



Necropolis of Is Pirixeddus

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ Hypogean chamber tomb with a dromos entrance

The most common type of tomb in the Sulci necropolis is the *dròmos*, with the particular feature of the entrance to the hypogeum chamber dug in such a way that it had steps and a landing (fig. 1), the size of which helps to date the tombs: the tombs from end of 6th-beginning of 5th century B.C. have a dromos that can be wider than a metre and a half, while the ones dated to mid 5th century B.C. have a width that decreases considerably and rarely exceeds one metre. The landing is generally 2-3 square metres.



Fig. 1 - typical entrance to a tomb with an entrance corridor: Tomb Steri 2, Sant'Antioco (from MUSCUSO 2010, p. 2039, fig. 6).

The corridor and the landing lead to the the entrance to the burial chamber that, when untouched, has the closure that is usually a slab made while digging the tomb (see fig. 1), which was sealed with fresh clay. The tomb could be closed with stones or clay bricks dried in the sun. The burial chamber was always an irregular square shape and while the older tombs had a single cell of 4x5 metres, with no further divisions and an entrance on the short side, the more recent ones normally had a wall with the end facing the entrance often painted with geometric patterns or figures, simple or complex, as in the case of high-relief work of whole bodies, at natural size in an Egyptian style, portraying the god Baal Addir, the lord of life beyond the tomb (tomb 7). The burial chambers never follow a precise standard and have several types of adaptation to the rock they were dug in and some of them also have ground burials in them, as in the case of the Tomba Steri (fig. 2).



Fig. 2 - Interior of Tomb Steri 2 with evidence of two pit graves (in MUSCUSO, POMPIANU 2010, p. 2040, fig. 7).

The walls of the rooms often had niches, within which some vases belonging to the grave goods were placed. In some cases, they were painted (directly onto the rock) as in the case of the burial chamber stated above, tomb 8 (fig. 3), where plain red band run horizontally

around the walls, framing eight niches, two on each wall and a false door. The sides and back of the central pillar are also painted with red bands (figs. 4-5).



Fig. 3 - Detail of the painted decoration on the right side of underground grave no. 7 and along the bottom wall (from BERNARDINI 2007, p. 156, fig. 9).



Fig. 4 - Detail of the false door of tomb 7 (from BERNARDINI 2007, p. 157, fig. 10).



■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Cinzia Olianas

■ Bibliographic abbreviations

- BARTOLONI 1989 P. BARTOLONI, *Sulcis*, Roma 1989.
- BARTOLONI 2007 P. BARTOLONI, *Il museo archeologico comunale "F. Barreca" di Sant'Antioco*, Sassari 2007.
- BERNARDINI 2007 P. BERNARDINI, *Memorie d'Egitto. Un sepolcro punico da Sulky*, in G. M. DELLA FINA (a cura di), *Etruschi, Greci, Fenici e Cartaginesi nel Mediterraneo Centrale. Atti del XIV Congresso Internazionale di studi sulla storia e l'archeologia dell'Etruria*, (Annali della fondazione per il Museo "Claudio Faina", XIV), Orvieto 2007, pp. 137-60.
- MUSCUSO, POMPIANU 2010 S. MUSCUSO, E. POMPIANU, *Ipogei punicì tra età punica e romana: la Tomba Steri 2*, in M. MILANESE, P. RUGGERI, C. VISMARA (a cura di), *Atti del XVIII Convegno Africa Romana (Olbia, 11-14 dicembre 2008)*, Roma 2010, pp. 2032-2059.



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