



UNIONE EUROPEA



REPUBBLICA ITALIANA



REGIONE AUTÒNOMA DE SARDIGNA
REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA

Archeological area of Sant'Eulalia

Patrimonio culturale
SARDEGNA Virtual Archaeology



■ Central crypt

Between the XVII and the start of the XVIII century¹ the largest crypt of the seven found in the area was implanted below the central nave of the church of Sant'Eulalia (figs. 1-2)².



Fig. 1 - Central crypt when the dig took place in the church. The crypt ceiling appears to be vaulted (photo by AFS).

¹ Cisci, Tatti 2007, pages 357-358; Martorelli 2013, p. 258.

² Pinna 2002a, pages 47-52.



Fig. 2 - Next digging stage in the church: the main crypt reveals the presence of an altar in andesite slabs and the stairs connecting it to the church above (photo by AFS).

A staircase connects the church to the crypt: the 12 remaining steps (knocked down during the dig for static reasons) were to the West and led to a rectangular environment (about 13.50 x 4.80m) initially barrel-vaulted; in its south-east area there was an altar 1.8 x 0.8 metres, covered in slate slabs.³ Under the non-preserved floor, about a hundred of graves were proof of the use of the crypt for burials: they were on different levels, arranged to exploit all the space available (fig. 3).

³ Pinna 2002a, p. 48; Pinna 2003a, pages 385-386.



Fig. 3 - Map of burials in the crypt (by Martorelli, Mureddu 2002a, p. 50, fig. 27).

The types of tombs used included ground burials in the initial phase of use of the crypt⁴, followed by placement in wooden coffins of a trapezoidal shape (fig. 4). At times, the bodies of the dead were found placed on the covers of previous coffins, collected in a shroud and covered in a layer of lime. In other cases, the buried bodies occupied the space free between two coffins, to exploit the remaining spaces to the maximum⁵.

⁴ Pinna 2003a, pages 385-387; Cisci, Tatti 2007, pages 357-358.

⁵ Pinna 2003b, p. 324.

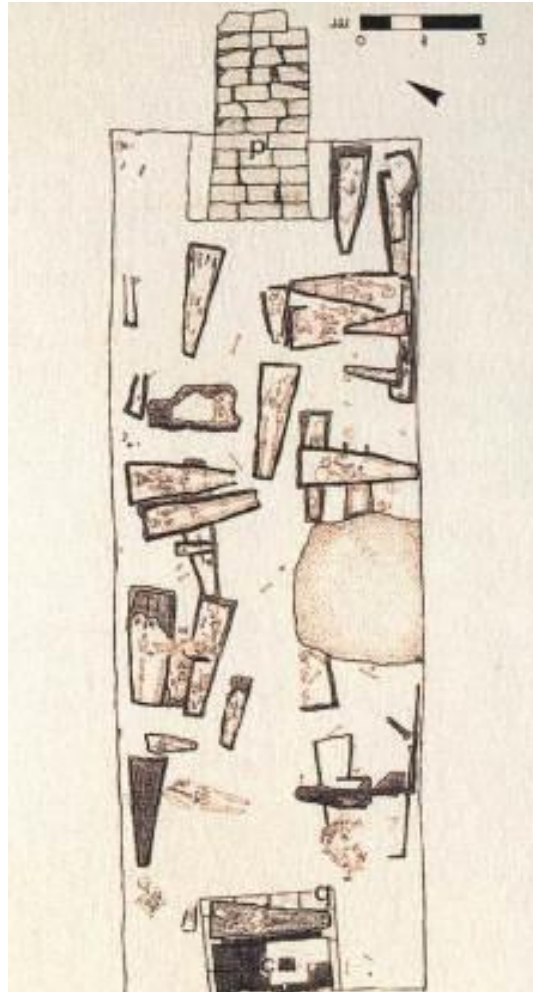


Fig. 4 - The crypt during excavation (photo by AFS).

During the last crypt use period⁶, the lack of space for new burials led to the recovery of existing coffins, freed following the corpses being moved to a charnel pit, identified between the stairs and the NW-SE perimeter wall.⁷ The bone remains show the area was used by a heterogeneous range of society: women and men of all ages, up to the foetal one, were laid to rest in this area⁸.

⁶ The use of the crypt for burials is thought to have continued until 1829, the year when the Bonaria cemetery was built (Pinna 2003b, page 325).

⁷ Pinna 2003a, pages 385-387; Cisci, Tatti 2007, pages 357-358.

⁸ Pinna 2003b, pages 325, 329.

■ Credits

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■ Bibliographic abbreviations

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- PINNA 2003a F. PINNA, *Le indagini archeologiche. La chiesa*, in MARTORELLI *et al.* 2003, pp. 372-381.
- PINNA 2003b F. PINNA, *Il corredo funerario nella Sardegna post-medievale: la cripta della chiesa di S. Eulalia a Cagliari*, in S. LUSUARDI SIENA (a cura di), *Fonti archeologiche e iconografiche per la storia e la cultura degli insediamenti nell'altomedioevo*, in *Atti delle*

giornate di studio (Milano-Vercelli, 21-22 marzo 2003) = *Contributi di Archeologia*, 3. Milano 2003, pp. 323-335.

■ Periodicals and magazines

AP *Archeologia postmedievale. Società, ambiente, produzione*, Firenze, I, 1997e ss.

RAC *Rivista di Archeologia Cristiana*, Città del Vaticano, I, 1924 e ss.





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