



Megalithic circles of Li Muri

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ Apple-shaped spheroids (Li Muri)

During the excavation of the circle tombs of the necropolis of Li Muri of Arzachena, apple-shaped spheroids impregnated with red ochre were found together with other grave goods belonging to the deceased. The circle tomb no. 4 contained five of them, while tombs 1 and 2 contained one each. This data could be associated with the number of people buried in each stone cista. They have a spheroidal shape, a smooth surface and a cylindrical hole. In the absence of reliable data concerning their true purpose, they are currently interpreted as artefacts symbolising power, whose central hole suggests a possible connection between a part made of perishable material with a rotating movement (figs. 1, 2, 3, 4).



Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4 - Arzachena, Necropolis of Li Muri, apple-shaped spheroids
(from ANTONA 2013, pp. 82-83).

It has been suggested that these manufactured goods were imported (third millennium B.C.) and belonged to a class of prestige goods, given their elegant shape and the care in the workmanship, which spread during the late Neolithic Age. Within the island, similar apple-shaped spheroids made of green stone were also found in the village of Su Cungiau de Marcu of Decimoputzu and in the funerary area of Pranu Mutteddu in Goni. Their presence is documented in Corsica, as well as in various contexts of the island of Crete during the Neolithic age and in the culture of Ripoli, in Anatolia and Egypt. The discovery in the Goni site was useful in order to determine a more precise chronology of these stone elements of Li Muri, which may be placed in the Culture of San Ciriaco. Another school would exclude their Aegean-Eastern origin, given their absence

in Cycladic contexts and the fact that they may be found only in the Italian peninsula, during Eneolithic phases.

The apple-shaped spheroids found in the necropolis of Li Muri are kept at the National Archaeological Museum of Cagliari.



■ Credits

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