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REPUBBLICA ITALIANA



REGIONE AUTONOMA DE SARDIGNA
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

Necropolis of Sant'Andrea Priu

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ Funeral rituals in the pre-Nuragic Age

Reconstruction of funeral rituals in prehistoric Sardinia was managed using documentation of the contexts where items were found during the dig of a large number of *domus de janas* and archaeological findings.

In spite of the difficulties in finding hypogeums that have not been tampered with, given the way they were used for many centuries up until the High Middle Ages also caused the disorder of human remains, it has been determined that there was both a primary collective burial with the deceased lying on one side and curled up, and secondary burial.

The deceased were buried with items that included different pottery items, decorated or plain, female statues in stones, hunting or defence items, and personal ornaments.

The concept of a life after earth is indicated by the reproduction of symbolic and architectural elements on the inside of the *domus de janas* rooms, (decorated ceilings, pillars, columns, lesenes, bases, relief strips, fireplaces) to imitate structures that characterise dwellings (fig. 1, 2, 3).



Fig. 1 - Detail of the ceiling that characterises the *domus de janas* VIII at S. Andrea Priu, known as the "Tomba a camera" (photo by Unicity S.p.A.).



Fig. 2 - Bonorva, Sant'Andrea Priu necropolis, ritual fireplace in *domus*XIII
(From http://www.sardegnaicultura.it/immagini/7_88_20070119094226.jpg).



Fig. 3 - Bonorva, Sa Pala Larga necropolis
(From <http://www.sardegnaigitalibrary.it/index.php?xsl=626&id=29469>).

The bull's protome, a symbol of life and creator of power and therefore protector of the deceased and principle of regeneration, is often found.

Elements related to ritual functions, with the use of liquids, are hollows, bowls or channels.

Paintings with ochre, a pigment of intense symbolic value linked to the regeneration of the deceased and the colour of blood, can still be found on the walls of several hypogeums.



■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Maria Grazia Arru and Dr. Emanuela Atzeni

■ Bibliography

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La Sardegna cresce con l'Europa



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