



Projet Erasmus+ Namur - Marsala

" Patrimonia "



A la découverte du patrimoine historique, architectural et culturel

« Baglio Anselmi » Archaeological Museum



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ISISS « Abele Damiani » - Marsala

ABSTRACT



The Baglio Anselmi Regional Archaeological Museum is located on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea in Marsala, near Capo Boeo (the most extreme point of the western coast).

The Baglio Anselmi, before being a museum, was a winery, built in 1880 for the production and conservation of Marsala wine. The building became a museum in 1986, when it was chosen as a place to preserve the remains of a Punic ship, brought to light by the Archaeological Mission of the British School of Rome, directed by British archaeologist Honor Frost.

The Museum consists of two large exhibition rooms, which were once warehouses where the barrels were stored. The first hall is called the **Lilybeo Hall**, in which are preserved the most important archaeological pieces telling the ancient history of Lilybaeum (ancient name of the city of Marsala), from the Paleolithic to the medieval age. The most important archaeological findings of the prehistoric age are arrowheads, choppers, flints, votive bowls and statuettes from the Sant'Anna and Sant'Onofrio districts of Marsala and the Roccazzo district of Mazara del Vallo.

The **Lilybeo Hall** also has a display case of cinematographic urns and stems from the **Tophet** of Mozia, an open-air sanctuary where the eldest male children were sacrificed to god Baal-Hammon as a sign of thanks. The funerary urns were terracotta containers in which the ashes of the deceased were put after being burned, while the steles were calcarenite and parallelepiped funerary monuments used to indicate where the deceased's tomb was. On the steles were engraved images of divinities or astral symbols. The steles and cinerary urns date back to the 5th century BC



The archaeological excavations carried out in the Punico-Roman necropolis, which is located in the north-east zone of Marsala, from the end of the 19th century to the present day have made it possible to highlight a series of objects of daily use, which constituted the funeral bodies. The peoples of Antiquity believed that there was another life in the Heaven; that is why the tomb had to be provided with objects that would serve the deceased for the conduct of daily life in the Heaven.



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Among the most important pieces are: miniaturist vases or baby bottles that come from children's graves; knives and a strigil coming from male graves and pans, jewelry and toiletries from female graves.

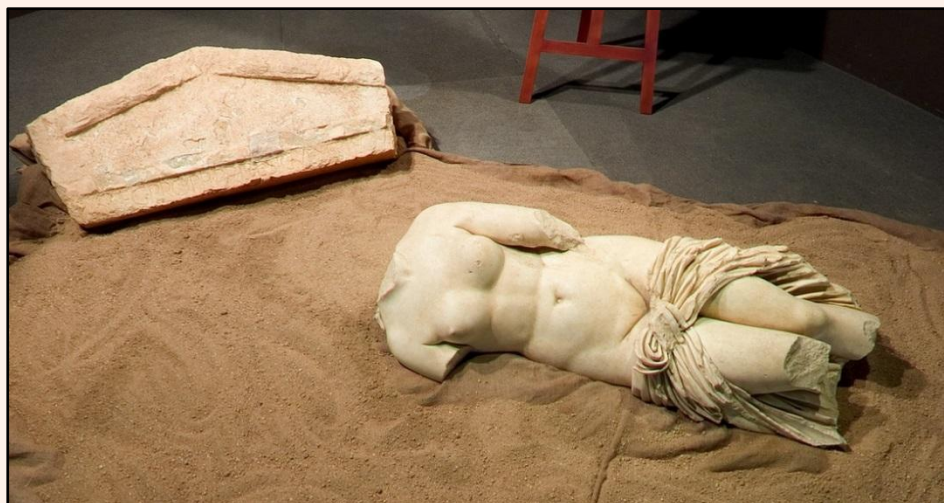
In particular, among the most precious objects characterizing the female kits, there is a series of Sicilian vases with red figures representing scenes of gynoecium (end IV- beginning III s. av. J.C.). What is particularly interesting are the lead plates where were engraved some curses that the deceased had to send into the realm of the dead against someone.



A hospitality card, two squeezing right hands in ivory, document on the contrary the solemn promise of friendship and hospitality between a Punic, named Imulch Inibalos Cloros, and a Greek, Lyson, Diognetos's son.



A section of the hall is dedicated to Venus Callipyge, a statue representing the goddess Venus found in 2003 near Saint John the Baptist church. The statue is made of crystalline marble, 1.18 m high, acephalous which held the himation with the left hand. This statue was built in the 3rd century AC.



A major artifact is the portable terra cotta brazier, found off the south coast of Marsala, which was to be a sort of onboard "dish warmer".



A very important piece of the Hellenistic age is the funerary kiosk belonging to the Salinas private collection. The pavilion has the shape of a small temple, inside which is painted a funeral banquet scene, a caduc and the Punic symbols of the goddess Tanit, who was for the Carthaginians the goddess of fertility.

The Lilybeo Room ends with the Epigraph Room, where 7 Latin epigraphs are exhibited, and a showcase with pieces from the necropolis of Crispia Salvia.

The **second exhibition hall** of the Baglio Anselmi Archaeological Museum is the Punic Vessel Hall, which preserves the remains of the wreck of a Punic ship with a rich collection of transport amphorae, stem of anchor and remains of object of the shipboard cargo of an Arab wreck found off the Lido. The wreck of the Punic ship, representing an important testimony of the First Punic War, fought by the Romans against the Carthaginians for the conquest of Sicily, was accidentally found in 1969 in the maritime zone near Punta Scario, near the Stagnone of Marsala by Captain Diego Bonini and recovered through the underwater archaeological mission of archaeologist Honor Frost. It is an auxiliary ship, shipwrecked in the 3rd century BC during the Battle of the Egades. From this vessel was recovered the posterior part, the port side, timbers and much of the plating.



The vessel was 35 meter long and 4.80 meter wide. It was 2.5 meter high and weighed 120 tones. It could accommodate a crew of 68 rowers, 34 per side, operating 17 oars on each side. We understood that this was a Punic boat because the letters of the Punic alphabet are engraved on the plank. Shipboard debris were found with the vessel, including ropes, nails, ash wood, cannabis sativa twigs and numerous ballast stones.

In **the room of the Punic ship** are also exposed numerous transport amphorae found in the area of the sea in front of the city of Marsala. Amphorae were the most common containers in ancient times and were used to transport oil, wine, cereals, granum and many other food products from place to place. The word amphora derives from the Greek amphorae and means “to be handed on both sides”.



Amphorae have a different form, which allows us to know in which city they were produced. Many amphorae have a point at the end of their bodies, which allowed them to be loaded into the boats by placing them checkered in the ship's hold.

From April 2019 this room welcomes a new proof: “a Roman ship” found in 1999 in front of the Lido of Marausa, a village 15 kilometers from Marsala.



It contributes to deepening our knowledge on the intense trade relations between Sicily and Africa at the end of the Roman era, providing a framework for economic integration especially in the field of agricultural production.

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