by John M. Jensen Jr.

Dolmens Around the World (A section from the chapter "Dinosaurs in the Historical Record" from my upcoming book "Earth Epochs".

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In the previous sections of this chapter, we have established a reasonable amount of evidence to support the fact that some mid-range dinosaurs including T-Rex and flyers like Pteranodon survived at least up into the early to mid-late Holocene in various places in the world, let's take another look at dolmens around the world as potential 'safe-rooms' that may have been used as a defensive measure against some very aggressive carnivorous predators.

Dolmens, in certain locations around the world are a lot more plentiful than any other megalithic structure. They are seen in European megalithic cultures densely clustered along the east coast of the Atlantic. Western European dolmens and megalithic culture are centered around France, extending to Portugal and Spain on the south, and to the British Isles on the west. They are found in Corsica, Sardinia, Provence (southern France), the southeastern peninsula of Italy, Algeria (northern Africa), and Syria (eastern Mediterranean). Along the Black sea, dolmens are densely clustered in Caucasia, Russia.

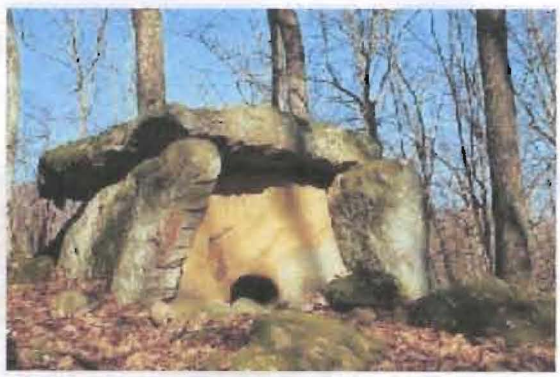
In Asia, dolmens are mostly found around the Indo-Pacific region, including India, Indonesia, Vietnam, Taiwan, China, Japan, and Korea. In South Korea, for example, there are more than 35,000 dolmens, about 40% of all the known dolmens in the world. In Northeast Asia, dolmens are clustered in the Korean Peninsula, northwestern Kyushu (Japan), and Zhejiang and Liaoning Provinces (China). In China, about 50 dolmens are found in Zhejiang Province and about 700 dolmens in Liaoning Province. In Japan, about 600 dolmens are clustered in Kyushu, near the Korean Peninsula, including Nagasaki, Saga, and Fukuoka.

There are scattered stone burrows in New England that are not classic dolmens, though they may have served the same purpose. There is one dolmen in Brazil, but other than that, it is generally not known in the Americas in the same configuration as discussed in this chapter for Europe and Asia.

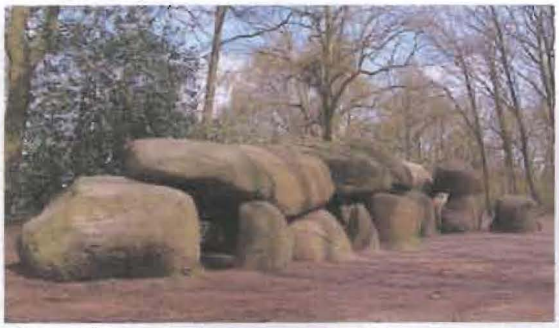
It remains unclear when, why, and by whom the earliest dolmens were made. The oldest known dolmens are in Western Europe, where they were set in place around 7000 years ago. The oldest dolmens in the Far East are also dated to about the same time. Archaeologists still do not know who erected these dolmens, which makes it difficult to know why they did it. They are generally all regarded as tombs or burial chambers, despite the absence of clear evidence for this. Human remains, sometimes accompanied by artifacts, have been found in or close to the dolmens which could be scientifically dated. However, it has been impossible to prove that these archaeological remains date from the time when the stones were originally set in place.

There are four general styles, although each style provide many different and varied characteristics, probably based on local custom and design, as well defensive needs.

This table top dolmen is open on all sides, with the single large 'slab' of stone perched up on several stone (menhirs) pillars. The single prominent feature is the massive table top covering.



This dolmen has the same table top construction as the open version, except it has heavy single slab stone side walls. This suggests its purpose may have been a different protective or defense oriented function than the open sided style.



This dolmen is the low burrow type. These are rarely dug out and seem to be designed for quick defense against a large and tall predator.

This is a dug out burrow type, and generally had a covered tunnel leading into the chamber.

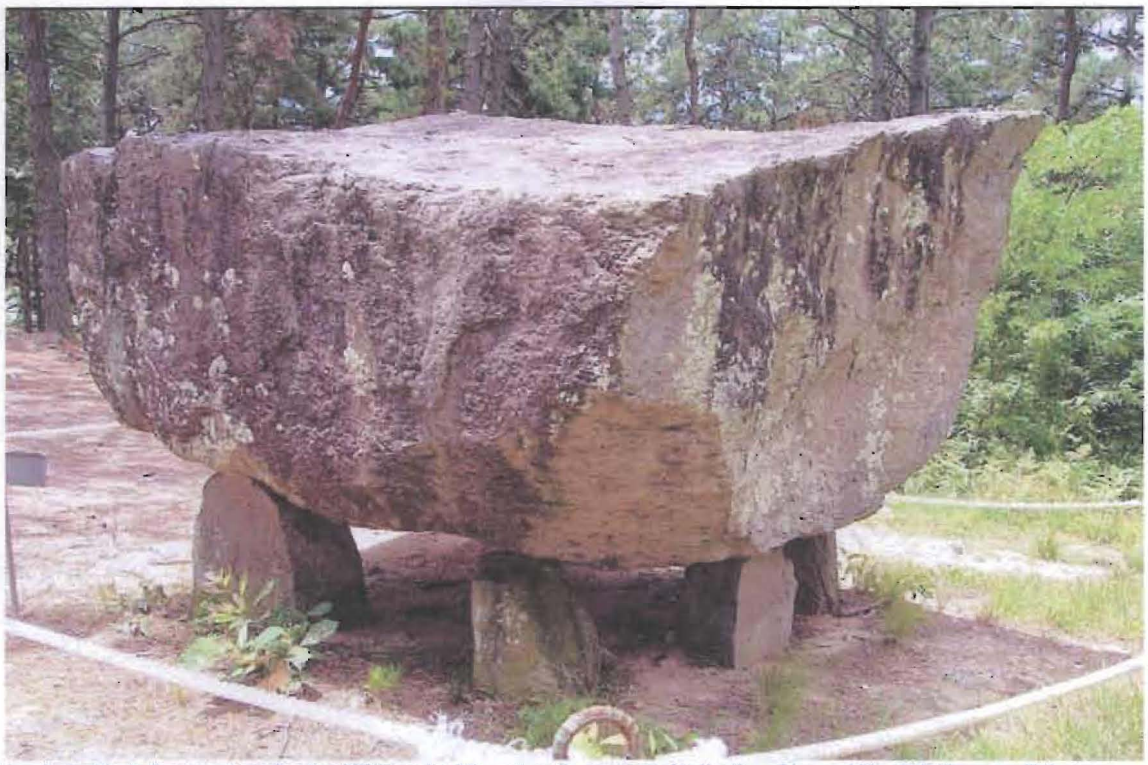
The following photos of dolmens from around the world have similar characteristics that might point to particular type use as security and defense against different type predators. The one common characteristic on all four types is the very large and very heavy cover or table top roof. Almost always the stone is a single slab, or in the case of long burrows, several very heavy stone slabs. If form follows function, the slab stone 'roof' top indicates predator attacks are from the top down.

This dolmen is among a group that are near the Zhane River in the Caucasus. It has a secret entrance in the rear and a false facade in the front.

The slab setting on stone posts or menhirs do not seem to have much protection from a ground attack, so the natural instinct is to assume the predator in that instance is a very large flyer that couldn't or didn't 'land' to attack, but caught its victims 'on the fly'. When the flyers were seen, everyone scurried to the nearest shelter until the predators passed.

This dolmen is one of the many on the South Korean Peninsula. To survive upright after several thousand years is a testament to how well built and balanced this particular dolmen is. This is a northern style dolmen from Chukrimri, Gochang, Jeolla-bukdo, South Korea

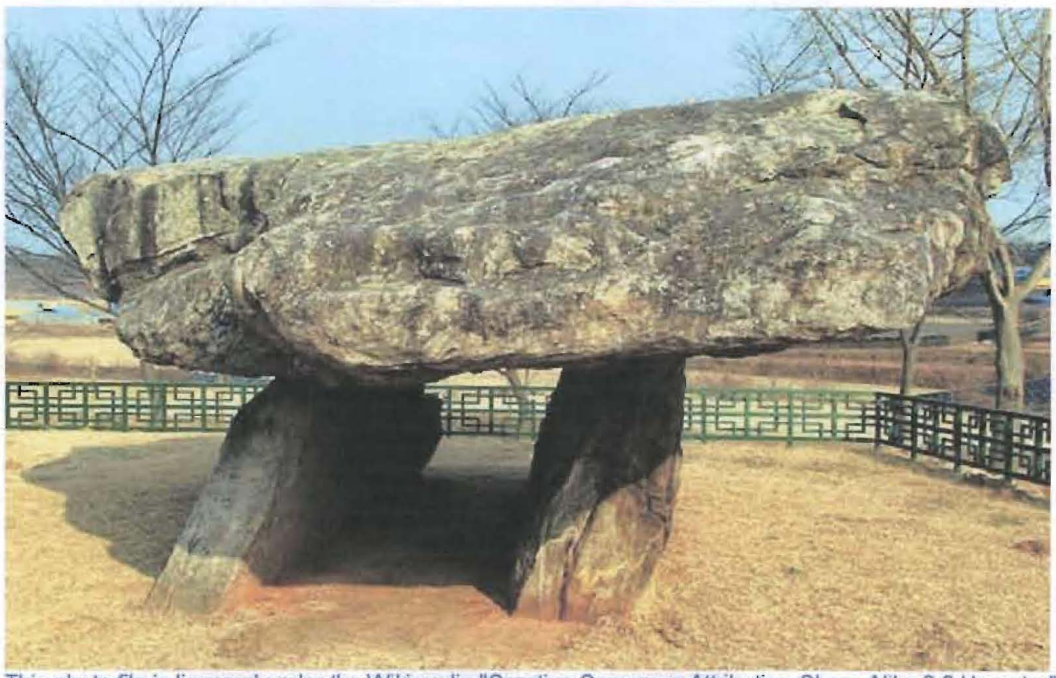
The above is one of the dolmens at the Gochang Jungnim-ri Dolmens that are centered in Maesan village, Gochang County, North Jeolla province in South Korea. This dolmen seems to serve a completely different purpose than the one above it. This one appears as a defense from a large ground predator, probably with a large neck and head that could not enter the small opening, and was not strong enough to move the oversized slab rock top.



This is one of the dolmens at the Gochang Jungnim-ri Dolmens that are centered in Maesan village, Gochang County, North Jeolla province in North Korea. Here again, the top slab seems to be a protective mechanism against an attack from above. The predator could not get its probably long neck and large head down far enough to attack under the slab. The sheer weight of the top slab, and the effort required to place and balance it precisely on top of its stone legs is at the least a difficult task. The weight of the slab displays in mute detail the strength of the attacker.

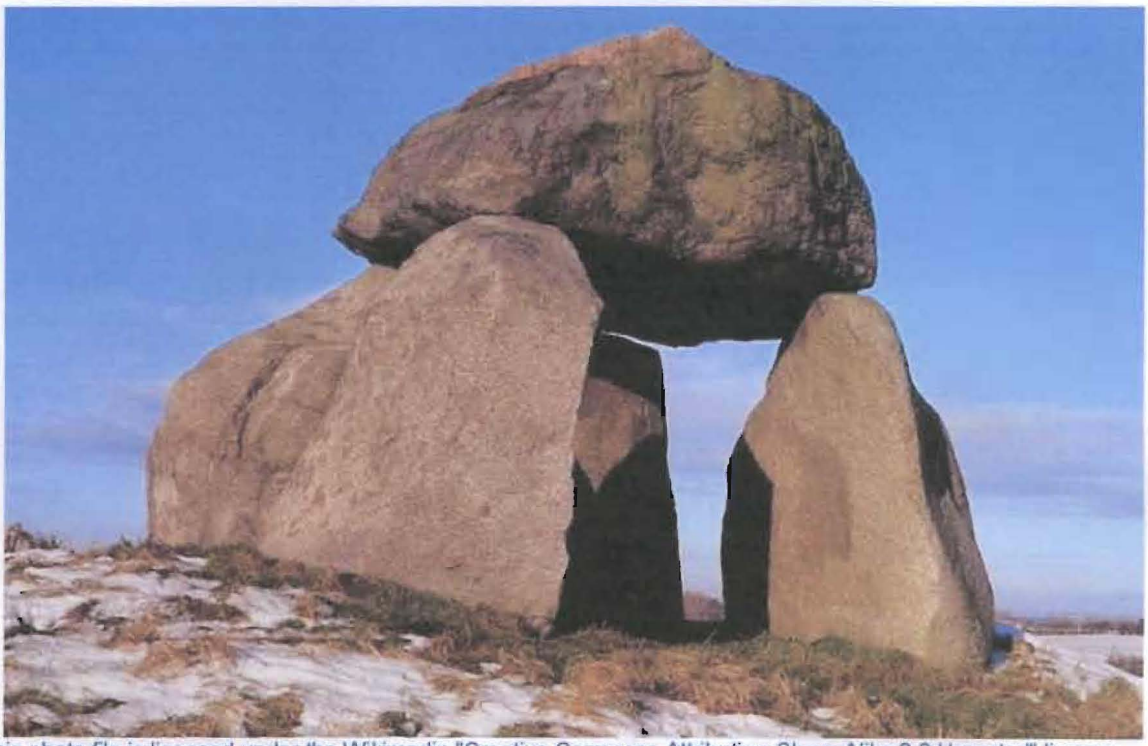
A view of Gochang dolmens of South Korea at the world heritage site. In the foreground left is the 3rd block of the Gochang dolmen site. In Chukrimri, Gochang, Jeolla-bukdo, South Korea. Like the above two dolmens, this field of broken dolmens have the same heavy top slab on short stone supports, suggesting they are used for relatively the same purpose, that is protection from very large long neck, big headed predators. This being a field group of dolmens, as so many are in this area, suggests a larger than single family population base requiring many more 'safe' rooms when big predators were in the area.

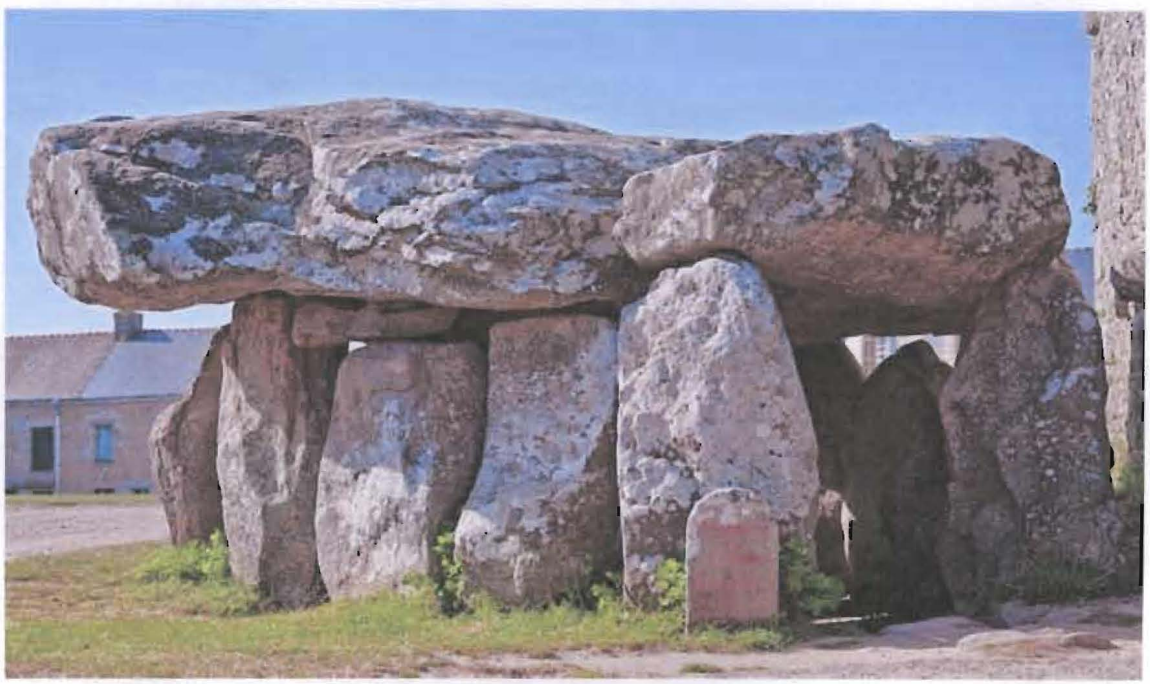
Dolmens in Osang-ri, Ganghwa Island, South Korea. The above field, like the photo above it, is representative of a larger population that needed relatively the same protection as other folks in the area. Suggesting of course that the population of predators was quite high in this area of South Korea.



Above is a standard table top dolmen in South Korea. The top is so heavy, that over time the side walls, though buried quite deep have over time begin to lean with the top rock weight. This, as most of the dolmens on the South Korean peninsula has a questionable erection timescale, with some experts attributing the overall build period to start sometime right after 7,000 years ago.

The following photos of 'open' table top design from around the world are posted without further comment, with the exception of their location and license details. Please review them under the perspective of a utilitarian purpose as a defense against (more than likely) dinosaur predators.



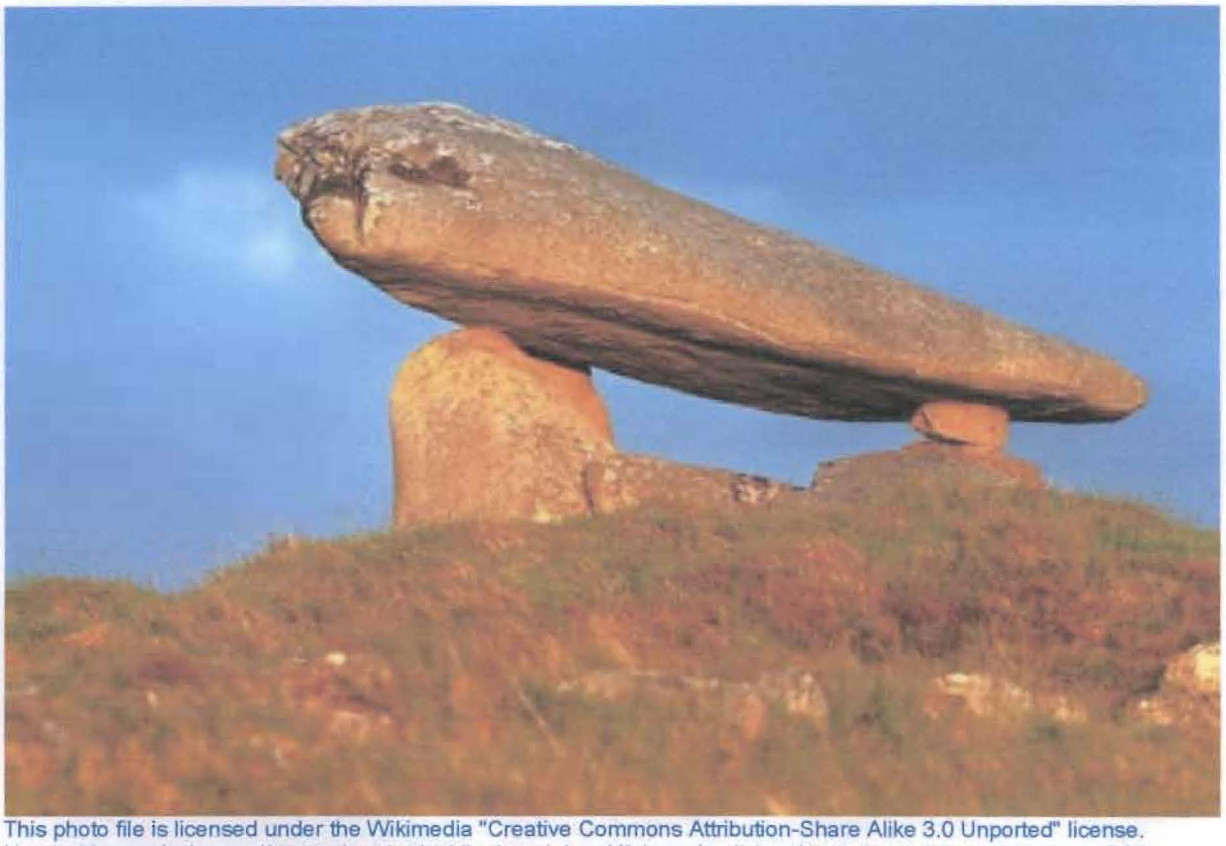


Crucuno dolmen, in Plouharnel (Morbihan, Brittany, France). It has a 40 ton cap stone on the top. It is dated 6,000 YBP. This was originally located in the 19th century by reading engravings of a very long passage. This information is noted in a sign posted at the site itself.

Sulimalthe, Somwarpet, India

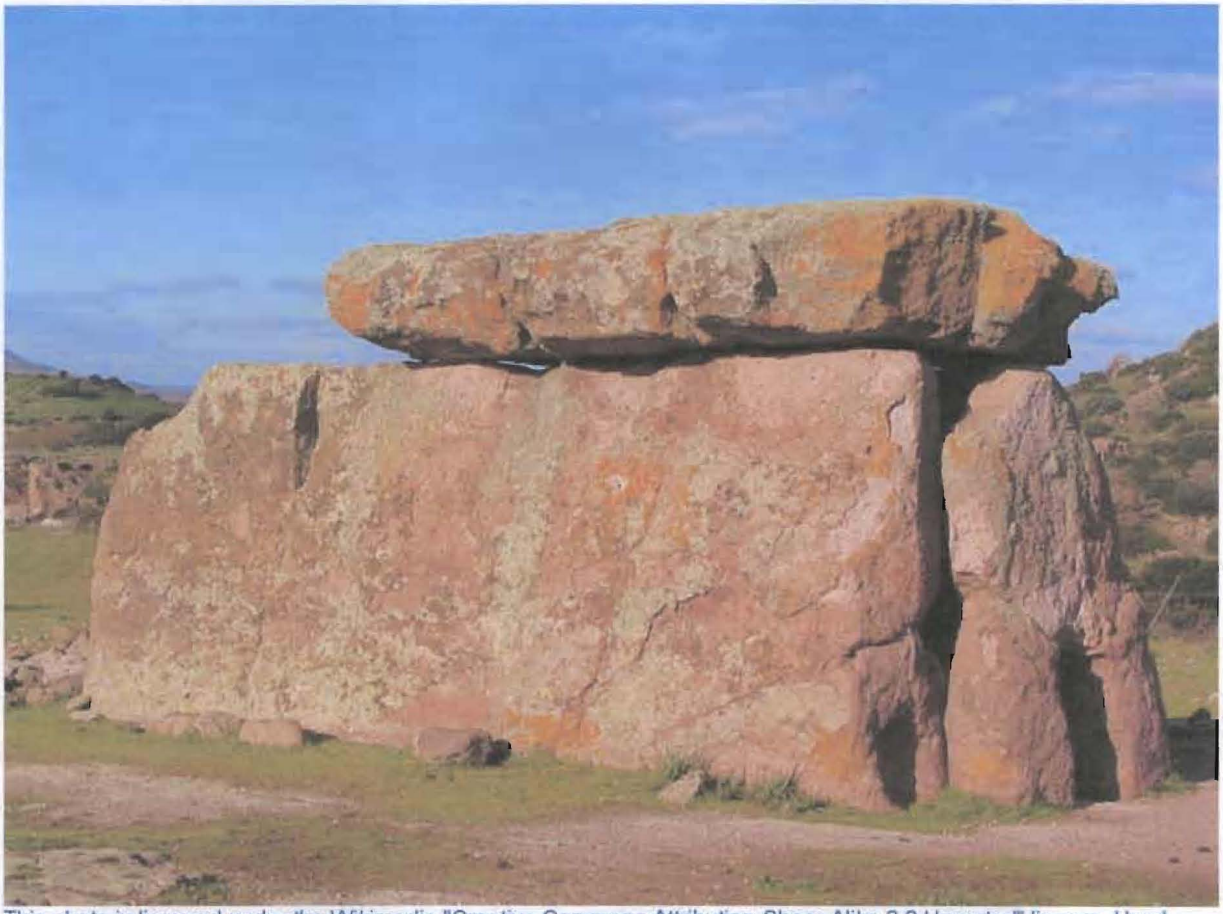
It might be relative at this time to have a discussion about 'form' following 'function' regarding these dolmens. It is almost impossible to imagine any funerary use for these type of stone structures, as has been claimed by other researchers. Most of the stone slab tops are way too heavy to be moved in place for any other than a utilitarian purpose. Primitive people, more so than their modern day counterparts had little if any 'extra' time, energy and cost resource to construct these 5,000 to 15,000 pound structures, without the dolmens having a utility imperative purpose. Conclusions to that purpose will be discussed at the end of this section.

The Kilclooney Dolmen near Ardara, County Donegal, Republic of Ireland, pictured on a sunny evening in June 1986.



There is no data available on this Burren dolmen.

Mores, Sardegna, Italia



The following dolmens are from the Russian Caucasus. The first is the only surviving megalith or single stone chamber carved out of the interior of the stone. Photo is from a Russian Stamp commemorating the Sochi Winter Games.

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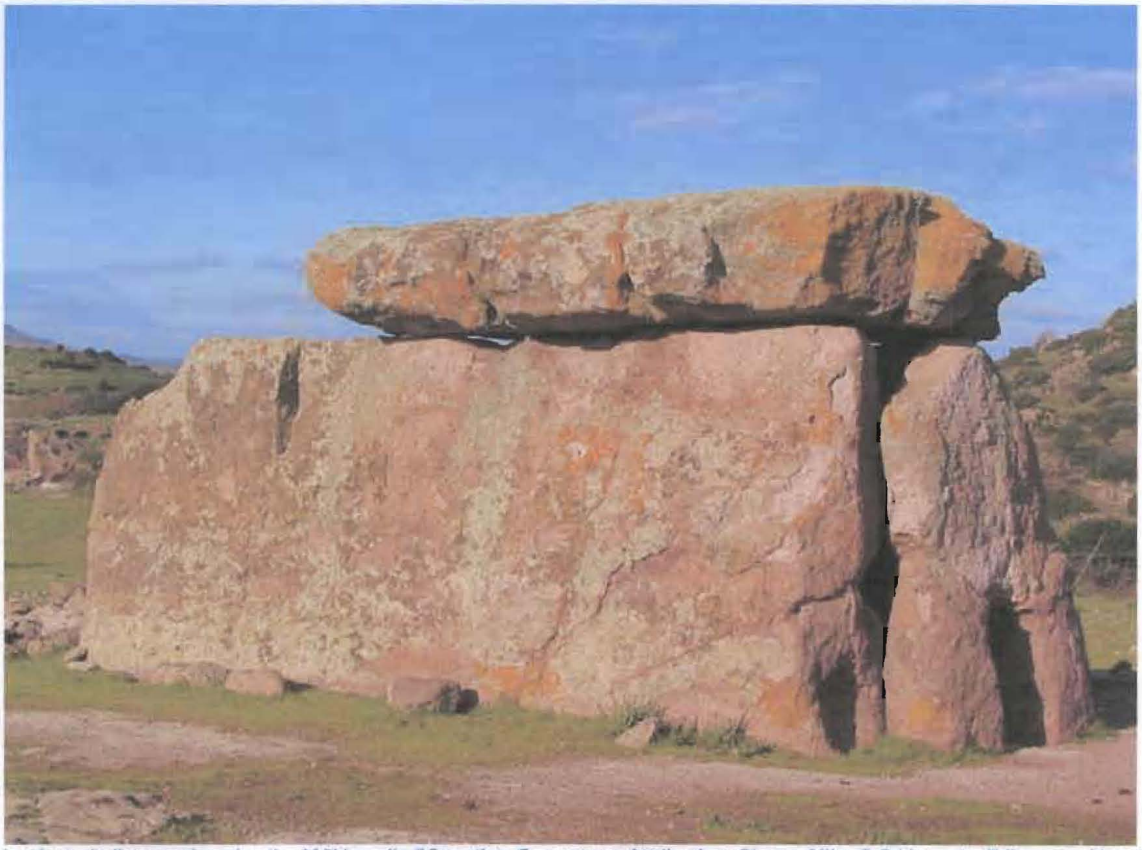

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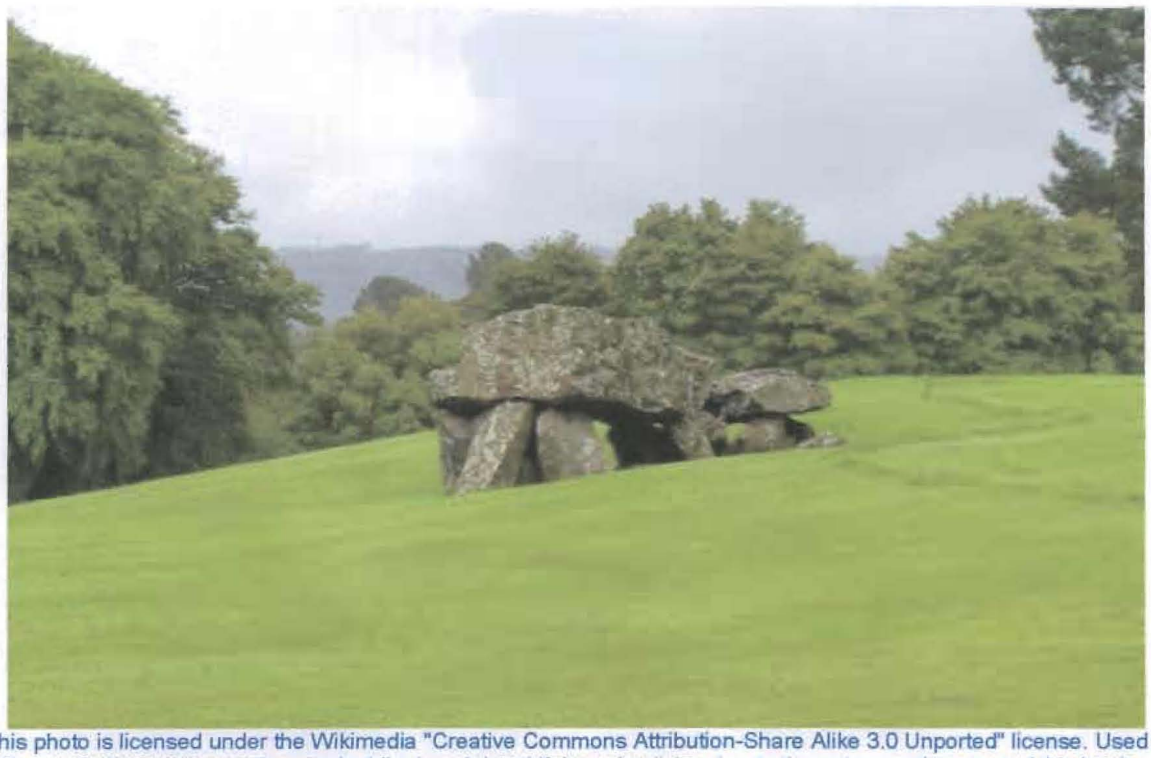
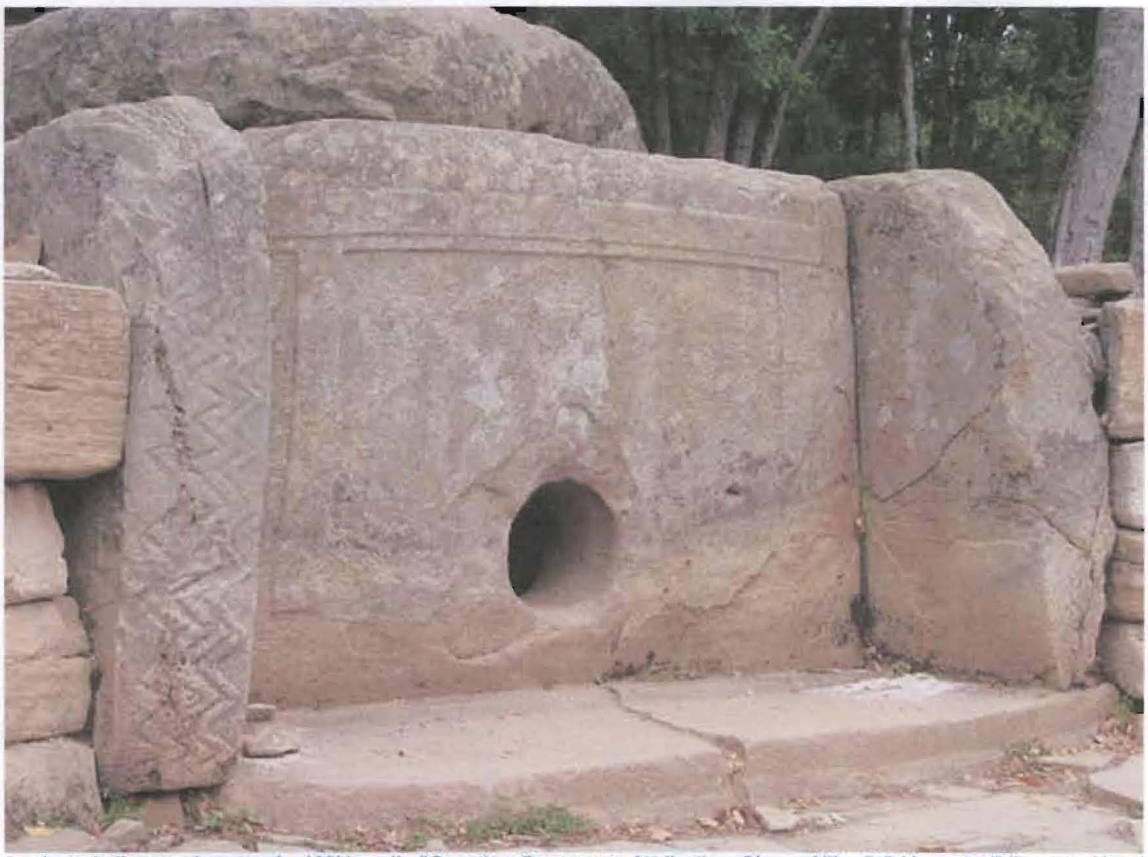
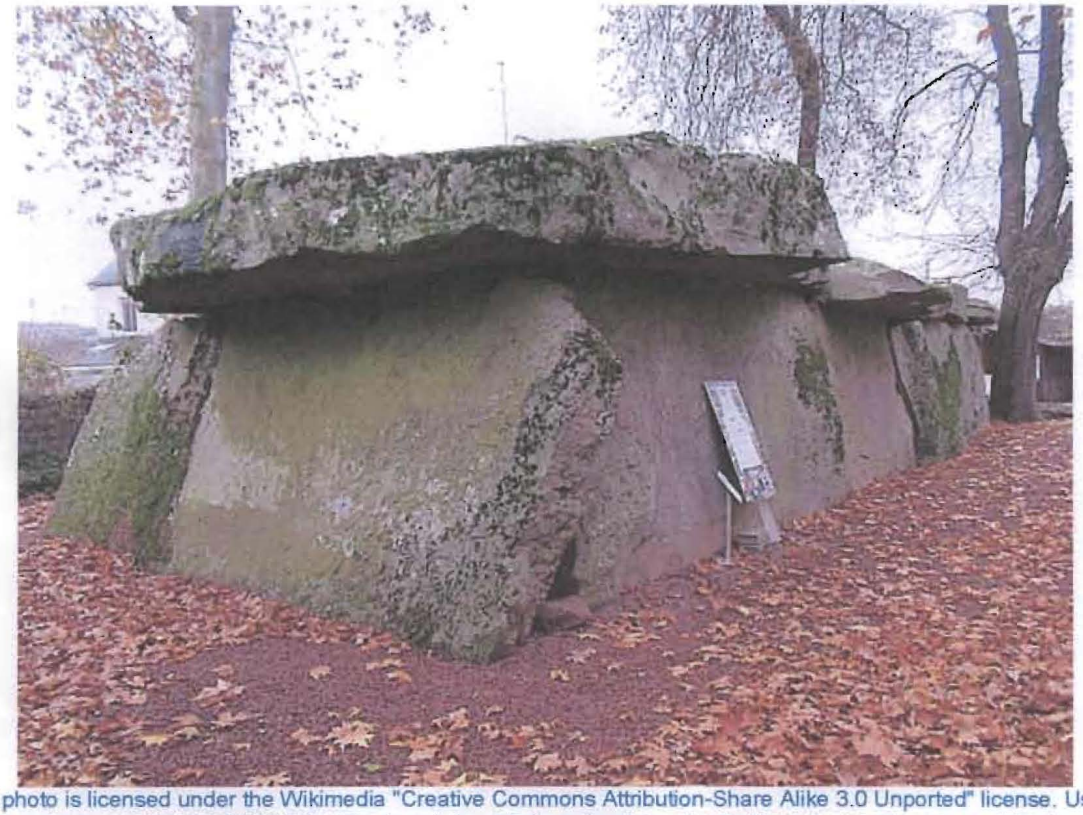


Gelendzhiksky district, Russia





This is the largest single table top dolmen that I have found. I believe it is in France. Its local location is not available. The work effort to create this megalithic structure is quite extensive. The side walls must be buried deep to retain its shape when so many other buildings have succumbed to earthquakes over the same period of history. The seven wonders of the world have nearly all came and gone, while these megalithic small building retain their shape and structure. This structure must have supported a village or larger population, as it appears to be within the magnitude of 24'x12', or about 290 square feet. On a short term basis, it would comfortably hold 40-70 women, children, the old, sick and probably the infirm or wounded.

This dolmen is also in the Caucasus, Russia. Like the photo above it is another of the 'larger' structures. Built of single monolithic slabs, this dolmen is one of the strongest and best suited defensive 'safe rooms' in the area. It appears to be somewhere in the range of 25' long and about 10' wide. The entry hole is about the same size as all the dolmen holes in this area, or about 20" in diameter. Many of the hundreds of dolmens in this area have 'plugs' that fit the hole opening, so we know they were meant to be closed up. The design is interesting, because the plugs could not be 'pushed in' but could be 'kicked out' from the inside. I am very interested in the depth the side walls are buried in the earth.

One other feature that is nearly universal for this style dolmen is the 'overhang' and protruding side walls around the entry hole. In and of itself, that feature seems to meet a universal security need, like protecting the opening (set back) from a large headed, long neck predator. Almost every dolmen in the world has this basic feature.

Conclusion

If you are interested in further data and information on the more than 130,000 dolmens around the world, please review Wikipedia as a good start. The only problem is that on the Wiki sites, too many unknowns are stipulated as 'facts'. For example, dolmens are universally accepted in Academia as 'graves or 'cairns'. While some may be, those are generally taken over and used as tombs and cairns long after the primary reason for the dolmen's original construction had passed into history.

The best information we have at the current time, which is a composite of various archaeological digs around the world, is that the dolmens were built shortly after 7,000 years ago. Some are speculated to be newer, and some folks attribute wildly eccentric dates to them.

The fact is that no one knows anything about them at all. And all speculation about them is pure guess work. By their primary design, they are NOT tombs, cairns or primary funerary locations. We as a species have been burying people for about as long as we go back in history. It has always been a utilitarian process, with the exception of a few Kings and Pharaohs. The dead are almost always buried "under" the ground, or deep in the rocks as in the case of the Pharaohs. During a Hunter-Gatherer phase like that represented by the dolmen builders, it is logical to assign relative value to the effort necessary to set up very large flat rock or table top rock "rooms", which means that the tribal group did not have the time nor resources to construct megalithic 'rooms' with very large stone table top construction unless the process had a primary survival imperative.

Now that we have established in earlier sections of this chapter that dinosaurs DID live alongside hominids between the early and mid to late Holocene, the logical conclusion as to the purpose and function of 'safe rooms' was to protect the most vulnerable (women, children, the old, sick and wounded) from large and probably ferocious carnivorous predators.

I think a reasonable conclusion can be drawn from the fact that the dolmens may be contemporary to the Last Great Cataclysm. As I made the case for a very large global population (above 4 billion) before the Last Great Cataclysm, 7,000 years ago, one of the recognizable features of that civilization is that it had a significantly high level of technology, at least enough to build some of the most elaborate canal systems on earth. This means they more than likely had some kind of defense-weapon systems that kept the largest predators at bay, much like the case of current Kodiak grizzly bears.

If you go hunting Kodiak Browns with a switch, you are likely to be bear snacks. But if you have a .45 LR Pistol and interchangeable .45 LR Carbine Rifle, you are probably going to have at least an equal chance up against a mad or hungry Mamma Bear. Large Dinosaur predators were probably more of a threat than a grizzly in terms of ferocity. While larger than a very large grizzly, some predator dinosaurs would make short work of a small to medium sized human that did not have overwhelming defensive or destructive firepower.

Some issues and characteristics attributed to dolmens, such as piled high earthen mounds around the dolmens don't seem to fit the archaeological facts. If earthen walls or stone and dirt were part of the original construction, some of the residue of that building style would still be evident in the surrounding areas of the building site. While many of the sites have scattered cut stone lying around, there is no clear evidence those stones were part of a mound or burrow system. They could and probably were part of the local buildings surrounding the dolmen. Many of the sites show this to be true, where local buildings and a plaza area in front of the dolmen show its central nature to the community. The dolmen(s) would be close to the occupants of the village, and probably in the center of the housing complex. A person as potential prey would not want to have to run very far when the predator(s) show up.

It makes logical sense to me, that a survivor population following the Last Great Cataclysm, 7,000 years ago would have lost most or all of its technology within a few generations, probably not more than 4 or 5, or certainly within 150 years of the event. Survival at that time was a day to day enterprise, and as soon as any predators began to hunt and kill the survivors, the local tribal leader's immediate reaction would be to build some sort of impregnable 'safe room' that was not vulnerable to predator attack. The characteristics of the dolmens around the world fit that set of circumstances better than any other scenario.

This section is based entirely on the fact that we have more than 65 blind 14c tests of extracted collagen and hemoglobin elements from non-fossilized dinosaur bones, including T-Rex, returning dates between 12,000 to 42,000 YBP. Tests have been performed at various University Labs around the world. That is way too many tests for them all to be wrong.

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