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REGIONE AUTÓNOMA DE SARDIGNA
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Nuraghic complex of S'Arcu 'e Is Forros

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ The worship of water: the Sa Carcaredda Nuragic complex

In Riu e Inu, at 1000 metres above sea level and a few kilometres from the site of Arcu'e Is Forros, we find the remains of a Nuragic settlement, including a *megaron* temple and five giants' tombs.

The choice of location was strategic: a crossroads for transhumance that helped social relations, trade and therefore frequentation of the sacred place by pilgrims. Here, the digs lead by Maria Ausilia Fadda at the beginning of the 1990s brought to light a sacred building built in the Recent Bronze Age, in irregular blocks of local granite, damaged by previous clandestine work.

As a layout, the sacred building was presumably connected with the worship of water, and had a number of rooms arranged longitudinally: a double vestibule *in antis*, with side benches, covered with a dual sloping roof and stone slabs, and a second room with a *tholos* roof, both with granite slabs (fig. 1).

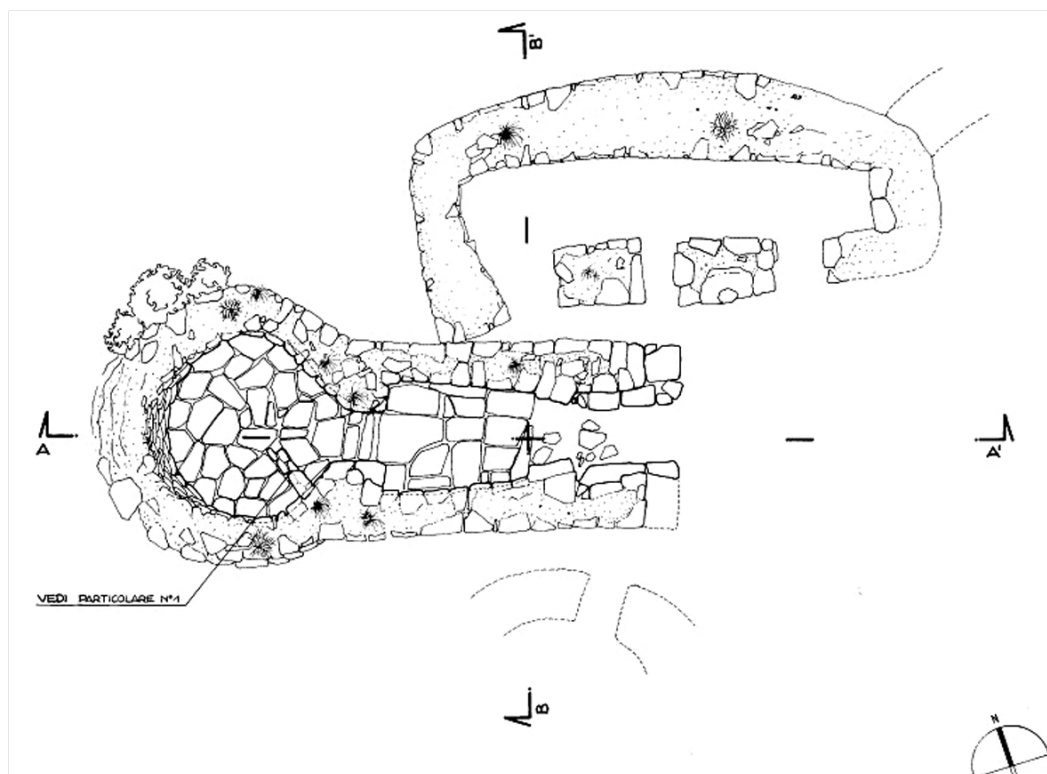


Fig. 1 - Map of the temple of Sa Carcaredda (from FADDA 1995, p. 118, fig. 4.1).

In a specific side pseudo-rectangular storeroom, votive offers were hoarded; ox-hide ingot and lumps were found together with some pottery (e.g. urns) and bronze items. Inside the circular cell, the ritual fireplace, bordered by a wall made from small blocks of limestone covered in a layer of clay, and a votive altar for offers in the shape of a Nuragic tower, on the base, also made with limestone blocks joined with molten lead in the T-shaped incisions on the inside, show the sacred character of the temple (fig. 2).



Fig. 2 - Reconstruction of votive store at the temple of Sa Carcaredda (from <http://www.museoarcheologiconuoro.beniculturali.it/index.php?it/23/i-reperti/27/diorama-di-sa-carcaredda>).

Several ritual items were found from the dig of the Nuragic complex, such as bronze buttons with animal protomes on top, stiletto and votive quivers, bronze figures (figures of

offerers and animals), daggers, lance tips, axes, bangles and parts of necklaces in amber and rock crystal, datable between the 12th and 7th century B.C. (fig. 3).



Fig. 3 - Statuina zoomorfa a forma di cinghiale proveniente dal deposito votivo di Sa Carcaredda (da <http://www.museoarcheologiconuoro.beniculturali.it/imagePreview.php?id=98>).

The treasure found in the area opposite the temple vestibule proves the continuity of worship and frequentation of the site in the Historical Age. The treasure found includes bronze coins from the Late Empire (3-4th century A.D.) together with votive swords, daggers bronze rings and clips in lead from the Nuragic Age, that would support the hypothesis of reuse of the building as a hiding place for the treasure, after abandonment as a place of worship.

■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Emanuela Atzeni





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