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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Simon Stoddart
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...
Sardinia and of progressive positions which were initiatives which promoted the independence of also involved in politics, first as a member of the drafting the Special Statute of Autonomy. He was he worked for the Regional Council of Sardinia, and acute, despite his soft tone. As a cultured man, in a way which was never dull but rather vigilant taking on civic responsibilities, which he fulfilled in a way which was both comprehensible and 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 multi-faceted. 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 ‘uca de su Tintirriolu (Loria & Trump 1978). His work around Bonu Ighinu (Trump 1990) is, however, closest to the 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 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 7

Remembering Nuraghi: memory and domestication of the past in nuragic Sardinia

Mauro Perra

A fierce debate has developed in Sardinia between orientalists, that is scholars of Phoenician and Punic archaeology, and protohistorians about the complex subject of the political and social structure in nuragic communities when they came into contact with the first Phoenician prospectors. This is because of both a constant lack of reliable archaeological sites excavated in the past and a blunt divergence between traditional dating, based on the presence of geometric Greek pottery, and the latest radiocarbon dates recorded at Carthage and in the Iberian peninsula (Nijboer 2002, 2004; Arruda 2003; Mederos Martin 2003). The debate has branched out into strictly connected themes such as the dating of the famous bronze figurines, of the stone statues of Mont’e Prama (Cabras) and of the stone and bronze Nuraghe models found in various Sardinian sites. The debate has recently seen echoes in the volume I Nuragici, I Fenici e gli Altri: Sardegna e Mediterraneo tra Bronzo Finale e Prima Età del Ferro, Sassari 2012, edited by Paolo Bernardini and Mauro Perra. In brief, while the orientalists are inclined towards more recent dates (not earlier than the ninth century BC), protohistorians consider the ninth century BC to be a terminus ante quem, therefore the date of the final phase of such production.

The archaeological data

While research in the key site at Mont’e Prama cannot yet be considered definitive, and despite the fact that most finds of Nuraghe models are, with a few exceptions, occasional and accidental, the recent acquisitions from excavations in nuragic sanctuaries allow us to date the first examples of bronze figurines, generally ascribed to the Early Iron Age, minimally to the initial and intermediate phases of the Final Bronze Age (Campus et al. 2010). The most recent phases of such artefacts do not come later than the eighth to sixth centuries BC, particularly the bronze boats found in Italic and Etruscan sanctuaries, amongst which the sanctuary of Hera Lacinia in Crotone (Spada 1994; Lilliu 2000a) and recently tomb 74 of the necropolis in Monte Vetrano (Salerno) (Cerchiai and Nava 2008–2009).

Between the Middle and Recent Bronze Age, settlements were characterized by a polycentric layout with nuragic towers at their centre, surrounded by large hierarchical territorial systems which extend to over 100/150 sq. km. Within these systems, one can distinguish both upper and lower order centres reflecting the hierarchy of society. As shown by the latest research, single-towered Nuraghi overlook unavoidable fords and mountain passes, but they also command, together with more complex Nuraghi, the road network which connects them. In short, all of them together control the territory and its resources. The ostensibly egalitarian communal burial in megalythic tombs apparently contrasted with such a strictly hierarchical socio-economic organization, leaving one with a suspicion that the power of the elites was anything but stable, and where it could actually be challenged by subordinate groups with a deeply egalitarian ideology (Perra 2009).

This pre-existing historical picture entered a crisis as early as the beginning of the twelfth century BC, at the onset of the Final Bronze Age, when 60 per cent of Nuraghi showed signs of dismantling, while the few remaining Nuraghi which escaped this fate underwent a phase of visible restoration (for example at Su Nuraxi di Barumini, Lilliu 1955). Already from about the eleventh century BC, no new Nuraghi were built. Whereas, in some cases, limited occupation can be observed during the Early Iron Age, in other cases the sites were still visited, but were turned into cult sites (Perra 2012). This is a period during which the ancestor cult in collective burials became weaker, while new structures employed for a strictly religious purpose, such as Well-Temples, Spring Fountains, ‘megaron’
Chapter 7

Figure 7.1. Alghe, Nuraghe Palmavera: the reconstruction of the reunion hut (after Moravetti 1992).

Temple structures and Round Temples were constructed and utilized at a higher rate. The surge of religious activity which can be detected in these structures stems from the nuragic elites’ need to overcome a systemic crisis. The power system has become unstable under challenge from entropic forces, leading the elites to try to subject the community to a brand new cult that legitimized social inequality (Perra 1997a; 2009). During the most recent phase of this period, the first few individual tombs started to appear. This is also the moment in which specially distinct structures called Capanne delle Riunioni (Meeting Huts), round-shaped and equipped with benches, niches and also Nuraghe models, were used in the largest settlements such as those of Su Nuraxi di Barumini and of Palmavera in Alghero (Fig. 7.1) (Lilliu 1955, Moravetti 1992), but also near Well Temples like the one of S. Anastasia in Sardara (Ugas & Usai 1987).

Through an analysis of the recently examined sanctuary sites and Capanne delle Riunioni, it has become clear that during the rites a number liturgical artefacts were employed at the same time: Nuraghe models, votive swords, bronze or stone anthropomorphic and zoomorphic figurines (Campus 2012). In the light of this fact, we cannot separate nor study ritual instruments out of context, that is purely according to style or typology, otherwise we would risk misunderstanding their true meaning and, worse, be led into inevitable interpretative mistakes.

Figure 7.2. Sorradiile, Su Monte, the reconstruction of the altar and the Nuraghe model, view from top and side (after Santoni & Bacco 2008).

Models of Nuraghi

Nuraghi models have been studied by various authors, who have considered their typological and interpretative features (recently Blake 1997; Leonelli 2005, 2012a, 2012b; Perra 2017). The models have been generally analyzed as miniature reproductions of the typical Bronze Age monument of Sardinia. The reproductions of nuragic towers are in stone, bronze, pottery; they differ in size ranging from the large-scale models enclosed in altars, such as the ones at Su Mulinu in Villanovafranca (Ugas 1989–90) and at Su Monte in Sorradiile (Fig. 7.2) (Santoni & Bacco 2005, 2008), to the bronze miniatures, such as the four-towered Nuraghi from Camposanto at Olmedo (Lilliu 1966) and Serra Niedda in Sorso (Rovina et al. 2002) or the stylized reproductions on buttons and bronze boats (Lo Schiavo 2012a & b). The four-towered bronze model of Serra Niedda is matched with anthropomorphic and zoomorphic bronze figurines. In the well-temple of Santa Vittoria in Serri, numerous fragments of stone Nuraghe models with crenellated friezes, stone bull heads, votive swords and bronze figurines are also found together (Taramelli 1909, 1914, 1921, 1922,
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Nuraghi from an archaeological point of view, and even less so in collective graves. The practice is an evident manipulation and falsification of the past in order to transform it to present-day advantage (Assmann 1997).

The votive context

As for the association of Nuraghe models with anthropomorphic statuettes, one can observe the exceptional narrative power of the three-towered Nuraghe reproductions from Cann’e Vadosu, near Cabras and from Paulilongu in San Sperate, in which the human figure in relief stands out against a complex Nuraghe. The model recently found at Serra Is Araus near San Vero Milis (Usai 2012a), showing a calf beside a human figure in relief, must be added to those two miniatures. (Fig. 7.4). Despite the fact that they were all chance finds lacking context, they still tell the same stories observed throughout all ritual centres of nuragic Sardinia and especially at Mont’e Prama.

Other votives

As Fulvia Lo Schiavo (2005) states regarding votive swords (Fig. 7.3): ‘it is now beyond doubt that they are votive objects. The metallurgical analyses have now been joined to the archaeological assessments, showing how, rather than being of bronze, they are of an alloy of copper with a very small quantity of tin, totally unsuitable, on account of its flexibility and fragility, for use as a weapon, having been anyway rendered almost useless by the two sides not being perfectly symmetrical.’ In those religious sites in which they were found in their original placement, they stand either in the higher parts of the shrine, or on top of partition walls in circular buildings. In all these instances the base of the swords are embedded in castings of lead at the base and with their tips always pointing upwards (recently Campus 2012). This is obviously a clear manifestation of weapon worship. As a matter of fact, there are very few swords among those found in nuragic contexts that can be considered as true weapons; moreover, during the archaic phases of the nuragic civilization, traces of war and warriors are not detectable within

Figure 7.3. Villasor, hoard of Su Scusorgiu: votive swords (after Lo Schiavo et al. 2005).
Sword-carrying warriors, in many cases carrying a votive sword, stand out among the collection of anthropomorphic bronze figurines. There are also numerous archers, whereas figurines of boxers ought basically to be considered irrelevant, despite the numerous specimens found at Mont'e Prama (Perra et al. forthcoming). Votive swords are in any case quite frequently represented in bronze figurines and it is worth mentioning that fragments of these were already found in the most ancient bronze-hoards of Sardinia dating from non-final phases of the Recent Bronze Age. The considerable amount of armed bronze figurines is not only evidence of a defined social group portraying their role as warriors; it is also indicative of the meaning underlying the exhibition of swords and the representation of the Nuraghe, which was probably strictly interpreted as a defensive structure.

Moreover, in nuragic sanctuaries one can observe a considerable amount of zoomorphic figures represented both in large scale stone statues (for example at Santa Vittoria in Serri) and in bronze miniatures. They are for the greater part images of cattle and rams, but there is also an abundance of deer, wild boars, foxes, etc. There is an evident need to represent the wealth of the community ranging from cereal production to cattle, sheep and goat livestock. The presence of such imagery as the deer and the boar, but also the mouflon, should not surprise us given the great importance of hunting in nuragic cuisine (Perra 2018a). As for the zoomorphic figurines, their possible role as substitutes for real animal offerings in religious rituals has already been mentioned (Lo Schiavo and Manconi 2001).

Once the inseparable archaeological and semantic link among the different liturgical objects of nuragic rituals has been determined, the interpretation of the large and famous necropolis of Mont'e Prama near Cabrasis is probably less laborious (Tronchetti 2005, 2008; Bedini et al. 2012; Minoja and Usai 2014). This nuragic funerary sanctuary has been, and still is, an object of hot debate among scholars. In the 1970s, 33 pit graves were excavated, each one containing an individual burial, 27 of which belonged to male individuals and 6 to females, all strictly related to each other (Tronchetti et al. 1991). Only tomb 25 contained the remains of grave goods: various necklace beads and a scaraboid seal, possibly crafted in the East, dating, on typological grounds,
from the twelfth to tenth centuries BC (Stiglitz 2012b). The wells were covered with a layer of rubble which yielded a large amount of Final Bronze Age (eleventh to tenth centuries BC) nuragic ceramics (under study by G. Bacco), Phoenician and Punic pottery dating to the fifth to fourth centuries BC and 5,200 fragments of 28 life-size nuragic statues featuring 16 boxers, 6 archers and 6 sword-carrying warriors (Fig. 7.5), at least 16 stone models of Nuraghi, 8 of which are multi-towered, and several baetyls like the ones of Oragiana in Cuglieri. According to Carlo Tronchetti, the archaeologist who led the excavations of the necropolis, and to other scholars, there is a strong connection between the graves and the statues, which they dated to the eighth century BC, that is to an important transitional phase in the island’s history. This is the period in which close contact between nuragic locals and Phoenician prospectors was established, at least in the regions of Sulcis, Sinis and Nurra (Alghero). In accordance with this interpretation the tombs, the statues and the models are a clear sign of hybrid practices or hybridization, according to some scholars (Tronchetti & Van Dommelen 2005) or evidence of cross-breeding from other perspectives (Stiglitz 2010; Bernardini 2011a, 2012a, b).

New research of the necropolis has been extended to the external part of the line of tombs, leading to the discovery of other structures which seem to be related to a sanctuary (Usai & Vidili 2016). The most recent radiocarbon dating reveals that the burial area was used from the Final Bronze Age (twelfth century BC) until the Early Iron Age (first half of the eighth century BC). It is therefore evident that, if we do wish to consider the statues of Mont’e Prama contemporary to the tombs, their dating ought to be placed within this entire time period.

Moreover, the whole apparatus of the sanctuary, pit graves, Nuraghi models and statues, clearly reproducing the iconography of the anthropomorphic bronze figurines, can be fully ascribed to the nuragic tradition which, with the baetyls, can even be dated as early as the Recent Bronze Age. Indeed the baetyls from Mont’e Prama belong to the same typology as those found in several nuragic megalithic tombs of Sardinia dating from the Middle Bronze Age. A fragment from a statue’s finger was found in pit grave 28 (Tronchetti 2012a, 227), which clearly indicates that the statues were already in pieces at the moment when the grave was built and that the destruction of the statues should be linked to the internal social and political dynamics of the nuragic community in Sinis and not to contact with the Phoinikes from Tharros.

Thus, Mont’e Prama can be placed as a typical nuragic sanctuary dating back at least to the Final Bronze Age, or even to the Recent Bronze Age, as shown by other Sardinian ritual sites, and lasting at least as late as the eighth century with various reuse episodes. The graves themselves are not dissimilar at all from other nuragic pit graves found in other places of the island, such as the sanctuary of Antas in Fluminimaggiore. So, should models and statues be considered as ‘entangled’ objects? Are they properly a sign of ‘hybridization’? This could be the case, if we mean that all craft objects are entangled or that all cultural manifestations, especially the ones of the Bronze Age Mediterranean, are hybrid practices, but the precise connection with the Phoenicians cannot be
demonstrated. The cause is a memory geographically close at hand, not from an exotically induced knowledge from a distance.

Conclusion

_Nuraghi_ models, bronze figurines, votive swords and shrines are inextricably entangled in meanings that are historically linked with a terminal, though not declining, phase of the nuragic civilization and that do not reveal anything unique nor anomalous if studied in a context seen as unitary. These meanings should be related to a historical phase which, starting from the final Recent Bronze Age marks a crisis amongst the _Nuraghe_ as a political and social model, a crisis to which nuragic hegemonic groups respond by intensifying religious rituals in native sanctuaries, appealing to a deep monumental history. These sanctuaries, especially those located in the inner regions, retained their political independence and economic welfare at least until the Orientalizing phase. Far from being an expression of aristocratic individuals, whose existence is elsewhere archaeologically well demonstrated by their tombs and monumental residences (at Murlo in Tuscany for example), such sanctuaries were the product of hierarchically dominant groups in a resolute search for a legitimation of their unequal social position in comparison with other subordinate groups and chose to emphasize their power by drawing on deeper memories (Perra 2009). The symbolic language employed for this aim is the one of a mythical age when the _Nuraghi_ builders and the hero-warriors guaranteed peace and economic prosperity for a long time in a not too distant past, allowing the whole community to grow and evolve along the centuries before colonial contact with Phoenician people who brought great, but different, innovations to Sardinia, that is urban civilization, state organization and writing.
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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