

Megalithic circles of Li Muri

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ Dolmens and lithic cistas

The Neolithic necropolis of Li Muri (Arzachena, SS) consists of a series of dolmen cistas, formerly filled by a mound of which nowadays only the platform of stones included in one or more rings of stone slabs placed like a knife remains, forming an artificial hill with a roughly circular shape (fig. 1).



Fig. 1 - Rendering of the funerary circles (photo by Unicity S.p.A.).

Dolmen, collective megalithic tombs of particular monumentality in use since the end of the fourth millennium, characteristic of the pastoral plateau environments, were originally also covered, enclosed and protected by a sub-circular mound of earth and rubble which increased their visibility.

Access to the room, generally oriented to the southeast, was through a door in the base of the front slab, which was closed by a stone finished with care. The deceased were placed in varying numbers inside the monument, never in individual burials, accompanied by basic funerary goods.

The burial chamber of these prehistoric monuments is rectangular or polygonal in shape, made of vertical slabs driven into the ground (orthostats), and covered by a horizontal slab (fig. 2).



Fig. 2 - *Dolmen* Li Casacci in Arzachena (from Mancini 2010, p. 24).

The more than two hundred *dolmens* identified so far in Sardinia are concentrated in the north-central part of the island, in the area of Nuoro in particular, and because of their number and their characteristics, are one of the most important megalithic groups in Western Europe (figs. 3, 4).



Figs. 3, 4 - *Dolmen* of Ladas and Bilella in the territory of Luras-SS (from <http://www.sardegnaigitallibrary.it/mmt/480/100931.jpg> and http://www.sardegnaicultura.it/immagini/7_112_20090430125045.jpg)

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■ Bibliography

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