



UNIONE EUROPEA



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REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA  
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

# Giants' tomb of Thomes

Patrimonio culturale  
**SARDEGNA** Virtual Archaeology



## ■ The *facies* of Bonnanaro in Thomes

The Culture of Bonnanaro<sup>1</sup> characterises Sardinia during the early Bronze Age, and continues even during the Middle Bronze Age phase which follows.

It has been divided into two very different *facies*: the first is commonly known by the name of Bonnanaro A and/or Corona Moltana (1800-1600 BC), while its most recent aspect, chronologically attributed to the Middle Bronze Age (1600-1500) is called Bonnanaro B or of Sa Turricula<sup>2</sup> of Muros (1600-1500 B.C.). This latter aspect was found in central and northern Sardinia, in a number of sites, mostly burial sites, including the Giants' tombs of Thomes-Dorgali.

In the Middle Bronze Age I, proto-Nuraghi became popular (fig. 1), ancient nuraghi mainly comprising corridors, arranged in various manners, covered with horizontal slabs laid next to each other; there are niches and small areas covered with false-vaults inside.



**Fig. 1** - Protonuraghe Bruncu Madugui, near Gesturi

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<sup>1</sup> From the name of the town of the same name in the province of Sassari where there is a burial hypogeum in Corona Moltana, that returned a synthesis of the material culture typical of this *facies* for the first time.

<sup>2</sup> Names thus by the settlement of the same name, attributed exclusively to the culture of Bonnanaro B, that offers the most complete picture of items from this cultural period.

From the limited investigations regarding Middle Bronze Age settlements, it emerges that the huts of the mountainous and hilly areas, with a single room and for a single family, have a brick base. The rectangular and profiled hut of Sa Turricula with an apse, partly carved into the rock and partly bounded by a wall base, is equipped with a fireplace and a floor made of stones. The raised wall and roof could have been made with a frame of branches and twines of reeds and twigs, sealed with clay.

In central-northern Sardinia, at the start of the Nuragic Age, and starting with the *facies* of Sa Turricula (Middle Bronze Age I) the Giants' tombs with orthostatic structures and stelae standing at the centre of a ceremonial exedra (like in the example of Thomes-Dorgali or Li Lolghi-Arzachena) spread. These were collective graves, in which a human group, living in a given area, buried its dead for several generations (fig. 2).



**Fig. 2** - Giants' tomb of Li Longhi, in the territory of Archazena (from <http://www.sardegnaigitallibrary.it/mmt/1024/49404.jpg>).

In the north-western part of the island, in a rather small area (Sassari and Northern Logudoro), this type of giants' tomb was mostly carved in the rock, creating funerary environments excavated in the rock with an architectural façade and often reusing previous *domus de janas* (fig. 3).



**Fig. 3** - Tomb with architectural structure in Sas Puntas, in the territory of Tissi which fully reproduces a giants' tomb both as regards the exedra facade and the interior (from <http://www.sardegna.digitallibrary.it/mmt/480/48318.jpg>).

The only sacred building so far attributed to the Middle Bronze Age is the temple of Malchittu, in the territory of Arzachena (fig. 4).





**Fig. 4** - The small temple of Malchittu-Arzachena (from <http://www.sardegnaigitallibrary.it/mmt/1920/344746.jpg>).

With regard to the production, the facies of Sa Turricola can be distinguished on the base of its simple forms, such as truncated-cone cups and low trays and the continuation of older formal elements such as rounded handles.

The rare ornaments attributed to the Middle Bronze Age, necklace beads or pendants, are made of bone, animal teeth, shells and various types of stones.

## ■ Credits

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