miniature pan S	0
trigil	0
Needle	0
Mirror	0
Knife	1
Total	**73**

Table 30 Quantity of pottery by fabrics from Bidd'e Cresia, Sanluri
(figures from Paderi 1982 and from the excavation journals).

Ware group	Fabric code	Description	No. of vessels per fabric in Pits
Amphorae	AAF	Red	1
	AAF1	Red with sparse white incl. Grey with sparse	0
	AAF2	white incl.	0
Black gloss ware	BGL	Light red	0
	BGLI	Light pink/greyish	2
Coarse ware	CW1	Light yellow with black incl.	0
	CW10	Dark brown	4
	CW11	Light brown	3
	CW12	Yellow with sparse black incl.	6
	CW13	Pink	2
	CW14	Sandwich, black interior, orange	0
	CW2	outside	7
	CW21	Orange with sparse white incl.	5
	CW3	Dark orange with dense black and white incl.	0
	CW4	Dark orange with sparse white incl.	0
	CW5	Dark orange with sparse black incl.	1
	CW6	Dark orange easily breakable	0
	CW7	Dark orange w/ dense white incl.	0
	CW8	Dark orange	5
	CW9	Light orange w/ sparse brown incl.	0
	CW91	Grey/black	0
Fiammata ware	FW2	Yellow, light orange, big white incl.	0
Sigillata Africana	SAFA	Light pink	5
	SAFC	Light orange	6
	SAFD	Light brown	0
Sigillata Italica	SIT	Light brown/pink	1
	SITIM	Light red	1
Thin walled ware	TWA	Light orange	4
	TWAI	Light orange thicker than TWA	4
	TWAI	Dark red/brown	0
Total			**61**

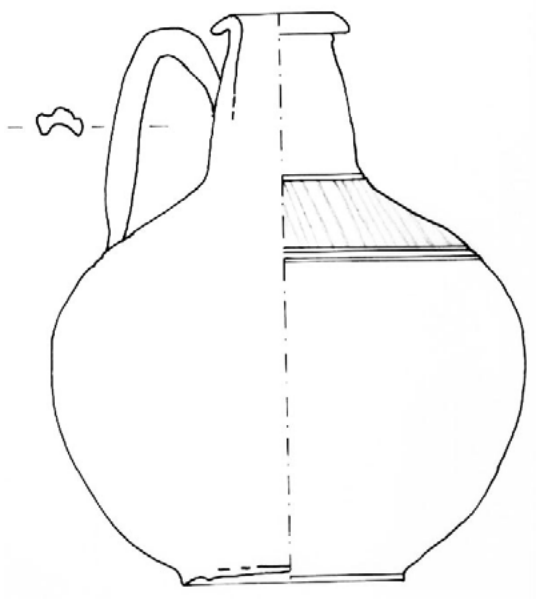
Table 31 Quantity of grave good types from Bidd'e Cresia, Sanluri (figures taken from Paderi 1982 and from the excavation journals).

Type	No. of good types
Amphora	1
Balsamarium	2
Beaker	2
Coin	7
Cup	12
Dish	3
Jug	15
Lamp	6
Mug	7
Pan	6
Urn	3
Total	**68**

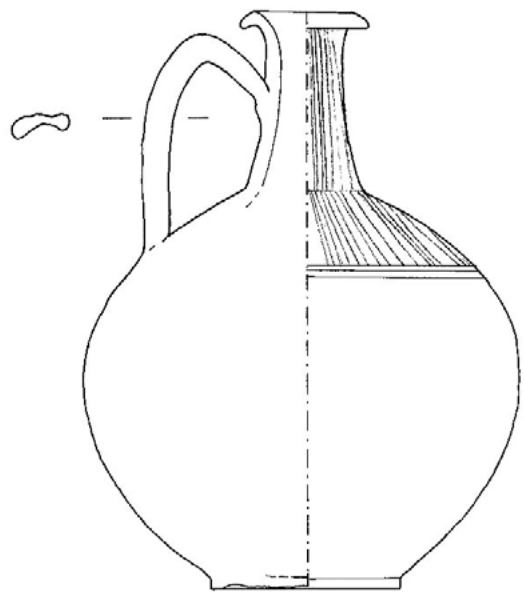
APPENDIX 2
COARSE WARE TYPOLOGY OF CERAMICS FROM MASULLAS (CHAPTER 4)

I. JUGS/FLAGONS

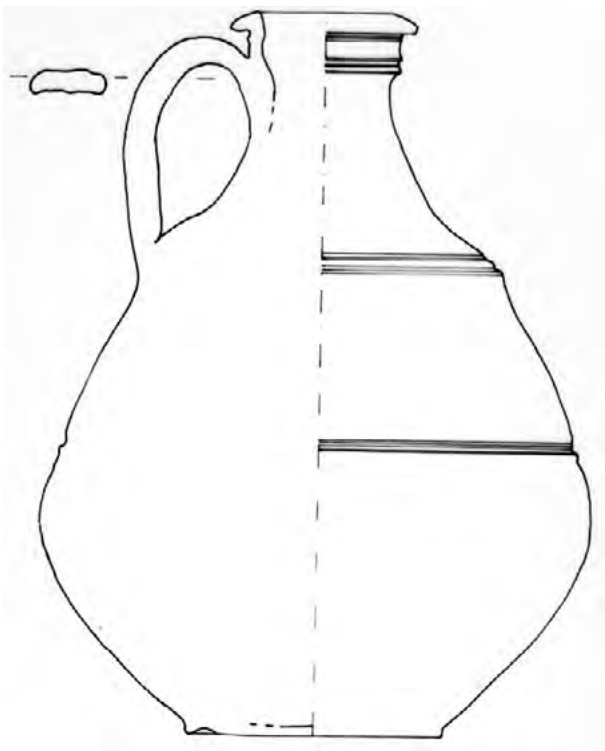
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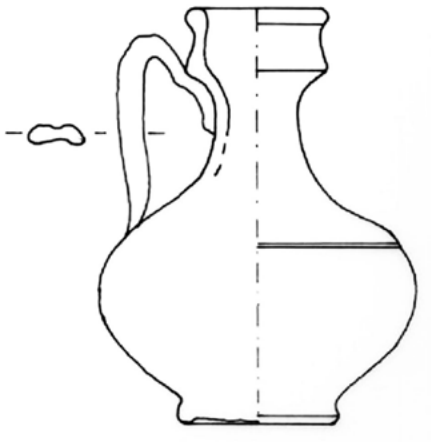
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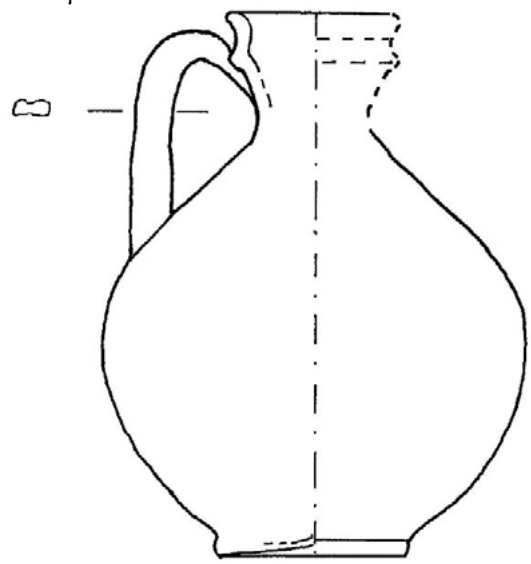
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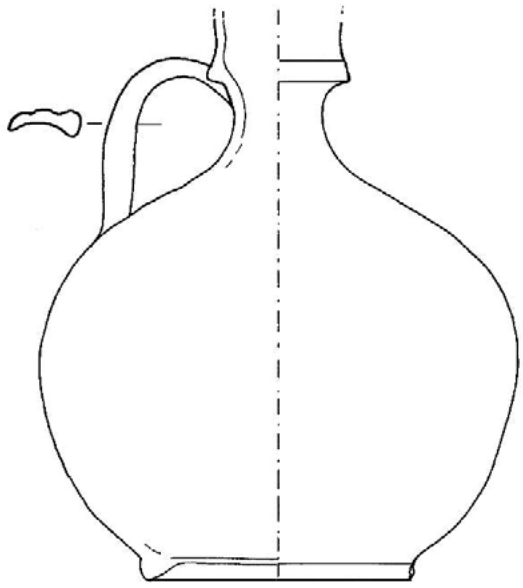
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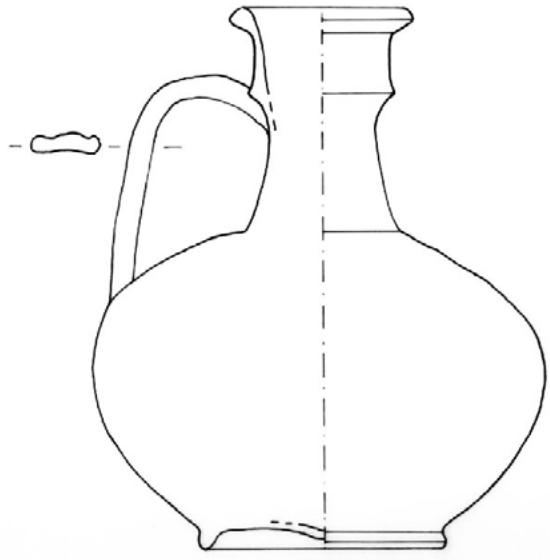
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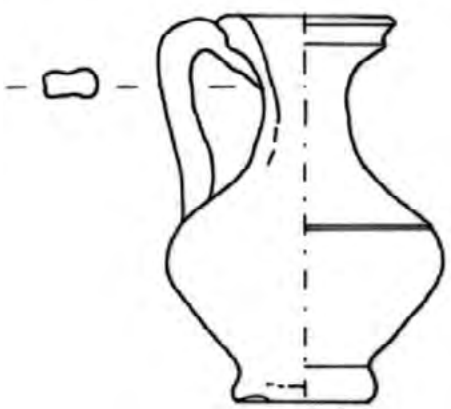
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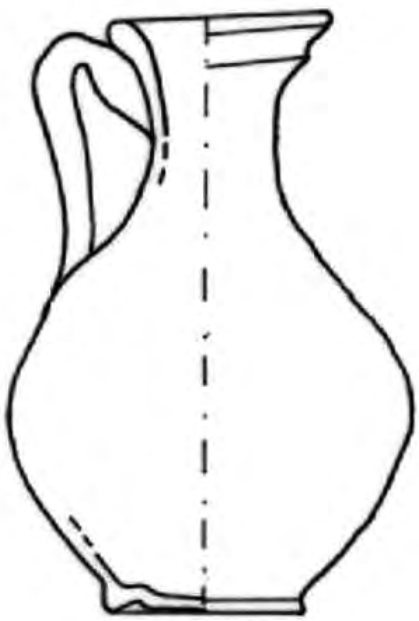
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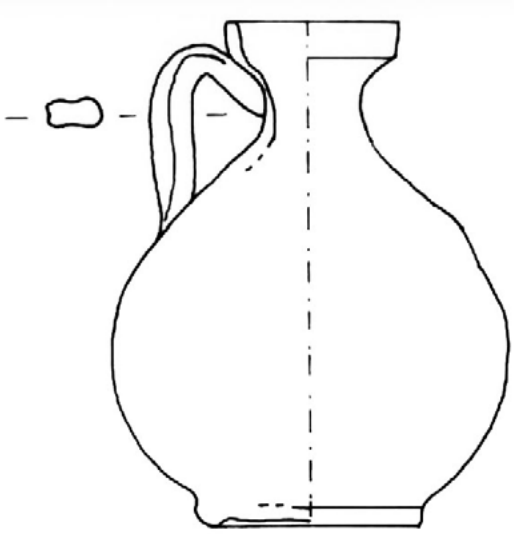
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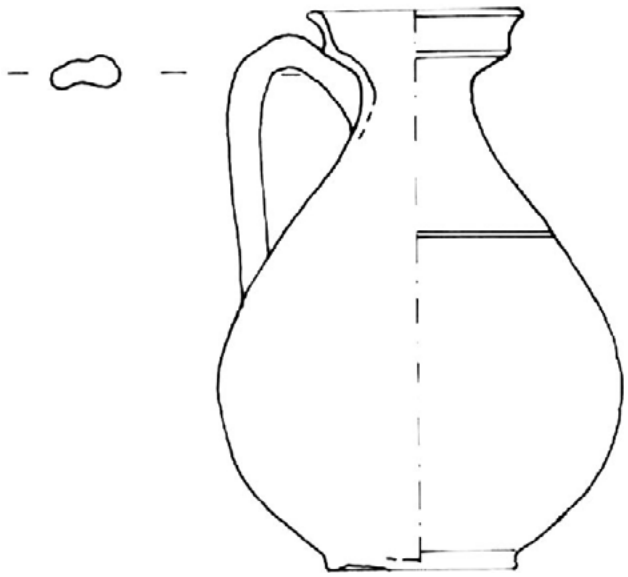
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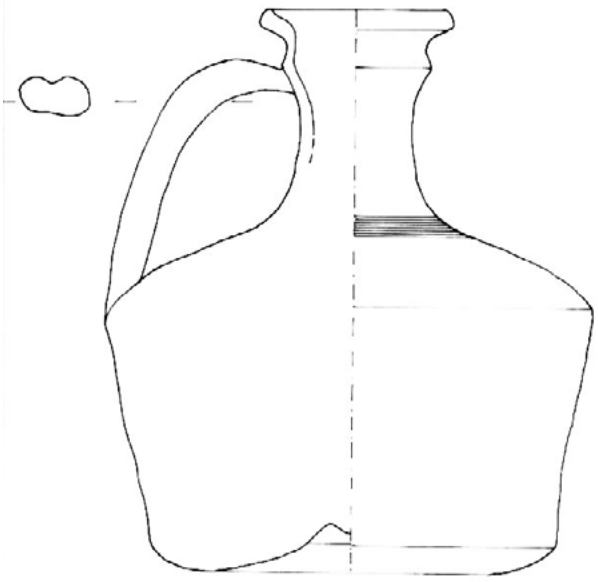
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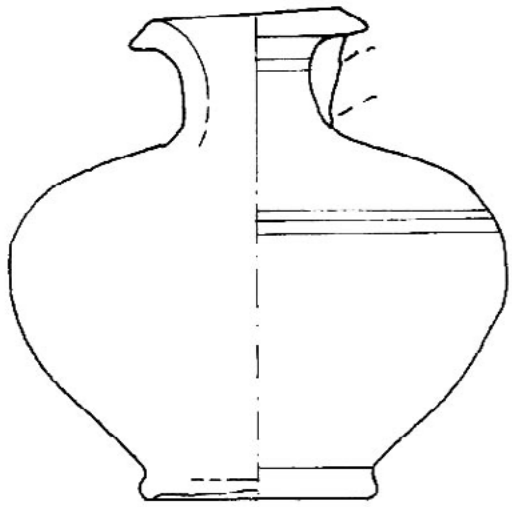
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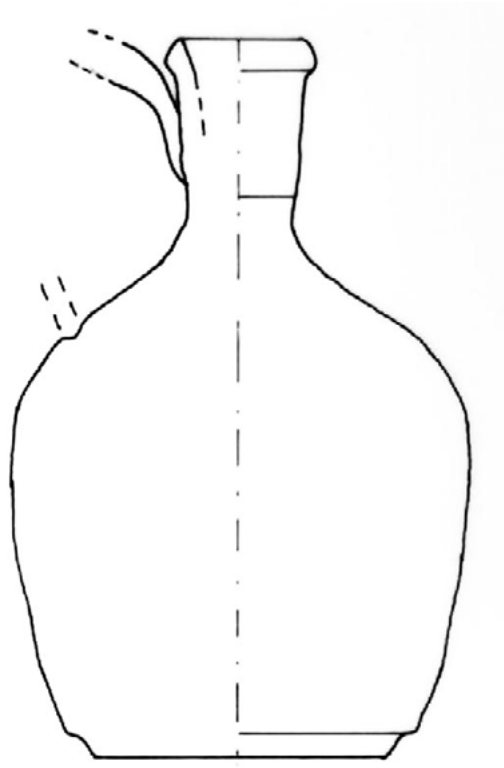
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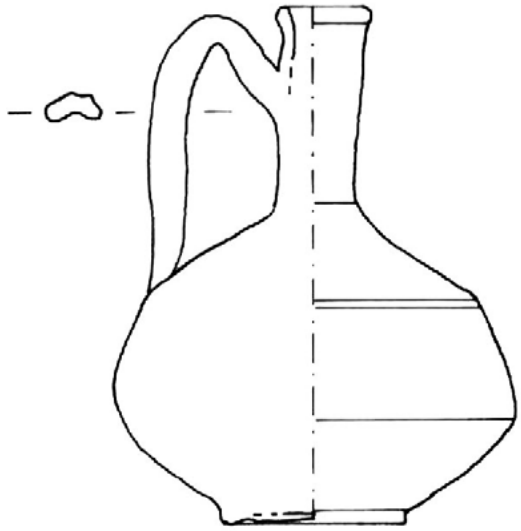
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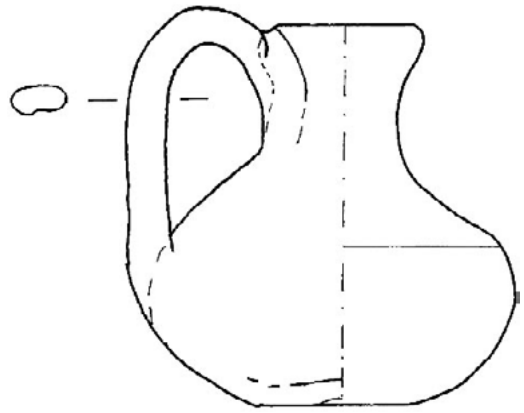
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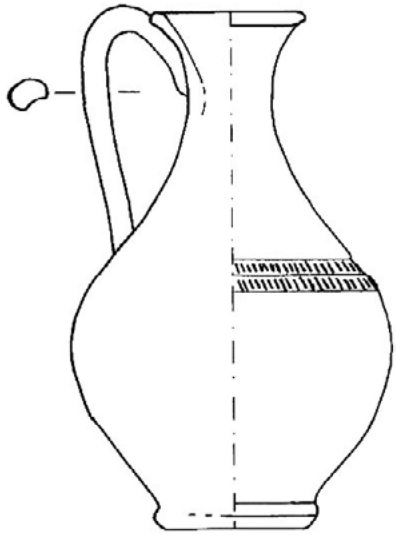
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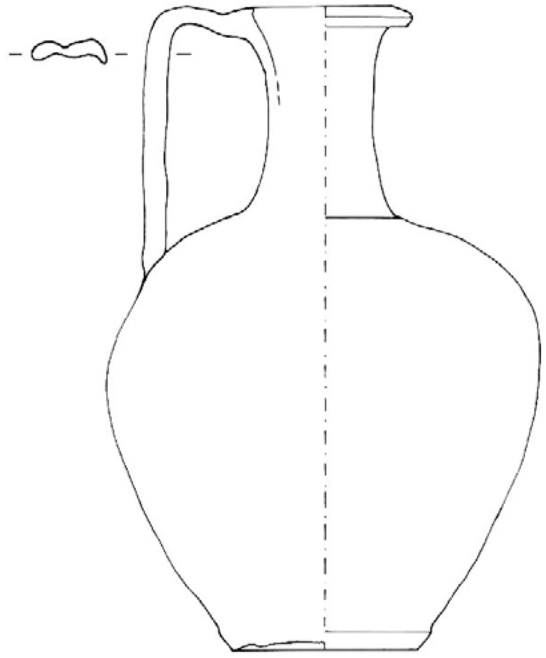
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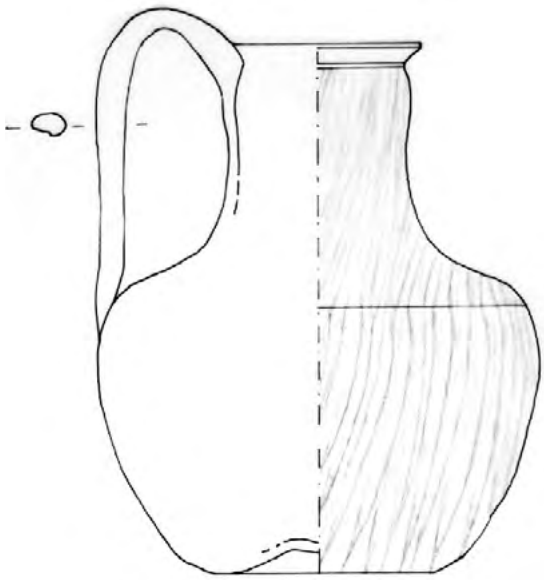


I.I.1.a.α

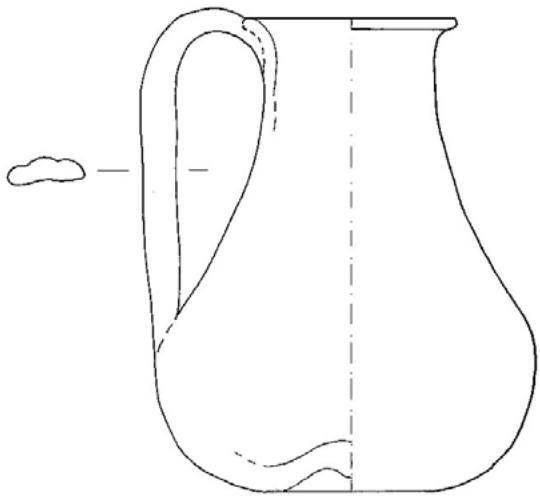


II. PITCHERS

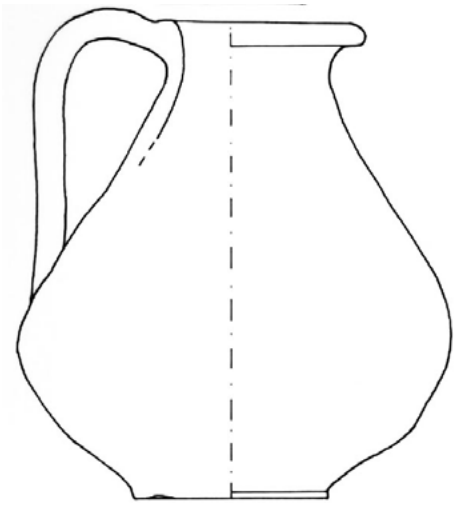
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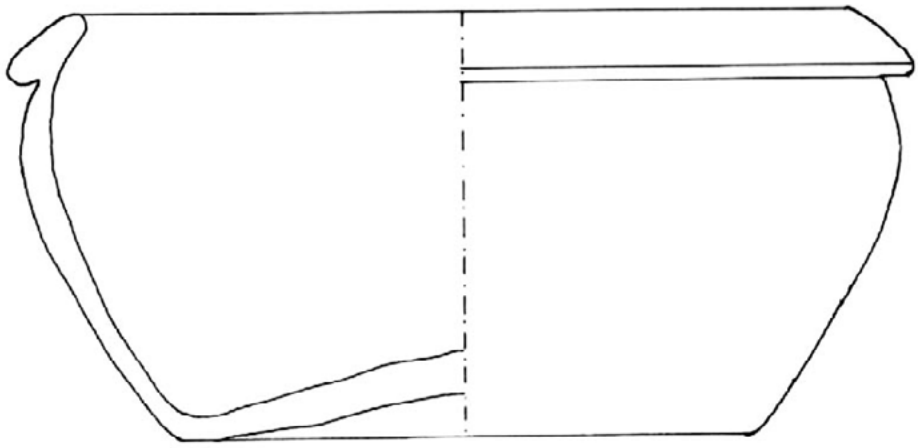
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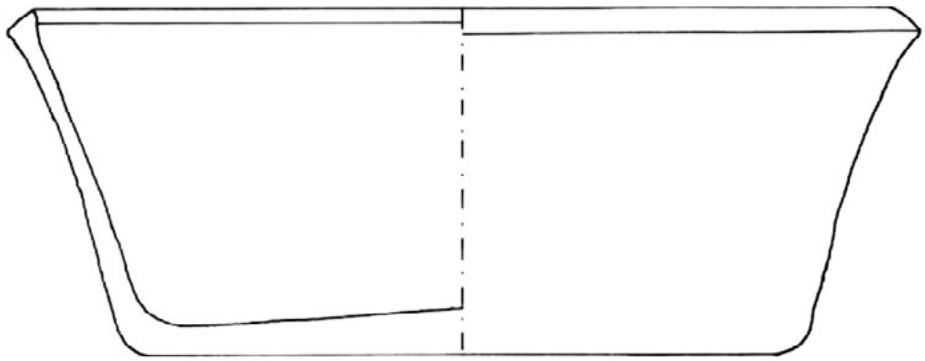
II.N.3.f.α



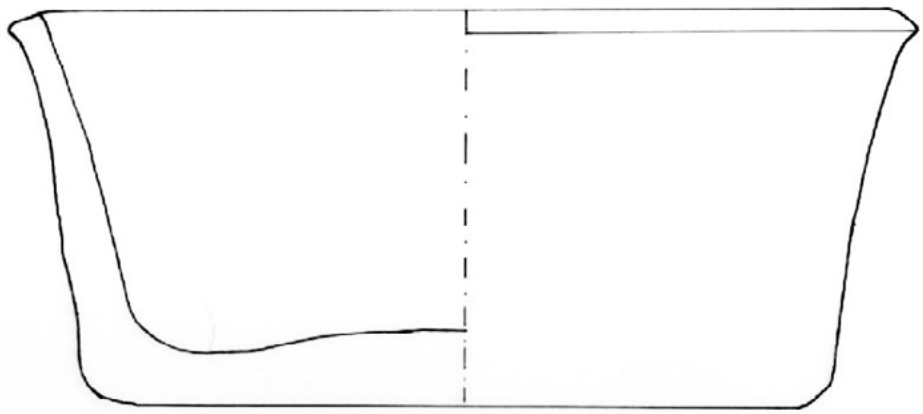
III.A.1.a



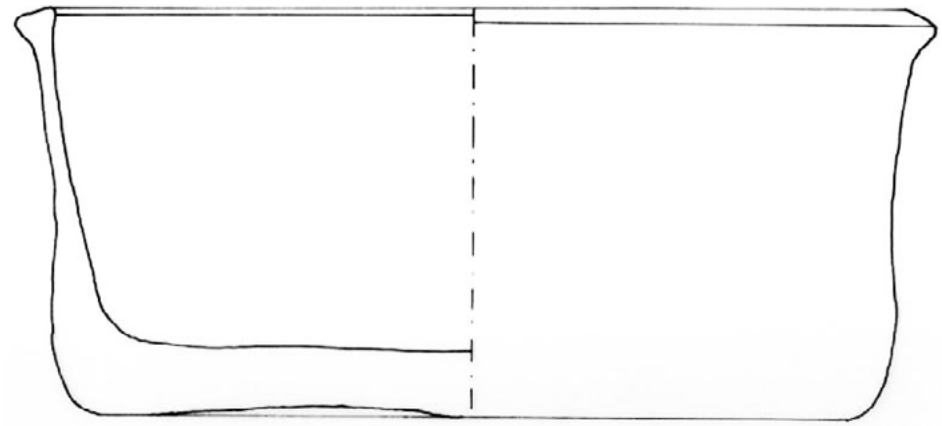
III.B.6.b



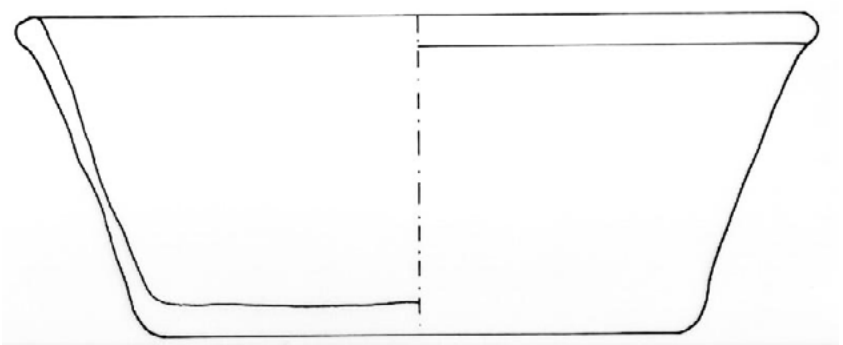
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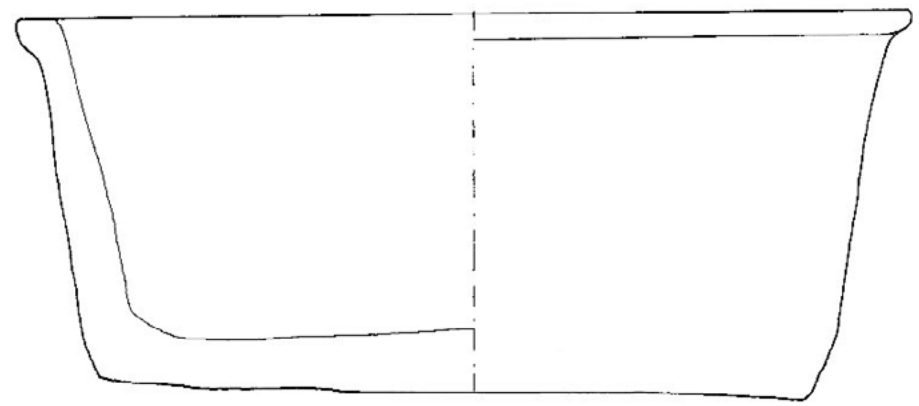
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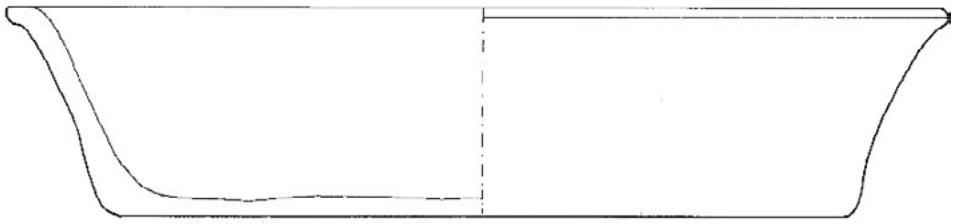
III.C.4.c



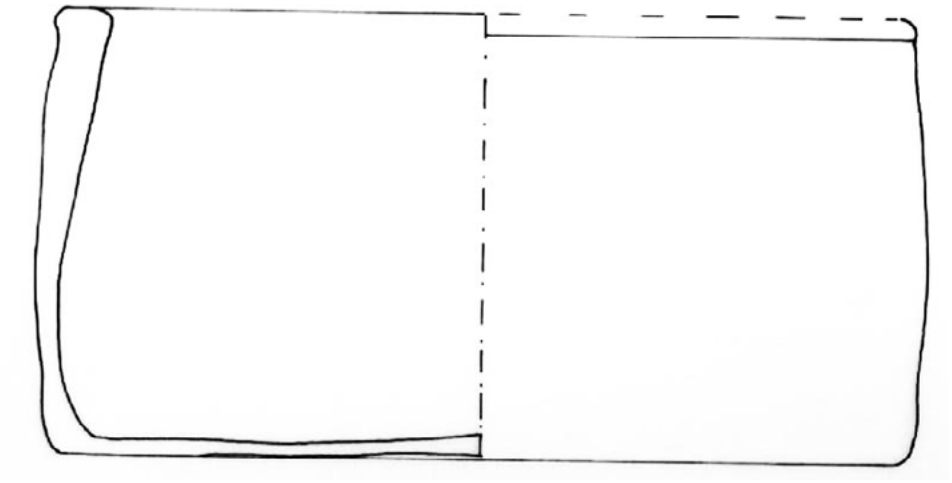
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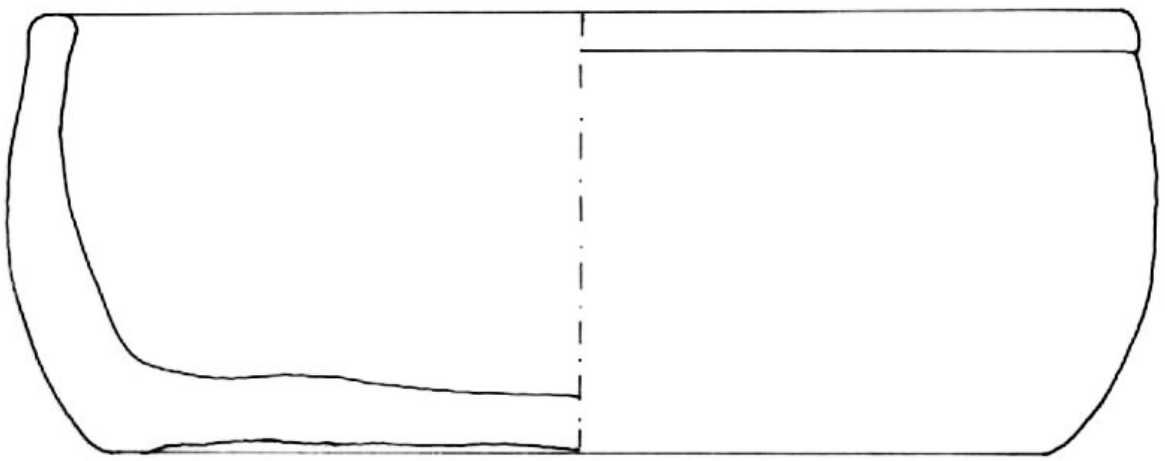
III.C.10.c



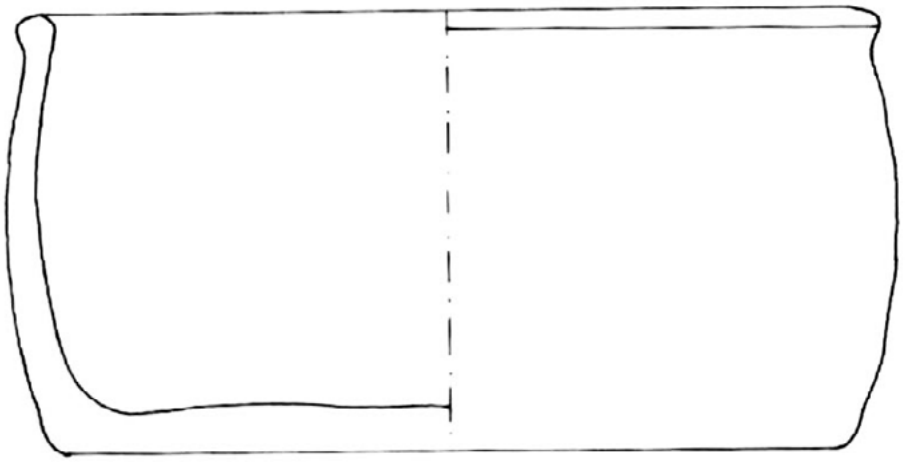
III.D.5.c



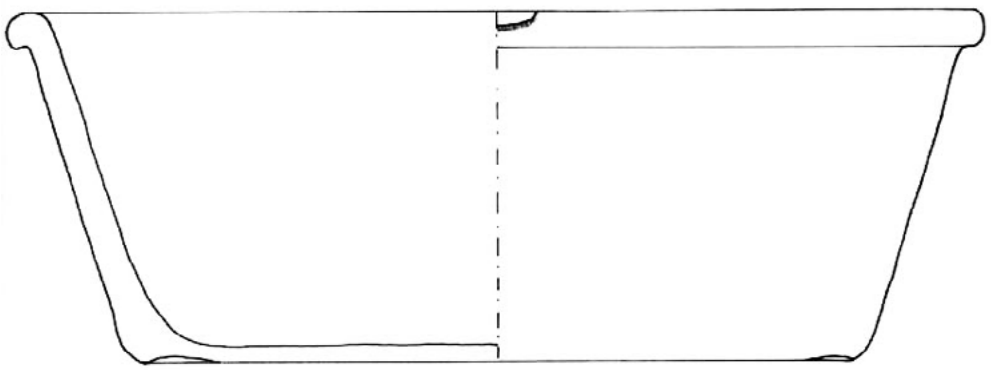
III.D.2.c



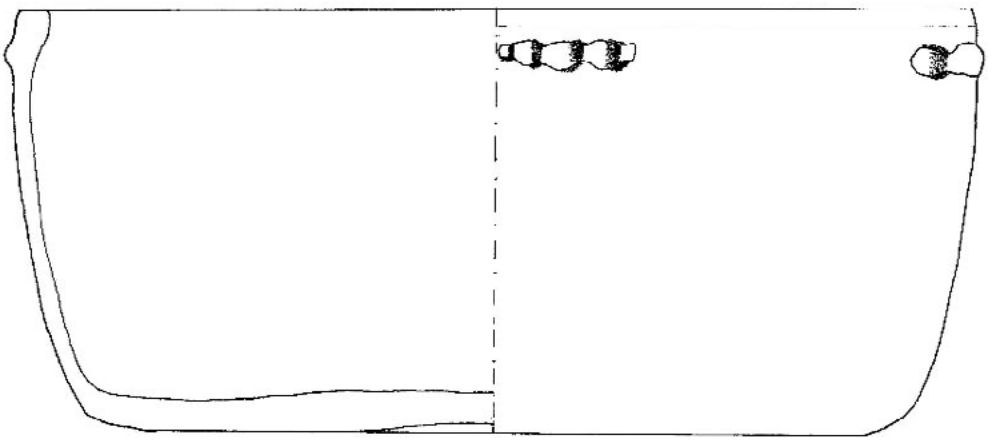
III.E.2.c



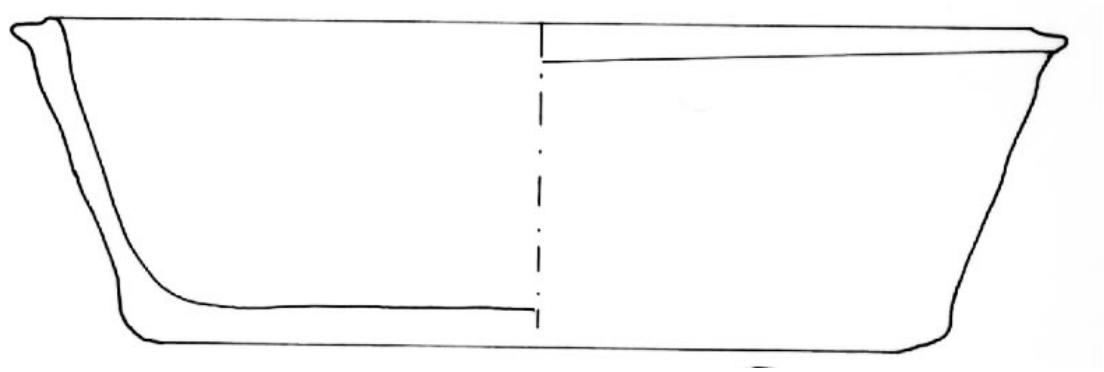
III.E.7c



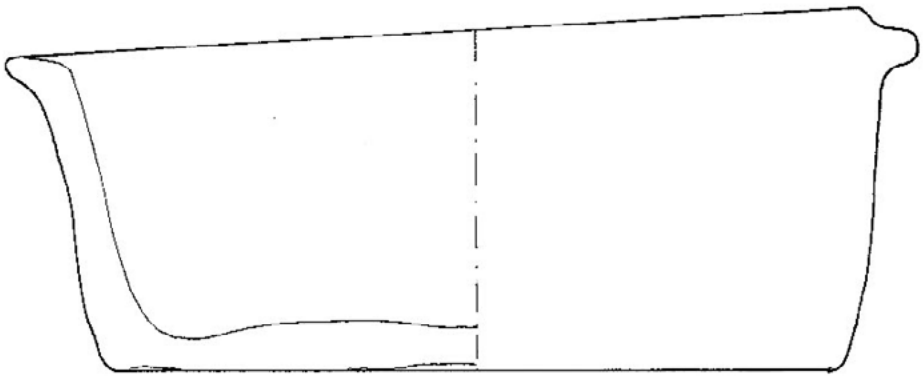
III.F.3.d



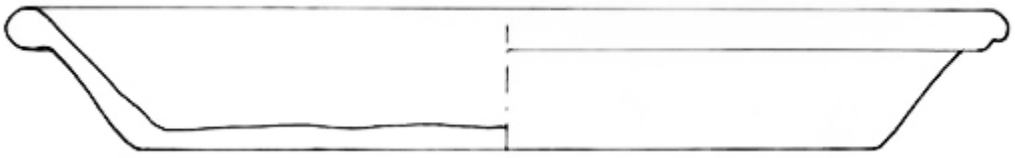
III.G.4.c



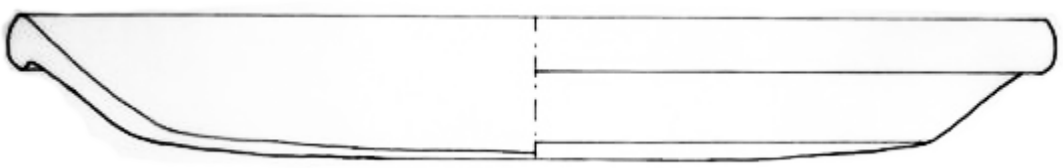
III.G.6.d



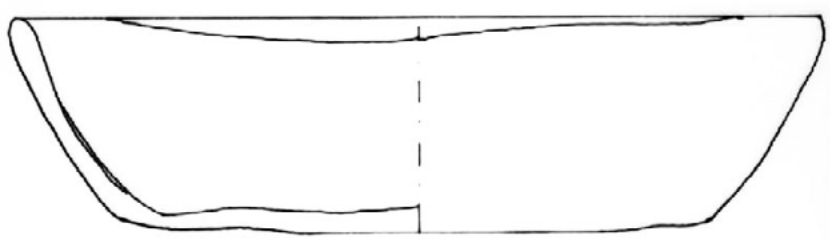
III.E.7.c



III.E.7.d

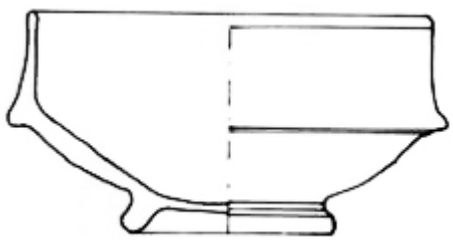


III.H.9.c

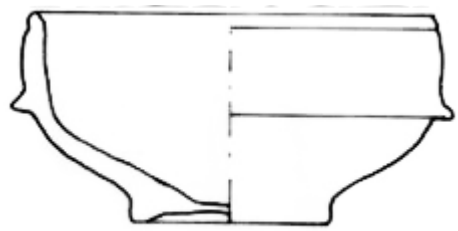


IV. CUPS

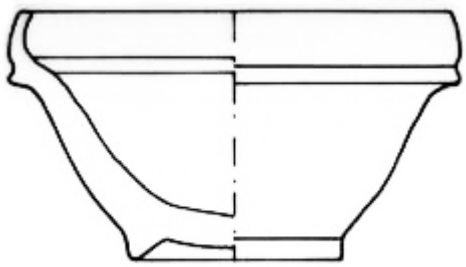
IV.A.1.a



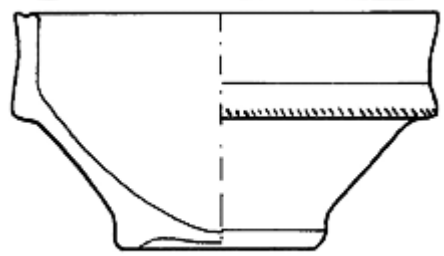
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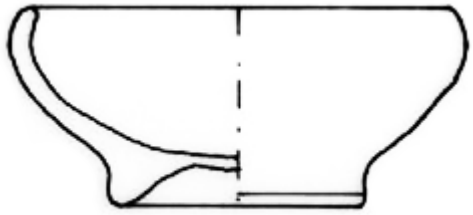
IV.B.3.a



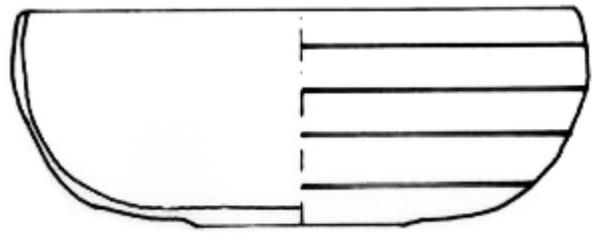
IV.A.3.b.α



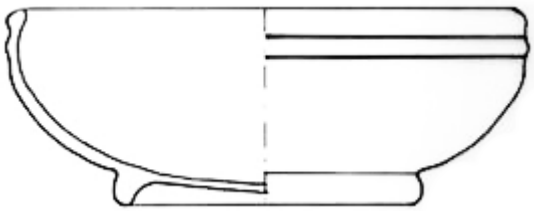
IV.C.4.a



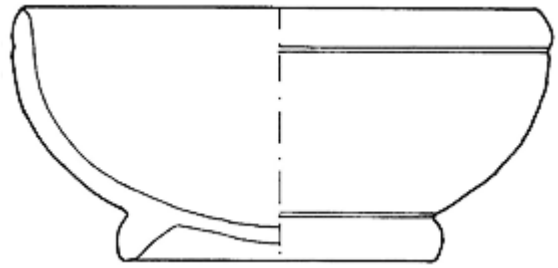
IV.C.6.d.γ



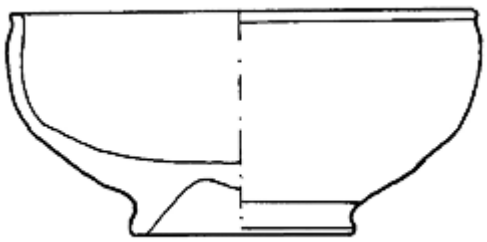
IV.D.6.b



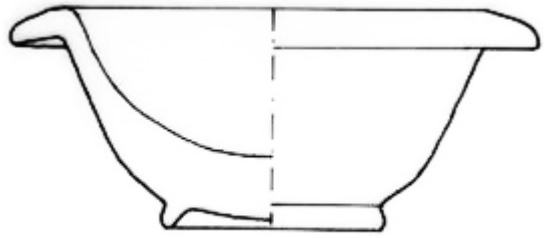
IV.D.6.a



IV.D.4.a

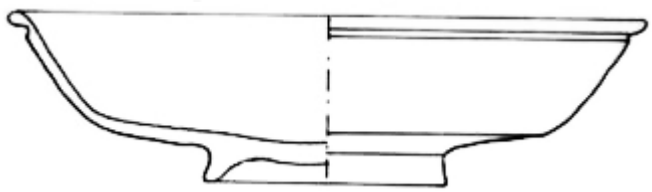


IV.E.5.b

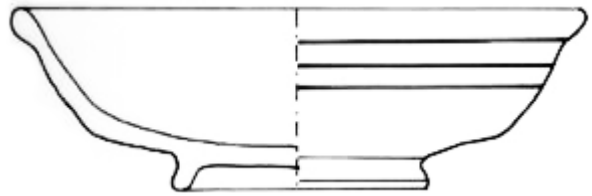


V. PATERAE/DISHES

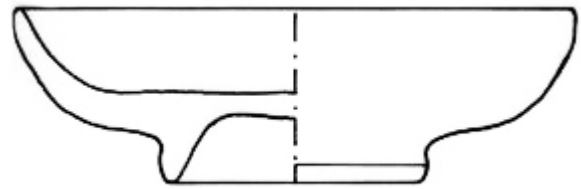
V.A.1.a



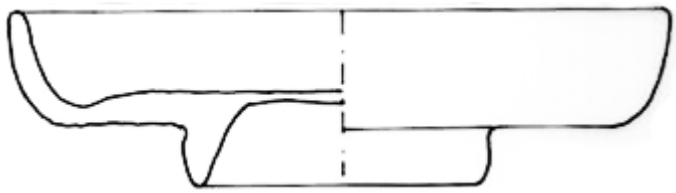
V.A.2.a



V.B.1.b



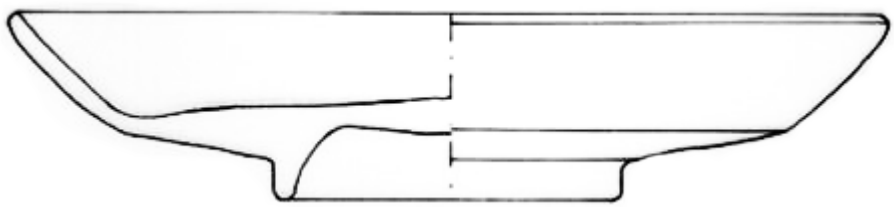
V.B.5.b



V.B.2.b



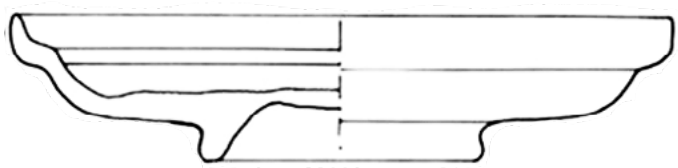
V.B.4.b



V.B.6.b



V.C.3.b



The coarse ware forms and types presented below are divided in five main forms, represented by the first number of their label, which are divided in several different types based on their formal details, such as body, handle, neck, foot, and rim.

So, each item has a label formed of six figures.

The first symbol – 'I', 'II' – is the same for every token, and it stands for a comprehensive interpretation of the object as a flagon or a pitcher. This is the only concession left to a supposed function of the object – which is pouring liquids. There will later be a distinction between the concepts of function and use.

The second– from A to N – stands for the shape of the rim.

The third one – from '1' to '3' – refers to the connection between neck and shoulder. The fourth – 'a' to 'f' – indicates the shape of the body.

The fifth and last symbol – 'α' to 'η' – indicates the shape of the foot.

The sixth – where present – will be another number referring to the decoration.

I. JUGS/FLAGONS

I.A: Disc-mouthed jugs.

I.A.1.a.α.0. Large one-handled flagons with out-turned rim, extended and narrow (sometimes wider) neck, round body, and very small and low ring-foot. The connection between neck and body is the meeting of two different curves profiles ('1' in the label). The shoulder is often characterized by an impressed decoration.

Parallels: in the whole Mediterranean (*Atlante I* , p. 100, tav. XX n. 12). Date: 1st century AD.

I.B: Ring-necked jugs.

I.B.4.f.α.00. Large one-handled flagons with out-turned rim followed by a number of moulded rings on the neck, angular body profile, underlined by two sets of impressed lines, small and low ring- foot.

I.C: Sinuous-necked jugs.

I.C.2.b.α. Small one-handled flagons with slightly out-turned rim followed by a small collar sinuously attached to the rim and characterized by a continuous curve profile ('2') from the neck to the foot. Elliptic-shaped body, small and low ring-foot.

Parallels: Many occurrences in southern and central Sardinia (Tronchetti 1996, p. 107, tav. 23 n. 4), and Spain (Lloris 1978, 379). Date: II century AD.

I.C.2.a.γ. Medium-large flagons with same rim and neck as described above. The elliptic body is less compressed and taller than I.C.2.b.α. The foot is flatter.

Parallels: Occurrences in southern and central Sardinia (Tronchetti 1996, p. 107, tav. 23 n. 4), and similar tokens in Spain (Lloris 1978, 803).

Date: II century AD.

I.C.2.a.β. Large one-handled flagons, similar to the previous two, but with a round body and a tall and distinct ring-foot.

Parallels: Spain (Lloris 1978, 803).

I.D.: Sharp-necked flagons.

I.D.1.b.β. Large one-handled flagons, with the upper part similar to I.C but with a sharper interruption between the different components. Large and elliptic-shaped body, tall and distinct ring- foot.

Parallels: central Sardinia (Tronchetti 1996, tav. 21, n. 3).

I.D.2.b.α. Small one-handled flagons, with elliptic and body sinuously attached to the neck and low ring-foot.

I.D.2.d.δ. Large one-handled flagons, with thick out-turned and sharp rim, continuous curve from the neck to the upper part of the body, sharply interrupted at the shoulder, from where a trapezoidal lower part begins. Round foot in-turned towards the core.

I.E: Collared flagons.

I.E.2.e.α. Large one-handled flagons, with a collar around the top of the neck, attached to it without discontinuity. The continuous curve of the neck and body follows I.C. Low ring-foot.

Parallels: similar occurrences from Spain (Lloris 1978, 379; Mezquiriz 1961, 12).

I.F: Long collared-necked flagons.

I.F.1.f.α. Small one-handled flagons, with a small collar around the top of the long and narrow neck, angular polygonal body, low ring foot.

Parallels: probably imitation of Sigillata Africana A/C? (Salomonson 1968, 26; Lloris 1978, 569).

I.F.2.d.δ. Large one-handled flagons, with same collar and neck as above, almost straight, slightly curved body profile, distinct flat foot.

Parallels: similar tokens come from other sites in south Sardinian, and reproduce the characteristic of the ceramic class named *Ceramica Fiammata*, considered a sub-class of Common ware (Tronchetti 1996, pp. 125-129)

I.G: Triangular out-turned-rimmed jugs.

I.G.2.b.α. Small one-handled flagons with globular body and low ring foot. Two sets of impressed lines decorate the middle of the neck and of the body.

I.H: Round flaring-rimmed jugs.

I.H.2.e.ε.01 Medium one-handled jugs with flaring rim, tapering neck and whole profile characterised by a continuous curve without any interruptions. Distinct flat foot. Rouletting decoration on the shoulder.

I.I: Long-necked jugs.

I.I.1.a.α: Large on-handled jugs with sharp triangular out-turned rim, narrow, long neck distinctly divided from the peer-shaped body, low ring foot.

Parallels: occurrences from Spain (Lloris 1978, 837; Mezquiris 1961, 20).

II. PITCHERS

II.L: Round-rimmed pitchers.

II.L.2.g.η: Small one-handled pitchers with large, round rim, and curve of the profile with no interruption between the rim and the flat foot.

II.M: Long-necked, polished pitchers.

II.M.2.g.δ.02 Large one-high-handled pitchers, with angular out-turned rim, long and wide neck sinuously linked to the upper part of the body, angular shoulder, peer-shaped lower body, round and strongly intro-flexed foot towards the core. The characteristic impressed decoration is widespread all over the surface, in vertical and oblique lines.

II.M.3.f.δ: Large one-handled pitchers, similar to the previous one, but with a less sharp and distinct rim, curve profile with no interruption from the rim to the foot, and with no decoration.

II.N: Out-turn rimmed pitchers.

II.N.3.f.α. Large one-handled pitchers, with a round, strongly out-turned rim and no interruption in the curve of the profile from the rim to the distinct, low ring-foot.

Parallels: similar occurrences in Spain (Lloris 1978, 782).

The three next are open forms. Their rim is moulded in the majority of cases, with some exceptions as regards the pans. The tag of the objects of these three groups will then be a four digit one - five when the decoration is present.

III. PANS

III.A. ***Wide rounded, down-bent rimmed pans.***

III.A.1.a. This rim is only associated with a rounded, slightly constricted below the rim, wall, and a lifted up bottom.

III.B. ***Flat and angular rimmed pans.***

III.B.6.b. Oblique slightly curved towards the interior wall, flat bottom. III.B.8d. Convex shaped wall, thickening towards the slightly curved bottom.

III.C. ***Flat and round rimmed pans.***

1.1.1.b. Thin, straight, and almost vertical wall, angular attachment to the flat and thicker bottom.

1.1.1.c. Straight and oblique wall, flat and thick bottom. III.C.10.c. Wall curved towards the interior, flat bottom.

III.D. ***Straight rimmed pans.***

III.D.5.c. Slightly out turned rim, wall a little curved towards the exterior, flat and very thin bottom.

III.D.2.c. Slightly rounded rim, round and thick wall, flat bottom.

III.E. ***Out turned rimmed pans.***

III.E.2.c. Flat rim sinuously connected to a rounded wall, flat bottom.

III.E.7.c. Rounded triangular rim, flaring wall, flat bottom.

1.E. .E.7d. Shallow pan with triangular rounded rim, flaring wall, rounded bottom.

1.F. Flat and angular rimmed pans, with handles applied underneath the rim.

III.F.3.d. Flat rim, slightly swollen in the inner side, with four handles worked out with the fingers' pressure, applied underneath it. Slightly sloping wall, and flat bottom.

1.G. Flat rimmed pans with flat, horizontal handles.

III.G.4.c. Flat, almost absent rim, finishing in a thin and flat handle, or groove on which to place the lid, with a flaring and irregular wall, flat bottom.

III.G.6.d. Flat, irregular rim, that in certain parts flares towards the interior, with a flat handle underneath it, vertical or slightly convex irregular wall, flat bottom with some irregularities in the interior.

1.H. Shallow, rimless pans.

III.H.9.c. Very shallow and rimless pan, with a curving, slightly in-turned wall, and flat bottom.

IV. CUPS

IV.A. ***Conical cups with a long vertical upper wall.***

IV.A.1.a. Absent rim, vertical upper wall separated from the flaring lower wall by a small external strip, and low ring foot.

Parallels: imitation of tokens from Samian ware, Conspectus 34 (Ettlinger 1990, pp. 121, 122, tav. 31) .

IV.A.2.b. Slightly out-turned rim highlighted by a shallow groove, rounded upper wall separated from the lower wall by a strip, and low ring foot.

Parallels: tokens from Samian ware, Conspectus 22 (Ettlinger 1990, pp. 58, 59, tav.4)/26 (Ettlinger 1990, pp. 98-99, tav. 24)/ 34 (Ettlinger 1990, pp. 121, 122, tav. 34)

IV.A.3.b.α. Slightly out-turned rim with a groove on top of it, curved upper wall, and horizontal strip with fine rouletting decoration on its lower part, flaring lower wall, and low ring foot.

IV.B. ***Conical cups with a short upper wall.***

IV.B.3.a. Short, rounded upper wall, slightly in-turned rim, small strip, long flaring lower wall, low ring foot.

Parallels:imitation of tokens from Samian ware, Conspectus 22 (Ettlinger 1990, pp. 58, 59, tav.4) and 26 (Ettlinger 1990, pp. 98-99, tav. 24).

IV.C. ***Rimless hemispheric cups.***

IV.C.4.a. Slightly in-turned rim, round body, high ring foot.

IV.C.6.d.γ. Rimless hemispheric cup, with low flat foot, and multiple very shallow grooves on its wall.

Parallels: tokens among tokens of Black gloss pottery produced locally, Morel 2920 a1 (Morel 1981, p. 229, pl. 78)

IV.D. ***Flat triangular rimmed hemispheric cups.***

IV.D.6.b. Hemispheric cup with triangular rim highlighted by a double groove decoration underneath it, rounded wall, and ring foot.

Parallels: Sardinian production, Morel 2567 a1. (Morel , p. 186, pl. 57)

IV.D.6.a. Similar to the previous but with a singular groove underneath the rim.

IV.D.4.a. Slightly out-turned rim underlined by a single groove, hemispheric wall and high ring foot.

IV.E. ***Flat and downturned rectangular rimmed bowl.***

IV.E.5.b. Downturned, wide rim, flaring and rounded wall, with a hemispheric internal profile, and low ring foot.

Parallels: imitation of Samian ware tokens (Ettlinger 1990, pp 140-141, tav. 42).

V. DISHES

V.A. Round rimmed dishes.

V.A.1.a. Small and slightly out turned rim highlighted by a deep groove, carenated wall, and ring foot.

V.A.2.a. Round rimmed dish, with three wide grooves from the rim to the middle of the carenated wall, and ring foot.

V.B. Carenated dishes with absent or very small rim.

V.B.1. bCarenated dish with a ring foot.

Parallels: imitation of Samian ware tokens (Ettlinger 1990, pp. 58, 59, tav.4).

V.B.5.b. Strongly carenated dish, with deep interior groove in correspondence with the external curve, ring foot.

Parallels: imitation of a Samian ware token (Ettlinger 1990, pp. 58, 59, tav.4).

V.B.2.b. Strongly carenated dish with a slightly out-turned upper wall, and ring foot.

V.B.4.b. Carenated dish with a strongly flaring upper wall, interior deep and wide groove in correspondence of the curve, and high ring foot.

Parallels: central Italy (Morel 1981, pl. 57, 2567 a 1).

V.B.6.b. Slightly out-turned rim, flaring upper wall, flat bottom, and ring foot.

V.C. Dishes with a moulding on the exterior.

V.C.3.b. Carenated dish with a high moulding on the exterior, an internal groove in correspondence with the lower wall, and a ring foot.

Parallels: imitation of a Samian ware token (Ettlinger, 1990, pp. 62, 63, tav 6.2.1).