

## ETERNITY THROUGH FIRE: DEATH IN THE PHOENICIAN PERIOD 625-525 BC

In the seventh century BC, the Phoenicians came to Puig de Vila and the surrounding area and founded a settlement in the bay of Ibiza that would later grow into a city. It was at this time that the lower part of the hill known as Puig des Molins began to be used as a necropolis, eventually occupying a surface area of nearly 10,000 square metres.

### FUNERARY RITES

The first step in the funerary ritual was washing the body to purify it. People of higher social standing were given special treatment: makeup was applied to highlight their facial features, their hair was combed, and finally the body was anointed with scented oil.

The corpse was then taken to the cemetery and cremated. Cremations were done individually on a spot near the tomb or, in some cases, inside the burial pit. Afterwards, the bones were gathered and sometimes carefully cleaned, and these remains were buried in a small hole in the ground, in an urn or in a proper grave. Before sealing the tomb, the mourners performed a series of prescribed rites such as libations (pouring out liquids in honour of the deceased), funeral banquets or placing lighted oil lamps beside the remains to illuminate the way to the afterlife.

The tumulus-like structures that may once have marked the grave sites have disappeared at Puig des Molins. The only surviving elements, which may be related to the worship of the dead, are the baetyli or memorial stones carved out of local sandstone. However, the fact that bits of broken baetyli or grave markers have been found in the earth filling in burial sites suggests that they may be symbols of the union between the deceased and the deities they represented and of the religious consecration of the grave itself.

### BURIALS

Burial offerings were not placed in the majority of Phoenician tombs at Puig des Molins; such pieces have only been found in just over 40% of interments. In contrast to other Phoenician cemeteries, where groups of objects are repeated in a significant number of cases, here there seems to be no common criteria for grave goods. Only a few graves have yielded the odd piece of jewellery and personal adornments (perhaps to protect the deceased) and, in some cases, pottery items—primarily globular ampullae which probably held oil used in the anointing ritual.

## POSSIBLE CENOTAPHS

At the necropolis of Puig des Molins, as at other ancient cemeteries on the Iberian Peninsula, archaeologists have uncovered sites similar to those used to inter cremated remains, where they found a few pieces of pottery or personal adornments but no bones. These sites, sometimes referred to as “fires”, are believed to be cenotaphs—in other words, graves or offerings for a dead person whose body is located elsewhere.



*Please put me back where you found me!*

## THE JOURNEY TO THE AFTERLIFE: PUNIC FUNERARY RITUALS 525-25 BC

**T**he Punic period on the island of Ibiza commenced around 525 BC. This culture attached extraordinary importance to the funerary world and all its rituals, from preparing the body and the funeral rites associated with burial to the acts of worship performed after death.

### PREPARING THE CORPSE

Punic society believed that the soul of the deceased (*rouah*) made a transcendental journey to the afterlife, and consequently the body had to be properly prepared by following a series of rites. The first step was to purify the corpse by washing it with lustral water. Next, the body hair was removed and the hair on the head was combed, or perhaps shaved. The hygienic process was completed by anointing the corpse with ointments and oils scented with resins or aromatic plants. The eyes, nose and mouth were almost certainly sealed with an object, although none of the thin sheets of gold or silver that have appeared in the necropolises at Carthage have ever been found in Ibiza.

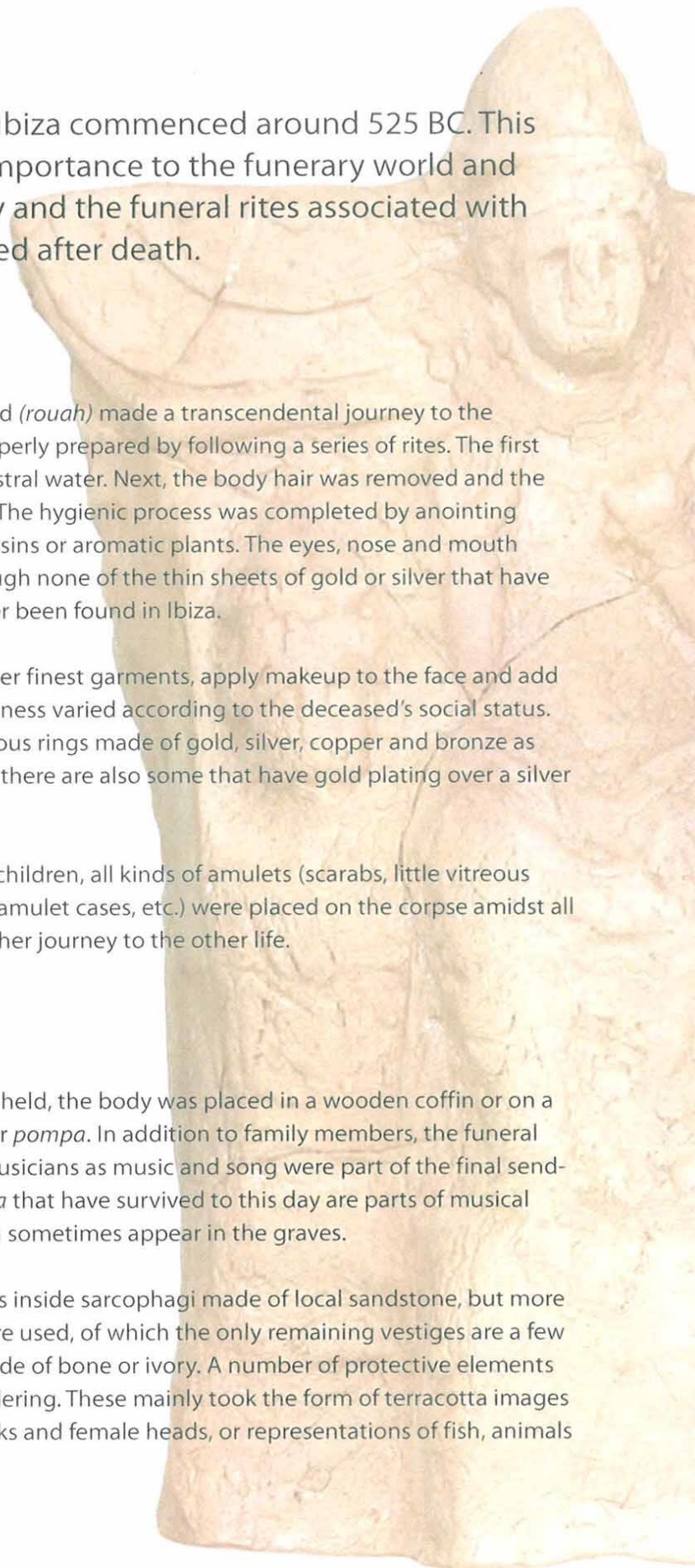
The next step was to enshroud the body in his or her finest garments, apply makeup to the face and add jewels and other personal adornments, whose richness varied according to the deceased's social status. The graves at Puig des Molins have yielded numerous rings made of gold, silver, copper and bronze as well as gold hoop and pendant earrings, although there are also some that have gold plating over a silver or bronze core.

Finally, and particularly in the case of women and children, all kinds of amulets (scarabs, little vitreous paste heads, tiny bells, images of different deities, amulet cases, etc.) were placed on the corpse amidst all the other jewels to protect the deceased on his or her journey to the other life.

### FUNERALS

After the deceased had been laid out and the vigil held, the body was placed in a wooden coffin or on a litter and carried to the cemetery in a procession or *pompa*. In addition to family members, the funeral procession included professional mourners and musicians as music and song were part of the final send-off. The only material remains related to the *pompa* that have survived to this day are parts of musical instruments—mainly castanets and cymbals—which sometimes appear in the graves.

Occasionally, the corpses were placed in the graves inside sarcophagi made of local sandstone, but more often than not wooden coffins or funeral beds were used, of which the only remaining vestiges are a few nails, hinges, handles and decorative elements made of bone or ivory. A number of protective elements were also placed inside the tomb to prevent plundering. These mainly took the form of terracotta images of goddesses (initially Astarte and later Tanit), masks and female heads, or representations of fish, animals and stylised plants.



Some of the elements that were deposited in the tombs allow us to identify the gender, age or profession of the people who were buried there. For example, signet rings, knives, strigils and double-headed axes are associated with male graves, whereas pieces related to textile activities are commonly found in female graves and toys in children's tombs. The professions that have been identified at Puig des Molins are as follows: potter, fisherman and fishmonger, peasant, sheepshearer, butcher, scribe and merchant.

## FUNERARY RITES

After the corpse had been placed in the grave, the burial proper began—namely, the presentation of the deceased to the deities. At this point offerings of food and ostrich egg shells were deposited in the grave alongside all the other goods, bloody and bloodless sacrifices were performed and the ritual libations were poured as a symbol of union between the dead and the telluric gods of the afterlife.

Another ritual that took place at this particular moment of the burial was the illumination rite, which consisted of lighting a lamp next to or on the corpse to illuminate the dark world of shadows and, by extension, the soul's way to the afterlife. Aromatic substances were also presented as offerings to the gods. The most common offering was incense, in grain or powder form, sometimes mixed with grains of cumin and balsam and myrrh. These were burned in special receptacles called censers, which for centuries were fashioned out of metal or clay and adopted very diverse forms, including heads of the goddess Tanit and little sandstone altars.

## ACTS OF WORSHIP AFTER DEATH

Ibiza has not yielded any of the funerary monuments that were used in the East and in North Africa to mark graves, or any funerary inscriptions such as those found at Carthage, but archaeologists have discovered objects used either to identify tombs or for post-mortem worship: baetyli, altars and stelae. The baetyli, which are shaped like truncated pyramids or parallelepipeds, are thought to be associated with ancestor worship, as symbols of the underworld. The altars are shaped like oversized perfume burners and are associated exclusively with burial interments. Finally, the stelae are memorials to the deceased as well as grave markers. There are very few at Puig des Molins and none of them bear any inscriptions. A piece of sandstone shaped like a krater and a pedestal base fragment with painted decoration suggest the existence of funerary monuments that have not survived.

## THE HOUR OF DEATH: PUNIC BURIALS 525-25 BC

**T**his room charts the evolution of Punic burials in Ibiza during the Early Period (525-425 BC), the Middle Period (425-300 BC), when the site achieved its greatest splendour, and the Late Period (300-25 BC).

### EARLY PUNIC PERIOD (525-425 BC)

In the second half of the sixth century BC, new people—this time, Punic—began to arrive at Ibiza and mingle with the existing Phoenician population. This led to changes in funerary rites, such as the introduction of burial interments, a greater quantity and variety of grave goods, and the appearance of a new type of grave: the hypogeum.

A hypogeum is an underground tomb carved out of the rock consisting of a rectangular entrance pit of varying depth (between two and three metres) and a square burial chamber. The opening that led from the shaft to the chamber was sealed with a large stone slab and the pit itself was entirely filled with earth.

Punic grave goods were much more copious and varied than their Phoenician counterparts. They typically included headdresses and personal ornaments (bead necklaces and other pieces of jewellery), objects of magical or religious significance (ostrich eggs, terracotta items, amulets, scarabs, etc.), and pottery containers for liquids (milk, wine and water) and solid substances (fish, fowl, small mammals, fruit and pulses), which were placed next to the body.

The hypogea at 10-12 Calle León date from this period and must have belonged to a group of new Punic settlers who were buried in this novel way near the Phoenician necropolis. Hypogea from the early fifth century BC have also been found in the northwest and southeast areas, confirming the expansion of the necropolis during this period. In addition to hypogea, rectangular pit graves carved out of the rock face and with steps at the sides to support the stone slab lids were also used for burial purposes and have yielded similarly copious and varied grave goods.

Cremation interments in pit graves and small holes in the ground persisted during this period but with variations in the funeral procedure and the introduction of some of the grave goods typically found in burial interments, which indicates that the autochthonous funerary customs gradually evolved towards Punic forms.

### MIDDLE PUNIC PERIOD (425-300 BC)

During the second half of the fifth century and the first quarter of the fourth century BC, the island population grew as new waves of Punic settlers arrived. Meanwhile, social changes led to a democratisation of access to the afterlife, which meant that every citizen now had the right to a grave.

As a direct consequence of this, the necropolis experienced considerable growth and gradually spread over the entire north slope of the Puig des Molins hill, eventually occupying a surface area of more than five hectares. The original cemetery was systematically occupied by new Punic graves, which were either superimposed on or broke up the old Phoenician tombs. It is estimated that more than 2,000 hypogea were created during this period alone.

Until the second half of the fourth century BC, two different types of burial interments continued to coexist: the collective hypogea (although chambers containing a single burial, or at least a single sarcophagus, have been found), and individual pit graves with or without a sarcophagus.

In the late fifth and early fourth centuries BC, cremation interments were much less frequent. They took the form of cremations *in situ* or secondary burials in which the ashes were placed in individual trench graves or in urns, either two-handled jars of the Eb. 64 type or "urns with ear-shaped handles", which have been found in abundance throughout the Iberian world.

### LATE PUNIC PERIOD (300-25 BC)

By the late fourth century BC hypogea were no longer being built and the existing ones were reused during this period as pantheons and ossuaries. They continued to contain terracotta pieces, vitreous paste vases and amulets, although to a lesser extent. By contrast, individual trench graves became increasingly common, sometimes carved out of the rock but more often than not dug in the ground. Burial remained the habitual form of interment, although several cremation interments from this period have been found. During the third century BC, fewer burial offerings were deposited in graves and usually consisted of no more than the odd pottery object associated with libation rites or the anointing of the corpse.

In the final quarter of the second century and the early first century BC, the progressive assimilation of the Roman state structure gave rise to a series of changes in Punic-Ebusitan society. Hypogea continued to be reused during this period, albeit to a much a lesser extent, but most corpses were simply enshrouded and placed in coffins. The most common burial interments were pit graves dug in flat areas at the foot of the hill. In the case of infant burials, amphorae were used as coffins or the corpses were placed in trench graves, accompanied by an object of personal adornment or a symbolic element for protection. Cremation was becoming popular again but remained a minority practice in comparison with inhumation burials. As in the previous period, the cremated bones were placed in pottery containers or funerary urns, which were then buried in holes in the ground or, occasionally, deposited in the chambers of existing hypogea.

In the second and first centuries BC, grave offerings were very sparse but they included: imported Campanian ware, Ebusitan ware coated with engobe and Hellenistic unguentaria. Bead necklaces, amulets and the odd coin are occasionally found, but many interments are characterised by the total absence of grave goods. While this is a clear indication that funerary rites were changing, it probably also points to the impoverishment of Ebusitan society.

## SIT TIBI TERRA LEVIS: DEATH IN ROMAN TIMES AND LATE ANTIQUITY 25 BC-700 AD

This room describes Roman funerary rituals in Ibiza from the beginning of the Early Imperial Period (25 BC) to the end of Late Antiquity (700 AD).

### FUNERARY RITES

According to Roman custom, when death was imminent relations and close friends would gather around the dying person's bed to comfort him. The nearest relative present would give him a last kiss to catch the soul, which the Romans believed left the body with a person's final breath, and close his eyes (*oculos premere*). Afterwards, everyone present called upon the dead by name (*conclamare*) and lamented him. The next step was to lift the body off the bed and place it on the ground (*deponere*), where they washed and anointed it with perfume. Various magical and religious objects were then placed beside the corpse to protect the deceased on his journey to the afterlife. Once the body had been placed in its tomb, the mourners held funeral banquets (*silicernium* or *refrigerium*) and poured libations of wine (*vinum repersum*) or water (*circumpotatio*).

Funerary epitaphs on stone slabs or blocks were essential for preserving the memory of the dead, although few have been discovered at Puig des Molins. Modern excavations have revealed that some disappeared during the early Middle Ages, when the largest pieces were broken up and reused in Hispano-Arabic constructions.

### EARLY IMPERIAL PERIOD (25 BC-150 AD)

Burial and cremation continued to coexist during this period. Burial offerings were Romanised and consisted almost exclusively of items imported from Italy (*terra sigillata* ware, thin-walled vases, pear-shaped unguentaria, initially made of clay and later of blown glass, etc.). Meanwhile, the frequent presence of one or more coins in graves to pay Charon for safe passage across the River Styx indicates that Roman beliefs about the underworld had begun to take hold.

Cremation was the most common funerary practice. The body was placed on a pyre inside a coffin. Relatives, clients and acquaintances of the deceased placed objects which he had found pleasing in life inside the coffin. They opened and closed his eyes one last time, gave him a farewell kiss, and a relative lit the funeral pyre, decorated with flowers and perfume unguentaria. When the flames had died out, the embers were extinguished with wine and the remaining bone fragments were gathered and stored in an urn which, in some cases, was placed inside one of the old Punic hypogea. However, the remains were more commonly buried in simple holes dug in the ground.

Punic hypogea were also reused for burial interments. In such cases, the entrance shaft was partially or completely excavated and the new remains placed inside, but the original burial chamber was rarely opened or disturbed.

## MIDDLE IMPERIAL PERIOD (150-300 AD)

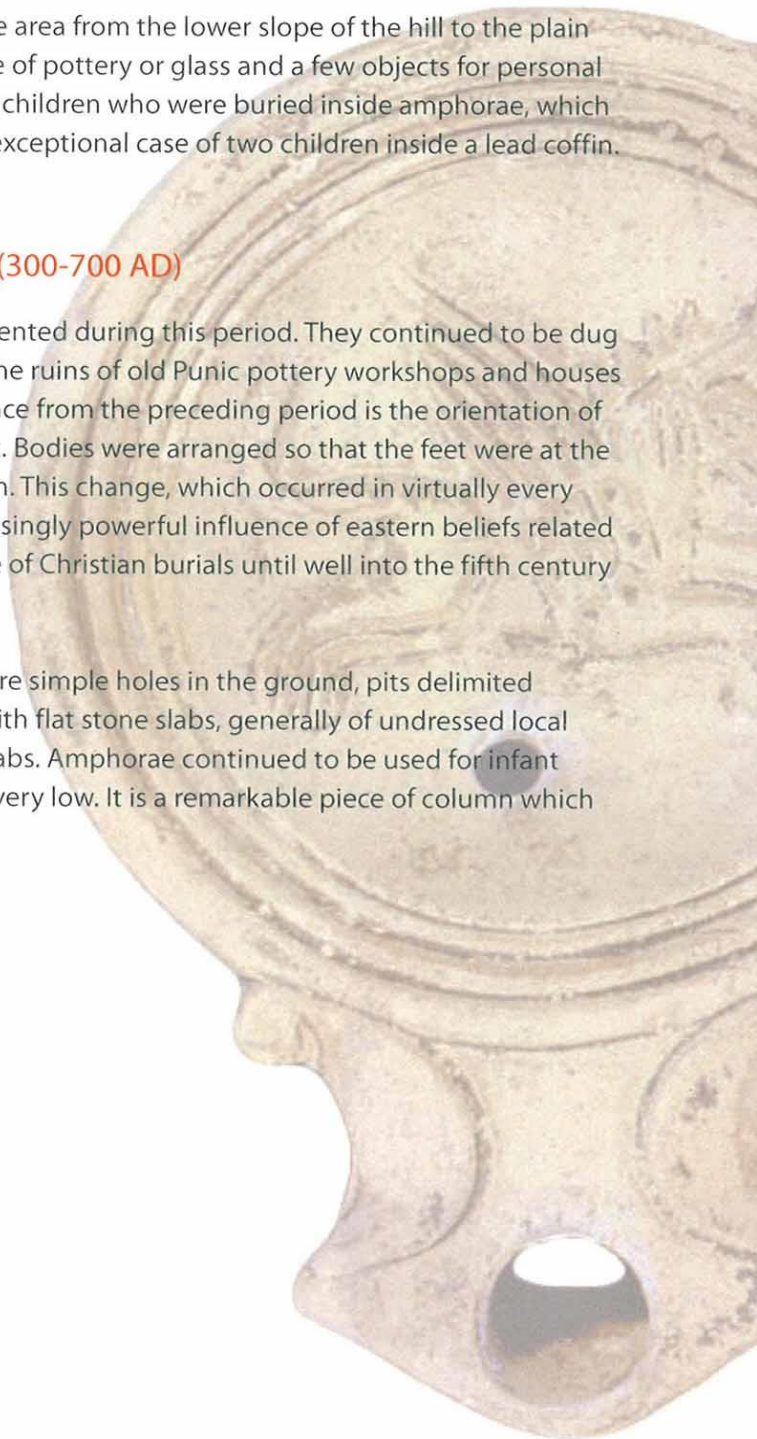
This stage was characterised by the exclusive practice of burial interments, as cremations ceased to be performed in most of the empire's territories from the mid-second century AD. We do not know exactly what triggered such a profound, widespread transformation of funerary practices, although nothing suggests that it was the product of a significant change in religious beliefs. The only type of burial site from this period found at Puig des Molins is the pit grave, whose sides were usually lined with stone slabs or thin walls of stone held together by clay or mortar. Three or more flat stone slabs were placed on top of the grave, and it was always aligned with the north-south axis.

The urban cemetery from this period only occupies the area from the lower slope of the hill to the plain below, and burial offerings are limited to a single piece of pottery or glass and a few objects for personal use or adornment. There are also a few cases of young children who were buried inside amphorae, which in turn were placed in a pit dug in the ground and an exceptional case of two children inside a lead coffin.

## LATE IMPERIAL PERIOD AND LATE ANTIQUITY (300-700 AD)

Pit grave burials are the only type of interment documented during this period. They continued to be dug in the northern part of the site, where graves overlay the ruins of old Punic pottery workshops and houses from the third century AD. The only significant difference from the preceding period is the orientation of the tombs, which were invariably positioned east-west. Bodies were arranged so that the feet were at the east end and the head at the west, facing the rising sun. This change, which occurred in virtually every corner of the Roman Empire, is attributed to the increasingly powerful influence of eastern beliefs related to sun worship on Roman society. There is no evidence of Christian burials until well into the fifth century AD.

The pit graves, dug slightly larger than the corpses, were simple holes in the ground, pits delimited by a row of stones, or more elaborate trenches lined with flat stone slabs, generally of undressed local limestone. The tombs were covered with several flat slabs. Amphorae continued to be used for infant burials, although the number of documented cases is very low. It is a remarkable piece of column which was partially emptied to turn it into a child's coffin.





## COLLECTING AND HERITAGE: THE SAINZ DE LA CUESTA COLLECTION

**R**afael Sainz de la Cuesta (Madrid, 1896-1961) first visited Ibiza in 1931 and thereafter spent most of his holidays on the island. A great archaeology enthusiast, he started his collection with gifts and pieces acquired from country folk, which unfortunately means that the provenance of many of the objects is unknown. However, the bulk of the collection corresponds to the lot that Sainz de la Cuesta purchased in 1945 from the heirs of Juan Román i Calbet, the director and sponsor of the Sociedad Arqueológica Ebusitana [Ebusitana Archaeological Society], whose pieces had been published in works such as *Los nombres e importancia arqueológica de las islas Pythiusas* [Names and Archaeological Importance of the Pityusa Islands] (1906) and *Antigüedades Ebusitanas* [Ebusitan Antiquities] (1913). Today, we can admire this collection—a compendium of all Punic-Roman archaeology on the island of Ibiza—thanks to the donation made to the state in 1965 by Sainz de la Cuesta's heirs with the express desire that it be exhibited in this city.

### SHRINES AND NECROPOLIS

The collection comprises material from three of the main shrines of Punic Ibiza—Es Culleram, Illa Plana and Puig d'en Valls—which confirm the existence on the island of organised religion with acts of worship governed by a group of priests. For example, the shrine at Es Culleram has yielded a large set of terracotta ex-votos in the form of female figurines—many of them broken—representing the goddess Tanit. From Illa Plana there are three incomplete recumbent figures that were found outside a votive pit (*bothros*) which also yielded 35 schematic figures with heavily pronounced sexual characteristics. Two of these figures are male and oval-shaped, while the other is female and has a bell-shaped body. The artefacts from Puig d'en Valls include torsos, heads and feet of figurines, two miniature ram's heads and two Arab oil lamps.

The collection also features a representative selection of typical Punic funerary objects, the majority from the necropolis at Puig des Molins, used in the different stages of the funerary ritual: preparing, enshrouding, and protecting the corpse for the journey to the afterlife. Jewellery and personal ornaments, again from the necropolis, are also well represented in the collection and include vitreous paste beads, semi-precious stones, rings and bracelets made of bronze and gold.

In his passion for collecting, Sainz de la Cuesta managed to assemble an extraordinarily diverse array of fine materials and the collection therefore boasts a considerable number of pieces made of bone, metal and glass. The bone objects include items related to textile activities (needles, spindles and weights), pieces used to decorate the wooden coffins, a fascinating set of tusks from the Suidae family, which were used for protection, and miscellaneous objects for personal adornment such as hair pins. Many of the metal pieces—most of them made of iron or bronze—are related to the dead person's craft and include ploughing instruments and fishing hooks. There are also pieces associated with the home, such



as scissors and knives, and sacred objects like *obeloi*—originally, bronze spits for roasting meat—which are frequently found as offerings in shrines but may also have had a monetary value.

The collection includes relatively few glass objects but some of them are particularly exquisite, such as various containers and a small spindle whorl for spinning. From the Early Roman period there is a selection of characteristic unguentaria, and the fragments of Roman mosaic glass are particularly interesting because they are the only such items that have been found on the island to date.

The numismatics section boasts equally interesting pieces from the Punic period, most of them struck at the local mint and bearing the image of the god Bes. Another important lot corresponds to the Roman period and includes several Antoninianus coins from the third century BC and numerous examples of Early Roman bronzes. There are also a few *doblers*, *sous* and *cinquenas* minted by the University of Ibiza between the reigns of Charles I and Philip VII.

Objects associated with games make up another fascinating section of the collection. There is only one example of children's toys: a Punic doll that must have had articulated arms. However, there are numerous vitreous paste *calculi*—tokens that were moved around a board according to a set of rules which determined whether the player won or lost the game in question. Another highlight of the collection is a very rare incomplete bone die from the Roman period. The vitreous paste *astragali* on display were also used for playing games but, like the bone variety, sometimes for divination purposes as well.

The sculpture section is principally made up of terracotta figures from the Punic period, with characteristic pieces like the one of Tanit on her throne. A splendid head of Bacchus, which was found at Can Fita and probably formed part of the villa's decorative repertoire, is a fine example of Roman sculpture.

Finally, the collection contains a large and varied assortment of pottery objects. The Punic period is represented by locally-made pieces, such as cooking pots and tableware with their characteristic engobe coating, as well imported Greek and Hellenistic pieces. The Roman period is superbly represented by "thin-walled" vases and terra sigillata ware. Rounding out the section are two important medieval pieces: an oil lamp from Al-Andalus, the period of Islamic domination, and a 15th-century jug or decanter.