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Estratto

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Estratto

THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE “SANT’IMBENIA” AMPHORA TYPE: THE STORY OF A FRIENDSHIP AND OF TWO SIMILAR YET DISTINCT AMPHORAE

IDA OGGIANO*

The origins of my friendship with Susanna¹ date back to the period of the SITAG project (*Sistema Informativo Archeologico Gallurese* – Gallura Archaeological Information System), an initiative that brought together a large group of early-career scholars and fostered the development of scientific and professional expertise, as well as – perhaps most importantly – enduring personal bonds that have lasted to the present day. My relationship with Susanna was particularly close, grounded in mutual esteem and affection, to the extent that the desire to collaborate again became a concrete prospect when, at the conclusion of the SITAG project, I was awarded a research fellowship by the National Research Council.

Susanna, together with Fulvia Lo Schiavo, subsequently involved me in the study of the Phoenician materials recovered from the excavation of the Nuragic village of Sant’Imbenia. This work formed part of a broader research project that included distinguished scholars such as David Ridgway, responsible for the study of the Greek pottery, and Giovanni Garbini, who examined the Phoenician inscriptions. The project aimed to publish the assemblage from the so-called “hut of the hoards” (*Capanna dei ripostigli*) which at the time was housed in the storage facilities of the former *Soprintendenza per le Provincie di Sassari e Nuoro* in Porto Torres.

These were the formative years of research into Mediterranean interactions approached from a “post-colonial” perspective, in which the local component—in this case, the Sardinian community of Sant’Imbenia – began to be recognised as playing a central and active role in such relationships. Within this interpretative framework, the remarkable discovery at the site of fragments of Euboean pottery – specifically *skyphoi* decorated with pendent semicircles and *chevron* motifs – did not lead to the interpretation of Sant’Imbenia as a Greek *emporion* (as had occurred in the case of Al Mina). Rather, it became clear that any analysis had to be grounded in the study of the local ceramic production, a field in which Susanna possessed exceptional expertise. This locally produced pottery constituted the bulk of the assemblage, in stark contrast to the very limited number of imported fragments of Greek, Greek-Cypriot, and Phoenician/Levantine origin.

The manner in which our research developed may thus be regarded as a microhistorical episode within the broader discipline concerned with the Sardinians of the Iron Age and the *Phoinikes* who sailed the Mediterranean alongside the Greeks – and, as we now know, the Nuragic communities – at the dawn of the first millennium BCE.

I travelled to the storage facilities in Porto Torres, where the boxes containing the finds were kept, with the initial intention of selecting “only” the Phoenician materials. As the bags were opened, Susanna, with her characteristic aplomb, began to place into “my” boxes numerous sherds of orange-fabric coarse ware, bearing

* Institute of Heritage Science (CNR ISPC); ida.oggiano@cnr.it. Translated from the article *L’identificazione del tipo anforico “S. Imbenia”*. *Storia di una amicizia e di due anfore simili ma diverse*, in E. Isetti – G. Rossi (edd.), *Ricerche archeologiche fra Genova e la Sardegna*, Firenze 2025 («Millenni», 29), pp. 149-161.

1 This work is dedicated to Susanna Bafico, who will be referred to throughout the text simply as Susanna.



Fig. 1. Site plan of the Nuragic village of Sant'Imbenia (after Rendeli 2013, fig. 2).

vations into local workshops, both in clay purification techniques and in the adoption of the potter's wheel. This realization was profoundly stimulating, for the careful study of material culture had effectively transported us to a particular moment in the life of the settlement. It also enabled us to reassess, with renewed perspective, the two amphorae from the *capanna dei ripostigli* that form the focus of this tribute to Susanna.

1. THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE "SANT'IMBENIA" AMPHORA TYPE

The village of Sant'Imbenia is discussed in this volume by Elisabetta Garau and Beatrice De Rosa, to whose contribution I refer the reader for an overview of the important research project directed by our late friend Marco Rendeli. Here, I shall confine myself to addressing the history of Sant'Imbenia during its ninth-eighth-century BCE phases, as these may be reconstructed through the biography of two "speaking objects":² the amphorae recovered from the so-called *capanna dei ripostigli*.³

By the end of the ninth century BCE, the village of Sant'Imbenia was inhabited by an active community open to exchange and prepared to receive the ships that anchored in the bay of Porto Conte, following maritime routes well known to sailors from the Syro-Palestinian coast. During this period, the principal ports of the eastern Mediterranean were those along the Phoenician coast, although other significant harbours must also have existed both to the north and to the south. On the northern Syro-Palestinian coast, mention may be made of the port of Al Mina,⁴ founded in the eighth century BCE (according to the traditional chronology) by local elites of the regional polity of the Amuq Valley (Unqi or Pattina).⁵

² For an archaeological perspective on the active role of material culture, see Hodder 2014, pp. 19-36. For a historical and anthropological perspective, see Appadurai 1986.

³ This section of the article draws on work published by Tatiana Pedrazzi and myself in 2019 (Oggiano – Pedrazzi 2019). I would like to thank Tatiana, with whom I have long discussed Phoenician amphorae from both the eastern and western Mediterranean, as well as many related topics.

⁴ Coldstream 1988b, pp. 353-360; Coldstream 2002, pp. 15-32; for an overview of the relationships between Euboea and the Levantine coast, see Lane Fox 2010, pp. 53-101; for Cyprus and Tyre, see Coldstream 1986, pp. 321-327 and Coldstream 1988a, pp. 35-44.

⁵ Luke 2003, pp. 21, 36; Lehmann 2005; Fantalkin 2006, pp. 200-201; Oggiano 2016.

clear traces of wheel-throwing and therefore apparently not produced according to local ceramic traditions. While Susanna smiled, I grew increasingly apprehensive at the steadily expanding volume of material I was expected to analyse. How could such a substantial quantity of "non-local" common ware be present in a Sardinian settlement?

As the selection proceeded, however, Susanna began to identify forms that were unmistakably local in typology, yet wheel-made and produced in a light-coloured, carefully levigated fabric. The issue gradually came into focus: at the village of Sant'Imbenia (Fig. 1), interaction with Levantine populations had led to the introduction of specific technological innovations

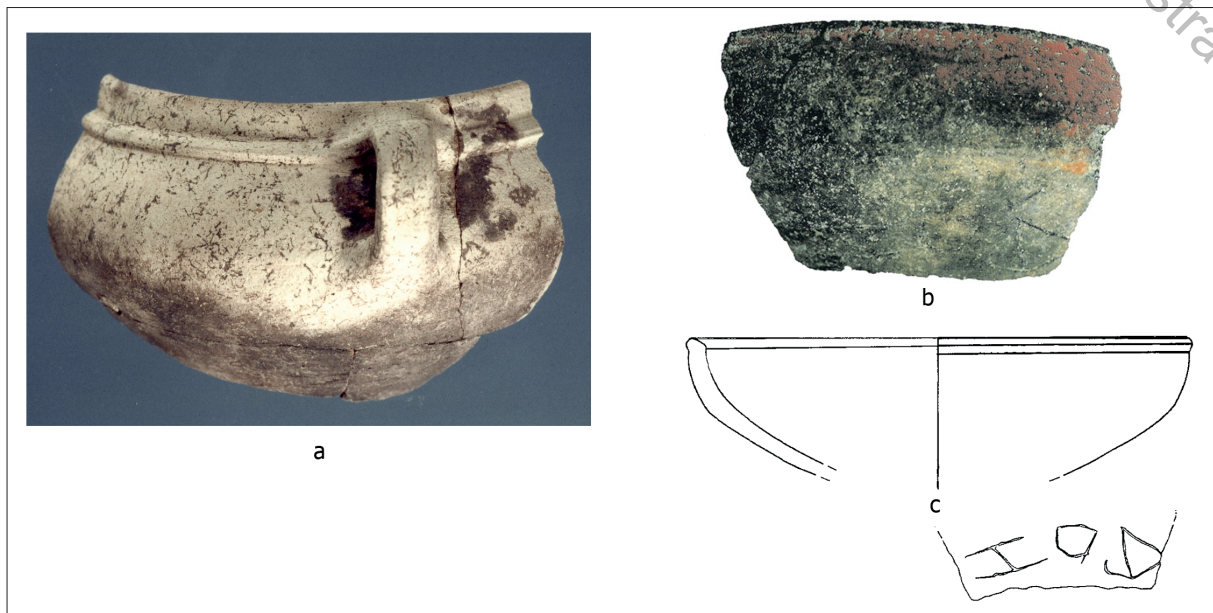


Fig. 2. Sant’Imbenia. a. Levantine *Cooking pot*; b-c. fragment of inscribed bowl (after Bernardini *et al.* 1997, a. p. 232, 23; b-c. p. 50).

While trade along the Iberian routes was probably managed primarily by the *Phoinikes*,⁶ in the central Mediterranean a profound interaction between Greek and Phoenician merchants is attested from the earliest phases of their shared westward expansion, both in the archaeological record and in the survival of place names of Euboean tradition applied to certain regions and settlements, such as Ichnoussa and Pithekoussai.⁷ Those who embarked on ships bound for the central Mediterranean included sailors, merchants, and craftsmen from diverse social and geographical backgrounds within the Levant.⁸ They carried with them goods intended for exchange, but they also left behind at western ports objects required for life on board, as in the case of the cooking pot and the cup incised with two letters – a *beth* and a *zayn* – found at Sant’Imbenia (Fig. 2a-b).⁹

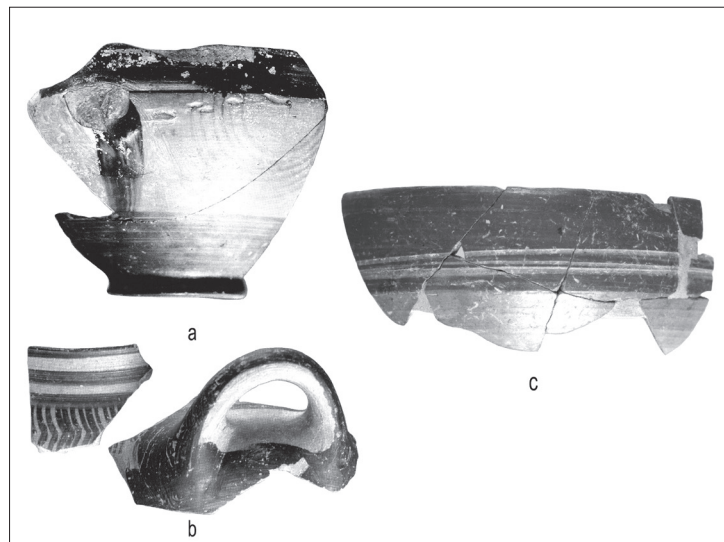


Fig. 3. a. *skyphos* PSC; b. fragments of *skyphoi* à chevrons; c. fragment of a bowl in *Phoenician Fine Ware* (after Bernardini *et al.* 1997, a-b. p. 51; c. p. 232).

6 Gonzàles de Canales Cerisola – Serrano – Lompart Gomez 2004, pp. 200-205; Torres Ortiz 2008, pp. 84-85.

7 Botto 2008, pp. 132; for Carthage-Oinoussa, see Torres Ortiz 2008, p. 85; Bernardini 2016.

8 Botto – Oggiano 2003; Botto 2004.

9 Oggiano 2000; for the inscription see Garbini in Bafico *et al.* 1997, pp. 52-53.

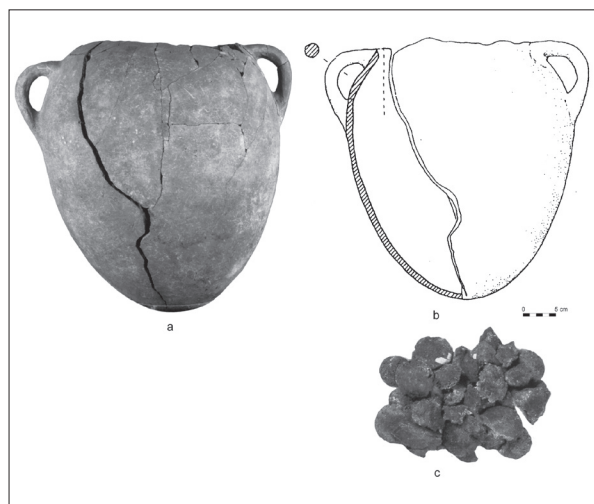


Fig. 4. Amphora under the floor of the hut and copper ingots (after Bernardini *et al.* 1997, p. 46).

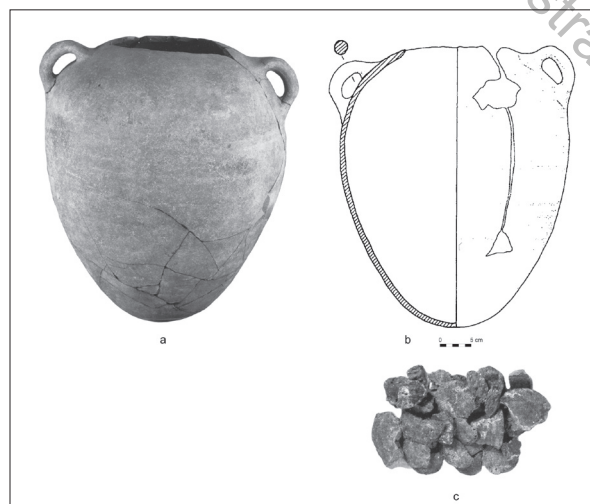


Fig. 5. Amphora found beneath the upper floor, which was built after the collapse of the nuraghe blocks inside the hut, along with copper ingots (after Bernardini *et al.* 1997, p. 46).

The presence of metal resources in the region constituted the principal *raison d'être* of eastern interest in Sant'Imbenia. Contacts between the leaders of Levantine trading missions and local authorities were likely accompanied by codified rituals, among which the act of “drinking together” must have played a particularly important role. Wine was poured from locally produced jugs (*askoi*) into imported drinking vessels, such as *Red Slip* and *Phoenician Fine Ware* cups (Fig. 3c), or Euboean-produced *skyphoi* (Fig. 3a-b). Since shared drinking accompanied negotiations leading to the conclusion of profitable transactions, the beverage assumed a central role in structuring commercial relations between the local community and merchants arriving from the East.

It is well known that wine was produced in Sardinia from an early period, and that the Nurra region offered ideal conditions for viticulture.¹⁰ The *Phoinikes* therefore did not introduce vine cultivation but most likely demonstrated to the Sardinians the potential for commercialising wine through the use of transport containers such as amphorae, in accordance with a practice long established in the Levant. In response, local pottery workshops developed a vessel type suited to this new activity, producing locally – perhaps with the initial involvement of Levantine craftsmen – a form that combined elements of eastern tradition with indigenous features. According to this reconstruction, the “Sant'Imbenia” amphora type emerged.

In order to formulate this interpretative hypothesis concerning developments at the village during this period, the deciphering of the “enigma of the two amphorae” proved crucial. These are the two amphorae recovered from the village structure known as the *Capanna dei ripostigli* (Figs. 4-5). The stratigraphic analysis of this context is essential to understanding the reconstruction proposed here (Fig. 6).¹¹ At the time of the hut's construction, a pit was excavated beneath its floor, and within it an amphora containing 44 kilograms of copper in the form of small ingots was deliberately concealed. The amphora – its neck and rim removed –

10 Recent results from the Nuraghe Sa Osa at Cabras, in the Oristano area, where non-carbonised seeds of *Vitis vinifera* L. ssp. *vinifera* were recovered from three wells, were subjected to radiocarbon (¹⁴C) analysis, which yielded a calibrated date at 2σ between 1286 and 1111 BCE. (Ucchesu *et al.* 2015).

11 The stratigraphy of the *capanna dei ripostigli*, documented by Susanna Bafico (Bafico 1988, pp. 20-21), is discussed in Oggiano 2000, pp. 236-243; for the amphorae, see Oggiano 2000, pp. 240-242.

was handmade in a fabric typical of local production (Fig. 4).

Although the vessel displays an ovoid body and vertical handles set high on the shoulder – features characteristic of eastern transport amphorae with rounded profiles – the handles themselves have a sub-oval section and broaden towards their lower attachment, following a technique typical of the Nuragic ceramic repertoire (as seen, for example, in *askoid* jugs). In addition to the fabric characteristics and handle morphology, local manufacture is further suggested by the presence of a longitudinal firing crack, which would have rendered the vessel unsuitable for its primary function as a transport container.

The dating of the act of burying the amphora – and thus the *terminus ante quem* for its production – is based on the discovery, on the floor beneath which it was buried, of an Euboean cup with pendent semicircle decoration (Kearsley Type 5), dated by David Ridgway to the end of the ninth-beginning of the eighth century BCE,¹² and more precisely by Paolo Bernardini to the early eighth century BCE (Fig. 3a). If the *skyphos* is assigned to the early eighth century BCE, the amphora must have been produced prior to this date; however, it is not possible to determine whether this occurred only a short time earlier or several decades in advance.¹³

Towards the end of the eighth and into the seventh century BCE, the village underwent significant events that resulted in the collapse of several large blocks from the *nuraghe* into the hut. During the seventh century BCE, part of the structure was reused, and, during this reoccupation, a new floor was laid, beneath which another amphora containing copper ingots was buried (Fig. 5). This second amphora displays a body shape and handle morphology more closely aligned with eastern amphorae, and distinct wheel-throwing marks are visible on its walls. The construction of this later floor can be dated on the basis of a fragment of an eastern amphora with a carinated shoulder bearing an inscription (Fig. 7).¹⁴

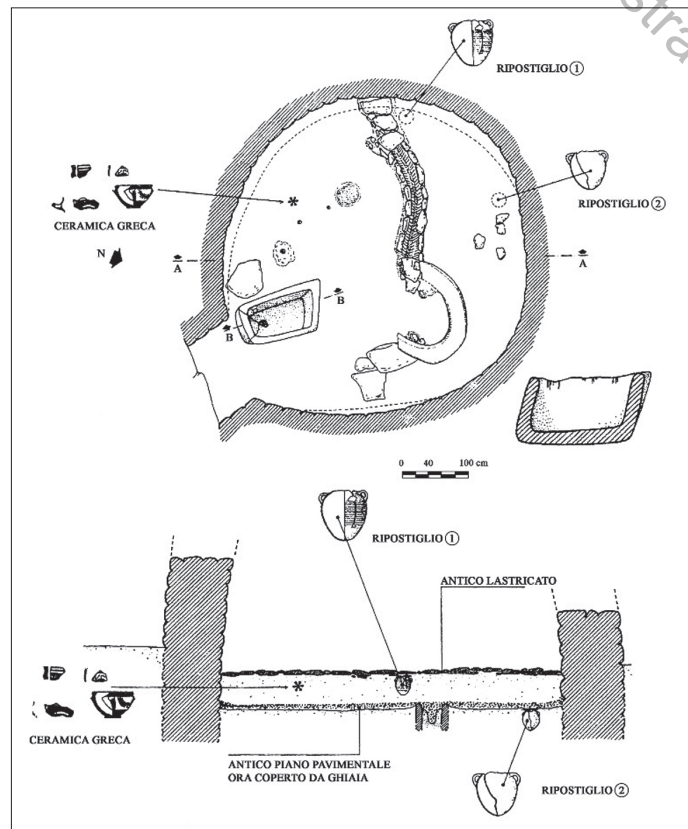


Fig. 6. Plan and section of the “capanna dei ripostigli” (after Bafico 1988).

12 Ridgway 1996, pp. 119-120; Ridgway 1998, pp. 315-316; Oggiano 2000, pp. 238; Ridgway 2002, pp. 220-221; Stampolidis 2003, p. 326, n. 370. The dating of the *skyphos* has fluctuated between the early and mid-eighth century BCE; however, this artefact was soon regarded as the earliest example of its kind found in the West, and its chronology – based on its attribution to Kearsley’s Type 5 (Kearsley 1989, pp. 99-101, 98, fig. 39) – was accordingly set to the late ninth-early eighth century BCE. According to Bernardini 2016, p. 19, no. 76, the *skyphos* is stratigraphically compatible with Phoenician forms that at Sulki are still attested in the second half of the eighth century BCE. The Greek imports found in the area adjacent to the *capanna dei ripostigli* (Oggiano 2000, p. 243) are dated to the same period.

13 Oggiano 2000, pp. 239-240; Bernardini 2016, p. 22.

14 Oggiano 2000, p. 243; for the inscription, see G. Garbini in Bafico *et al.* 1997, p. 52.



Fig. 7. Fragment of a Phoenician amphora with a carenated shoulder with an inscription (after Bernardini *et al.* 1997, p. 53).

amphora – buried beneath the earlier floor – is dated to before the beginning of the eighth century BCE and therefore provides a crucial chronological reference point for the emergence of this type of production within the village.

One issue nonetheless remained unresolved: the morphology of the rims of the locally produced amphorae. Both vessels lacked their rims, while numerous rim fragments of markedly different shapes had been recovered from the same contexts within the hut and from nearby areas (the so-called *piazzetta*). The discovery of a single specimen in which a rim was preserved partially attached to the body made it possible to confirm the association between rim and ovoid body and thus to define a distinct ceramic “type”, now known as the “Sant’Imbenia type”.¹⁵

This locally produced type, inspired by certain eastern prototypes, is characterised by the combination of an overall vessel morphology typical of the Levantine ceramic tradition with elements derived from the Nuragic repertoire, such as the distinctive handle form. Certain particularly significant morpho-functional features – such as the pronounced neck¹⁶ – may indeed be attributed to Nuragic tradition; however, it should not be overlooked that this type of neck is also well attested in eastern amphorae of ovoid profile. The cylindrical neck, of varying height and surmounted by either a thickened everted rim or a simple rim, is well known in ovoid amphorae from the Late Bronze Age onwards, with continuity into Iron Age forms, particularly in northern Palestine and especially in Galilee.¹⁷

Regarding manufacturing techniques, the amphorae were produced on the wheel, handmade, or using mixed techniques (wheel-thrown bodies with handmade rims, or vice versa). In some cases, they were coated with a red slip, although no direct correlation can be established between the presence of this slip and

The two amphorae – very similar in overall form and in their secondary function (their reuse as copper hoards following the removal of the neck and rim) – were recovered from distinct yet closely related stratigraphic contexts, to such an extent that it is possible to hypothesise that they originally belonged to the same depositional episode. Both vessels may initially have been buried beneath the first floor of the hut; however, during the subsequent restoration following the collapse of the *nuraghe* blocks, only one amphora was rediscovered. This vessel was retrieved and then concealed beneath the newly constructed floor.

Thus, in the same location, two vessels were recovered that are morphologically similar yet produced using different manufacturing techniques. Both represent imitations of a vessel form previously unknown in the local ceramic repertoire but clearly evocative of types in use in the eastern Mediterranean. Moreover, the first

¹⁵ Oggiano 2000.

¹⁶ Dessena 2015; Botto 2011, p. 40, suggest that the flat base, characteristic of some specimens, reflects the local tradition; indeed, a flat base is not a feature of Eastern amphorae, as in the Levant amphorae ceased to have a flat base from the end of the Middle Bronze Age.

¹⁷ Pedrazzi 2007, pp. 100-101, type 9-1, with the specimens from Tell Keisan, Beth Shean, and Hazor, dated to Iron I and the early Iron II (with some Late Bronze II examples), cfr. for example Briend – Humbert 1980, pl. 58:2 and Yadin – Geva 1986, fig. 8:1. It should be noted that, compared to the amphorae from Sant’Imbenia, the Galilean ovoid amphora is less bulbous.

the place of manufacture.¹⁸ The use of the potter’s wheel may be attributed to eastern tradition, as may a certain degree of clay purification, which, as noted above, is also observable in ceramic productions that are otherwise clearly local in character.¹⁹

One can reasonably envisage the workshops of local potters experimenting with different clay-working techniques and testing various rim forms for amphorae. Indeed, rim profiles vary considerably, suggesting that individual craftsman shaped them according to their own technical choices and preferences. One may likewise picture the potter who fashioned the first of the amphorae discussed here, still insufficiently experienced in the use of the wheel and therefore producing a vessel with thick, uneven walls and numerous fabric imperfections, ultimately resulting in a crack formed during firing.

Once this amphora type had been identified at Sant’Imbenia, it was subsequently recognised at numerous sites across Sardinia and more widely in the western Mediterranean, from the Iberian Peninsula to Cartagena. Within Sardinia, the type has been documented at several locations, some of which were probably also production centres. The amphorae produced at Posada, along the eastern coast of the island (Fig. 8), for example, appear to have supplied the surrounding hinterland, as they have been recovered from the Nuragic village on the hill of the “Castello della Fava” and from the Nuragic site of Luthuthai, a few kilometres inland.²⁰ Along the eastern coast, amphorae of the Sant’Imbenia type are also attested at the indigenous village of Santo Stefano in the territory of Irgoli;²¹ in the south-eastern sector of the island at Su Padrigheddu (near San Vero Milis),²² Su Congiua ’e Funtà, and Nuraxinieddu.²³ The presence of this type at *Sulky* has been hypothesised, while several fragments have been identified at

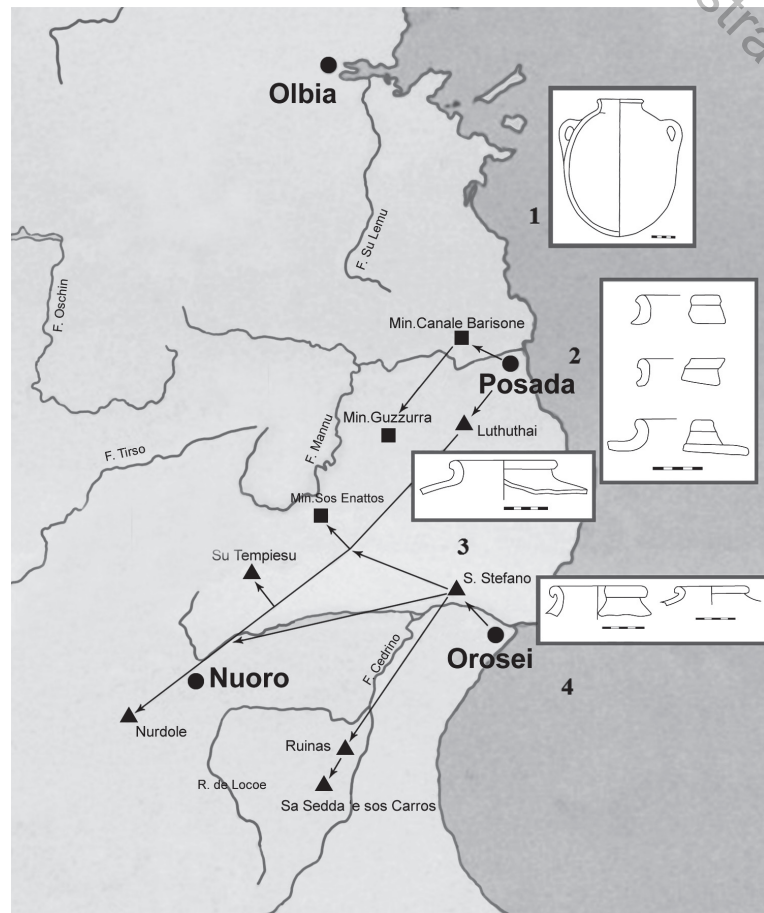


Fig. 8. Distribution of the S. Imbenia Type Amphorae in the region of Posada and Orosei (after Oggiano – Pedrazzi 2019, fig. 12).

18 The extensive and detailed study of fabrics and coatings carried out by Beatrice De Rosa (De Rosa 2014; De Rosa 2017) resulted in a comprehensive classification of the production and manufacturing techniques of this type of amphora in this part of the island.

19 Bafico *et al.* 1997, pp. 46.

20 Bernardini 2016, pp. 24 (with bibliography).

21 Sanciu 2010, p. 8-10; Salis 2006, pp. 89-108.

22 Roppa 2012, fig. 14.

23 Sebis 2007.

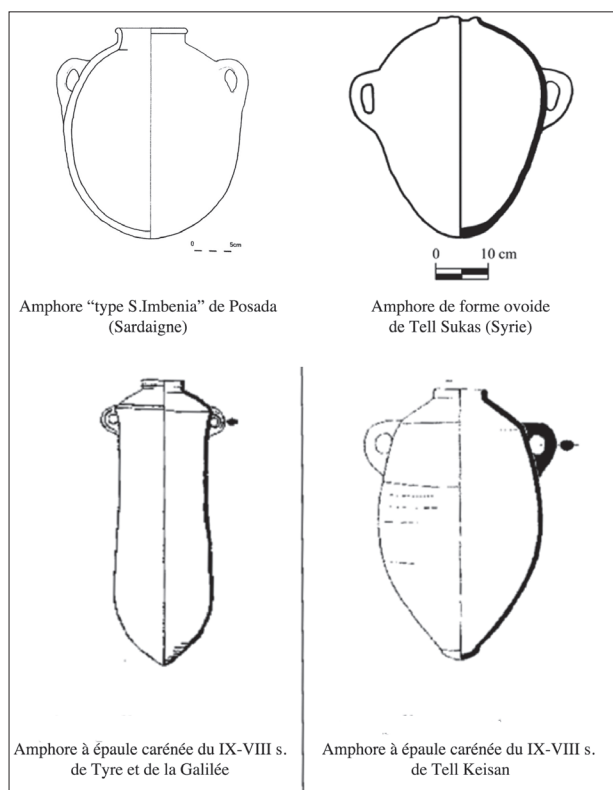


Fig. 9. Amphora of S. Imbenia type (from Posada) and Iron Age levantine amphoric type del Ferro: a. amphora from Posada (Sardinia) (after Sanciu 2010, fig. 5); b. Amphora from Tell Sukas (after Pedrazzi 2007, fig. 3.9: a); c. amphora from Hazor (after Yadin *et al.* 1961, pl. LXXII: 9 [Str. VI, Area A]); d. amphora from Tell Keisan (after Briend – Humbert 1980, pl. 48: 4 [niv. 7]). (Oggiano – Pedrazzi 2019, fig.13).

ed shoulders, whose production appears to have been concentrated in the southern Levant and in Galilee.

It is likely that, during a period of marked expansion of the Phoenician coastal region and of intensified political and commercial relations with the Kingdom of Israel,²⁹ agricultural products from the southern Levantine hinterland reached the ports of Tyre and Sidon. Contained in this type of amphora, these goods would then have been transported onward to the central Mediterranean. It is therefore unsurprising that the closest typological parallels to the Sardinian productions are to be sought south of the Phoenician ports. Although the creation of “hybrid” forms such as those from Sant’Imbenia complicates the identification of

the nuraghe of Tratalias in the Sulcis region, as documented by Fabio Dessena.²⁴ The circulation of these amphorae within Sardinia – or, more precisely, of the commodities they contained – is suggested by the discovery at Sant’Imbenia of specimens that, on the basis of archaeometric analyses, can be attributed to workshops located outside the village.²⁵ Beyond Sardinia, amphorae of this type reached Spain,²⁶ the Tyrrhenian region, and above all Carthage, where they are classified by R. Docter as “Nuragisch”.²⁷

Once the history of the encounter between Levantine and local craft traditions has been reconstructed, a further question arises: which eastern repertoire inspired local production? In these chronological phases, the amphorae most commonly stowed aboard ships departing from Phoenician ports were the highly distinctive so-called “carinated-shoulder” amphorae. This form, characterized by a pronounced shoulder carination followed by a marked constriction below it, is attested as early as the end of the ninth century BCE in Galilee (Hazor, Level VII) and became widespread in Phoenicia and northern Palestine, particularly from the following century onwards.²⁸ The amphorae that reached Sant’Imbenia and served as prototypes for the locally produced type between the late ninth and early eighth century BCE, however, were not of this carinated form but rather examples with round-

24 Dessena 2015.

25 De Rosa 2014, p. 235; Bernardini 2016, pp. 21-22.

26 Huelva, Cádiz, Castillo de Doña Blanca, Toscanos, Le Rebanadilla (Malaga), Las Chorreras. For a recent analysis of all these contexts, see Botto 2015, with bibliography.

27 Docter 1991.

28 Pedrazzi 2005.

29 Oggiano 2016.

exact parallels, a clear connection to the morphological tradition of northern Galilee (Hazor) and Palestine (Tel Mevorakh) is nonetheless evident (Fig. 9).³⁰

If objects possess their own biographies, then the amphorae of the Sant’Imbenia type speak eloquently of a productive encounter between two groups – local communities and “foreigners” – which led, to their mutual advantage, to the commercialisation of a local product: the wine of the Nurra region. It is no coincidence that Sant’Imbenia-type amphorae recovered at Huelva and La Rebanadilla³¹ sometimes bear Phoenician inscriptions, highlighting the role these containers played within a trading system managed – or, more likely, co-managed – by Phoenician agents. The active participation of the local community in the commercialisation of its products is further demonstrated by the export, alongside the amphora-borne goods, of the *askoid* jug form associated with wine consumption in Sardinia.³²

The presence of the *askoid* jug in the Iberian Peninsula, at centres of Atlantic trade,³³ as well as in Etruria, Sicily, and North Africa testifies to the arrival in markets frequented by the Phoenicians not only of Sardinian wine but also of the cultural practices associated with its consumption. These practices, enriched by new objects – and by sounds, flavours, and colours that have unfortunately not survived – reshaped the rituals of communal feasting as performed in different communities according to their own local traditions, while sharing the common objective of establishing a set of conventions within which elites could recognise one another. In the effort to forge a shared ceremonial language, objects drawn from diverse traditions – from the Levant and Greece as well as from Sardinia – were incorporated into wine-drinking rituals by elite groups at sites on the Iberian Peninsula (Huelva, La Rebanadilla)³⁴ and also at Utica,³⁵ where Nuragic jugs, Sant’Imbenia-type amphorae, fine Phoenician wares, and Greek cups occur together within the same assemblages.

In these centuries, Sardinia increasingly emerges as a zone of encounter in which shared commercial strategies were developed. It should no longer be viewed merely as a metal-rich region that attracted Levantine merchants intent on exploiting a supposedly marginal land. Rather, if this perspective is reversed, Sardinia appears as a territory endowed with a wide range of resources, whose inhabitants had developed into an active community ready to engage with the skilled *Phoinikes*. The latter recognized in the Sardinians interlocutors who enabled them to relaunch and expand westwards the highly prosperous activities they had cultivated in the East, according to a model of interaction of which Sant’Imbenia represents only one among many Mediterranean examples, including Kommos and Tekke in Crete, Al Mina in Syria, Pithekoussai, Carthage, and Huelva in the western Mediterranean – alongside many others that ongoing research continues to bring to light.

2. THE STORY OF A FRIENDSHIP AND OF TWO SIMILAR YET DIFFERENT AMPHORAE

How should one conclude this remembrance of the work that Susanna and I carried out together so many years ago? By adopting the comparative method so dear to us archaeologists, I might say that Susanna and I were, like the amphorae from the hut, *similar* yet *different*. We recognised one another because we both

30 Pedrazzi 2005, pp. 466-469.

31 Botto 2015.

32 With regard to the progressive specialization of the *askoid* jug in relation to wine consumption, see Botto 2011, pp. 40-46.

33 For the materials from Sardinia involved in Phoenician trade networks reaching the Iberian Peninsula, see the recent overview by Botto 2015, pp. 171-203. For the classification of *askoid* jugs in the Iberian Peninsula, see Campus – Leonelli 2000, pp. 436-441.

34 Botto 2015, pp. 192-194, with particular attention to the ritual context; Botto 2015, pp. 196-198, with an analysis of the material from La Rebanadilla and, in particular, of the objects forming a wine-consumption assemblage in Building 2 of Phase III.

35 López Castro *et al.* 2016.

carried within us the traces of ancient Mediterranean relationships between Sardinians and Phoenicians, as well as more recent ones – our own – which had brought together on the island the histories of Liguria and Tuscany. What might have appeared as differences – differences of character rather than of substance or values – thus became, for us, a deeply human experience, both beautiful and unforgettable.

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