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REGIONE AUTONOMA DE SARDIGNA  
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# Giants' tomb of Thomes

Patrimonio culturale  
**SARDEGNA** Virtual Archaeology



## ■ The burial chamber in the giants' tombs: examples from Dorgali and other parts of the island

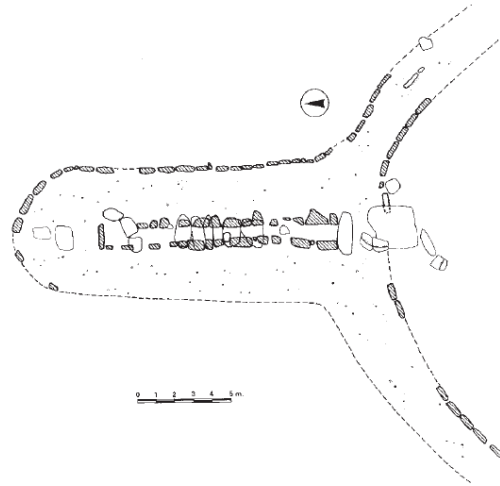
The giants' tomb, used by the Nuraghic people to bury their dead from the Middle Bronze Age (1600 BC), is characterised by a rectangular burial chamber with an apse, where the entrance opened in the centre of the ceremonial space of the exedra.

The masonry techniques used for building the room are essentially two:

- with orthostats, i.e. large slabs fixed knife-like in the ground, jutting towards the inside in order to create a stable base for the roof slabs; this type of tomb, also known as a dolmen, also found in Dorgali as well as Thomes, is found in S'Iskra e Lottoni, Sueredu, Abba Noa I (fig 1) and San Basilio, and more generally are widespread in central-northern Sardinia;
- With rows of stones (or isodoma) that include blocks arranged in horizontal rows; the highest rows jut out and become narrower, to create a triangular section; this type that are a more refined type of stone work, belong to the tombs of Biristeddi I, Ena and Iloghe, and S'Ulu mu, and are more widespread in central-southern Sardinia.

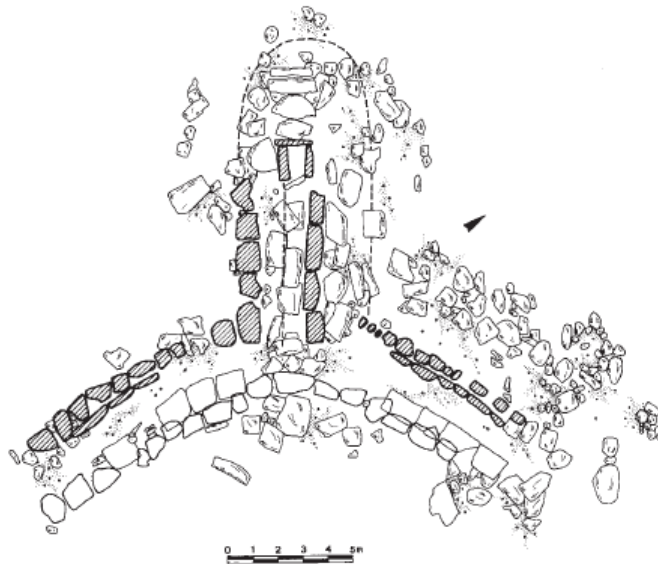
The chambers vary in length, from 16.5 metres at San Cosimo, in the area of Gonnosfanadiga, to 2.55 metres at Ruinachesos, in the area of Sorgono. The funeral chamber, inside which there may be practical items for worship, such as niches and benches, has a flat stone slab floor, with the rough-piece slabs arranged as a mosaic or with large shaped slabs arranged carefully.





**Fig. 1** - Plan of dolmen-type Giants' tomb of Abba Noa 1 - Dorgali (from MORAVETTI 1998, fig. 18, p. 27).

The tomb of Biristeddi I-Dorgali (fig. 2), also known as "Sa Tumba de Su Re" has a rectangular burial chamber (length 8.00 m; width 1.20 m, residual height 1.80 metres), made with large well-carved square blocks, arranged in regular rows.



**Fig. 2** - Isodomic type of giants' tomb in Biristeddi I (from MORAVETTI 1998, fig. 69, p. 82).

Tomb 2 in Iloi, in the area of Sedilo (fig. 3) and the tomb of San Cosimo, in the area of Gonnosfanadiga (fig. 4) are both tombs of the type with the slabs arranged in rows.



**Fig. 3** - Giants' tomb of Iloi 2-Sedilo

(from <http://www.sardegna.digitallibrary.it/index.php?xsl=615&s=17&v=9&c=4461&id=211113>).



**Fig. 4** - Giants' tomb of San Cosimo-Gonnosfanadiga

(from <http://www.sardegna.digitallibrary.it/index.php?xsl=615&s=17&v=9&c=4461&id=103511>).

In many giants' tombs, the materials which make up the grave goods are located outside the chamber. Sometimes, the reason for this phenomenon is due to the clandestine looting of the tombs which occurred over the centuries.

## ■ Credits

Deepening card edited by Dr. Emanuela Atzeni

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Progetto cofinanziato dall'Unione Europea  
Programma Operativo FESR 2007-2013

FESR - Fondo Europeo di Sviluppo Regionale - Asse I, Linea di Attività 1.2.3.a