

Italian island cultures (Sicily and Sardinia) as models

Hussein Muhammad Radhi Jabr¹, Prof. Dr. Maytham Abdel Kazem Joud²

College of Arts, University of Baghdad , Baghdad, Iraq

Abstract

Civilization is the opposite of barbarism and civilization has a dual meaning, it indicates both moral and material values, and researchers have separated the words civilization and culture. The first represents the dignity of spiritual concerns, and the other represents material affairs. Civilization has also been interpreted as a practical and technical body of knowledge, which is a series of ways of dealing with nature. Culture, in contrast, is a set of principles, standards, values, and ideals. Islands provide disparities in cultural development, settlement patterns, and exploitation of resources found on the Italian mainland. During prehistoric times, these islands were characterized by cultural, social, and economic diversity. These cultures have spread in both Sicily and Sardinia and have been characterized by diversity and have represented each society's cultural components.

Keywords

Italian island, Historical analysis, Civilization.

Introduction

The English word "civilization", which means "civilization", comes from the French word "civilisé" (civilized) and from the Latin word "civilis" (civilization), which is related to "civis" (citizen). Civilization is the opposite of barbarism and civilization has a dual meaning, it indicates both moral and material values, and researchers have separated the words "civilization and culture". The first represented the dignity of spiritual concerns, and the other represented material affairs. Civilization was interpreted as nothing more than a practical and technical mass of knowledge, a series of ways of dealing with nature. Culture, by contrast, is a set of principles, standards, values, and ideals. Anthropologists explain that the word culture is used to describe primitive societies, while civilization is used to describe modern societies. Civilization is complex because it is dualistic, that is, it constantly changes over time, until it perishes. Moreover, civilization is part of the social sciences, that is, it contains subjective elements, which are usually the most important elements of culture. Accordingly, civilization represents everything that people think or feel that affects what exists, changing the entire being in the process. Third, many aspects of civilization are continuous, existing in such fine gradations and varying degrees of abstraction that the divisions we make in them, in the course of our analysis, and the words we use are symbols to refer to them.

Culture

The term culture is used to describe the way people live and their relationship with each other. Civilizations usually include a set of complex cultures and consist of all physical objects of mankind, such as housing, tools, clothing, work patterns, thought, and deep-rooted social relationships, as well as among people and things. Therefore, culture is a very precise and complex concept that represents the social heritage that is transmitted from one generation to another. It is a complex mixture of personalities, material objects, behavior patterns, subtle emotional relationships, intellectual ideas accepted intellectual assumptions, and habitual individual actions. It is constantly changing, and its main subject constitutes the study of all social sciences. Culture must be adaptable because it is capable of change and is continuous, and the causes of this social change are internal and external. Culture also includes the geographical environment such as terrain and climate. It is also clear that as geographical conditions change, cultures must also change. Culture must adapt to changing biological conditions but it is clear that civilization is something more complex than crystallization. The word is "complex." Civilization is complex, first and foremost, because it is dual, that is, it constantly changes with time, until it perishes. Moreover, civilization is part of the social sciences, i.e. it contains subjective elements, which are usually the most important elements of culture.

Italian islands:

The islands provide differences in cultural development, settlement patterns, and exploitation of resources found on the Italian mainland. During prehistoric times, these islands are characterized by cultural, social, and economic diversity. These islands also had a clear impact on Italian cultural developments. This island represented a group of islands characterized by environmental diversity and population change, which were considered major sites for cultural developments in ancient Italy.

First: The island of Sicily between the demographic and the cultural variable:

This island was distinguished by its important strategic location, as it was located between the continents of Europe and Africa, and it was considered a cultural bridge transporting external influences from the ancient Near East towards the regions of ancient Italy. Opinions differed about the presence of human settlement on the island of Sicily, as some sources indicated that the oldest presence of humans on this island dates back to the Upper Paleolithic era, and they entered through the Strait of Messina. Another indication was that the beginnings of human settlement on this island date back to the Middle Paleolithic Age. However, it seems that human arrival was delayed on the island of Sicily, and what raises this hypothesis is the lack of human archaeological activity during the ancient and middle periods of the Neolithic Age. The reason for this is that man

[2]

did not cross from the regions of Messinia towards Sicily for several climatic reasons, including freezing and archaeological exploration, which identified for us many cultural variables for the Upper Paleolithic period, as this period was characterized by the abundance of human presence due to improved environmental and climatic conditions, especially the modern human period, which was in Sicily 30,000 years ago BC. A large group of tools and archaeological finds made of flint stone were found, as well as six burials chronologically on the island of Sicily. The sixth millennium witnessed significant cultural and cultural development through the dependence of Sicily's population groups on agriculture and the domestication of animals, as well as archaeological material developments through the use of pottery, man moved from shelters and caves to the principle of agricultural settlement.

The following cultures have emerged in the regions of Sicily, including:

Stentinello Culture (5000-4500 BC):

It is the oldest known Neolithic culture in Sicily. It was named after the city of that name near Syracuse. It is one of the cultures of the Neolithic era, which dates back to the fifth millennium BC and was founded by one of the immigrants who came to the island coming from the Strait of Messina. These immigrants brought their civilizational capabilities that were superior to the civilization of peoples before the Neolithic Age. These new immigrants did not depend on hunting and gathering wild fruits for their livelihood. Rather, they knew how to produce their food and grow and raise animals. They crossed the seas with their small boats, traded with distant peoples, exchanged their products, and learned new ideas from them. They did not live in caves, but rather built huts for themselves in fortified villages, they made pottery which reflects their artistic sense, in addition to flint, and they used obsidian. Researchers also believe that this culture was introduced from east to west by sea. It moved by coastal navigation linking one island with another in the same archipelago, and its crossing of the Adriatic Sea was done directly through the Otranto Channel or the islands of Pelagosa, Pianosa, Tremiti, and the Gargano Peninsula (Gargano), and later spread along the coast of Puglia until it reached the northern Adriatic Sea and the Aeolian Islands. Stentinello pottery is characterized by two types of pottery. The first type is represented by rough vessels with open shapes (i.e. with the largest diameter at the mouth), and dishes include cups. The decoration was often rough, made with fingernails or with various punches. The second type of pottery is made of finer, smoother, and more polished vessels, which are closed in shape (i.e. with a narrower diameter at the mouth), such as a bowl, and usually have a convex base. As for the vases, they are distinguished by their more sober decoration, limited to one or two close lines of decoration, in addition to the undecorated vases. As for the flint industry, it was limited to regular blades of large sizes, and they traded in obsidian imported from Lipari.

Catignano cultures

This culture is named after Catignano City, dating back between 6455-5865 BC. It extends along the Adriatic Sea, and because of its distinguished location in the middle of the island of Sicily, it is considered a forum for communication between the northern and southern regions. The most important thing that distinguished this culture was the development in the manufacture of pottery, ceramic statues, and conical vessels, in addition to vases with handles, as well as the addition of colors to pottery, including red and gray.

Chapter two

Cultural Developments of Sardinia:

Sardinia is one of the oldest Italian islands. It witnessed the first settlement of living organisms since the Lower Paleolithic era, as these traces were discovered in Angelona, Marmilla, and Logudoro. Another group also arrived in Sardinia at the end of the Upper Paleolithic and settled in the Lanaittu Valley. About 12,000 BC. The last migrations also arrived in the Mesolithic Age and settled in the Su Coloru di Laerru cave, but the real settlement began in the Neolithic Age in Sardinia (10,000-6,000 BC). The early Neolithic period (6000-4700 BC) was characterized by the spread of heart-shaped pottery with rims that resembled the heart, from which it was given this name. In the Middle Neolithic Age (4700-4100 BC), a culture called Bonuighinu flourished. It was characterized by polished pottery and complex decorations, as well as the first religious cultural developments, where the gods began to appear and influence the population societies, where they worshiped the mother god (Dea Madre), the god of fertility, and it is a model for

[3]

ancient agricultural societies in the Neolithic era in the Mediterranean. They were represented in small statues made of rock stone, alabaster, marble, and clay . The hypotheses have been proven that different species inhabited Sardinia during prehistoric times, including Euproctus, which is one of the human species that inhabited Sardinia before the main European plate separated. The second genus is known as Hydromantes, which is one of the human races that was widespread in the European continent. The third genus is known as Discoglossur Otth, which is one of the human families that originated in Laurasia. The fourth type is called Bufo Laurenti, which is one of the human impurities spread throughout Europe. The fifth race is known as Hyla Laurenti, which is of African origin and arrived in Sardinia via a bridge between Tuscany and the Elba Islands. As for the sixth race, Emys, it is one of the races that settled in the northern Maghreb , where the culture of stoves appeared, which were used to burn corpses, and this is what archaeological excavations have shown and the bones and skulls that have been provided to us, especially in the Corbedo Cave . Hypotheses have confirmed that the presence of humans in Sardinia dates back to about 20,000 BC. The remains of endemic animals were also discovered, including Prolagus Sardus. It is a type of rodent, and another type of animal, Megaceros Cazioti, from the deer family, has also been found.

Sardinia, Corsica, and the islands of the Tuscan Archipelago in the Italian Peninsula were one land mass in previous periods, and due to tectonic movements, they were divided in the period extending from the sixth millennium to the third millennium. The human and cultural invasion began heading towards Sardinia from the regions of the western Mediterranean. These peoples carried all their cultural components to Sardinia, which were represented by economic means, agriculture, and fishing, in addition to their social and cultural customs . It is believed that the first settlers to inhabit Sardinia came from the Italian mainland or Africa, and a wave also came from the Iberian Peninsula via the Balearic Islands. We can also point out that the most important feature of Sardinia is the availability of obsidian (which is used in the manufacture of weapons and tools). This stone enjoyed a great place in prehistoric times, which was the main reason behind the arrival of those human waves to search for natural resources , or that the man of the Lower Paleolithic period arrived in Sardinia from Africa via Sicily and the Italian peninsula .

Mining methods developed, as well as the introduction of the flint trade and the use of volcanic glass as a precious mineral resource for its flexibility in the manufacture of tools. Among the cultural variables that entered Sardinia was an important economic variable represented by the development of fishing methods and the raising of pigs, sheep, and goats, the influence of which continued until the Middle Neolithic Age . Archaeological tools have identified the most prominent variable in the production of pottery and vases in terms of precision in craftsmanship and the fact that these industries contain handles or decorated surfaces in multiple shapes. At least 34 sites of these cultural variants have been found, most of which are shelters, caves, houses, and tombs that were found near the sea (on the Santo Stefano Islands) . This stage was also characterized by ceramics that researchers called "cardiale." This species has also spread to other regions in the central, northern, and western Mediterranean, Corsica, and Sicily. The shapes of the vases are characterized by being spherical with a distinctive neck, pear-shaped, or oval-shaped, and always with a convex bottom with three-, four-, or single-handles depending on the region.

The second stage of cultural development began on the island of Sardinia, which was related to the manufacture of (undecorated) pottery tools, where colors were used, including red, as well as handles, which consequently led to a clear maturity in their manufacture. Then a third phase of pottery development began, in which the decorative elements ended with the use of the green color in those industries. The material found indicates that in this period Sardinia had close relations with other Neolithic societies in the Mediterranean . As for agriculture, it appeared in the east of the island of Sardinia, then it was considered one of the variants that moved to Italy by sea, as well as to the island of Sicily. It is most likely that agriculture reached Sardinia through the regions of northern Italy.

The island has witnessed the emergence of various cultures throughout antiquity, including: Bonu Ighinu culture (4000-3400 BC):

It is a local culture that appeared in the Mara region, in the province of Sassari. This culture is characterized by good living conditions, which was reflected in the production of ceramics made with a kind of precision and spherical or hemispherical shapes with smooth, colored surfaces in which the color brown was used. The pots and walls were also decorated with drawings and

[4]

symbols, which were in the shape of stars, horns, human faces, and animal handles . One of the cultural variables is the development in the manufacture of vessels with handles, made of obsidian, which is widespread inside and outside the island , which led to the growth of settlements in this region. Among the discoveries were burial tombs , known as (hypogea). These tombs are hollows in underground rocks that form what resemble rectangular rooms and are 2.50 meters long. These graves are often single, and the deceased is buried in a fetal, squatting position. He was painted with a red ocher, which is a symbol of an alternative to blood, and this is one of the indications of their belief in life after death. Oven-shaped burials were also found to bury bodies and were buried with dead female statues made of limestone, alabaster, or bone . This indicates the extent to which religious thought has evolved, its rituality, and its use, with the multiplicity of special models of the earth's fertility or mother God in the ancient regions of Sardinia.

San Ciriaco Culture (4400-4000 BC)

This culture is considered one of the continuous cultures, as it is considered part of the Ozieri culture. Its name comes from the Nuragic village of San Ciriaco in the Terralba region of the Oristano Province. San Ciriaco is located 4 kilometers from Monte Arce, perhaps indicating that these inhabitants were dedicated to the extraction of obsidian (a crystal of volcanic origin) . This culture has archaeological remains and pottery with a long neck and conical cups. The economy of this period was based on agriculture, grain cultivation, livestock raising, fishing, and shellfish collecting. These residents preferred to live near the coasts , and many of the statues are Athonite figures with prominent buttocks and breasts, there is a noticeable development in the process of making statues . As for the cult of the dead, near the village of Cuccuru s' Arrius, small artificial funeral caves were found engraved in sandstone with the deceased and beside them found funeral equipment. The cemetery of this village consists of 19 tombs and is the oldest in Sardinia. It consists of hypo gene tombs with a single chamber and a well. The deceased was buried in a grave in a contracted position, and in two graves in the well two skeletal remains were found for each grave which clearly shows the belief in a second life after death even in this culture. In hypogean tombs, the deceased is always accompanied by a female statue and in some cases two. Among the most important finds found in funerary caves, in the San Ciriaco culture, are the beautiful “volumetric idols”, that is, small statues of a female figure in the form of the Mother Goddess. A group of graves were found in which burials were carried out individually, using caves and in special burial areas that were usually far from the areas where the communities were located.

Culture of San Michele (3200-2850 BC)

This culture was named after the area in which it appeared, which is San Michele Cave in the northern regions of Sardinia . It was also considered one of the continuous cultures that branched out from the previous culture of Osiris. One of the advantages of this culture is that it spread throughout the island, as it shared many cultural commonalities with other cultures, including the worship of the mother goddess, where 100 female statues were found as well as the similarity in pottery and burial methods, the most prominent cultural heritage of this culture is its connection with the eastern Mediterranean and the island of Malta. This is what was made clear by the archaeological discoveries, represented by artifacts, statues, and vases. Researchers decided to divide this culture into three stages. Each of the aforementioned stages differs with a noticeable development in terms of decoration and pottery. The third phase witnessed a remarkable development in the pottery industries and industrial tools as a result of the cultural mixing between the regions of the Mediterranean and the island of Malta with the culture of San Michele . Historical studies have confirmed that this culture had trade connections with the Aegean regions, through the remarkable consistency of the statues and their manufacturing materials through their clay artifacts . One of the features of this culture in its delayed periods is that it witnessed clear precision in the manufacture, decoration, and coloring of pottery vessels, with the use of geometric designs and lines that were not common before. Besides, the quality of stone tombs carved into the rocks with multiple burial chambers, which were in the form of single tombs . Archaeological sources have provided us with information about the settlements that were established within this culture, which were in the form of circular huts with stone foundations and wooden walls . This culture was considered one of the authentic Italian cultures, and its influence spread at various levels in most parts of ancient Italy and Europe in general.

Arzachena Cultures

It is one of the cultures of the northeastern regions of Sardinia. Its name is derived from the city in which it spread, which is the city of Arzacena. This culture is distinguished by its use of grazing resources in its economic life and is characterized by several variables. The first variable is the use of curvy geometric shapes and circular sections in the manufacture of pottery vessels, as well as the multiplicity of burial methods, as circular graves were found with differences in burial methods within the community. Most of them were individual graves for those who assumed the position of leadership, and mass graves for the common people were known as (Do Mus de Jamas).

Resources

braudel, fernand, a history of civilizations, translated by richard mayne, allen lane the penguin press, 1993, pp. 5-7.

quigley , carroll , the evolution of civilizations an introduction to historical analysis , thomas j. bata library trent university peterborough, ontario , liberty fund indianapolis , 1979 , p. 85.

melko, matthew, the nature of civilizations, boston porter sargent, 1969, p. 8.

malone, caroline, the italian neolithic: a synthesis of research , journal of world prehistory, vol. 17, no. 3, september 2003 , pp. 242.

m, fabiola, baro rea & maría lazarich gonzález, el neolítico en sicilia, universidad de cádiz, 2015, p. 29.

brea, luigi bernabò, sicily before the greeks, published in the united states of america in 1957 by frederick a. praeger, inc., publishers, 150 east 52nd street, new york 22, n.y., new york frederick a. praeger, 1817, pp.23.

holloway, r. ross, the archaeology of ancient sicily, london and new york, 1991, pp. 2-7.

the arrival of cultural developments in sicily came from east to west by sea, most likely by sea, but knowledge of navigation was rudimentary and it was impossible to cross vast expanses of sea. their crossing was through coastal navigation from one island to another. as for crossing the adriatic sea, they crossed it through the otranto channel or the pelagosia islands. for details, see: l. bernabo brea, sicily before the greeks, london: thames and hudson, 1957, p. 45.

these immigrants brought the oldest agriculture to the coasts of the balkans, italy, france, spain and north africa. they came from the coastal regions of northern syria and southern anatolia, areas where this type of culture exists due to its richness and spread. daniel, glyn, ancient peoples and places sicily, london, p. 42.

serradimigni, marco, marta colombo, l'analisi tecno-tipologica dei nuclei in selcecome indicatore di cambiamento culturale. l'esempio del villaggio neolitico di catignano - area d (pescara), atti soc. tosc. sci. nat, mem, serie a, 121 (2014), p.99.

relatore: radi , giovanna , correlatore: lucia angeli , il candidato: dan socaciu , il passaggio dal neolitico all'età del rame nell'italia centro-adriatica , corso di laureamagistralein archeologia , università di pisa , 2014 , p.5.

[6]

colombo, marta, e carlo tozzi, la cultura di catignano nel panorama della ceramica dipinta neolitica italiana: contatti con le culture della sponda adriatica orientale, published by archaeopress, 2013, p.249

l'asina , mario , bruno ladu , sassari nella preistoria , dal neolitico all'età nuragica , questa pubblicazione è stata resa possibile grazie al contributo del comune di sassari e della presidenza del consiglio provinciale di sassari , 2011 , pp.21-22

see: lanza, benedetto, ipotesi sulle origini del popolamento erpetologico della sardegna , museo zoologico «la specola» e istituto di anatomia comparata, biologia generale e genetica dell'università di firenze , 1983 , pp.725-735.

corpedo: in the dorgales region (located on the east coast of the island). alberto, moravetti, la preistoria: dal paleolitico all'età nuragica. in: brigaglia, manlio; mastino, attilio; ortu, gian giacomo (a cura di). storia della sardegna. 1: dalla preistoria all'età bizantina. roma; bari, editori laterza , 2002 , p. 10.

simonis, damien, sardinia, footscray, vic. ; oakland, ca: lonely planet, 2003, p.11.

contu , ercole , riccardo cicilloni , la preistoria della sardegna e il mediterraneo (con particolare riguardo alla sicilia) , deputazione di storia patria per la sardegna , archivio storico sardo , i.g.e.s. – quartu s. elena , cagliari , 2015 , p.12.

cardillo , maria cristina , l'area marina protetta e la riserva naturale statale delle isole di ventotene e santo stefano tra salvaguardia ambientale e sostenibilità turistica , università degli studi di cassino e del lazio meridionale, dipartimento di lettere e filosofia mariacristina.cardillo@unicas , pp.14-15.

santo stefano island is part of the ponziano archipelago, with an area of about 2 square kilometers. these small islands of volcanic origin in the tyrrhenian sea are rich in natural resources and a temperate environment. cardillo, maria cristina, p.29.

(printed decoration with heart seashells). contu, ercole, riccardo cicilloni, op. p.16

it was interested in the obsidian trade (in addition to corsica, tuscan and sicily, as well as provence and catalonia). cardillo, maria cristina, p. 14- 15

giuseppa, tanda, le culture preistoriche. in: la provincia di sassari: ambiente, storia, civiltà, sassari, amministrazione provinciale, assessorato alla cultura e pubblica istruzione (cinisello b., stampa edizioni amilcare pizzi, 1989), p.53.

s. balmuth, miriam, archaeology in sardinia, american journal of archaeology, vol. 96, no. 4, 1992, pp. 671.

secci, raimondo, note sull'architettura in terra cruda in sardegna: dalle origini alle età punica e romana, raimondo secci università di bologna, dipartimento di beni culturali, 2022, p.50

ian shaw, robert jameson , a dictionary of archaeology , copyright blackwell publishers ltd 1999 , p.452

[7]

demartis, giovanni maria, la necropoli di anghelu ruju, carlo delfino editore, via rolando 11/a, sassari, 1986, pp.13-14.

cicilloni , riccardo , il megalitismo preistorico nelle isole del mediterraneo occidentale tra gli studi di giovanni lilliu e le nuove ricerche , quaderni di layers 1, le tracce del passato e l'impronta del presente scritti in memoria di giovanni lilliu , università degli studi di cagliari , 2018 , p . 121