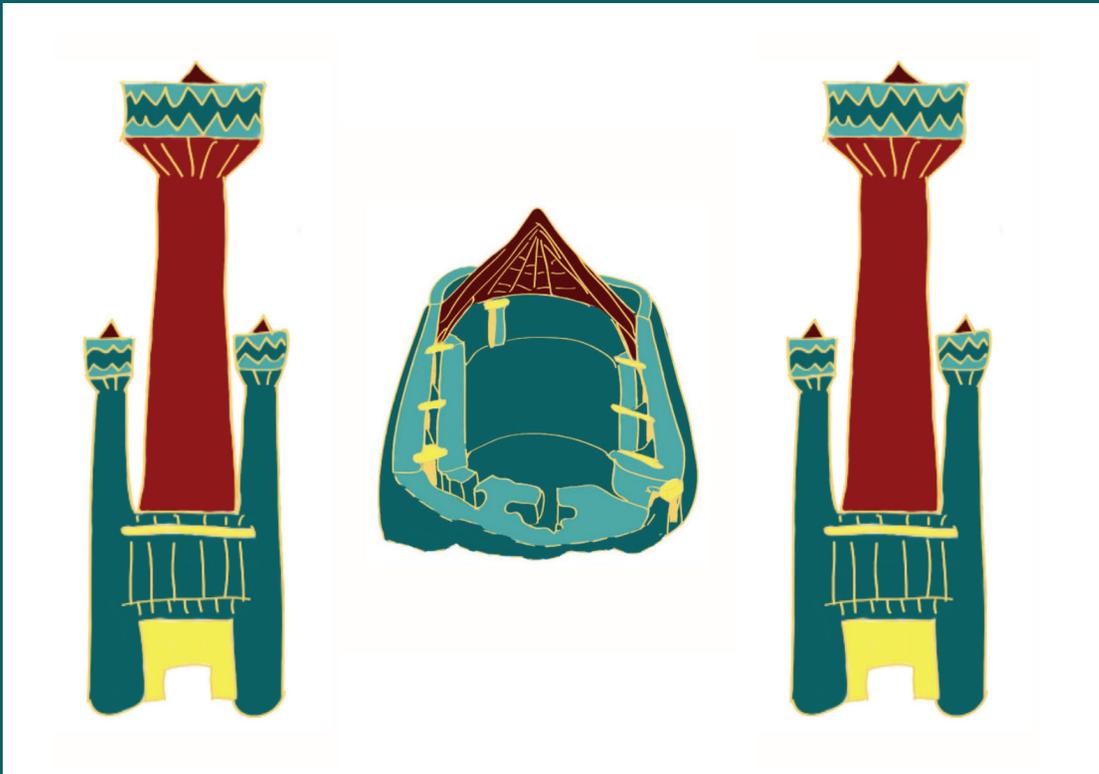




Gardening time

Monuments and landscape from
Sardinia, Scotland and Central Europe
in the very long Iron Age

Edited by Simon Stoddart, Ethan D. Aines
& Caroline Malone



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McDONALD INSTITUTE CONVERSATIONS

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with contributions from

Ian Armit, John Barber, Lindsey Büster, Louisa Campbell, Giandaniele Castangia, Graeme Cavers, Anna Depalmas, Matthew Fitzjohn, Mary-Cate Garden, Andy Heald, Luca Lai, Robert Lenfert, Mary MacLeod Rivett, Hannah Malone, Phil Mason, Megan Meredith-Lobay, Mauro Perra, Ian Ralston, John Raven, David Redhouse, Tanja Romankiewicz, Niall Sharples, Alfonso Stiglitz, Dimitris Theodossopoulos, Carlo Tronchetti, Alessandro Usai, Alessandro Vanzetti, Peter Wells & Rebecca Younger

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On the cover: *Cut out reconstruction of a broch flanked by two reconstructed Nuraghi, reconsidered by Lottie Stoddart.*

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Simon Stoddart

A tribute in honour of Giovanni Lilliu (1914–2012)

Anna Depalmas

Remembering Giovanni Lilliu may seem an easy task. One might think that it is only necessary to list his rich scientific bibliography and to describe his great work over the course of nearly a century, as a university professor and archaeologist. However, a simple listing of his achievements would not transmit the true importance of his work. He not only illuminated the prehistoric archaeology of Sardinia, but also used it to establish the idea of a Sardinian epic which he connected to the modern world.

Prehistory was the choice of his field of study – rather than the predominant exaltation of the Roman era and classicism of the time –, and this had its origins in his study under Ugo Rellini at Rome. He graduated in 1938 and worked as Rellini's assistant until 1942, when he returned to Sardinia to take up the position of Professor of Historical Archaeology and Geography at the University of Cagliari. From 1942 to 1958, he taught various subjects – Paleoethnology, Geography and the History of Religion – and in the latter year became a Full Professor and was appointed to the Chair of Sardinian Antiquity at the University of Cagliari. From 1944 to 1955 he also worked for the Superintendency of Sardinian Antiquity.

He held many posts in his long academic career. He was for a long time, and on various occasions, dean of the Faculty of Letters, Director of the Institute of Archaeology and Arts, Director of the School of Specialization in Sardinian Studies and Editor of the Journal carrying the same name (*Studi Sardi*), and, in 1990, he was elected a fellow of the Academy of Lincei of Rome. In his later years, he remained a very active Professor Emeritus at Cagliari University.

In 1936, while he was still a student, he published his first work on Su Nuraxi di Barumini. This was his birthplace, and throughout his life he maintained a close and almost embodied connection with the village. This also led him to carry out his most important

archaeological work in the landscape of his birth. Indeed, between 1951 and 1956, he worked on excavating an artificial hill there, which was found to cover the nuragic complex of Su Nuraxi di Barumini. This was the first excavation conducted in Sardinia using a stratigraphic methodology to establish a time-line for the nuragic period, and it became a benchmark for later investigations and chronological research. His work at Barumini formed the basis for a series of fundamental papers on Sardinian proto-history, from *I nuraghi. Torri preistoriche di Sardegna* (The Nuraghi, prehistoric towers of Sardinia) in 1962 to *Civiltà nuragica* (Nuragic civilization) in 1982.

He was the first to study many of the themes that he investigated in depth during his long scientific career and many of these were only studied for the first time in the first half of the twentieth century. The chronology of proto-Sardinian civilization was one key field that he developed, modified and changed in the course of his long academic career. At the same time, Lilliu published a brief essay in which he attempted to identify certain constant factors in the history of Sardinian art, and this was developed in the catalogue for the exhibition of Sardinian bronzes in Venice in 1949. Following the theories of Ranuccio Bianchi Bandinelli on how to classify the art of the ancient world, Lilliu assessed the coexistence of the 'anti-naturalistic' art of the barbarian world and the 'naturalistic' art of the classical world within which he inserted Sardinia as a 'land of pure expression', and defined as anti-classical and barbaric. This line of thought became the nucleus of a theme which he studied from various angles and which helped him to define key concepts in his field of study.

At the beginning of the 1960s, he published his wide-ranging synthesis of Sardinia, *La civiltà dei Sardi dal Neolitico all'età dei nuraghi* (1963) (Sardinian Civilization from the Neolithic period to the nuragic

era). This work was later reprinted, expanded and revised in various editions until 1988. Apart from incorporating the results of later research, the later editions also allowed him to reassess some of his earlier observations with a critical eye, which was always one of his great strengths as a researcher and academic. The book proposed that a single unifying thread ran through Sardinian prehistory from the Neolithic period, even starting in the Palaeolithic period, until the Phoenician conquest. It established elements of the historiography of the island using data obtained from his work as an archaeologist. Many of the principal Sardinian monuments were described in an elegant style which alternated with detailed, creative and lyrical descriptions. The book was aimed at not only archaeologists and students, but also at a wider public, and indeed the book was dedicated to 'the shepherds of Barbagia'. Generations of archaeologists have studied the manual and found themselves cited in later editions, in agreement with Lilliu's global historiographical approach which aimed to unite past archaeological research with his experience of teaching Sardinian Antiquity in a university context. This book also gave birth to a national and popular history of prehistoric Sardinia, and expanded the work of archaeologists and their research from being only something studied in university lecture rooms and solely of interest to academics to its status as part of the common heritage of all Sardinians.

This social dimension, this impact, can be clearly seen from Giovanni Lilliu's popularity, which came from having shone a light on the national history of Sardinia and giving life to a Sardinian historiographical tradition, i.e. one with a strong sense of identity. His fame led to him being consulted, even in the later years of his life, on current events in Sardinia not necessarily related to culture or archaeology and being seen as a kind of prophet or even as the 'father of his country'. One of the many lessons that he taught us, and in which he himself was an expert, was the importance of intellectuals being able to discuss, communicate and talk about complex historical themes in a way which was both comprehensible and of interest to laymen.

He showed a total but clear love for his land by taking on civic responsibilities, which he fulfilled in a way which was never dull but rather vigilant and acute, despite his soft tone. As a cultured man, he worked for the Regional Council of Sardinia, drafting the Special Statute of Autonomy. He was also involved in politics, first as a member of the Christian Democrats and later as a supporter of initiatives which promoted the independence of Sardinia and of progressive positions which were

close to the Centre-Left. In practice, he was active in actions which were designed to give greater value to Sardinian identity and culture.

The ideological basis for these activities were elaborated by Giovanni Lilliu at the start of his intellectual life, and were made completely clear in the 1970s when he developed the concept of 'constant Sardinian resistance'. At the beginning of the first prehistoric phase, the Sardinians were characterized by their resistance to foreign invaders and any attempts at acculturation. This characteristic did not disappear in ancient times, but has been a constant theme of Sardinian history and ethnicity, and is still present today. In this sense, Sardinian culture is not a fossil, but rather displays an extraordinary historical continuity with the past. This is an analysis which never became an idealization of aspects of Sardinian society and behaviour, but rather provided a clear and realistic picture through also identifying its negative aspects and its limitations. Nuragic civilization in particular became a symbol of a polycentric society, always in conflict with itself, the land and foreign invaders.

However, it is certainly limiting to supply a rigid definition of what Lilliu meant by nuragic civilization, given that he saw it as a dialectical relationship between its various dimensions, and worked on a reconstruction of it that was complex and multifaceted. He proposed an interpretation of nuragic civilization that saw it not as local but Mediterranean. In this, he was greatly influenced by his direct experience of excavations in the village of Ses Paisses in Majorca, where he found ethnic roots which were common to all the large islands of the West Mediterranean, the Balearics and Corsica, although there were also differences connected to the independent developments drawing on their insularity.

The fact that he found writing easy as can be seen from his some 330 publications. The last of these was in 2010, and was a detailed description of the excavation of the Giant's Tomb of Bidistili in Fonni. It is worth saying that many of the present arguments about certain elements and problems of prehistoric and proto-historic Sardinia were originally raised by him.

I would like to end this brief and partial memorial to Giovanni Lilliu by mentioning his work as a university professor of prehistoric and proto-historic Sardinia (and not only those subjects – with great versatility he also taught Geography and Christian archaeology). What I will personally remember is his little figure in jacket and pullover (he seldom, if ever, wore a tie), typewritten sheets in hand, and always punctual. He never postponed a lesson and was never

absent. As an examiner he was always courteous and understanding. But you had to be very well prepared for his exams. The end of the course every year was the moment that we all waited for. Then there were the one or two day excursions that he led us on to various parts of Sardinia. We students would present

our explanations of the monuments and he would listen with great attention as if it were his first visit, and then sometimes add some of his own memories, making it ever more clear how he was the creator of our view of prehistoric Sardinia.

He really was the memory of Sardinian history.

Tributes to Dr David Trump, FSA, UOM (1931–2016), and Dr Euan MacKie, FSA (1936–2020)

Caroline Malone & Simon Stoddart

David Trump was best known for his important work on the islands of Malta (Malone 2020), but his contribution to the prehistory of Sardinia is also worthy of record in the context of this volume.

David Hilary Trump took his first class BA in Arch and Anth at Pembroke College, Cambridge in 1955, and was a scholar of both the British School at Jerusalem, where he dug with Kathleen Kenyon, and the British School at Rome, where he excavated the key site of La Starza.

After Malta, Trump held the post of Staff Tutor in Archaeology at the University's Board of Extra-Mural Studies until retirement in 1997, when he was succeeded by Caroline Malone. He not only contributed to the teaching of Mediterranean Prehistory in the Department of Archaeology, but also had a large following in the wider, continuing education community, engaging mature students in all aspects of Archaeology in the region and beyond. It was during this period that he made a major contribution to the archaeology of Sardinia, uncovering once again unsuspected phases of prehistory at Grotta Filiestru (Trump 1983) and completing the survey of Bonu Ighinu. At Grotta Filiestru, he characteristically invested all the resources he could muster into constructing an effective chronology (Switsur & Trump 1983) and some of the first faunal studies undertaken in Sardinia (Levine 1983). This work was, in its way, as equally pioneering as his work on the island of Malta. The Grotta Filiestru produced a new scientifically dated sequence of Sardinian prehistory, identifying the fifth-millennium BC Filiestru Neolithic phase for the first time. In earlier fieldwork he also excavated the cave site of Sa 'ucca de su Tintirriòlu (Loria & Trump 1978). His work around Bonu Ighinu (Trump 1990) is, however, closest to the

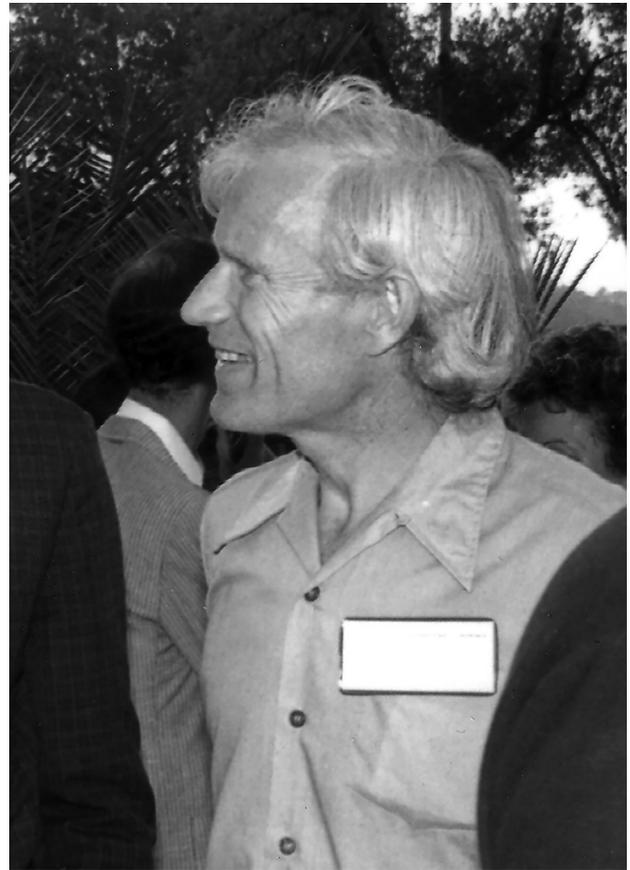


Figure 0.1. *David Trump.*

theme of this volume since, in typical energetic style, Trump also provided one of the earliest studies of a nuragic landscape, once again demonstrating a pioneering role, now followed by many others.

Euan MacKie was a central figure in the study of brochs, as is shown by the very high level of citation in this volume (Mackie 1965 ... 2008). In several ways the contribution of David Trump and Euan MacKie run in parallel, one journeying south, the other journeying north also from Cambridge beginnings, both Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries of London, engaged in seminal fieldwork, on a shoe string generally with volunteers, providing the first chronological foundations for monuments in the landscape and addressing synthesis of the results. Both were pioneers of their generation who retained their own intellectual independence in museums (both) and in continuing education (Trump), rather than a department of archaeology or a heritage organization.

MacKie graduated in Archaeology and Anthropology from St. John's Cambridge in 1959 and took his PhD from the University of Glasgow in 1973, becoming, after a brief period at the British Museum, Keeper and Deputy Director (1986) of the University Hunterian Museum. As a graduate he took part in an expedition to British Honduras, directing the excavation of the Maya site of Xunantunich, leading to an interest in Mesoamerican archaeology throughout his life.

His excavation of brochs such as Dun Mor Vaul on Tiree, published in 1975, Dun Ardtreck on Skye published in 2000 and Leckie in Stirlingshire published in 2008, were fundamental in uncovering the sequence, material culture and chronology of these monuments. He gathered information for his important three-volume compendium on brochs from his own excavations and the investigations of others, undertaking research well into retirement (1998), publishing the final volume in 2007. These volumes are landmarks of data on the subject, a resource which provides a platform for all broch studies. His achievements were also celebrated in his Festschrift, *In the Shadow of the Brochs* (2002), showing the respect shown to him by younger generations.

He ventured far and wide in his more interpretative work. Some of his interpretations of broch builders and their monuments are no longer widely held and the chronologies are currently being reconsidered, but his stimulating approach to ideas endures. He



Figure 0.2. Euan MacKie on Mousa broch in the Shetlands in 2000 at the Tall Stories conference.

was passionate about many other subjects including his seminal work in prehistoric metrology and archaeoastronomy. The volume *Science and Society in Prehistoric Britain* (1977) was a central work for Glyn Daniel's teaching in Cambridge, and he made the valid point that the sophistication of prehistory is not to be underestimated. His interest in ethnography, no doubt drawing on his Arch and Anth undergraduate career at Cambridge, gave him a great respect for other ways of thinking and for the architectural and political achievements of prehistoric Britain, most notably for the builders of the brochs themselves in the Iron Age.

Chapter 22

Nuragic memories: a deep-seated pervasive attitude

Alessandro Vanzetti

The popular attitude towards prehistoric monuments in Sardinia has been to consider them as testimony of a great past, as represented by the names attached to them, e.g. *domus de janas* (witches' homes), *tombe di giganti* (giants' tombs), *Nuraghe sa domu 'e s'orku* (home of the ogre). Actually, this past, with its alleged memories, is coming to be differently inserted into modernity. The insulation of the monuments is becoming heavier: a) because of a different involvement of people in their own landscape, as urbanism became a crucial part of human life; b) because of land management projects, both on the agrarian and development sides; c) because of tourism, and touristic economic expectations by people; d) and what more, because of contrasting attitudes between academic scholars, superintendency archaeologists, amateurs and skilled popularizing writers. While these are general processes in Italy, Europe and beyond, the specificity of insular Sardinia makes it a particularly well-expressed battleground and showcase of the conflicting attitudes presented.

Gardening time is not without counterpoints

The conference presented in its basic statements a positive view of the 'gardening of time', as 'tending a garden is a long process involving patience, accretion and memory. Scholars argue that memories are also cultured, developed and regained'. This inherently positive statement of gardening, as a wise and sound activity, can sometimes appear as an elitist position, like the one held by academia-embedded scholars: specifically the cultural (and social) assumption of the past, and its loss and regain, can be seen as one inherent contradiction to the positive perspective of the gardening of time.

A nice reversal of the metaphor of the gardening concept was proposed by the possibly most influential

and sharp thinker, poet and philosopher that Italy has ever had: Giacomo Leopardi (1798–1837). In his *Zibaldone* or *Hodgepodge*, written between 1817 and 1832 (Leopardi 2001), he reports the other side of gardening, let's say the dark side of it. His narrative aims at remarking the negativity of life, but I am interested in the implied concept of 'gardening'. He remarks that plants in any garden are suffering. And then he describes the activity of the walking man, of the romantic girl, of the Gardener: 'Meanwhile, you mangle the grasses with your steps; you crush, you knock, you squeeze their blood, you crash, you kill them. That delicate and gentle maiden keeps sweetly uprooting and breaking stems. The gardener is wisely severing, cutting sensible limbs, with his nails, with iron tools.' (Leopardi 2001, [4176] 22 April 1826; translation by author).

The Gardener is therefore a person who, while trying to put a wisely planned order into things, transforms and directs the Garden, often not caring for the plants' wellbeing. It is obviously possible that this dark-side of gardening depends in some way on the Italian Garden Style – which Leopardi knew well – that is made of order and discipline, and of cut and shaped plants and bushes, with an authoritarian-artistic view. On the contrary, the British garden style is apparently more free and natural, but still a regulated pattern, with its precise lawns, bushes, woodlands and paths; dialectics (and empiricism) with nature are anyway wider, and this attitude can possibly explain the positive view proposed by the conference itself. Other gardens, like the French, Japanese, or Persian ones could explain even more. Gardening, in practice, as well as in metaphor, either positive or authoritarian, is, therefore, in any case a selective process, including some amount of top-bottom decision.

As archaeologists, we are perfectly aware of how much the discipline is embedded in its social and

cultural milieu, and it is easy to recall the relevance of archaeological projects for specific ideologies and social or cultural dynamics: the cases of Nazi research at Biskupin, or of the Great Zimbabwe debate are two well-known examples (Bahn 1996), but also Mortimer Wheeler's British Empire perspective on Indus Civilization has been recalled as a case of directional and top-bottom gardening of the past (Vidale 2005). We are obviously conscious, particularly after the processual and post-processual polemics (Clarke 1973; Hodder 1982a) that there is not simply one past, about which everybody could agree, and that the gardening of time is not only a positive, unilinear accretion of data, but it is also a matter of choice and particular project. The accretion of data does anyway take place and has a proper sense, as data cannot be reduced to cultured perception, but constitute instead something out of us – and represent the inherent connection of archaeology with the Earth Sciences; something which is anyway open to contradictions, and to opposing views, across time. Ancient contradictions can possibly be perceived archaeologically, for instance in contrasting patterns, in persistences and removals, like the *Damnatio Memoriae* cases most easily prove. But more frequent are the contemporary contradictions between scholars, and between scholars, amateurs, skilled popularizing writers, politicians, etc.

Coming back to Sardinia, contradictions, on a historiographic perspective, are very frequent in its archaeology and history, both historically and now, between specialists or specialists and Institutions, but now mainly between specialists and amateurs. Some possible reasons for this will be pinpointed later.

Sardinia seen by a non-Sardinian anthropologist

Alberto Mario Cirese (1921–2011), not born a Sardinian, was the first professor of History of Folklore in Sardinia, in 1957, until 1972: from his position, he had a peculiar and deep-grounded view of Sardinian popular culture and society, as a socialist and a participant observer anthropologist. What is more, Giovanni Lilliu, the great Sardinian archaeologist, a Sardist militant and a Christian-Democratic politician, after voting against Cirese for the chair, became a great friend of him, a reciprocal esteem which can contribute to remark on Cirese's acquired capacity of insight into Sardinia (Cirese 2006, 10). He, when studying Sardinia, was impressed by its specificity, which appeared to him not simply dictated by insularity; he thought that it was embedded in the relative lack of distance between high and lower classes, that is, in the persisting sense of community, that

was characteristic of Sardinians, and which stood as a primary fact, notwithstanding other existing and important internal divisions (Cirese 2006 (1969)). In the 1960s, the debate concentrated on class struggle; nowadays cultural points of view take the fore (coast vs mountains; city vs villages), as the Marxist perspectives have gone into the background. These apparently different analyses should anyway be considered somehow an integration of social facts, seen from different perspectives, and not much distant indeed: the cultural divide contains many embedded elements appropriate for Marxist class analysis.

Cirese (2006 (1963)) remarks that the apparent conservatism of the Sardinian cultural world led to two different approaches:

- On the one side to the exaltation of this assumed tenacity of culture, an attitude that had the consequence of underestimating the changes and the transformations of cultural subsystems, and to refer much too often to Classical antiquity or the Near East contacts, as a direct source for allegedly persistent modern local behaviour;
- On the other side, to the deliberate rejection of this conservatism, considered as a consequence of the underdevelopment of the region, of its history-less time, mainly in mountainous areas.

He further remarks that fervour of debate and 'absolute' statements are particularly strong in Sardinian scholars. These contrasting approaches are clearly dependent on moral judgements, which could be considered of scarce interest in the present context, but they appear to me relevant in terms of our question of the gardening of Sardinian (nuragic) time.

The Sardinian physiognomy derives from the way of reaction to external contributions, and from the internal capacity of development. [...It is] the result of a peculiar way of being in the Mediterranean history (Cirese 2006 (1963), 22–3).

This apparently generic statement (external reaction...internal development) can be properly located in Sardinia, and it appears to be one of the causes of the actual debates, both between archaeologists, and with amateurs and stakeholders: the history of Sardinia has so many disparities, embedded in a single and cohesive social (and cultural) frame, to result in many ways paradoxical.

Sardinian archaeology seen by a non-Sardinian archaeologist

Emma Blake is another non-Sardinian (nor Italian) scholar who devoted a crucial part of her research to nuragic Sardinia. One of her papers (Blake 1998) is particularly illuminating for this discussion, like other ones by the same author on Sardinia are in other respects. It presents some arguments I agree with and would like to point out here.

The author stresses that *Nuraghi* cannot be reduced to unambiguous interpretation in terms of 'real' originary use and reuse, as they were progressively inserted in different networks, and got different meanings, in the different phases of their life. This has implications for the definition of attached memory.

In the nuragic period, the period we always first think of, *Nuraghi* would have changed from a basically domestic character to a symbol of social differentiation. Furthermore, the attention recently brought on their late nuragic cultic use, at least since the Early Iron Age (e.g. Ugas & Paderi 1990), was not stressed by Blake. During the Punic phase, a consistent reduction in domestic use, and progress in abandonment and cultic use, suggest to Emma Blake this label: a beleaguered survival. The Roman period would see a reappraisal in frequentation and reuse of *Nuraghi*, even if with some radical transformations: this is the case of the use of internal spaces for funerary depositions, in Su Nuraxi di Barumini; or of the insertion of the *Nuraghi* as representative features in a meaningful landscape, like in the case of the villa enclosing Santu Antine *Nuraghe* near Torralba; or of the Aidu Entos *Nuraghe* near Bortigali, bearing the latin inscription locating the people of the Ilienses. These cases would reflect 'manifestly political gestures', such that 'reuse of the *Nuraghi* was not a mere passive ethno-cultural continuity, but constituted a purposeful statement by the local populations as they forged a Romano-Sard identity'. (Blake 1988, 64) One can doubt this identity, but it is clear that monuments were part of the forcefully peaceful landscape of Roman Sardinia.

The medieval period would mirror the contrast between the new religion and traditional cult forms, with *Nuraghi* and other testimony of the past being consecrated by new symbols, like the cross engravings (e.g. at Su Lumarzu nuragic spring, Bonorva), and the building of churches in appropriate locations, conveying the esprit of place, and possibly the remaining popular interest in the monuments (S. Sabina *Nuraghe*, Sardara). Everybody, as well as Blake, quotes the famous letter by Gregorio Magno, of the sixth century AD in which the Barbaricini are described as pagan people, still adoring wood and stone. But

the medieval period is also a phase of modest and marginal reuse of the monuments, becoming stone quarries and secondary habitations, while progressively decaying.

In modern times, in the nineteenth century, when Alberto La Marmora, the Piedmont army officer exiled in – and later in charge of – Sardinia, debated the Antiquities in his book *Voyage en Sardaigne* (La Marmora 1826), most of them were in use, occupied by herders or for other purposes, displaying the new insertion in the modern landscape.

During the twentieth century, and specifically after World War II, the process of abstraction from everyday life has progressed, and now *Nuraghi*, and other monuments, protected by the State through Soprintendenza, are testimony of an ancient world, in terms diverted from 'a network of spaces, natural and social. Now they are increasingly conceptually isolated' (Blake 1998, 67). This is the Heritage phase, hallmarked by the inscription of Su Nuraxi di Barumini in the World Heritage List of UNESCO, in 1997 (one could ask why only one *Nuraghe*, and only in 1997, and nothing more of the nuragic past): we must be aware of the transformation that we have been applying and apply to monuments, and of the connected risks.

Blake further remarks that the construction of an imposing monument, like a *Nuraghe*, but also like the Giant's graves, or the Domus de Janas rock-cut graves, necessarily shapes the territory. They define relevant places of human interaction, with some conditioning characteristics; they are landmarks which form a puzzling presence to cope with: it is easily seen that the *Nuraghe* since its construction worked as a catalyzer of subsequent activities, even when we can guess that its meaning had radically changed from the initial one, and even when possibly no original situated memory of it existed anymore. 'Looking at several key phases in the *Nuraghe's* existence, this paper...demonstrate[s] that, while the narrative of the *Nuraghe* unfolds temporally, evocations of its age and origins alone do not account for its significance. Rather, it is its spatiality that guides its ongoing identity-formation, its relentless becoming' (Blake 1998, 60).

Memory of ancient places of Sardinia: major medieval break

The Pre- and Protohistoric Heritage is indeed very present in Sardinia: it includes huge and imposing monuments littering the landscape, both built (*Nuraghi*, giants' tombs, dolmens) and dug out (chamber tombs) or both (monumental wells and springs), huts with stone foundations, villages, standing stones, etc.

The names attached to monuments rarely reflect a directly transmitted origin, as probably is the case for *Nuraghe* (Lilliu 1962), seemingly attested as ‘Nurac’ in the Roman Age epigraph on Bortigali’s Aidu Entos monument (Moravetti 1998a, 237). Other monument category names refer to a popular origin, such as for the *domus de janas* (witches’ homes) or the *tombe di giganti* (giants’ tombs); the same is typical of some specific names shared by both *Nuraghi* and graves, like *sa domu ‘e s’orku* (home of the ogre). Even post-protohistoric monuments come to have problematic but evocative names, as it happened to us during our excavations near Bonorva, where we excavated around and inside a simple rural building locally named *Sas Presones* or *Sas Presones Romanas* (Roman Prisons). We found out that it had originally been a Roman Age bath, partly still standing to the roof (Ialongo *et al.* 2007). We do not know if the name ‘prison’ has any connection with a temporary function, or if it depends on a popular interpretation, as the building had been indeed modified (without leaving evident traces of its primary bathing function), by closing almost all of the doors, and it had no windows, a fact that could be suitable for a prison. Neither we know if the ‘Roman’ attribution is a recent, erudite one, but the mix of indications suggests that its name was probably the consequence of a popular, or partially erudite reconstruction of meaning for a puzzling building, without any persisting memory of its real function.

This attitude, shared by prehistoric and classical monuments, can be assumed as the consequence of a major removal, and of break in continuity, whose depth we can trace up to the medieval religious and social fracture, with the diffused fight against the potential sacred places of the pagan people adoring wood and stone, so appropriately quoted by Gregorio Magno (cf. above).

First millennium BC breaks

Even after the post-colonial debate has shown that some ethno-cultural definitions used by scholars have been more assumed by them than found as evidence (Van Dommelen 1997), it is a matter of recurrent debate whether the transformation of the Sardinian identity had been generalized by a disruption of the nuragic social system brought already by the Phoenicians (Usai 2007; Stiglitz 2010; Tronchetti & Van Dommelen 2005; cf. the debate in Van Dommelen 1998, 85), or later by the Punics or the Romans. Lilliu’s points of view have been very influential, as he remarked, still in the last edition of his ‘La Civiltà dei Sardi’ (Lilliu 2003 (1988)) that the Phoenician contact had no shattering effect on the nuragic world; on the contrary, it would be the

Punic warfare in the sixth century BC, that determined the major crisis of the indigenous world.

In recent years, it became moreover evident that a relevant transition already took place during the nuragic period, corresponding to the Final Bronze Age, leading to relevant shifts in shared meaning (Campus *et al.* 2010). It is generally assumed that no new *Nuraghi* were built after the Final Bronze Age, while on the contrary village culture and sanctuaries took the fore, in local communities, particularly during the Early Iron Age; traditional Giants’ tombs were probably no more built in the Iron Age, and funerary depositions inside them decreased or ceased at all (Bernardini 2011b). At the same time, *Nuraghi* are symbolized and reproduced as stone and metal models, taking part in ritualized and cult activities. The best example of this use is the shrine inside room E of Su Mulinu *Nuraghe*, where the monument becomes a cult place, and its symbolic representation is reproduced inside the embedded shrine (Ugas 1989–1990; Ugas & Paderi 1990). Its sacred use would last at least from the Early Iron Age (if not since Middle Bronze Age) until the late sixth century; after an apparent stop, from the third century BC, the room was used again, with a cultic function at least from the first century BC until the second century AD. Other cases of cult places inside *Nuraghi* are reported by Lilliu (2003, 501–2).

Continuity of sanctuaries into the archaic age is demonstrated, after the Phoenician coastal towns were settled, during the Early Iron Age; Nicola Ialongo (2010) has efficiently shown that, after c. 700 BC, votive deposits change, with a reduction, or even disappearance, of bronze display. We can further quote the recent study by Lela Manning Urquhart (2010), which – even if the study proposes the questionable attribution of some contexts to a post-Early Iron Age date – remarks that after the end of the eighth century, the use of nuragic sacred areas saw a decrease, ‘until a diffused dismissal during the sixth century BC’ [Manning Urquhart 2010, Fig. 4.2]: ‘by 600 only half of the earlier Iron Age sanctuaries were still being used [...] during the sixth century, a handful of sites [...] would continue to be used, but even most of them are abandoned by 525–500 BC’ (Manning Urquhart 2010, 202–3). Some memory in the cultic sphere has therefore to be assumed, but in a changing social context, during Phoenician-dominated phases and then in the Punic powerful intrusion.

As for the resumption of sanctuaries in the later Punic or Roman Age, like in the quoted case of Su Mulinu, other situations are even more complicated: at Genna Maria near Villanovaforru (VS), a cult is located inside the *Nuraghe*, from the late Punic period onwards, fourth century BC (Lilliu 1988; cf. Van Dommelen 1997). Here we have both an interruption and

a change in use, introducing cult: is this linked to the 'memorialization' process (i.e.: transformation of places into memorials) active since the Early Iron Age, in nuragic society, or is it a new independent action?

A more systematic survey of the situation has shown the complexity of the pattern (Stiglitz 2005). For the present goal, we can by now state that:

- A memorialization process came into being at the end of the Bronze Age, involving the whole of nuragic society. *Nuraghe* monuments shifted from subjects of shared memory to memorials, and similar processes can be identified in other subsystems: both the recurrent characters represented in *bronze* *zetti* figurines, occurring in cultic places, suggest they represent memorials of personalities, possibly even transfigured into divine figures and the Mont'e Prama statues strongly support a memorialization attitude;
- A persistence, even if with a transformation and decrease in use, of sacred places took place during the archaic age;
- After the transformations during the sixth century BC, some resumption of cults, and some introduction of new cultic use in nuragic monuments took place;
- Non-homogeneous cases of continuity and discontinuity have been identified in the settlement record (Blake 1998), during the first millennium BC.

Summing up, after the flourishing of the nuragic complexes during the central second millennium BC, whose constant use, testified by the continuity of internal stratigraphies (like at *Nuraghe* Arrubiu central hearth: Lo Schiavo & Sanges 1994), shows a persistence of memory, with enforcing commemorative traits, first millennium BC interruptions and changes in use can be the testimony of contrasting and competing issues about memory, marking contrasting views of the past. Since this process of memorialization of nuragic society, memory becomes more and more selective, possibly coming to be effective almost only in the cult sphere, from the Punic to the Roman periods; new cult places prevail, like main temples in towns and in the landscape, but some reuse of imposing monuments and indigenous sacred places is still clear: the punic Antas temple dedicated to Sardus Pater is superimposed above one of the few known cemeteries of the nuragic early Iron Age.

By the medieval times, the redefinition and reappropriation of the religious landscape was completed, and as such lasted until the present day. On a broad period perspective, this is the culmination of the contrasts in the view of the past that started at least in the seventh century BC. Removals and breaks are evident over a period of more than 1,000 years, even in front of a repeated reconstruction of the meaning of the imposing monumental landscape, and of the purported stability of the Sardinian traditional world discussed by Cirese (see above): a long-term gardening of time.

Modern 'museification' and 'memorification' of the Sardinian heritage

The interaction, re-actualization and creation of memories (memorification instead of memorialization) bound to nuragic imposing monuments was a recurrent phenomenon in the centuries, as can be proved by the contextual presence of archaeological materials of various chronologies. Nowadays, the scientific discovery of the nuragic monuments, started at least with Alberto La Marmora's survey, in the early nineteenth century, has been further developed after World War II, thanks to the Italian legislation, which is fully protective of visible monuments. The present state of knowledge and protection shows an accurate definition of the monuments, with a high number of excavated sites, and – what is more – an impressive number of accessible monuments, often under surveillance and with admission fees: even without considering the 'blockbuster' and most relevant monuments (such as Su Nuraxi di Barumini, Losa, Arrubiu and Santu Antine *Nuraghi*, S. Cristina well, Santa Vittoria sanctuary, etc. etc.), almost each municipality has one or more potentially significant monuments, implying a notable conservation effort and some expectations of touristic promotion. Many societies employing young archaeologists, which keep open the archaeological sites, are dependent on the regional financial support by the Region (Law 14/2006) and have been put at risk of closure, in the case of any end of this support.

Sardinia is an over-typical case in the culturally rich Italian landscape: it has even an excess of cultural supply, facing a rather stagnant touristic demand, with a slightly lowering number of visitors in recent years (Fig. 22.1; SISTAN data, Italian Ministero per i Beni e le Attività culturali). Tourism in Sardinia focuses on the wonderful coast and sea, but it almost ignores most of the beautiful inland territory, where economic activities, agriculture and even the famous Sardinian pastoralism cannot provide a widely distributed wealth.

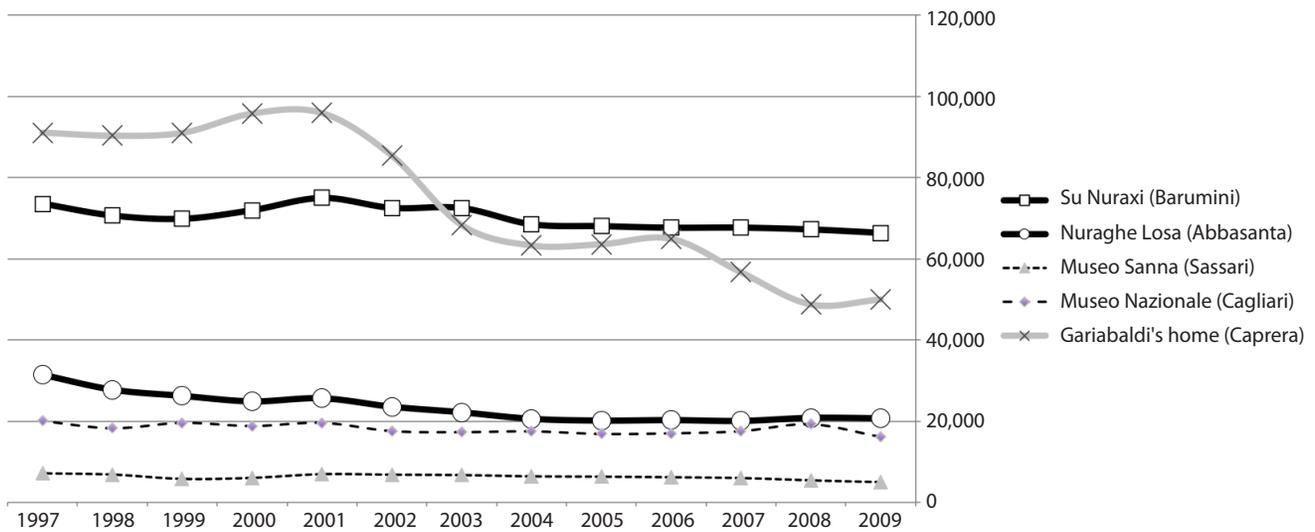


Figure 22.1. Trends in number of visitors of the main archaeological museums (dotted black lines) and sites (solid black lines) directly managed by the State, in Sardinia (3-years mobile averages). The historical site of Garibaldi's home (solid grey line) is included for comparison. The values for the museums and Garibaldi's home include only fee admissions, as they are a better marker of touristic contribution. SISTAN data, Italian Ministero per i Beni e le Attività culturali. Source: <http://www.statistica.beniculturali.it/Pubblicazioni.htm> (last accessed 21.12.2021).

As a consequence, inland rural Sardinia is becoming depopulated, and major and minor towns, as well as many coastal areas, have received a strong settlers' flow from the 1950s to the 1990s. If we look at an important area for nuragic Sardinia, dense of monuments, such as the so-called 'Valle dei Nuraghi', where Santu Antine *Nuraghe* stands, its demographic balance is dramatically falling, to levels lower than at the end of the nineteenth century (Fig. 22.2; data from ISTAT),

even if some villages have a rather flourishing economy (Thiesi, Bonnanaro), and the area matches the average of the Sassari Province, in terms of annual income per person (data of the Italian Ministero dell'Economia e Finanza, 2010). This means that the monuments are more and more alone, without a progress in cultural employment or economic return.

In fact, if we look at the economic performance of Sardinia, much has been done since the unification

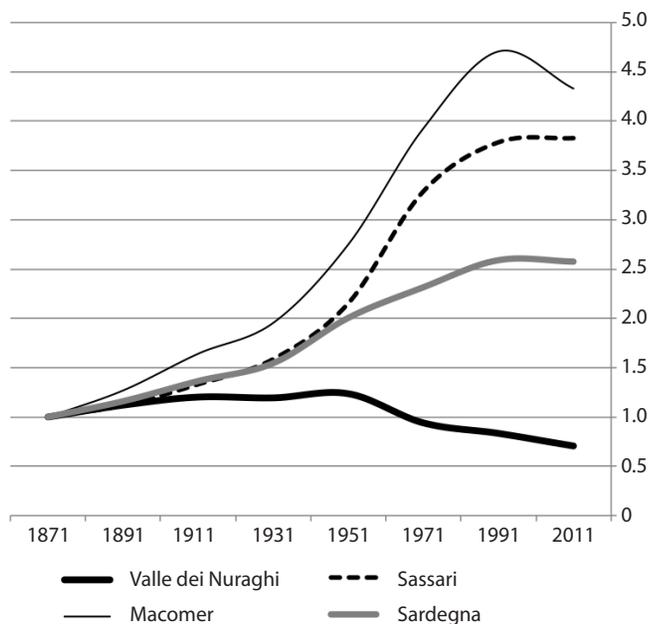


Figure 22.2. Demographic trend of whole Sardinia (solid grey line), compared to the major town of Sassari (dotted black line), the minor town of Macomer and the sum of the Valle dei Nuraghi municipalities (Bonnanaro, Bonorva, Borutta, Cheremule, Giave, Ittireddu, Mores, Thiesi, Torralba); Y values are percentages and 1871 value is set = 100%. ISTAT data. Source: <https://www.tuttitalia.it/> (individual search by administrative unit); https://ebiblio.istat.it/digibib/Sommario%20Statistiche%20Storiche/SBL0509344Comuni_e_pop_cens1861_1951.pdf (last accessed 21.12.2021).

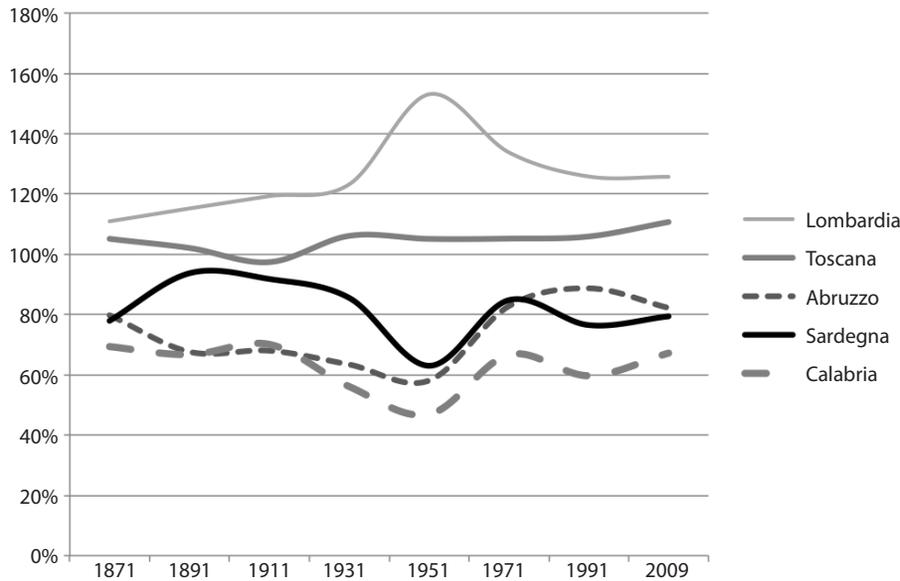


Figure 22.3. Average GDP per person of Sardinia (solid black line) and of selected Italian regions; Y values are percentages and the Italian average is set = 100%. Data: Brunetti et al. 2011, appendix.

of Italy (Fig. 22.3; Brunetti *et al.* 2011), but wealth is concentrated on the coast and in towns, while the depopulated centers of the interior are the poorest ones, mainly inhabited by old people with low pensions (Fig. 22.4, data from the Italian Ministero dell'Economia e Finanza, 2011). The discontinuous economic progress of Sardinia has brought some relative improvements, as Sardinia has now the highest GDP per inhabitant of Southern Italy and Sicily, but nevertheless lower than any region of Northern and Central Italy (data from ISTAT). If we add this situation to the already discussed internal population and economic disequilibrium, we can realize how much fragmented the traditional socio-cultural structure of Sardinia has become.

Therefore, the marginalized social and economic conditions of inland Sardinia stimulate idealized revivalist aspirations in the local populations, which come to be dependent on the dreams of a former greatness, such as shown by the monuments. In this context, private archaeological looting, aiming at finding bronzes, possibly the *bronzetti* figurines, to be sold on the illegal market, is still widespread in Sardinia, as well.

The existence of a strong Sardinian National feeling, a markedly proud attitude, a certain distrust of non-island people and in general of the State, are all components converging towards a partly anarchic and contrasting world of vital feeling, projected on the Antiquity, as the redeemer of present conditions. The constantly resisting Sardinians ('costante resistenziale sarda') about which Lilliu spoke, are as much a reality, as a creation (Lilliu 1971, 2003 (1988)). This situation, instead of reducing the perception of discontinuity with the past, appears to increase it: the past is seen through the eyeglasses of a dramatic fall, due to

external powers and violence, and we can see some of the points highlighted by Cirese, surfacing again.

Prominent amateurs and touristic operators are among the critical people, producing a parallel history and mythology of Sardinia, and sometimes even achieving political support, with an economic return. The case of the success gained by books and photographic exhibitions, not only asserting that Sardinia was Atlantis, but even finding some support in geologists, for the hypothesis that a tsunami could have destroyed the nuragic society, is but the most refined example of the amateurial perspective. It is in fact incredible the number of internet blogs and forums, books and booklets which debate about Shardana, archaeoastronomy, extraordinary building techniques, and so on. In practical terms, the distrust of the external powers and the State tends to extend to the archaeological specialists, seen as people not caring for the greatness of the past, and not producing the great transformation expected to generate wealth, and respect. I think I have learnt from Antonietta Boninu, who spent her life fighting for the assumption of responsibility by the Institutions and people in front of the 'excess in cultural supply' of Sardinia, that there is here a great divide between thought and action. This, more often than not, results in tensions between stakeholders, local communities and the Soprintendenza, sometimes reaching a heated level of confrontation.

As an example, I can recall my personal experience in the research of the Bonorva area (SS_2004–2009). Part of the work took place inside the Mariani Estate, a stretch of land that underwent profound transformations, from a hunting property and a forest, to almost total deforestation, and lastly to bovine stock-keeping,

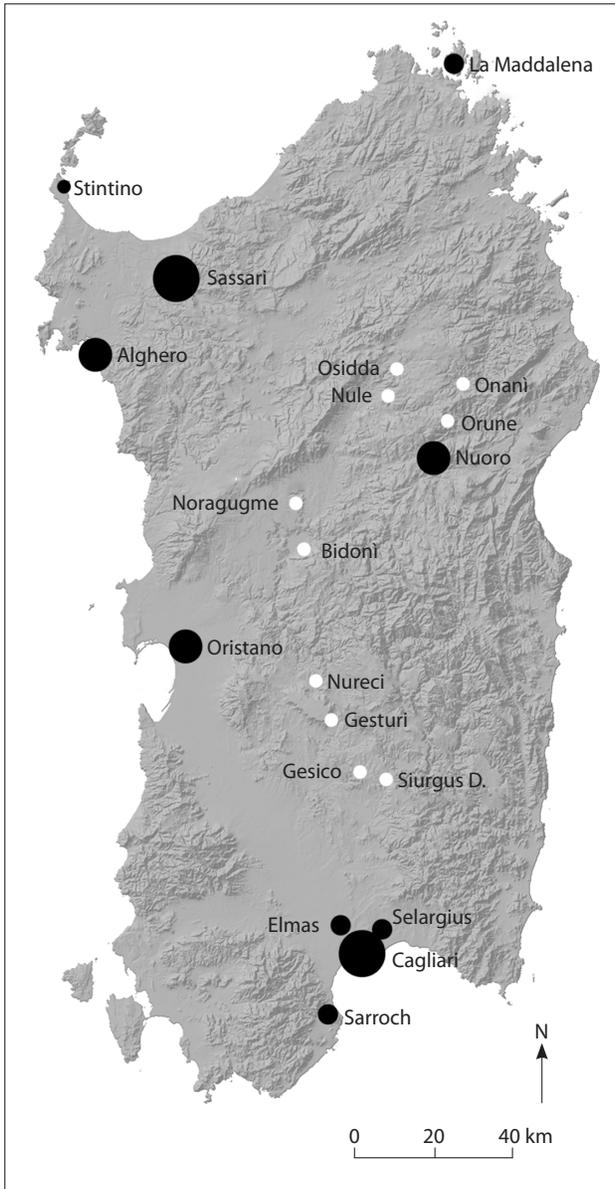


Figure 22.4. Sardinia: the 10 municipalities with the highest average income per person (in black) and the 10 municipalities with the lowest average income per person (in white); tiny dots, villages < 4,000 inhabitants; small dots, towns between 4,000 and 30,000 inhabitants; medium dots, towns between 30,000 and 45,000; big dots, towns over 45,000 inhabitants. Data from the Italian Ministero dell'Economia e Finanza, 2010. Source: <http://www.comuni-italiani.it/20/statistiche/redditip2010.html> (last accessed 21.12.2021).

opened also by bulldozer removal of the outcropping boulders and rocks, now left in elongated heaps bordering pastures. Bigger monuments were still standing and preserved, like three *Nuraghi* and the

underground *domus de janas* Tombs; even a Neolithic village could be identified as rather well preserved, but the landscape had undergone radical transformations, with scarce care by local herders. One of the *Nuraghi* had until recently been reused in a pastoral context, with attached pens, and bulldozer interventions. The whole area is a Municipality property since 2002, but has been continuously claimed by local herders, in a sort of no-man's-land status, until recently (2012).

In this context, while major monuments are more or less preserved, the landscape has been subject to massive alterations, and the smaller elements of the built environment have been at risk, in a competitive economic context, faced by the depopulation of the land. In this context, our team excavated Sa Pala Larga tomb 7, a wonderfully preserved painted chamber tomb (*domus de janas*), inserted inside an extremely significant cemetery, in an almost hilltop location, with difficult accessibility (Usai *et al.* 2011). The discovery of the painted tomb sparked contrast and debate between local amateurs, touristic operators and the Soprintendenza, as the grave had to be sealed for protection, pending restoration and adequate infrastructure for possible future visits. This debate expanded in the social media, spanning from claims of wrong decisions by the Soprintendenza to the quest for the reopening and touristic development of the site, claiming the scientific interest and possible economic return; the problems posed by the site location and its delicate conditions were definitely overlooked by amateurs, and the experts (archaeologists, restorers) not recognized as such. Obviously, the opening to the public of the cemetery and of the painted tomb depends on projects and financial support, which should be sought through a coordinated effort, but tensions by the local population concentrated on a short-term desire for immediate returns.

Conclusion

The components of memories of nuragic Sardinia are many, and include different views, and perspectives, in front of the puzzling monuments coming from the past. We have seen that phases of competing memories can be identified at least since the process of memorialization of nuragic monuments started, at the end of the Bronze Age. Competing and selective memories, as well as appropriation and memorialization acts, are to be seen as active during the first millennium BC, and further on, until the definitive late antique christianization of the region, as shown by the different use and qualification of the monuments. I have argued that this was a long term process, developing until the almost complete removal of memory eventually applied.

After World War II, in parallel with the extraordinary activity of Giovanni Lilliu, the nuragic monuments came to the fore, but the modern legal, economic and demographic conditions, progressively contributed to the isolation of the Heritage from its external context. This process is a general problem, which in Sardinia comes to be amplified also by the 'excess in supply' of cultural monuments. Newly emerging forms of memorification of the nuragic world result in intense contrast between specialists, amateurs (sometimes very heated), Institutions, and sometimes touristic operators and landowners. Globally, notwithstanding intense debate, and even careful descriptions of the contexts, the monuments are increasingly alone, inserted in a changing landscape, under pressure of different interests.

It is clear that in fact the Heritage, even if protected and recognized, is becoming scarcely embedded in the local depopulated rural contexts, while the attached memories mainly come from scholars or from prominent amateurs.

In my opinion, there are here many competing attitudes, as Leopardi remarked, but there is little of the alleged conservatism both quoted and denied by Cirese. The compact tissue of Sardinian society is fragmented, too, by demographic and economic factors, paving the way for deregulated and authoritative

positions, like many of those held by amateurs, and possibly by some archaeologists. A similar situation has taken place in other regions with a vulnerable economy and an attitude towards revivalist dreams, such as for instance in Calabria, where often natural stone blocks are reported as mysterious cultural products, or amateurs blame researchers for inadequate understandings. In Sardinia, leaving aside the socio-economic conditions, the amateur perspective is enhanced by the extraordinary monuments, and by the fascination they exert; which is certainly also one of the reasons why we, as archaeologists, care so much about them. For this reason, we should invest many efforts in making the Heritage a more integrated element of the living communities.

Acknowledgments

I owe Antonietta Boninu most of my insight into Sardinian facts, if I have any; this chapter is sadly dedicated to her powerful memory, hoping she would have appreciated my arguments. F. Campus, A. Depalmas, V. Leonelli have given to me other basic hints, I don't know if correctly understood. M. Gallinaro and N. Ialongo have read and commented drafts of this chapter; the responsibility of the text is anyway totally mine.

Gardening time

Gardening may seem worlds away from *Nuraghi* and brochs, but tending a garden is a long process involving patience, accretion and memory. Scholars argue that memories are also cultured, developed and regained. The monuments in Scotland and Sardinia are testament to the importance of memory and its role in maintaining social relations.

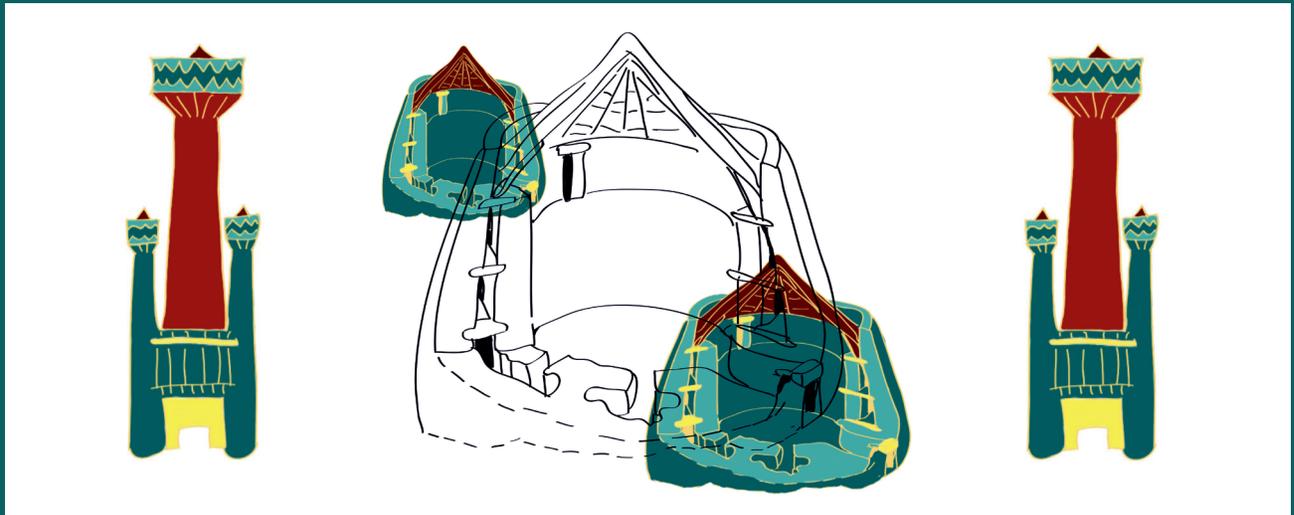
This collection of twenty-one papers addresses the theme of memory anchored to the enduring presence of monuments, mainly from Scotland and Sardinia, but also from Central Europe and the Balkans.

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