

# ...e cammina cammina...

The fairy tales, places and itineraries  
of an island

English version

**SARDEGNA**







**REGIONE AUTONOMA DELLA SARDEGNA**

## **...e cammina cammina...**

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ASSESSORATO DEL TURISMO, ARTIGIANATO E COMMERCIO  
Viale Trieste 105, 09123 Cagliari

Guide produced within the Interregional Project "Itinerari turistici dei paesaggi d'autore" [Tourist Itineraries in Writers' Landscapes], in accordance with bylaw 135/2001, section 5, paragraph 5

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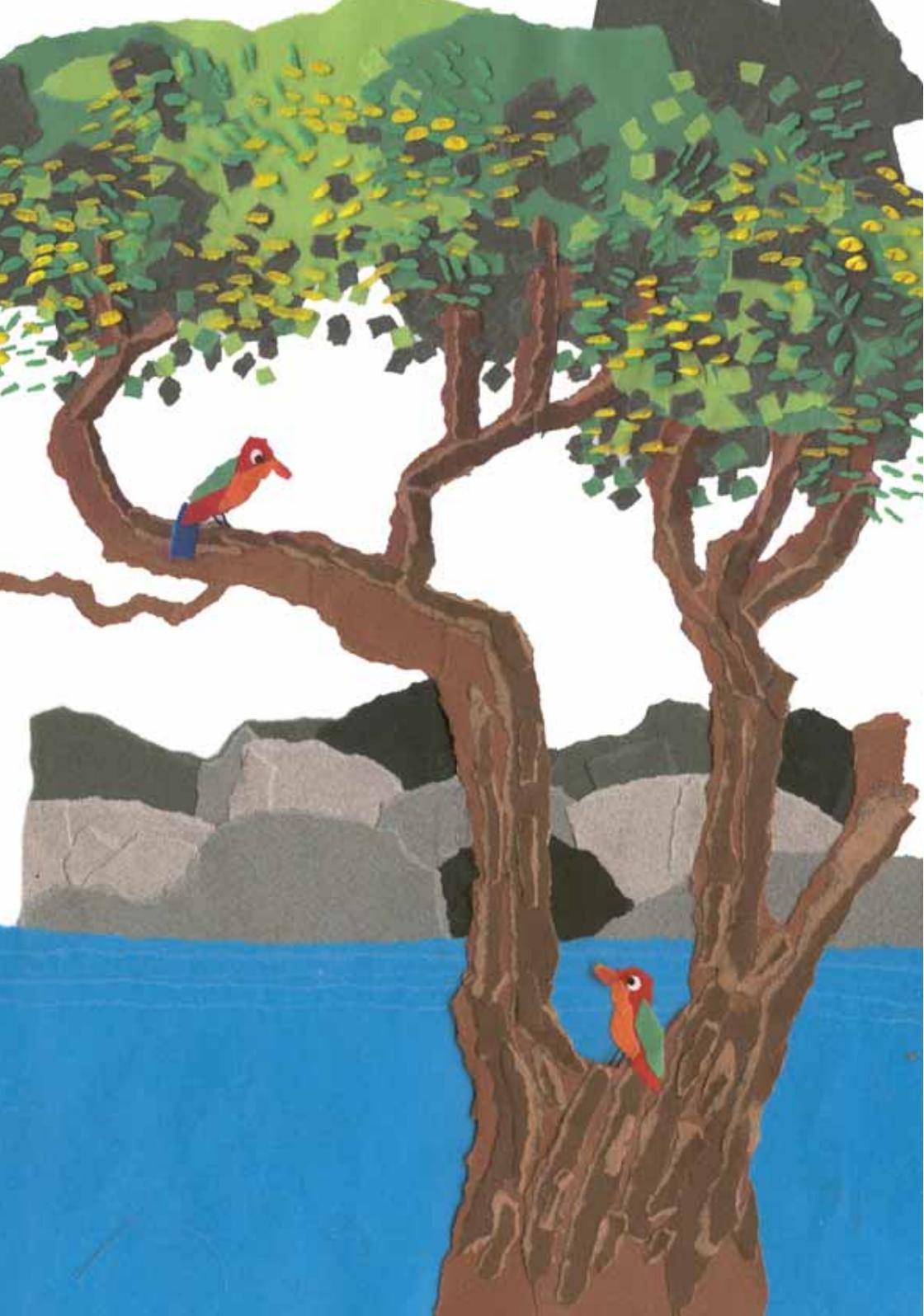
A children's literary  
guide

**SARDEGNA**



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# Marta pelle di sole e Mena pelle di luna

Alberto Melis

A long long time ago, when children were not afraid of the dark, two sisters lived in the village of Ulassai. Now these two sisters were born and lost their mother on the very same day, as she died giving birth to them.

They were as alike as two peas in a pod, apart from the fact that one of them had very dark skin, while the other was very pale-skinned: this was why they were called Marta pelle di sole [sunskinned] and Mena pelle di luna [moonskinned].

Now one day, when they were quite big, their father took them to gather wood near the Santa Barbara woods, because winter was approaching. This was when Mena pelle di luna walked out of the sun and disappeared. Her father looked for her all day long, in and out of the woods. Marta pelle di sole never stopped crying, indeed she cried so much, that even the sky grew dark and cried with her for a whole month without stopping.

"We'll have to face up to it! Mena pelle di luna is never coming back," said the father.

But Marta pelle di sole did not want to accept anything of the sort. And when the west wind brought the first snow to the mountains, she announced to her father: "I'm going to talk to the Coga [witch] who lives in the **Su Murmuri** cave. Perhaps she knows something about

## Then and now

The Su Marmuri cave is set in the mountains known as the “Tacchi d’Ogliastra”, because they have a curious shape like the heel of a shoe. The mouth of the cave opens up at 880 m above sea level and stretches for almost 1 km. Deep inside the cave, you can admire the rectangular Grande Sala [Great Chamber], the Sala dell’Organo [Organ Chamber] with rock concretions resembling organ pipes, the Sala del Cactus [Cactus Room] with tall stalagmites, the Sala dei Pipistrelli [Bat Chamber] and the Galleria delle Vaschette [The Tunnel of the Small Basins]. The temperature inside the cave is around 10° centigrade.

Su Marmuri, which is not far from the spectacular Lequarci falls, lies within the territory of Ulassai, the village which is so often called the “Open-Air Museum”, since it is studded with numerous works of art that make such a contrast with the wild, unspoilt nature of the surrounding area. Ulassai is the birthplace and home of Maria Lai, the famous artist who transforms canvas, books, bread and terracotta into stupendous works of art. Thanks to her donation, the old railway station has been transformed into a museum of contemporary art: the Stazione dell’Arte.

## How to get here

The cave lies at 1 km from Ulassai and can be reached along the asphalted road from the village, following a breathtaking route through rocks and spurs divided by deep gorges. A flight of 400 steps leads to the cave.

## Things to do here

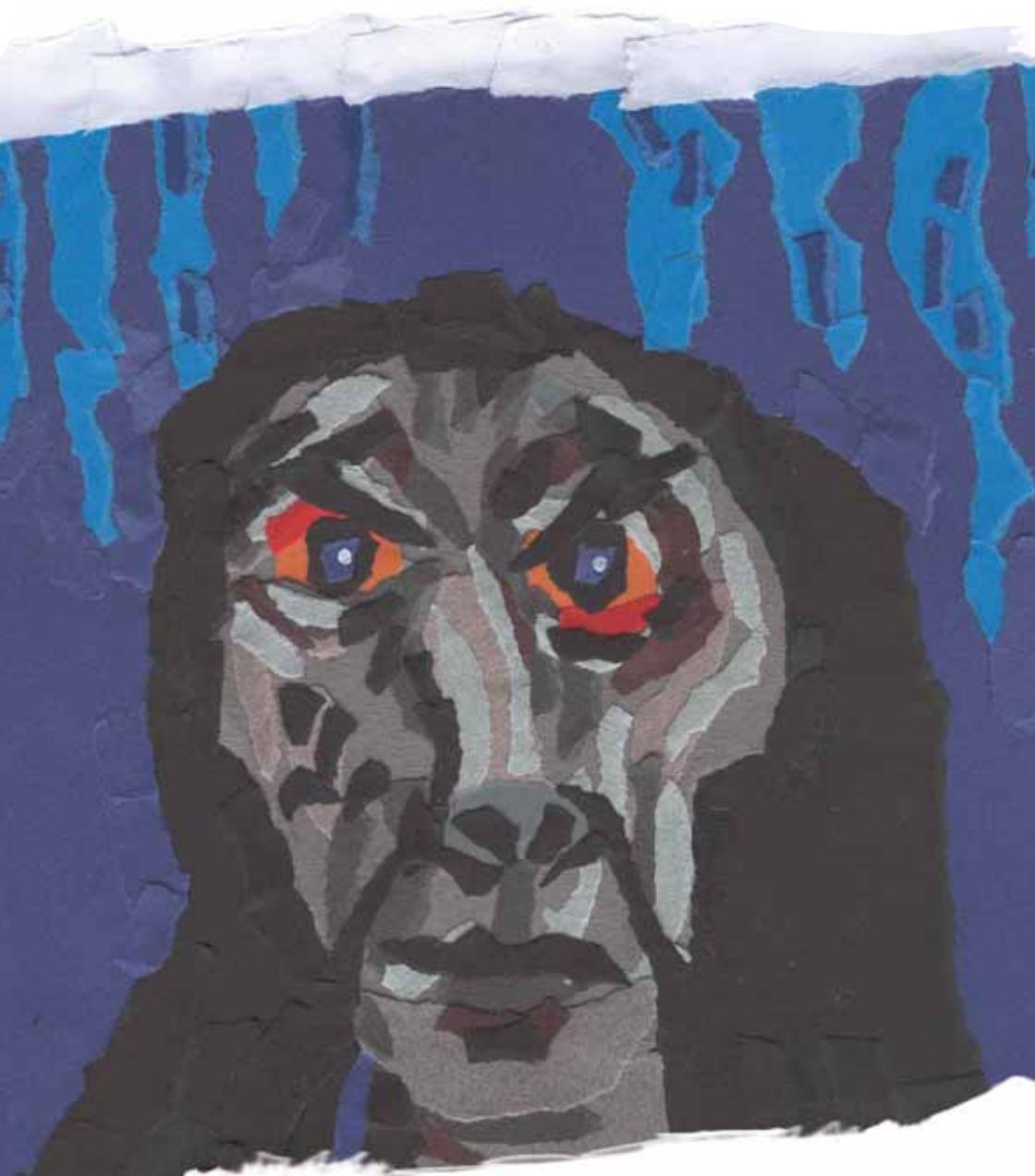
Outings to the Su Marmuri caves, *Coop. Su Bullicciu*, tel. 0782 79859  
Stazione dell’arte, in the ex *Stazione Ferroviaria* [ex-Railway station],  
*Sp 11 - Ulassai*, tel. 0782 79149 - 334 9695939  
Library with Children’s Section Ulassai, 0782 79149  
Festival dei tacchi [Festival of the “Tacchi” mountains],  
*Ogliastrateatro, Cadadie Teatro*; tel. 070 565507; period: August

my sister.” Just imagine how the poor man felt on hearing these words.

This was because the Coga who lived in Su Marmuri, a murky cave on the slopes of a huge rocky mountain called the Tacco di Ulassai, was an old witch who had got up to plenty of mischief in the course of her long life. Her spells had made fruits dry up on the trees and set fields of grain on fire.



She had bewitched men, enchanted young girls and  
every now and then during moonless starless nights, had  
gobbled up a child or two,





because she was fond of tender flesh.

But nonetheless, Marta pelle di sole's father did not stand in her way.

"If this is what your heart is telling you to do, then off you go!" he murmured, giving his blessing to his daughter. "But first of all take this, it might bring you good luck." Then the man gave the little girl a silver coloured bell-flower decorated with golden spirals, that had once belonged to the girls' mother and which had been kept in an earthenware pot without ever losing its freshness. So as dusk was setting in, Marta pelle di sole set off for the Tacco di Ulassai. The night was as black as the dark eye of a bottomless well and the air was really cold, so very cold, that even a cuckoo's breath would have been frozen into little clouds as white as snow. Yet Marta pelle di sole managed to find the right way immediately. And she walked on and on, not feeling the cold at all. This was because soft circles of light, pale as moonlight and hot as the rays of sun, were pouring forth from the flower that she was holding tightly in her hand. When she arrived in front of the cave, the little girl picked up a stone and ...

<<Knock Knock Knock>> she beat three times on the rock wall.

"Who is knocking at my house?" rasped a horrible voice in the silence of the night.

The little girl went down towards the end of the cave, where the Coga was waiting for her at the foot of a huge black rock, under a curtain of pink, very sharp stalactites. The witch's face looked as if it were made of mud and dust, of old cork, of leather, of wood shavings and of mouldy moss. "Who are you? And why aren't you

frightened to come into my den in the dead of night?" said the Coga, grinding her teeth.

"My name is Marta pelle di sole," answered the little girl, "and I am not frightened of the dark or of you!"

At these words, rather strangely, instead of gnashing her teeth even more, the Coga gave a great shiver, as if winter himself had breathed in her face with his stormy icy breath. "Keep that flower away from me, now!" she yelled. "Can't you see that its light is turning me to stone?" It was true. The shining circles of light pouring out from the flower had already turned the Coga's bony hands and her ox-hoofed feet to stone.

"Maybe I will or maybe I won't," was how Marta pelle di sole replied, "but anyhow, tell me, was it you who took my sister Mena pelle di luna?"

The Coga swore and even crossed her heart and hoped to die: she had not been the one to kidnap the little girl. And when she learnt that Mena pelle di luna had disappeared near the Santa Barbara forest ... "Perhaps I know who took her away," she hissed. "Near those woods there is an old abandoned well, where every now and then my comare [fellow witch] Maria Abbranca hides..." When she heard these words, Marta pelle di sole clenched her lips. Because Maria Abbranca, half woman, half demon of underground streams and dark caves, used to hide at the bottom of wells, ready to grab boys and girls under her dark coarse woollen cloak and drag them into the bowels of the earth to break them up into tiny pieces. "Where can I find your comare?" asked Marta pelle di sole again. "Amongst the ruins of the old **village of Romanzesu**, in the Poddi Arvu forest, near Bitti..." And these were the last words the witch ever

## Then and now

On the plateau of Bitti, in a dense wood of cork oaks in the "Poddi Arvu" [white poplar] area, near to the source of the Tirso river, we find Su Romanzesu, a nuraghic village which still has the remains of about a hundred huts, several cult buildings, a well temple, some huge rectangular rooms and a ceremonial granite wall. The site, which bears witness to man's presence here since the Prehistoric Age, developed around a well temple built into the rock, with water flowing from its crevices. Not far away, near Orune, we find the sacred Su Tempiesu fountain, a monument which has remained practically intact, and where traces of the cast lead used to waterproof the well are still visible. There are a number of rural churches in the countryside around Bitti, which are still used to celebrate festivals with extremely ancient origins. The village takes its name from the Sardinian "sa bitta", meaning fawn. In fact, according to legend, a fawn was killed by a hunter while it was drinking at a spring, known today as "Su Cantaru". The episode is recorded in an old popular poem. This little town also owes its fame to the musical group, the "Tenores de Bitti", whose rendering of traditional Sardinian polyphonic singing has won international acclaim.

## How to get here

Go along the SS 131 bis towards Nuoro, and continue as far as Bitti. Go through the village, continuing on the SS 389 in the direction of Buddusò and at km 54.2, turn right onto an asphalted road. Go on for about 1.9 km until you reach the car park.

## Things to do here

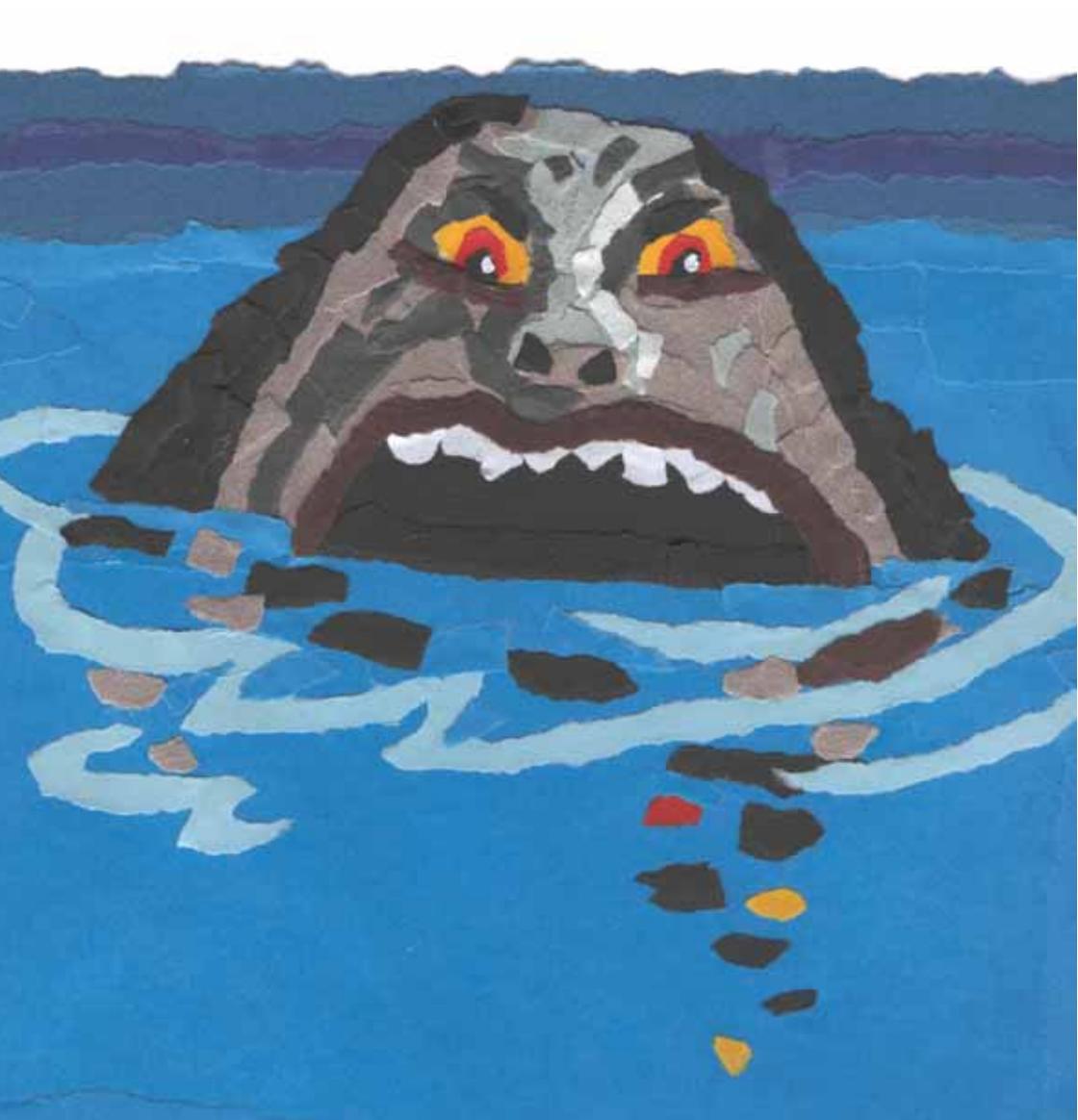
Guided tours to the Archaeological Site, Museo della Civiltà Contadina e Pastorale [Museum of Agricultural and Country Life], Museo Multimediale del Canto a Tenore [Multimedia Museum of "Tenores" Singing]

Info and bookings: Coop. Istelai, *tel. 0784 414314 cell. 333 3211346*  
Library with Children's Section, *Via Minerva, Bitti - tel 0784 414405*

uttered, before she turned to stone.

Marta pelle di sole rolled her down into the depths of a deep lake. Then she left the cave and went towards the forest of Poddi Arvu.

And on and on she went. She walked for such a long time that she saw the sun come out in the sky, play hide



and seek with the clouds and then fall asleep in the arms of the sunset. Thus by the time she reached the ruins of Romanzesu, darkness once again ruled the world.

"Tell me, oh flower of light," whispered the little girl as she wandered through the moss and lichen covered ruins. "Where is Maria Abbranca hiding?"

A circle of light poured forth from the silver bell-flower with its golden spirals and floated over the granite steps that led to a circular well, where a long long time ago, the priestesses of the earthly and heavenly waters used to carry out their sacred rites. And at that very moment, who should appear on the bottom step, but Maria Abbranca herself with her face made of smoke and shade, of tar, of stone, of ash and burnt corn.

"Who are you?" said this half woman, half demon creature, grinding her teeth. "And aren't you afraid to wander around these ruins in the dead of night?"

"My name is Marta pelle di sole and I am not frightened of the dark or of you!" Somewhat strangely on hearing these words, Maria Abbranca, instead of lifting her dark woollen cloak towards the little girl, gave a great shiver, as if the queen of the shadows herself had breathed in her face with her breath full of awe and fear.

"Keep that flower away from me, quick!" she shouted.

"Can't you see that its light is turning me to stone?"

"Maybe I will or maybe I won't," was how Marta pelle di sole replied, "but first of all, tell me, was it you who took my sister Mena pelle di luna?"

And Maria Abbranca also swore and swore again that she knew nothing about the little girl. But when she heard of where the little girl had gone missing, she hissed: "Perhaps it was la Pazzia [the crazy lady] who

took here, I saw her myself hanging around those parts. If it was her, then you will find your sister in her house between the **Cabras lagoon** and the sea...”

These were the last words that Maria Abbranca ever uttered, before she was turned to stone.

Marta pelle di sole rolled her into the well and set off again. And on and on she went, indeed she walked for such a long time, passing by rivers, mountains and valleys, all the while thinking about la Pazzia.

People said that she had once been a beautiful woman born from a dream suspended between dawn and dusk, that her eyes were blind to all adult and worldly things and could only make out the smiles and the games of children. For this reason every now and then, even if she was not bad at heart, she used to carry one away with her to keep her company.

“Flower of light,” whispered Marta Pelle di sole, when just before sunset, she reached the strip of land that separated the Cabras lagoon from the land. “Where is la Pazzia’s house?”

But this time no garland of light came out from the flower. Instead a silvery sound could be heard that charmed the air and the bamboo shoots, the fish in the lagoon and the last rays of the sun on the waves at sea.

“Tell me child, who gave you that magic flower?” a singsong voice rang out that sounded like candy floss and honey. La Pazzia’s house appeared at the edge of the lagoon; it was made of wind and water, sea spray, grains of sand and the beating wings of seagulls.

“It belonged to my mother,” said Marta pelle di sole in a tiny little voice, staring hard at the face of this beautiful woman standing on her threshold. Then she added, “I’m

## **Then and now**

The Cabras lagoon stretches out to the north of the Gulf of Oristano on the Sinis peninsula, a “wetland area” of international importance. The lagoon came into being through the formation of strips of sand that in the course of time, isolated tracts of sea and also through the gradual build-up of alluvial deposits from rivers like the Tirso. It has one of the richest marsh eco-systems in the Mediterranean: mullets, eels, bream, sea bass and numerous aquatic birds, like the red-crested pochard, pink flamingos, cormorants, blue rock thrushes, peregrine falcons and herring gulls, breed along the coast. In the past, fishermen used to fish from small pointed boats woven from reeds “is fassonis”. The archaeological site of Tharros is particularly interesting; it conserves remains from various historical periods; Nuraghic, Phoenician and Roman. The town of Tharros was founded by the Phoenicians around the end of the VIII century BC, on the site of a pre-existing nuraghic village; However, very few traces remain of this period, unlike the numerous examples of ruins bearing witness to the Roman presence here.

## **How to get here**

Cabras Lagoon: Take the detour for Oristano Nord [North] from the SS 131. On reaching the town, follow the directions for Torregrande. Follow the road for Torregrande and after about 4 km, turn right for Cabras. The lagoon skirts the village of Tharros: from Torre Grande continue on for San Giovanni di Sinis. On reaching the Church of San Giovanni, continue following the signs for the archaeological site, which is about 1 km further on.

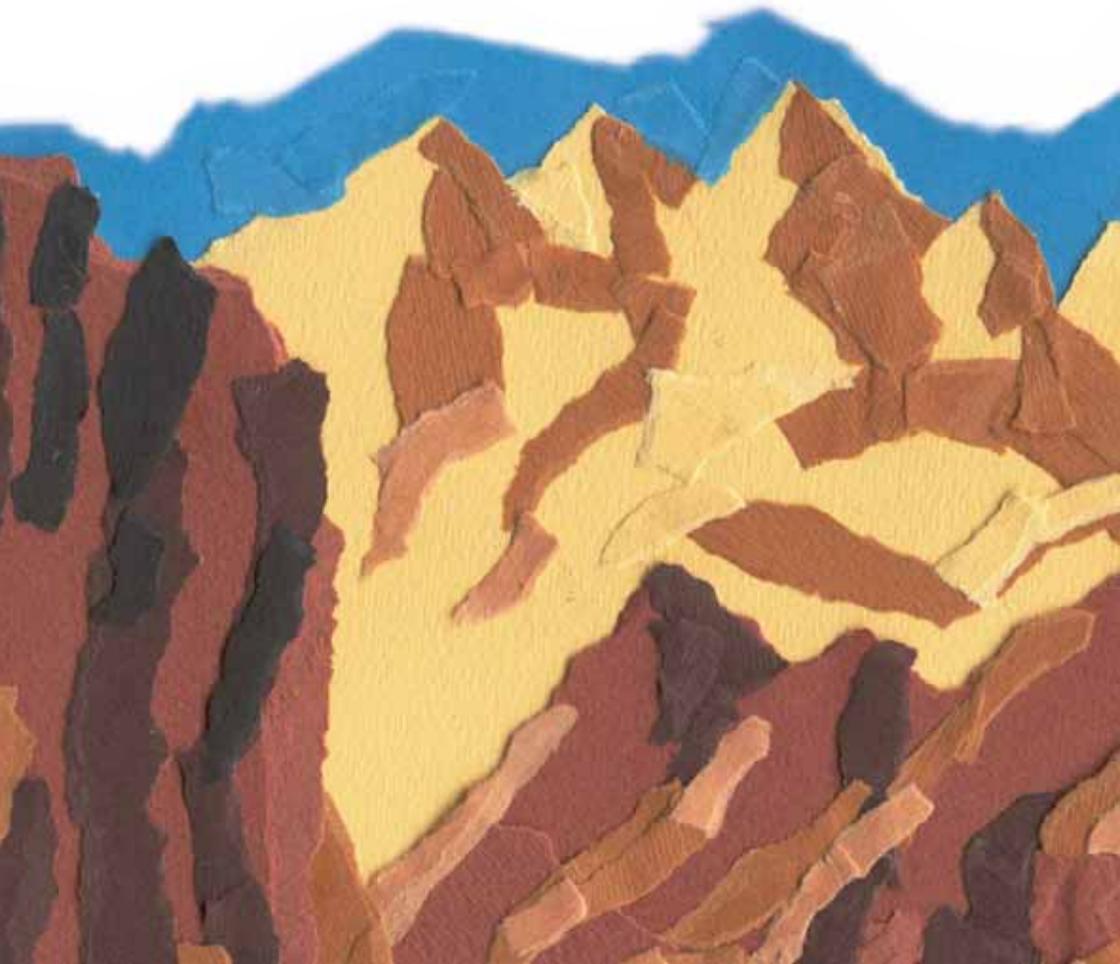
## **Things to do here**

Guided walking tours of the Sinis Peninsula, guided tours to the Tharros archaeological site, sport fishing, birdwatching  
Info: Area Marina Protetta del Sinis - tel. 0783 290071  
Comando stazione forestale di Oristano [Forest Ranger Station]  
tel. 0783 310309  
Library with Children's Section - Piazza Azuni 14, Cabras  
tel. 0783 290321

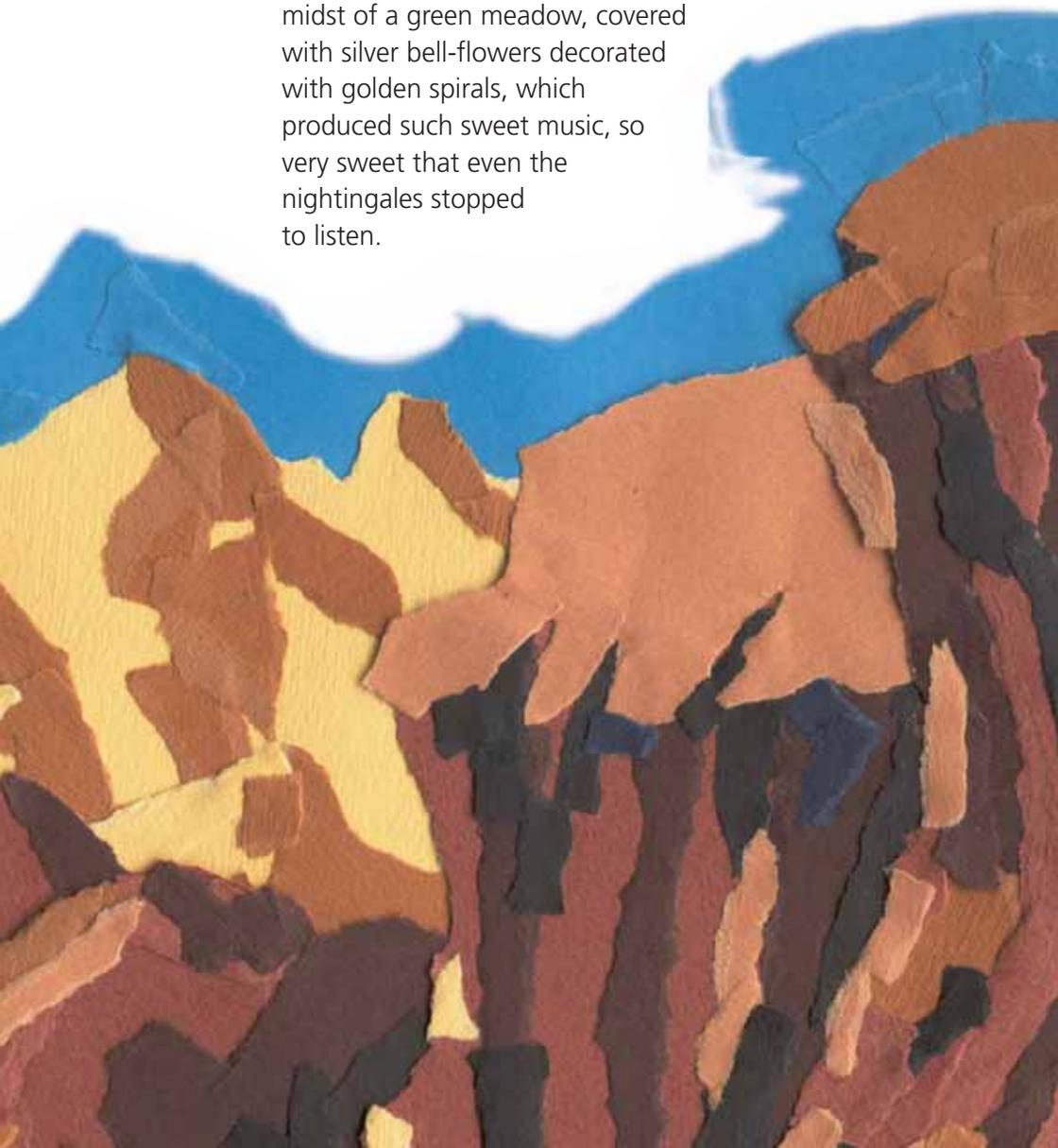
looking for my sister Mena pelle di luna, perhaps you were the one who..."

But before she could finish, la Pazzia took her in her arms and whispered in her ear, telling the child to be quiet and to close her eyes and go to sleep.

"I didn't take your sister," said the beautiful woman, "but I will make sure that you can see her at least one more time".



And so it was that Marta pelle di sole let herself be rocked to sleep and all night long, she dreamed she was flying between the sky and the earth and the moon and the sea. And when la Pazzia woke her up at the dawn of the next day, she saw that she was in the midst of a green meadow, covered with silver bell-flowers decorated with golden spirals, which produced such sweet music, so very sweet that even the nightingales stopped to listen.



“Where are we?” asked Marta pelle di sole.

“In **Montessu**, in a valley not far from Villaperuccio,” replied la Pazzia.

The woman pointed out a little slope rising at the edge of the meadow, where you could see lots of tiny little doors set in the living rock.

“Only those who were born in those stone houses can pick the bell-flowers that grow in this meadow,” and again, “and if your mother had one...”

Even before Maria pelle di sole could make sense of these words, the little doors in the rocks opened up and the air was filled with the rustling and flapping of soft silken wings. The Janas [Fairies] of Montessu flew out from their little houses; tiny little fairies in their red brocade dresses embroidered with silver and gold thread. When one of these fairies came to rest on her hand, she recognised her sister.

“Is that really you, Mena pelle di luna?” she smiled gently.

“Yes, it’s me, dear little sister,” answered the Jana [Fairy]. And while Marta pelle di sole’s face was filled with tears of joy and wonder, the tiny fairy explained that their mother had also been a Janas [Fairy], before she had fallen in love with their father who had been passing through those parts one day. Just like all the other fairies who had decided to spend their lives with a human being, before their mother could be changed into a young woman and marry her beloved, she had been obliged to make a promise to all her sisters from Montessu. A promise that one of her daughters would have taken her place amongst the little folk who lived in the houses of stone.

## Then and now

The necropolis of Montessu is set on the side of a hill and has about forty *domus de janas*. The *domus de janas* or fairies houses are tombs dug into the rocks between the IV and III millennium BC. They are found all over Sardinia and more than 2400 have been brought to light. They are made up of one or more rooms with tiny entrances and their interior often reproduces the structure and the objects of ancient Sardinian homes: tables, chairs, niches, fireplaces, pillars and false windows. Legend tells that since they were too small for men to live in, over the course of time, fairies came to live here. In Montessu the "spiral tomb" is the most striking, decorated inside with wolves' teeth, a bull's head and numerous circular graffiti (spirals), which a number of scholars believe were intended to represent the eyes and breast of the Mother Goddess. At the end of the tomb, a door engraved on the rock indicates the passage to the hereafter. Not far away, several gigantic menhirs (huge stones lodged into the earth) can be seen embedded into the ground. The biggest of these, Su Terrazzu, stands five metres tall and has been damaged by lightning. It is known with the name of Luxia Arrabiosa [Angry Lucia], which according to legend, is linked to a legendary giantess who had carried the heavy stone all the way to the island of Sant'Antioco to build a bridge to connect the island to the mainland. But on discovering that the bridge had already been built, on her return home, Luxia cast the stone to the ground in a furious rage.

## How to get here

From the SS 130, take the road towards Carbonia. Turning onto the SP 126, passing Carbonia and San Giovanni Suergiu, turn into the SP 77, continuing as far as Tratalias and then towards the SP 79 Villaperuccio. After the town centre, turn into the SP 80 in the direction of Narcao and after the Rio Mannu, at about 1 km, take a left and follow the directions for the necropolis.

## Things to do here

Guided tours to the archaeological site

Info and bookings: Coop. Mediterranea - tel. 0781 64040  
338 3818283

Library with Children's Section, Via E. d'Arborea, Villaperuccio  
tel. 0781 950074

"Animar", international festival of animation of the Mediterranean  
Is Mascaraddas, Teulada - tel. 070 883514 - period: July

And so it was that Marta pelle di sole came to learn the truth about her sister Mena pelle di luna. She stayed with her for three more days together with la Pazzia, who used to play with the little Janas every night under the stars.

Then she returned home to her father who was waiting for her, to tell him that Mena pelle di luna was well and that she was as happy as a fairy.

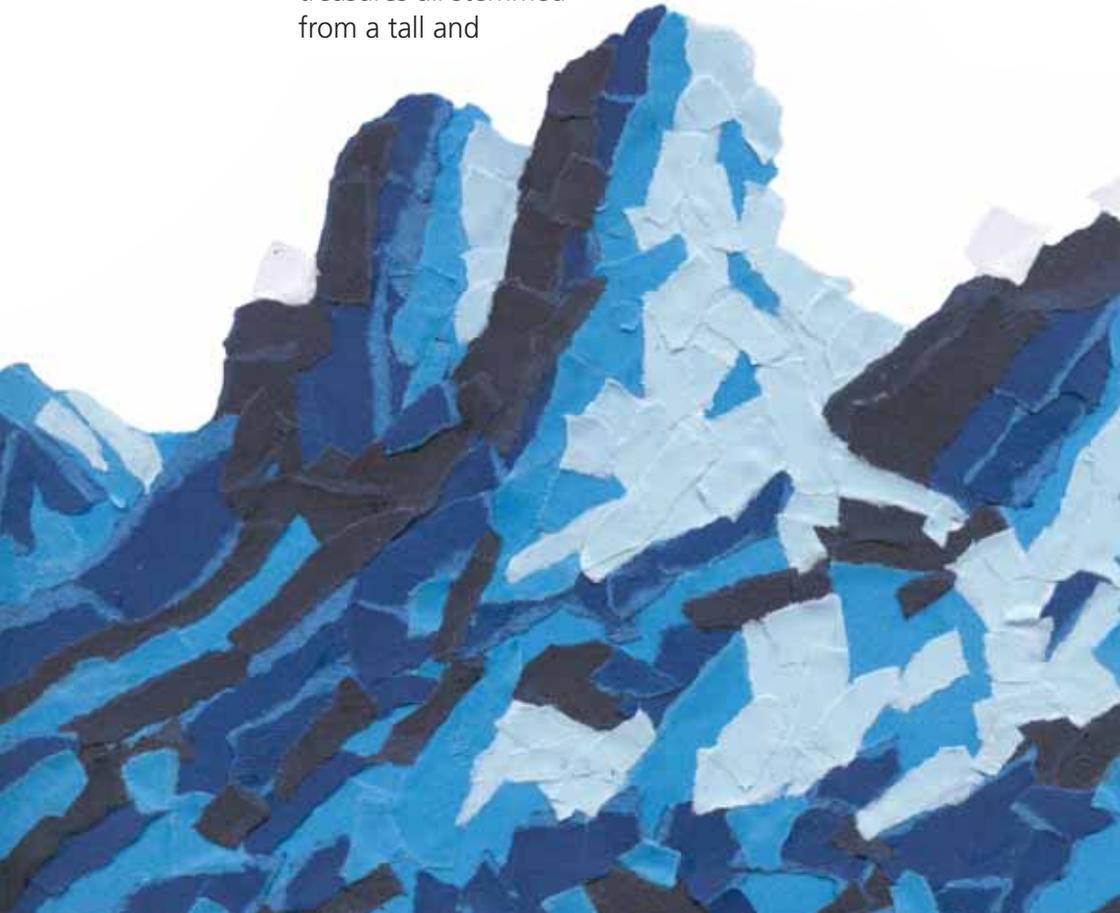


# Le tre mamme dei monti

Bruno Tognolini

## **1. La Mamma Nera di Monte Arci [Mount Arci's Black Mother]**

It is said that thousands of years ago, at the beginnings of time, there was no need to dig mines on the Island of Sardinia, because of the huge amount of ores that could be found everywhere, sprouting up from the earth like flowers or springs. It is said that this shining collection of treasures all stemmed from a tall and



## Then and now

Mount Arci ("Arci" means high ground in Sardinian) is found in the province of Oristano and is part of Sardinia's GeoMineral History and Environmental Park. It abounds with holm and cork oak forests, as well as arbutus, lentisk and myrtle bushes and is the ideal habitat for boars, foxes, wild cats, martens, rabbits, hares and as regards birds, jays, crows, woodpeckers, woodpigeons, grouse, hoopoes, buzzards and kestrels. One of the most beautiful forests is the oak grove of Acqua Frida, in the territory of Ales, a dense shady wood with a wealth of springs. But Mount Arci is above all an obsidian depository and mine, and has been home to small prehistoric communities ever since the Neolithic Age. Obsidian is an extremely hard black rock of volcanic origins, used for the production of weapons and cutting tools, utensils, knives and arrowheads. Obsidian objects have been found in every one of the nuraghe, just as in many archaeological sites throughout the Mediterranean; evidence of a flourishing trade that involved the exportation of material overseas. The abundance of obsidian can still be clearly seen in the Pau area. From the village, on reaching the Sennisceddu area, and in particular in the so-called Scaba Crobina, you can follow a path which is almost entirely made from pieces of obsidian. At the end of the nineteenth century, the scholar Alberto Lamarmora once said that walking along this path, was like walking on the broken glass from a black bottle factory.

## How to get here

Mount Arci can be reached in a number of ways from the SS 131. From Simaxis, turn into the SP 35 for Siamanna and 5 km after the village of Villaurbana you find the signs for the Cantiere Forestale del Monte Arci [Mount Arci Ranger Station]. From Uras, still on the SS 131, turn into the SS 442 and after going through Morgongiori, follow the signs for Is Benas and the Ranger station. The Mount Arci Massif can be reached from Morgongiori, Ales or Pau.

## Things to do here

Museo dell'Ossidiana [Obsidian Museum], *via San Giorgio 90, Pau - tel. 0783 934011*

Centro di documentazione ambientale del Monte Arci [Environmental Documentation Centre], *via Monte Arci, Morgongiori - tel. 070 9386602*

Museo del giocattolo tradizionale [Museum of traditional toys] *via Vittorio Emanuele 10, Ales - tel. 0783 998072 - 0783 932228*

wooded Holy Mountain, **Mount Arci**, which had once a been a volcano.

This story tells how all this came about.

Two children, a boy called Oxi and a girl called Dian, lived in one of the caves inhabited by man on the slopes of Mount Arci. One terrible day when the two children were suddenly left orphans and since their tribe had more mouths to feed than food to feed them, by tribal rule the children were abandoned in the forest. The members of the tribe were sure that they would have died from hunger and thirst in a few days, and were thus quite amazed, even frightened, when two months later, during a hunting expedition, they saw them scampering through the ferns. That night around the fire, they couldn't stop talking about this and decided that the two children must have found a new mother, perhaps Mamài Neranotte herself. And indeed this was what had happened. Mamài Neranotte, so men said, especially men who are so afraid of the dark, was a bloodthirsty monster who lived in the depths of the night, feeding on darkness and rocks, on animals and men, at least on those who were so bold as to move away from their fires during the night. In actual fact, Mamai was a good and patient woman, calm and powerful, half woman, half ox, with a big black face, shoulders and hands which were so gentle in their touch and an enormous back and feet that were lost in the darkness behind her. Mamai Neranotte had adopted the two children, she had cared for them and fed them, she had taught them to move in the dark to hunt and get food and to hide at dawn in deep caves to keep themselves safe. This was how the children had lived for several months. But the men in the tribe could not rest easy and after a long discussion they

decided to go on a night-time hunting expedition, men and women together, armed with spears and clubs, to kill those two bewitched orphans and the Mamai buia who was bringing them up. In so doing they would rid themselves of their fear for ever. To pluck up courage, they chanted and yelled and set off that very same night, lighting up the forest with hundreds of torches

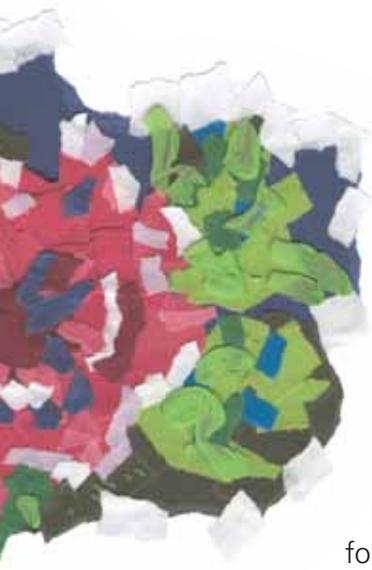


and they beat and searched so much that finally they found the tracks of the children and the cave where they were sleeping. But the great Mamai Neranotte got there before them. She woke the two orphans and announced in a grandiose manner, that her time had come to die and to free men

from all their fears so that they would feel more confident in their world, both at day and at night. But she would see that her darlings received a precious treasure: the darkness of night that becomes rock. With these words, she led them out of the cave,

where the gleeful and frightened men were waiting to kill them. And Mamai Neranotte appeared to them, huge, black, terrifying in the eyes of men and she shouted at them, danced, sung, raised her arms and with a huge shout fell to the earth, spreading out and dissipating as if she had gone into the ground, soaking it with darkness. The fiercest of the men, as soon as he had got over his fright, gave a yell and pointed at the two orphans who were just as shocked: "You will pay for your mother's spells!" As he yelled these words, he threw his club with all his might at Oxi who managed to leap aside. The heavy weapon hit the rock behind him. It was a strange rock, all black and shiny, that nobody had ever seen before and the force of the blow split it into two; the air was filled with splinters as black as night and as shiny as the waters of a lake in the dark. The child instinctively grabbed hold of one of these splinters and as the man drew near to him with his axe raised high, he drew the splinter across his leg. Astonished, the man saw a deep long cut open up in his thigh, from which blood was already oozing. What on earth...? He had not felt an arrow pierce his flesh or the agony of a club hitting his skin, but simply a cutting breath... The men got sidetracked from their anger and bent over to pick up those splinters, handling them with amazement. They had never seen anything quite so sharp; however much they might pound or beat and sharpen a stone for days on end, they would never have





got such a scraper. But then it wasn't a scraper, it was something new, it was... a blade. The women of the tribe, who were quite fed up with this blind and exhausting rage, took advantage of their husbands' bafflement, to take the two children beneath their furs, meaning that they were willing to save them and feed them. The tribe returned to the caves, taking about ten of these incredible splinters of black rock with them and they never got tired of looking at them and talking about them. In the following months, they discovered that this vitreous and nocturnal rock was to be found all over Mount Arci; they learnt how to split it, to splinter it, to shape it; they made new unbeatable tools, scrapers, graters, blades and arrowheads, jewellery, even mirrors. The fame of this stone reached the other tribes on the island, who came to barter, and the news even reached other peoples living on the other side of the sea, who landed here with their ships and came to trade.

The tribe became rich and wealthy, devoting itself to the art of the black stone, which in honour of the two orphans, Oxi and Dian, was given the name of Oxidiàna. The two children, for their part, knew who to thank for this gift. That prodigious rock was hardened darkness, the night sky turned to stone; it was the very flesh of Mamai Neranotte herself, melted and mixed with the rocks for their well-being, so that they could be saved, and also for the well-being of all mankind who would no longer be afraid of the dark. And beneath the sun, in those busy workshops filled with the resounding sound of stone being hammered and showers of splinters, those people prospered for thousands of years.

## Then and now

Mount Gonare is part of Sardinia's GeoMineral History and Environmental Park. It lies in the centre of the island, straddling the lands of Orani and Sarule. At the top of the mountain, at a height of 1100 metres, we find the Sanctuary of the Madonna of Gonare, which according to an ancient legend was built by Judge Gonario of Torres. While returning from the Holy Land, he was caught in a sudden storm and vowed to build a temple on the first strip of land that he set his eyes on. The area is rich with ilex, oak, chestnut and durmast trees and in summer, cyclamens and peonies blossom here. There are plenty of different kinds of birds: grouse, turtle doves, shrikes, woodpeckers and eagles. The area has been known to man ever since the Neolithic Age, due to the presence of steatite or soapstone, an easily-worked mineral used for the production of precious, ornamental or sacred objects, like the statuettes of the Mother Goddess. These are statues about 10-15 cm tall representing female figures, which, according to numerous scholars, symbolise the earth conceived as the source of life and thus "mother". There are plenty of nuraghi and burial places in the area. Examples of the latter are the Giants' Tombs, megalithic constructions (huge stones) dating back to the Nuraghic Age, which bring to mind the head of the bull god. Of these the Nurdòle site near Orani is certainly of great interest. The village was the birthplace of Costantino Nivola, the world famous painter and sculptor, who did most of his work in Europe and America. His childhood in these places, tradition and family are the key to understanding his work. He moulded clay in the same way that his mother had kneaded dough to make bread, and his inspiration for transforming stone into art came from the sight of the granite rocks, the red and white earth and nature that had been shaped and moulded by the wind.

## How to get here

From the SS 131 bis in the direction of Nuoro, there are two possible routes: one from Orani, and the other from Sarule. From Orani follow the road towards Mamoiada SS 128 in the Istolo area, which climbs as far as Urture. From Sarule instead, you need to take the road that skirts the cemetery, as far as Su Pale'e Gonare, near the disused marble quarry.

## Things to do here

A visit to the Sanctuary of the Madonna di Gonare, Trekking on foot or jeep excursions.

Museo Nivola [Nivola Museum] *via Gonare 2, Orani - tel. 0784 730063*

Ass. Pro Loco, *piazza Vittorio Emanuele 3, Orani - tel. 0784 74548*

Ass. Pro Loco, *via San Bernardino, Sarule - tel. 340 7276069*

## 2. La Mamma Bianca di Monte Gonare [Mount Gonare's White Mother]

But many more years had to pass before man, apart from collecting the outcrops of Obsidian that came to the surface, learnt to dig into the earth to look for the other treasures hidden in its depths. And this is when they started to do so.

An old legend tells that on the slopes of another of Sardinia's Holy Mountains, **Mount Gonare**, three thousand years after the Mamai Neranotte affair, there lived a tall, strong beautiful woman whose skin was white as milk, for which she was known as Lunalatte [Moonmilk]. Every day, just like all the other women in the village, Lunalatte used to go to fetch water from the village spring, which she and her companions carried in huge heavy jugs, resting them on their hips and holding them with one hand. One fine day Lunalatte tried carrying the jug on her head, by first making a support from a piece of leather wound into a ring, and she found that it was much easier to carry far heavier weights in this way. And not only: the way she moved while balancing the jug on her head gave her an elegant and majestic gait, which made her even more beautiful and all the more attractive to men.

The young son of the village chief was particularly taken with her, but he was about to be married to the daughter of the chief of the neighbouring village. The two chiefs were most unhappy and very annoyed when they found out that Lunalatte's beauty might mess up this marriage; and their annoyance turned to rage, when the jealous and lying women of the village, let it be known that Lunalatte boasted about being able to carry anything on her head including the village chief. They

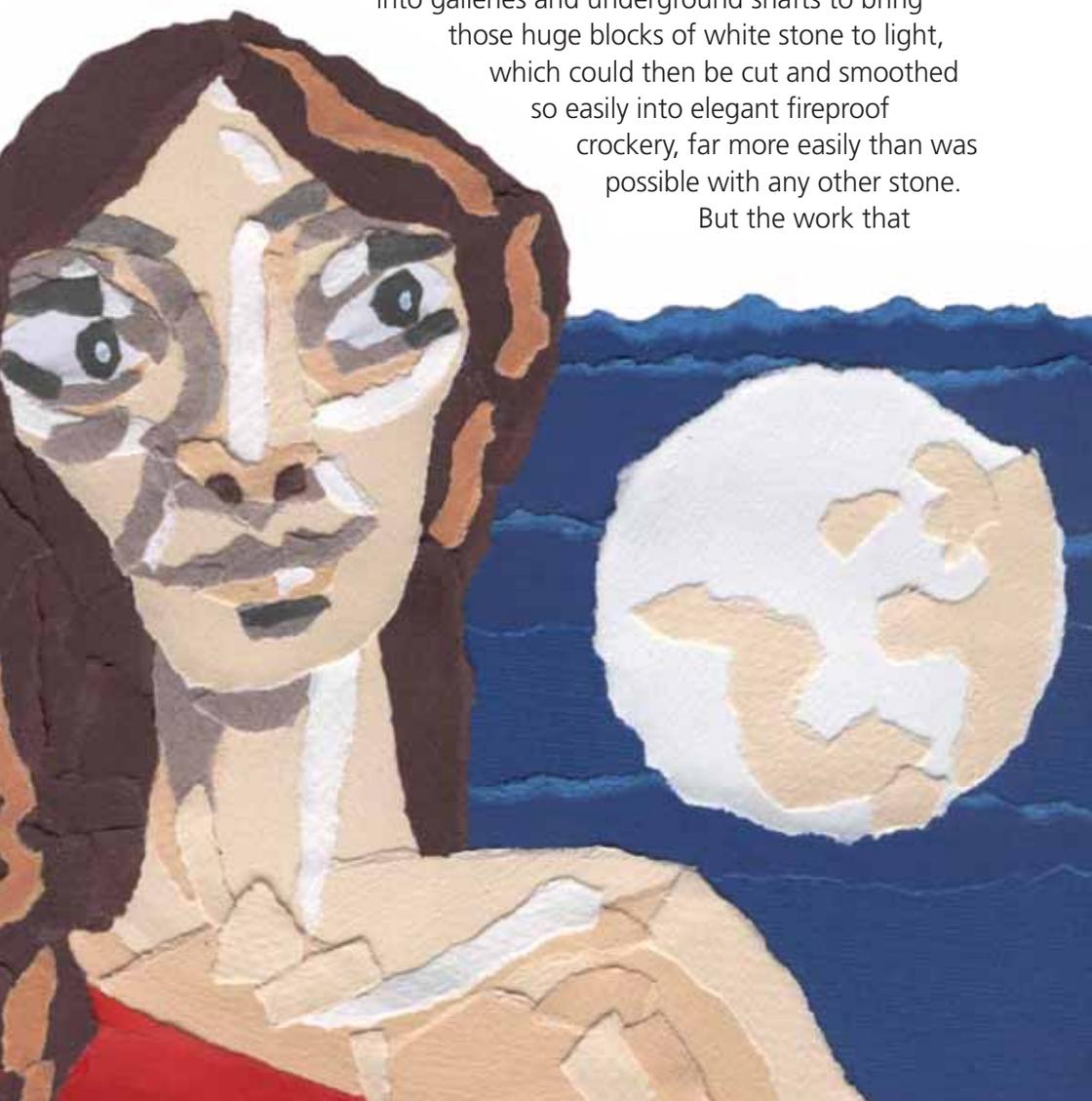
challenged her to carry an enormous stone to the village. Step after step, with a proud expression and a steady pace, she did so. They challenged her to carry three women holding on to each other; with a great deal of effort but without showing any signs of suffering, she did this too. The third challenge was to carry the full moon on her head as far as the village. And Lunalatte did this too.

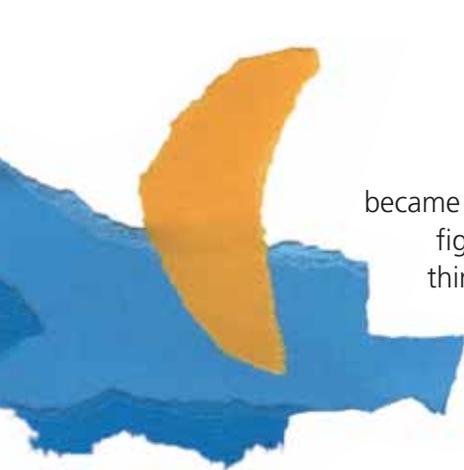
On and on she went, with the moon balanced on her head without ever stopping. But when she reached the square and came to a halt, the enormous weight that she was carrying on her head, slowly started to force her feet into the ground, and then her legs and then her hips, followed by her arms and shoulders. The chief's young son with all the despair of someone in love, and the women of the village with all the delight of someone who is jealous, looked on as Lunalatte inevitably sank deep into the hard ground like a nail, or a spear or a root. When she had completely disappeared, the moon flew off and returned to the sky and no woman ever gave birth to children in this place for seven long years. In the eighth year, the wise-men of the village, who were both discouraged and ashamed, since they realised that their bad behaviour had been at the cause of this long shortage of children, gave the order to dig in the very point where Lunalatte had disappeared, to bring her back to light, render her honour and to beg for her forgiveness.

The men dug and dug for seven long days, but their obsidian hoes only met with hard and sterile rock. Until, all of a sudden, on the eighth day, their hoes started to cut into a doughy, coarse white



stone that seemed like grated moon rock mixed with milk. Everyone was certain: this was the huge white body of Lunalatte, which had grown and got larger underground, branching out and sending its veins in five directions, spreading that new sweet stupendous mineral through the bowels of the earth. The men dug some more, they widened the hole, they transformed it into galleries and underground shafts to bring those huge blocks of white stone to light, which could then be cut and smoothed so easily into elegant fireproof crockery, far more easily than was possible with any other stone. But the work that





became most famous was that of a little statue, figuring Lunalatte not as she really was, tall and thin, but rather how the tribe wished their own women might have been, fat and round, flourishing and pregnant, full breasted and waisted, full of children, moon and milk. She was made a goddess and was called the Mamma di tutti [Mother of Everything], Mamma del Monte [Mother of the Mountain], Mèter Orèie, Mamai. Slowly but surely the curse wore off; by placing a little statue of Mamai Lunalatte in the niche in every hut, the village women started to bear children again. To pay homage to their former companion and to appease her spirit, the women started carrying their jugs of water on their heads. They did so for thousands of years and some still do today. The white soft stone, born from her beautiful white flesh continued to be excavated in the mines of Mount Gonare for thousands of years, with the Greek name of Steatite, which means “greasy fat stone”. Thousands of years later, a sanctuary in honour of the Signora di Gonare [Lady of Gonare] was erected on top of the mountain. It pays homage to a Divine Woman who ascended to heaven and perhaps recalls an ancient grandmother who ascended to the earth.

### **3. La Mamma Colorata di Monte Albo [Mount Albo's Coloured Mother]**

Thousands more years passed by. Men continued to splinter the black Obsidian and to cut the white Steatite, but they knew nothing about the hundreds of other multi-coloured metals, which were useful to make populations grow and which were just lying there waiting in the bowels of the earth. This story tells what happened when



they found this out. **Mount Albo** was a rocky rampart, about thirty kilometres long, which rose up over the surrounding lands like the long white crest of petrified foam just before a wave breaks. However this wave never broke but on the contrary, protected the huge plain from cold winds, making the land rich with crops, flowers and fruits. Monstrous and dark spirits like Mamai Neranotte had long disappeared, and now bright goddesses and other young goddesses peacefully governed the lands of Sardinia. One of these was called Tanit by the Sardinians, Cèrere by the Romans, and other more secret names by women. She ruled over the harvest, gave corn to the village and rejoiced in the multi-coloured flowers and juicy fruits. She also took great delight in one of her daughters, a beautiful little teenage goddess called Broculina by the Sardinians and Prosèrpina, by the Romans; names that mean the same thing in both languages: “she who makes the earth grow”. In fact, wherever Broculina passed and at her wish, cornflowers, peonies and pale blue lilies sprung up at the blink of an eye and figs, cherries, pears, plums and all kinds of fruit ripened instantly. One day the little goddess was playing with her friends near a small lake on the slopes of Mount Albo, when all of a sudden, a huge black foreign god emerged from the water with an enormous roar and plenty of foam. It was Hades, god of the underworld, also known as Pluto, il Ricco [the rich one], who every now and then rose out of his abysses, emerging from lakes and fountains in his search for a beloved. There was no hope for Broculina, who looked at him with terror. Her brief attempt to escape was in vain: as white and supple as she was, she looked so tiny as she struggled in the huge oak-like black arms of the Latin god who was carrying her away. In a matter of seconds, the



## Then and now

Mount Albo lies within Sardinia's GeoMineral History and Environmental Park known as "Guzzurra-Sos Enattos", in the lands belonging to Lula, Siniscola, Lodè, Loculi, Irgoli and Galtelli. Crossed by deep ravines, it reaches its highest point with the peaks of Punta Catirina and Punta Turuddò which are over one thousand metres high. The whole area hosts significant tracts of Mediterranean Shrub. Different species of animals populate the area: hedgehogs, desert dormice, moufflons, choughs, ravens, wild cats and martens. In quite a few periods of the year, golden eagles nest here. The park is rich with white gorges and walls of calcareous rock, to such an extent that it is often compared to the Dolomites. There are several caves found all over the mountain range, once used by man as a natural shelter. One of these is the cave of Bona Fraule in the commune of Siniscola, where the findings of several objects have suggested that it was once used as a place of worship. You can visit the caves of Sa prejone e' s'orcu [The orc's prison], Duar Vuccas, and the Sa Conca 'e Locoli hollow, a natural hollow in the rock walls, which is the natural outlet for an underground river that flows along the slopes of Mount Albo. This is the ideal place for trekking, excursions and outings on horseback. While travelling along the old paths once used by shepherds, you can visit panoramic areas with lots of caves, rivers and underground lakes. Views that sweep from the mountains to the sea: La Caletta, Santa Lucia, Capo Comino, and the little bays of white sand on the beach at Berchida. Near to Lula, we find the Sos Enattos lead and zinc mine which was in use even in Roman times. Other mines in the area are Buzzurra, Su Ergiolu and Argentaria.

## How to get here

Mount Albo mainly lies within the communes of Siniscola and Lula. These can be reached along the SS 131 bis, following signs for the various villages.

## Things to do here

Excursions on foot, on horseback or by mountain bike with a typical lunch

Comune di Siniscola - tel. 0784 875381 - 0784 877880

Ass. Pro Loco Sa Rosa, piazza R. Luxemburg 7, Lula - tel. 0784 417027

Petting Zoo, La fattoria delle api, Lula - tel. 0784 412011

Petting Zoo, Workshops: from wheat to bread, from milk to cheese, Siniscola; tholoi@tiscali.it

Library with Children's Section, Via Matteotti, Siniscola - 0784 870843

god disappeared into the little lake and the waters slowly became calm again. The little goddess' companions started crying, and Tanit, the Mother Goddess cried with them and screamed and raged against the Father of all the Gods. But nothing could be done: Pluto was a very powerful God and not even the Father of the Gods could take away from him, what was now his.

Broculina would have to live for ever in the underworld, under skies of stone, without ever seeing the sun or feeling the wind in her face again. Several months went by. It was time for everything to blossom, but no flowers bloomed. A strange kind of underbrush covered the fields and the slopes of the hills, dark bushes never seen before, laced with thousands of pliable thin branches but without a single leaf or flower or even a fruit. The farmers could not believe their eyes, but realised and finally were forced to admit that those strange bushes were roots.

Roots in the air, growing upside down, pushing up towards the sky instead of down into the earth. The little goddess' companions confirmed what they already knew: the plants were all growing upside down.

Broculina, Proserpina, "she who makes things grow" was underground, and the trees and flowers were sprouting out of the sky to grow towards her.

Men and women trembled at the very thought, which was so contrary to the laws of nature. They shivered as they imagined those delicate stems and soft petals trying to make ground in the darkness of that land of stone. How on earth? The famine lasted for many months, the livestock died, children fell ill, entire villages were on the point of disappearing. The Father of all the Gods became alarmed, he finally lent an ear to Tanit's pleas and ordered Hades, the black god of the underworld, to free the little

goddess he had kidnapped. Pluto was forced to obey but before he let his young lover go, he made her eat the red seeds of a pomegranate, which in ancient times represented the union between a married couple. Broculina could leave, but now she was his wife and sooner or later, she would have to go back to him. Thus Tanit and Hades came to an



agreement; the little goddess could live with her mother under the heavens for three months, during the blossoming period, and with her husband in the dark earth for the rest of the year. This is what happened for thousands and thousands of years, and what still happens today; when Spring returns every year, Broculina Prosèrpina returns to the world above and every plant can grow as nature ordered from the earth towards the sky.



However, some of the young lads from the village of Lula, on the slopes of Mount Albo, who were keen-minded and curious about everything, had long discussions with the little goddess' companions, because they wanted to know exactly what had grown underground. They had seen with their very own eyes all those roots waving around like legs in the air, but underground? What kinds of flowers, or trees or fruits had grown there? They took their picks and hoes and started digging in the soil. They found what they were looking for. The fruits of the trees growing upside down had turned to stone and had become the rich mineral fruit of the rock. The black and succulent figs had become lead, which men can melt with just a small flame. The red sweet cherries had become copper, so malleable and beautiful for jewellery and alloys. The blue plums were zinc that can be fused with, and is such a good friend of copper in one of the most ancient of alloys invented by men, yellow brass. And the white pears had become silver, the malleable, shiny bright metal of coins, of necklaces, of mirrors.

The Island's very first mine was excavated near the village of Lula. The Romans took possession of it, they enlarged it and enriched it with machinery, they brought slaves here and prisoners condemned "ad metalla" [to the metal]; in other words, to dig and quarry those hard coloured fruits from under the ground. After these slaves, for centuries and centuries, myriads of Sardinian men, who were used to living under the sky in the fields with their flocks, were forced to choose to live digging in the bowels of the earth, beneath a huge stone sky. The story of mining in Sardinia had begun.



# Il congresso di Orchi e Giganti

Francesco Enna

## **Prologue**

*In olden times, when times were dark and wolves were at war, Orcs and Giants ruled the Earth.*

*They were times when our island was about to be submerged by hurricanes and seaquakes, which had kept people awake for days and nights.*

*"For Heaven's sake, that's enough, it's time to put an end to all this!" shouted the people, who were fed up of not being able to dream even for a little bit. Orco Babborco, [Father Orc], far more orc than dad, tried first, by yelling at the sky which was getting angrier and angrier.*

*Orco Malnato tried to solve the problem by swallowing up a profusion of rain clouds and more clouds and sheep, always taking care to choose the most tender and beautiful.*

*Until one day, a highly-refined God with the name of Giove Pluvio arrived from Olympus and put an end to the Flood with his huge holy foot.*

*This was why our island was not submerged.*

*Then it was the time of the Giants: they were full of bright ideas and as strong as dragons and with their hands as big as spades, they built sheep-pens and the mighty nuraghi.*

*But then the Earth had the better of them and under a magic spell, only the ghost of a memory remains of their story.*



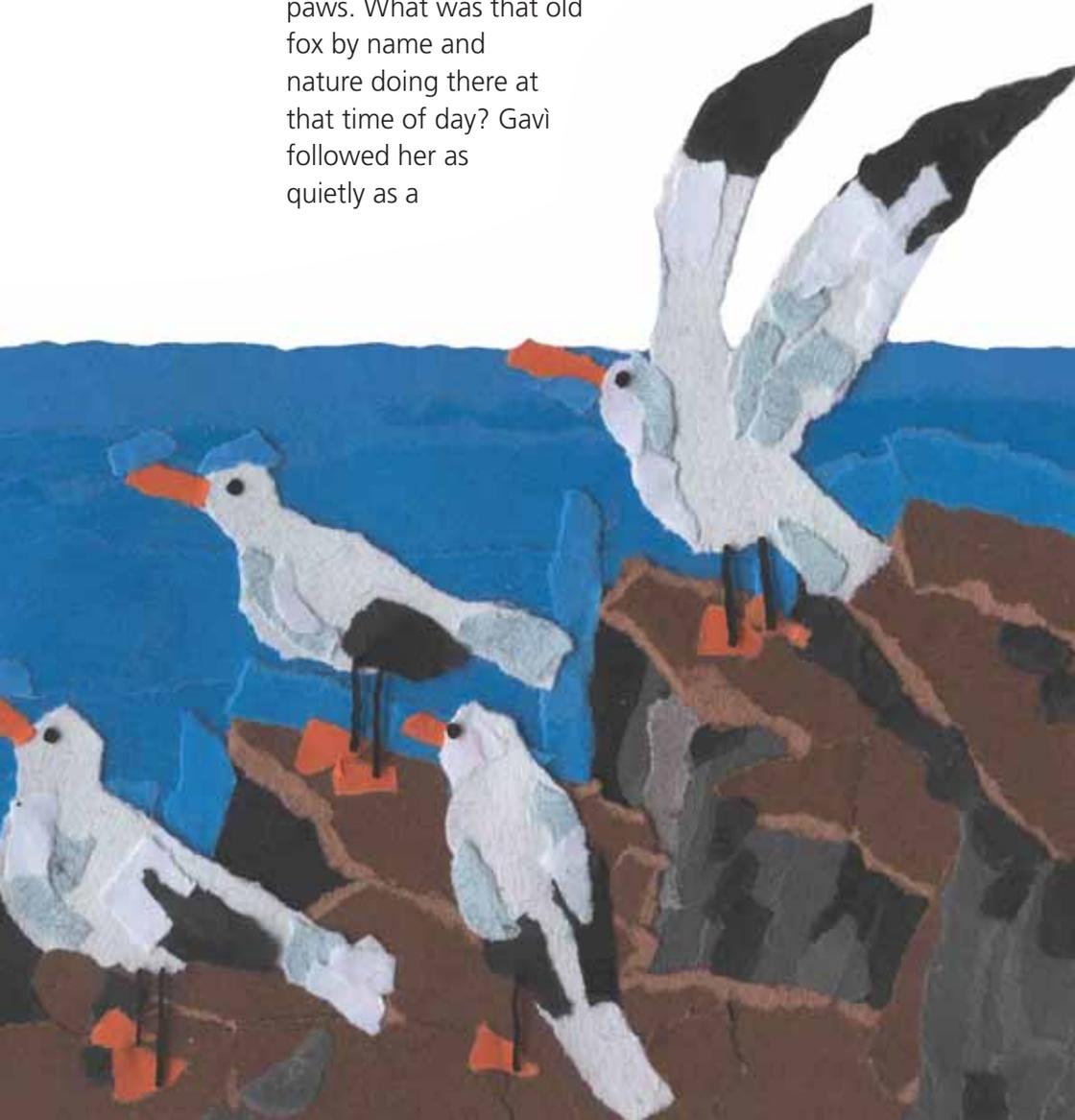


## **La Notte del Risveglio** **[The Night of the Awakening]**

Gavi lu Llandò was enjoying the last few minutes of the sunset, before he finished drying his wings on the Punta Giglio rock, on the other side of the Porto Conte bay in the Riviera del Corallo. He was your average old cormorant who had really seen life and who always felt a bit sad when he saw the last glimmer of light die down beyond the horizon. Then he left his observation post and flew off skimming the surface of the water towards the Capo Caccia headland, which he easily



circumnavigated to reach the entrance to the **Grotte di Nettuno** [Neptune's Caves]. While he was flying alongside the Escala del Cabirol, the flight of stone steps descending sheer to the sea and to the great cavern, he saw Madama Scaltra coming down the stairs on the tips of her paws. What was that old fox by name and nature doing there at that time of day? Gavi followed her as quietly as a



church mouse, all the way to the mouth of the cave, which was still bathed in the last rays of sunlight. Then he saw her swimming in one of the many underground pools, until she reached a tall pink and white stalagmite, on which she knocked with her paw.

<<Boom, boom, boom!>>

"Helloo! Is Neptune there?" screeched the fox.

"Whooo iss caalling me?" answered a very old thundering voice.

"It is the Night of the Awakening," announced Madama Scaltra in a terrified tone, before bolting like a flash of lightning towards the exit.

A terrified Gavi lu Landò cleared off as fast as he could, heading towards the nearby island of Foradada, all the way to the nest of Cau Majore, the chief of the flock of herring gulls.

"Helloo, wakey wakey! Incredibile things are happening," shouted the cormorant, who was all agitated and managed to wake up the whole flock who were taking a nap. Soon they were all around him.

"And so on and so on..." said Gavi.

"Are you sure that was really Neptune's voice?" asked Cau Majore with a dark look.

"Well, whose was it, if not?! It was as loud as a clap of thunder!"

The herring gull shook his head thoughtfully and then muttered: "Mmm, the Night of the Awakening were the fox's words; that means one hundred years have already gone by."

"And so?" "And so this means that tonight all the ancient Sea gods, from Neptune, the King of the Sea to Torco, King of the Tritons, will circle the island to wake

## Then and now

The Grotte di Nettuno [Neptune's Caves] are found beneath the Capo Caccia headland, near to Alghero, in the north west of Sardinia. They abound with tunnels and pools, and are literally pierced with huge stalactites and stalagmites, protected by gigantic rocky pillars, the tallest of which is the Colonna dell'Organo [Organ Pipe]. The caves get their name from the Latin god, Neptune, king of the sea, who according to a Sardinian legend, helped the heroic sailor, Torco, to send African pirates packing from the coasts of Sardinia. Unfortunately, at the end of the battle, Torco sunk with his ship and consequently Neptune transformed him into a half-man, half-fish and made him King of the Tritons. The whole area, known as "l'Arca" [the Arch], lies within the Marine Reserve of Capo Caccia and Punta Giglio, the Regional Nature Reserve of Porto Conte controlled by the State Forest Rangers "Le Prigionette". The landscape in this bay is varied, characterised by impressive cliffs that drop sheer to the sea, stretching from Punta Cristallo to Capo Caccia, separated by Mount Timidone. The Romans called it the bay of the nymphs for its incredible beauty. The reforested areas and Mediterranean shrub offer shelter to the Sardinian hare, wild rabbits, weasels, martens and Sardinian grouse. Halfway through the seventies, man reintroduced fallow-deer, the Giara pony, the Asinara white donkey and the boar. Man has always lived here ever since the Prehistoric Age and today you can still admire the Grotta Verde [Green Cave]; the Palmavera nuraghe; the remains of a Roman noble family villa and towers dating from the Spanish rule. The Palmavera nuraghe has a huge central tower which stands over 8 metres high, as well as other smaller towers built in later periods. Of the actual village that extended around the nuraghe only the circular walls remain.

## How to get here

Grotte di Nettuno [Neptune's Caves]: to reach the caves, take a ferry from Alghero Port or climb down from Capo Caccia, along the "Escala del cabirol", (Catalan for "The deer's steps"), which counts more than 659 steps leading right to the underground cavern.

## Things to do here

Excursion to the caves, *Alghero Tourist Offices* - tel. 079 979054

Mediterranean flora and fauna Research and Documentation Centre, *Alghero*, tel. 079 951595

L'Ageur Excursion Centre, *Alghero* - tel. 340 7233953

Palmavera Nuraghic Village and Anghelu Ruju Necropolis, *Coop. Silt*, tel. 079 980040

San Michele Library, *Largo San Francesco 14, Alghero* - tel. 079 970102



up the Giants and the Orcs who need to meet in the **Valle dei Nuraghi** [Valley of the Nuraghi].”

“Giants? What Giants? And which Orcs?” screeched Gavi, trembling all the way down to his tail.

Cau Majore flew up into the air; the gulls and the cormorant followed him in silence, shaking with fear. Soon they reached the hinterland, where the last glimmer of dusk was drawing dark shadows on the mountains and hills against the light.

“Every one of those mountains and those hills,” explained the herring gull as he floated with open wings on the breeze, “even the ones where you find the Palmavera nuraghe, is either an Orc or one of the sleeping Giants, who built the nuraghi so long ago.”

In the terrified look of the gulls and the cormorant, the mountains and hills were transformed into the profiles of faces, bodies and long feet, and somebody even thought they could see their chest rising as they breathed, while all the time the undertow on the Capo Caccia rocks made such a loud snoring noise.

“They were ruled over by the biggest Giant there has ever been,” continued Cau Majore. “His name was Antoni Craccassoi and he was an excellent Master Bricklayer, capable of lifting tons of square rocks with his bare hands, which he then laid one on top of another to make the nuraghi. And when together with the other Giant workers, he had finished one, his wife would step in and clean it and make it shine so brightly with her huge hands and long rotating breasts, helped by the local Orcs. Maria was a witch, as tall and sturdy as an oak tree with stubbly hair and an enormous appetite. For this reason, in between the building of one nuraghe or



## Then and now

The Valley of the Nurgahi lies in the Logudoro area ("Terra dell'oro" [Land of gold]), in the north of Sardinia and has about thirty nuraghi and ten Tombe dei giganti [Giants'Tombs]. The nuraghi are truncated-cone shaped towers, built from huge stones called megaliths and dating back to 1800 BC. They are found throughout Sardinia and were the centre of ancient Sardinian social life, giving their name to this civilisation, namely the Nuraghic civilisation, one of the most mysterious and lesser known in the Mediterranean. The word "nuraghe", according to numerous scholars, has primitive origins and derives from "Nur", meaning a pile of stones with a hole in the middle. Archaeologists and historians more or less agree that the nuraghi were used for both civilian and military purposes, mainly designed for the control and defence of the territory and its resources, but still many questions remain as to their real use and how they were built. For this very reason, many legends tell that the giants, Antoni Cracasso (or also "Craccassoni") and Maria Mangroffa, built nuraghi all over the island.

Maria Mangroffa was also known as a wicked witch and child-eater, and eventually she was burnt at the stake, just like all the other witches during the Inquisition.

The highest of the nuraghi is the Reggia Nuragica [Nuraghic Palace] of Santu Antine, also called "Sa domo de su Re" [The King's House] and situated in the Torralba area. It is a trilobated construction with three towers that form a triangle, with the main tower in the centre originally standing around 25 metres tall; this was almost a world record at the time, since the pyramids were the only buildings taller than this in the Mediterranean. The monument is an authentic castle-fortress, around which we find the remains of a nuraghic village, also inhabited during the Roman age.

At the beginning of the Valley of the Nuraghi, near to Siligo, we find the Church of Santa Maria di Mesumundu [the "Centre of the World"], built during the Middle Ages by Byzantine monks on an existing structure dating from the Roman period, when it had been used as a Roman spa.

Not far away, the Osservatorio Astronomico e Planetario [Astronomical Observatory and Planetarium] has been built with the very aim of observing the Universe from the "Centre of the World". It has a powerful 4m class space telescope and a mobile dome to

observe the sky and it is possible to take a guided tour to wonder at the Solar System and The Milky Way. The Saint Andrea Priu Domus de Janas [Giant's Tomb] is found at about 5 km from Bonorva, on the road that leads to the Forest of Burgos.

The necropolis dates back to the Neolithic Age (around 3,000 years ago) and comprises around twenty tombs, with lots of pillars and double-sloping roofs. The largest of these is the so-called Tomba del Capo [Chief's Tomb] with around eighteen rooms inside. These are decorated with paintings dating from the Middle Ages when the Byzantine monks transformed the caves into areas for meditation. The statue of a bull is found on the little hill, which in ancient times always represented strength but was also the symbol of extreme sacrifice.

### **How to get here**

Take the SS 131 towards Sassari, following signs for Bonorva, Torralba and Siligo. The whole archaeological area is well signposted.

### **Things to do here**

Guided tours to the Santu Antine Nuraghe, *Comune di Torralba*  
*tel. 079 847010*

Guided tours to Saint Andrea Priu, *Comune di Bonorva*  
*tel. 079 867894*

Museum of the Valley of the Logudoro Meilogu Nuraghi  
*Cooperativa La Pintadera, Torralba - tel. 079 847298 - 079 847296*  
Osservatorio Astronomico e Planetario, [Astronomical Observatory  
and Planetarium] "*Società Astronomica Turritana*" di Sassari, Siligo -  
*tel. 079 836003*

Library with children's books, *Via V. Emanuele 73, Siligo*  
*tel. 079 837016*

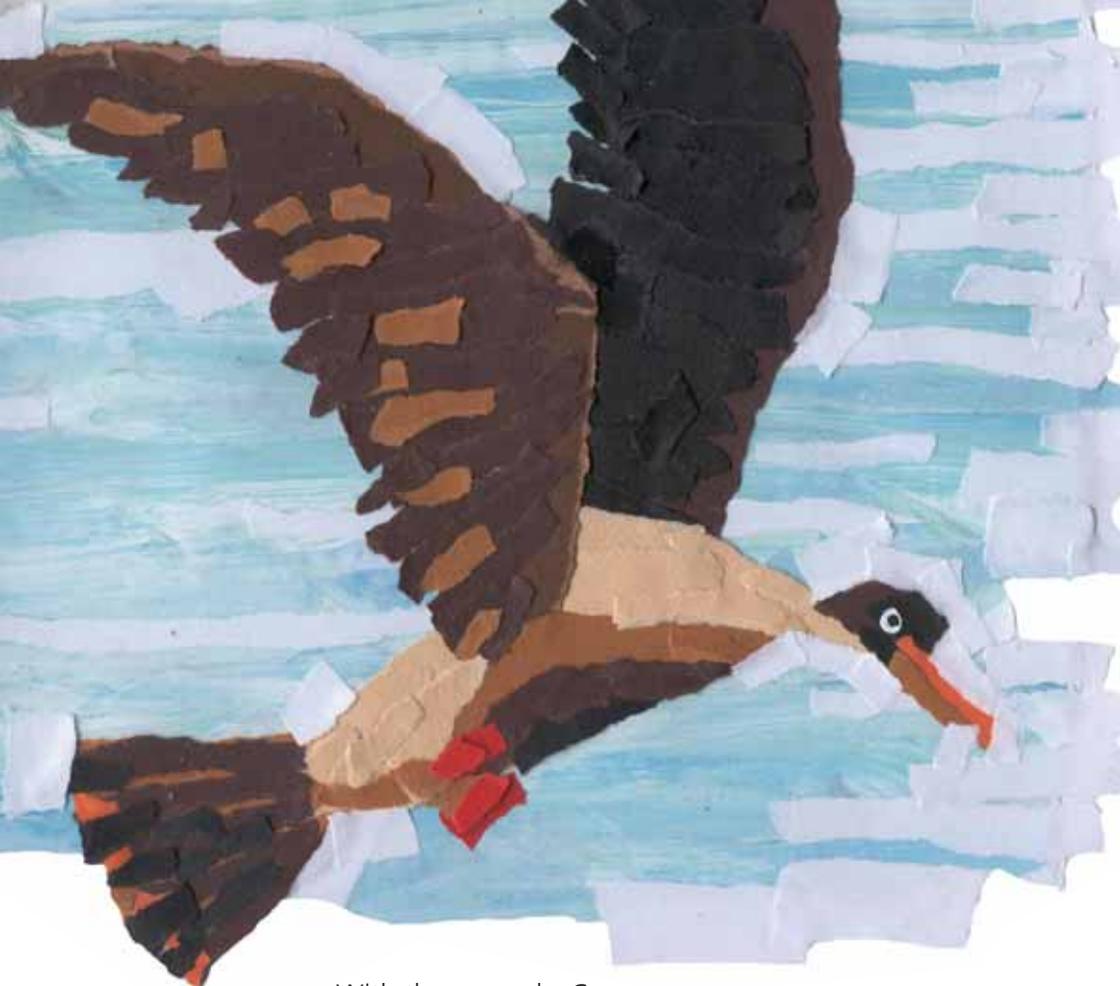
another, she used to go hunting for the young of every living species, children and baby gulls included, since they were particularly tasty." On hearing these words, the young seagulls started to tremble and sideslipped to try and hide behind a rock.

"Antoni Craccassoi and his Giant bricklayers," continued Cau Majore, "built tens of thousands of nuraghi, from north to south on the island, in exchange for a lot of money. But after the work was done, the Giants, Orcs and Maria Mangrofa were so tired that before they could claim what they were owed, they crashed to the ground and slept for such a long time that they became mountains and hills. In so doing, they also changed the appearance of the island, which ever since Giove Pluvio had squashed it with his foot to put an end to the Flood, had been completely flat. Grass, bushes, vineyards and fruit trees sprouted up on their bodies. And then yews, cypress and whole woods of oak trees. This was how our island came to be populated with plants of every species that covered all the hills and mountains."

"But now, what's going to happen?" asked Gavi lu Landò, the cormorant, "and why on earth are the sea gods waking them up?"

"Because they promised the Orcs and Giants to do so every hundred years. So that they can go the meeting held in the Valle dei Nuraghi, where they are supposed to agree on how much they should ask the humans to pay them for the ten thousand hand-built nuraghi. But now, let's hurry up! If we fly fast, we'll reach the Valley before Neptune and Torco have finished their round of the island and woken everybody up."





With these words, Cau Majore flapped his wings and took off towards the south, followed by the little flock and the cormorant. When they got to the Valle dei Nuraghi, they stopped for a rest on the white roof of the little old Church of **Mesumundu**, that gently reflected the rays of the full moon. But there was absolutely no sign of any Giants, Witches or Orcs. So the little flock spread their wings and flew off in the direction of the Nuraghic Royal palace of **Santu Antine**, which stood out so proudly in the heart of the valley. But there too, only wind and silence reigned.

Finally they headed south in the direction of the Domus de Janas in the **Sant'Andrea Priu**, necropolis, a place of shadows, death and spirits.

And right there they saw the witch Maria Mangrofa who, after such a long sleep, was feeling a certain pang of hunger and had just grabbed a chubby little orc in her claws, all ready to gobble him up.

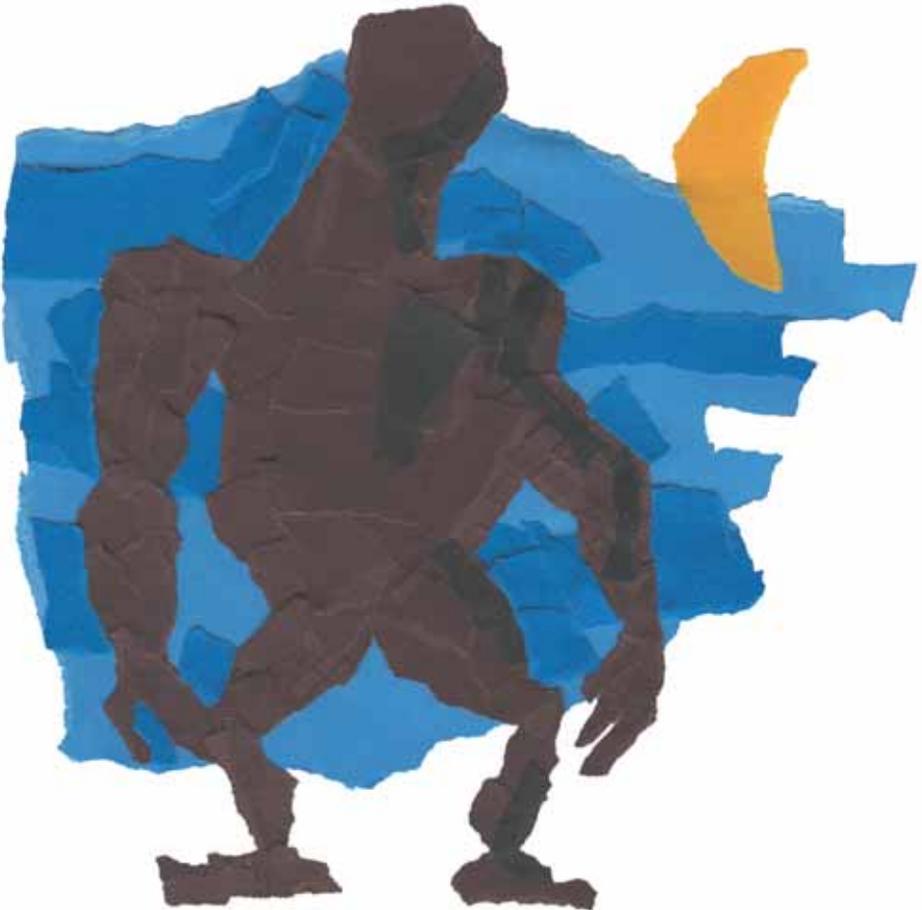
"Leave my son alone, you ugly witch!" Orco Baborco appeared out of nowhere, as Maria Mangrofa was humming: "Yummy, yummy! Look out tummy, here it comes!". "Sorry, thought it was a piglet," said the witch with an amused sneer. Then one after another, the Orcs and the other Giants arrived, making the valley resound with the menacing noise of thunder and earthquakes.

The last to arrive was the Giant of Giants, Antoni Cracassoi, and the meeting finally started.

The Orcs yelled out that they should get the largest part of the payment, since they had worked the hardest. Maria Mangrofa yelled simply because she was a witch. And as for the Giants, who were always chatterboxes and quarrelsome by nature they never stooped arguing amongst themselves and banging their fists and threatening to smash the nuraghi, the necropolises and even the holy wells and country churches to pieces, if the humans didn't settle this ancient debt for the ten thousand nuraghe they had built with their bare hands. After hours and hours of all that furious uproar, Cau Majore yawned, shook his head and flew off, followed by his flock and his cormorant friend.

"Now they'll try to work out how much interest is due after three thousand five hundred years of waiting," he said. "And when they have finished counting on the

fingers of their big hands, it will be dawn already...  
And at dawn you know, Giants, Orcs and Witches always  
disappear in the splendour of the morning light."  
The cormorant Gavi lu Landò had the impression that  
Cau Majore was laughing up his sleeve.  
"Oh yes," murmured the chief of the gulls. "With the  
first rays of sunlight, they will change back again into  
hills and mountains. And Humans can sleep sweet  
dreams for another hundred years!"



# I sette berretti di Matzamurreddu

Gianluca Medas

Once upon a time a group of tiny elves called Pundacci lived in the depths of the **Sette Fratelli** forest and they all had seven black caps and a treasure hidden amongst the roots of a tree. Their favourite game was bothering human beings. In fact at night fall, each one of them put on his seven caps and went into a house in one of the many villages in Sardinia with one idea in mind: to jump with both their feet onto the tummy of their chosen victim, taking their breath away and giving them the fright of their lives.

Nevertheless the human beings accepted this rough treatment quite willingly. This was because if, at this rude awakening, you managed to grab one of the Pundaccio's seven caps, you would receive all his wonderful treasure. In fact, this was the price that an absent-minded or clumsy elf had to pay if somebody managed to pinch one of his caps.

"Tell me, mammai," a young Pundaccio called Matzamurreddu asked his mother. "When can I go and jump on the tummy of a man or woman?"

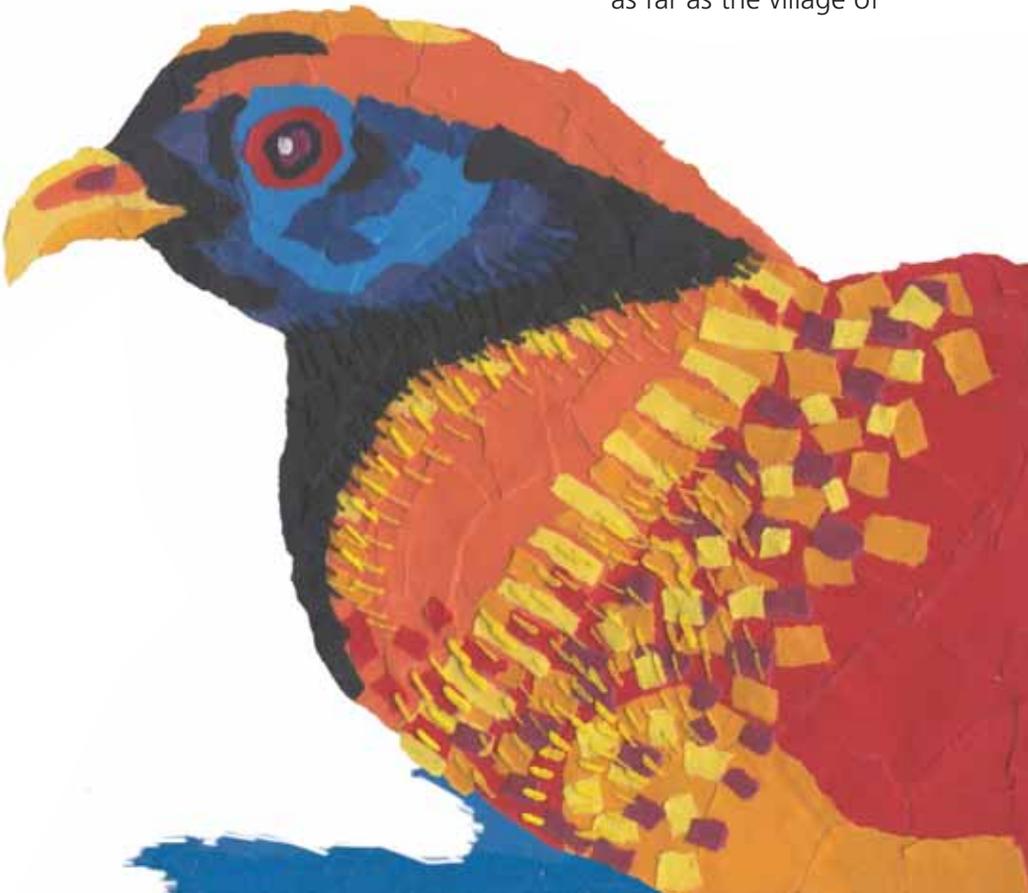
"Very soon," answered mammai elf.

And when Matzamurreddu finally reached the age of fortyeight (when these long-lived Pundacci came of age),

his father gave him a piece of final advice.

“Remember, my son,” said babbai Pundaccio, “that before jumping on the tummy of the person you have chosen, make sure that they are fast asleep. Be ready to be off like a shot as soon as they open their eyes. And above all, never ever single out shepherd boys since they always sleep with one eye open, in case anyone tries to make off with one of their flock...”

Matzamurreddu thought about his father’s words. Then as soon as it got dark and the moon started to go for its stroll among the stars, he asked a partridge to fly him as far as the village of



## **Then and now**

The Sette Fratelli [Seven Brothers] Mountain lies in an area in the south east of Sardinia. As the name suggests, it is made up of seven granite peaks separated by deep gorges. In actual fact, the peaks of the Sardinian massif are so much more. The range is crossed by several rivers; mountain streams that flow into the Colostrai lagoon and the Rio Maidopis. Right at the heart of the state-controlled forest with the same name, in the lands of Burcei and Sinnai, lies a natural oasis abounding with Mediterranean shrub, where you can catch sight of the majestic Sardinian deer, and in the Punta Ceraxa area, a herd of moufflons. Other species of animals like boars, wild cats, golden eagles and buzzards can also be seen amongst the ilex and oak woods. Then there are plenty of Giants' Tombs and Nuraghi to visit here. The "Umberto Noci", Ranger station is found in the Campuomu area; from here you can follow a path that leads towards Punta Sa Ceraxa with the Arco dell'Angelo [Angel's Arch], a pink granite valley considered a natural monument. The reserve boasts a dense network of hiking paths, once used by Burcei's coal producing industry. This little village is not to be missed in the month of June when a cherry festival is organised here.

## **How to get here**

From Cagliari take the SS 125 towards Muravera as far as the S'Arcu e Tidu pass, turning right, you reach the "Noci" Forest Ranger Station in the place called Campuomu.

## **Things to do here**

Outings on foot or on horseback, with different levels of difficulty, environmental educational activities, birdwatching  
Azienda Foreste Demaniali, *Viale Nerollo 68, Cagliari - tel. 070 27991*  
Library with Children's Section, *Piazza Municipio Sinnai*  
*tel. 070 782241*

## Then and now

The name derives from the Latin word "mandara", which means "a pen for animals". In fact this village, which stands between the Campidano and the Barbagia areas, certainly has plenty of fertile lands and is an important agro-pastoral centre. The presence of more than 40 nuraghi is evidence of the fact that this land has been inhabited since Prehistoric times, thanks to its strategic position as an obligatory passageway for anyone going to the centre of the Island. Mandas was also a railway junction, along the route from Cagliari leading right to the heart of Sardinia, to the regions of Mandrolisai and Ogliastra. In 1921 the English writer D.H. Lawrence (author of "Lady Chatterly's Lover") travelled on this train and wrote about his voyage around the island in his book "Sea and Sardinia". A major International Prize for Literature has been set up in his honour, taking place in the month of September. The railway line is no longer operating, but during the summer and for the most important festivals, outings on the Trenino verde [Little Green Train] are organised following the old routes: from Mandas to Arbatax. The railway passes through areas which have no roads and are rugged and wild, where landscapes are continually changing: dense woods, roundabouts of bends, lakes, nuraghi, steep slopes and natural granite sculptures as far as the sea. The journey takes 5 hours, during which you can stop off and visit all the villages that you meet on the way, such as Orroli, Sadali, Seui, Lanusei, Tortoli and Arbatax, the place of arrival.

## How to get here

From Cagliari go along the SS 131 in the direction of Sassari. After going through the little town of Monastir, take the SS 128, in the direction of Senorbì - Suelli.

## Things to do here

A visit to the archaeological sites, a visit to the Acqua Bona park which has a snack bar, the Museo Comunale Etnografico [Communal Ethnographic Museum] "Is Lollasa'e is Aiaiusu", with reproductions of two farmer's houses, the typical location for everyday rural life of the past centuries

Ass. Pro Loco, *via Cagliari 192, Mandas - tel. 348 9335805*  
Trenino verde [Little Green Train]: *Ferrovie dello Stato*

**Mandas.** “Now I only have to choose the house,” murmured the young Pundaccio, after having said goodbye to the partridge who was already flying away. Matzamurreddu studied the silhouette of the houses for a long time and decided to climb up on a charming house made of ladiri [mudbricks] and go in down the chimney. But just a moment later, what did he see before his very eyes?

A shepherd boy, on his way back to his sheepfold in the mountains, had decided to stop with his flock to sleep under a tree not far from the house.

Matzamurreddu was bewitched as he stared at the boy. Both his eyes were closed and he seemed to be so fast asleep that nothing, not even a storm could have woken him up. Thus he forgot everything his father had told him and murmured: “Why should I bother going down that chimney and maybe get myself all covered with soot, if I don’t need to?” And straightaway he climbed up on the branch of a tree and got ready to jump on the poor boy’s tummy to frighten him out of his life.

But only at the very last moment, did Matzamurreddu realise that he couldn’t do it. This was because he had put his feet on a patch of incredibly sticky resin and he couldn’t move an inch.

“Oh, no...” despaired the young Pundaccio. “If I can’t get my foot off this branch, when that shepherd boy wakes up tomorrow morning, he’ll be sure to see me”. And this was not Matzamurreddu’s only problem. Because with all his moving around on the branch, pulling himself here and twisting himself there, one of

his seven caps slipped off his head and gently floated like a leaf onto the head of a sheep, who unlike the milk-white fleeces of her sisters, had a fleece as black as coal. Just imagine how the imprudent Matzamurreddu spent the rest of the night!

He regretted over and over again not having listened to his father's words. But luckily when morning arrived and the shepherd boy woke up, he didn't seem to notice him up on the tree, nor did he see the black cap which was still on the head of the black sheep.

The boy whistled happily, washed his face in a stream and after having drunk some fresh milk, set off with his flock along a path that led away from the village.

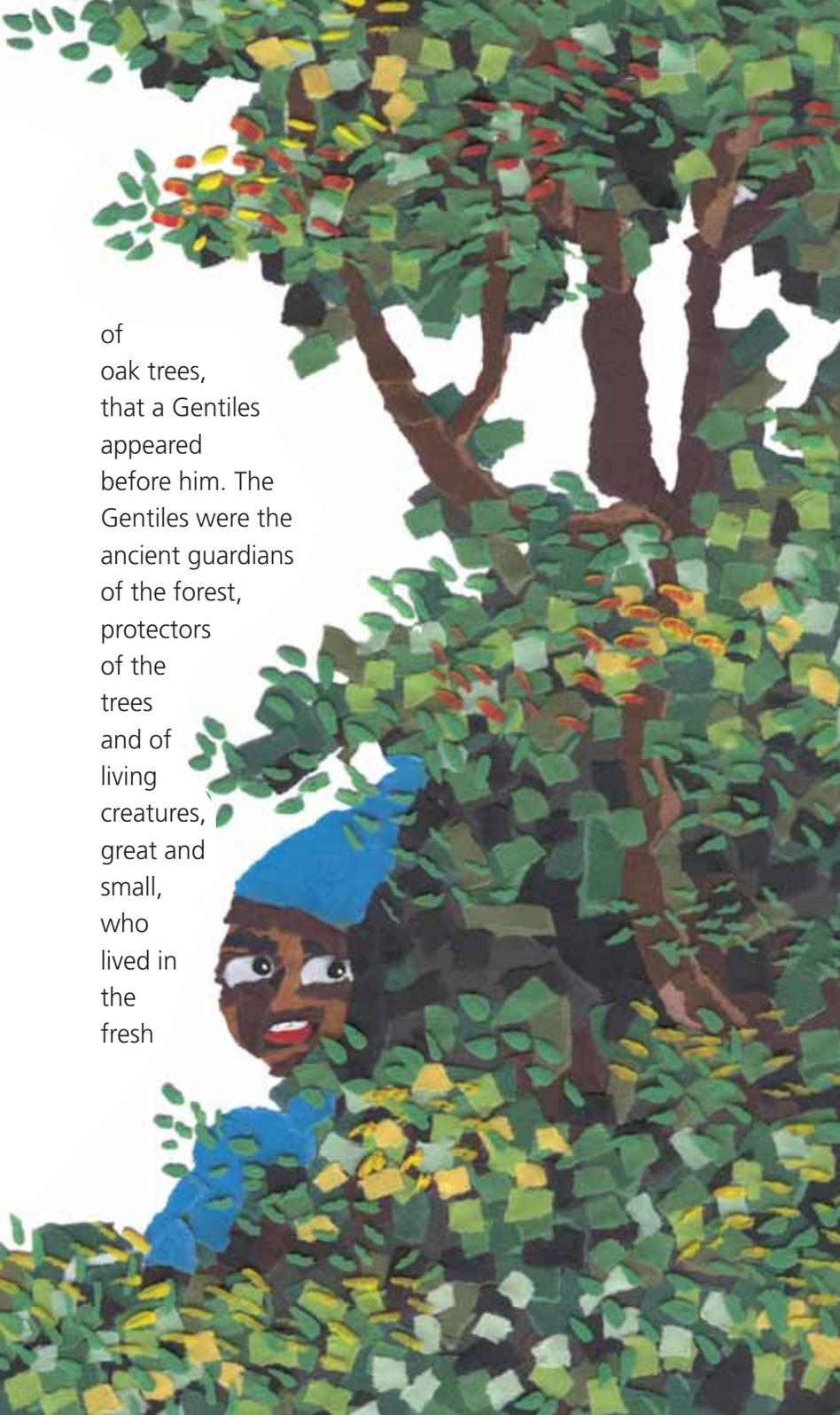
"Phew! At least he didn't see me," whispered the young Pundaccio. "But how am I going to get my cap back?"

When Matzamurreddu finally managed to set himself free from the resin and get down from the tree, it was already late evening. He started to follow the trail left by the sheep along the road, hoping to reach them as soon as possible. But when night fell, he had to go much more slowly. And the next day things didn't get any better, since he often had to hide motionless behind a rock or a bush so as to avoid being seen by the farmers working in their fields.

"Poor old me," he whispered, when he got close to the village of **Orroli** and stopped to get his breath back near the huge Arrubiu Nuraghe.

"How can I tell babbai that I have lost one of my seven caps because I didn't follow his advice?" It was only a short while later, as he was going through a dense wood

of  
oak trees,  
that a Gentile  
appeared  
before him. The  
Gentiles were the  
ancient guardians  
of the forest,  
protectors  
of the  
trees  
and of  
living  
creatures,  
great and  
small,  
who  
lived in  
the  
fresh



## Then and now

This village of lakes and nuraghi rises in the basin of the Pranemuru plateau, at the edge of the valley of the Flumendosa and Mulargia lakes. The village is the site of the "Gigante Rosso" [Red Giant], the Arrubiu nuraghe, red because of the lichens covering the stones. It is one of the most important examples of a nuraghic fort and the only one found till now, which has five lateral towers as well as the central one. Every year during the summer, Orroli holds an important road race meeting, known as the "Corriorroli", which attracts a great number of world-class athletes and draws great crowds. Visitors can enjoy fishing and canoeing on the nearby Mulargia lake, or take a pleasant and relaxing boat trip, certainly a great favourite for nature lovers.

## How to get here

From Cagliari, take the SS 131 towards Sassari. After passing the town of Monastir, take the SS 128, in the direction of Senorbì. At the crossroads for Isili, turn onto the SS 198 as far as the crossroads for Nurri; turn right on the SP 10 continuing as far as the village, after which continue until you arrive at Orroli. Go on towards Escalaplano; at km 9 turn left and after about 3.5 km, you reach the archaeological area.

On the "trenino verde" [little green train]: Mandas - Arbatax

## Things to do here

Guided tours to the archaeological site, boat trips on the lake, fishing and canoeing.

Ass. Pro Loco, *piazza Municipio 1, Orroli*  
tel. 0782 845177 - 0782 847777

shade of the forest. "Where are you going to in such a hurry, young Pundaccio?" the gigantic being asked Matzamurreddu, staring at him with that huge eye stuck right in the middle of his forehead. "And how come you only have six caps, instead of seven?"

Matzamurreddu breathed a long sigh, long enough to go all around the world and back, and told the guardian of the woods all about his misadventures, since he was certain that he could trust him as Gentiles and Pundacci have been friends since time immemorial.

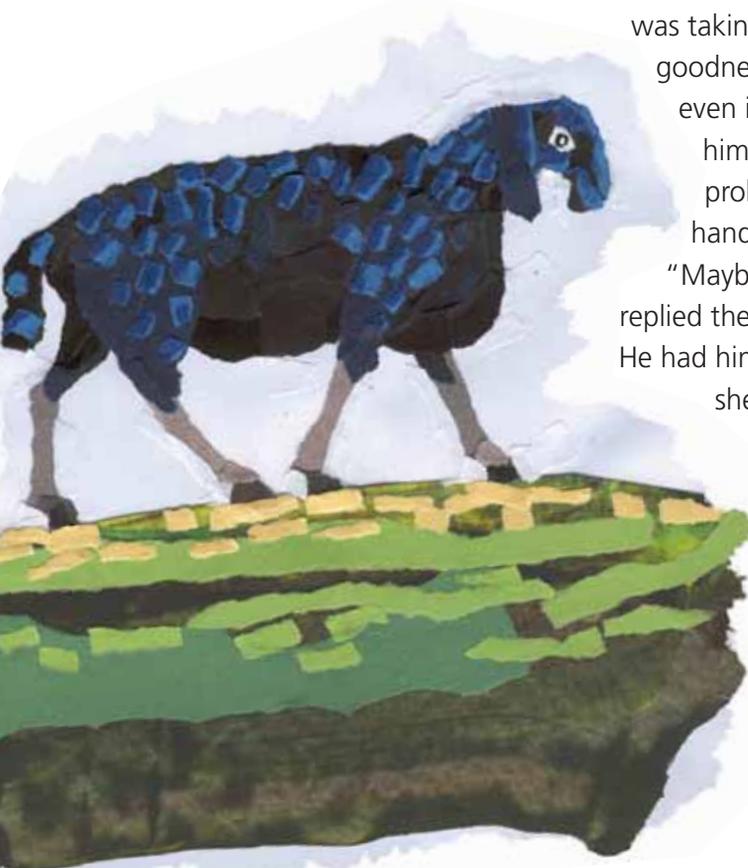
"So, now you know everything," said the little elf. "Who knows if I can catch up with that boy who

was taking his flocks, goodness know where. And even if I do catch up with him, by that time, he'll probably have got his hands on my cap..."

"Maybe yes or maybe no," replied the Gentiles.

He had him describe the shepherd boy and said to Matzamurreddu:

"I'll help you to find him again, seeing that I know where his sheep-pen lies. My friend the boar will lead



you along the secret paths through the woods and mountains. But remember, once you get there, you are on your own...”

The Gentiles whistled twice and a few seconds later a bristly haired reddish-brown boar appeared, who led Matzamurreddu along the secret paths of the mountains and woods. The two of them crossed the lands of the village of Nurri, where they stopped for a break near the Su Pizzu de is Cangialis nuraghe, then they continued east, passing by the Montarbu forest and when it was nearly dusk, they were in sight of the steep slopes of **Gairo** Taquisara, where the boar showed Pundaccio the shepherd boy’s sheep-pen.

Matzamurreddu thanked him and when he was alone, waited until it grew really dark. Then holding his breath, he drew near to the stone pen where the boy kept his sheep and immediately spotted the black one. Only just as he had imagined, the cap was no longer on its head! “Perhaps this is what you are looking for?” boomed a voice from the dark. The shepherd boy was standing behind Pundaccio, looking at him with a sly grin and wearing the black cap on his head.

“Yes... I... You see, I...” stammered Matzamurreddu. But even before he could manage to form a complete sentence, the boy handed the cap to him, saying: “Take it back, I don’t want it and I don’t even want your treasure, seeing that your cap fell off your head when you climbed up that tree and I didn’t take it off you...” Matzamurreddu realised that two nights before the shepherd boy had actually seen him and thanked his

## Then and now

Gairo Vecchio [Old Gairo] has been a ghost town since the fifties, when after numerous floods and the risk of a possible landslide, the entire population moved to the nearby town of Gairo Sant'Elena, just a few kilometres away. Its fate even seems to be written in its name which probably derives from the Greek "ga" and "roa", meaning the "land that slides". There are plenty of remains from the Prenuraghic and Nuraghic eras, in particular the Su Serbissi nuraghe, which is connected by a tunnel dug into the rock to an underground cave where, according to numerous scholars, food was stored. There are countless archaeological itineraries and nature trails which wend their way through the woods which are the habitat of a wealth of wildlife. From Taquisara, on reaching the valley and the small "Genna Orruali" lake, you come across the archaeological area and calcareous "tacchi" [mountain crags] area. In particular, Pèrde Liàna, the highest of the Ogliastra peaks, was probably once a site of worship and the place where the chiefs of the tribe held military meetings. This gave rise to the origins of the legend that on certain nights magical creatures used to meet here. As we descend, we find the woods of Bibòisi, Baccu Nieddu and of the Sarcerei; the latter has picnic areas. Not far from the town centre, we find the enchanting and unspoilt beaches of "Baccu'e Praidas", followed by the "Marina di Gairo", "Su Sirboni" and finally "Coccorrocci".

## How to get here

From Cagliari, take the SS 125 in the direction of Lanusei - Tortolì, continuing as far as the crossroads for Jerzu and after going through the town centre, on towards Ulassai and Osini. The village is reached after 6 km.

The Trenino verde [Little Green Train] stops here.

## Things to do here

A visit to Gairo Vecchio, excursions to the Coil'e sa Mèla pinneta [shepherd's hut] (by car followed by a short walk), excursions to the Su Serbissi nuraghe, Comune di Osini, sport fishing in the little "Genna Orruali" lake

Ass. Pro Loco *via della Libertà 1, Gairo - cell. 333 2714812*

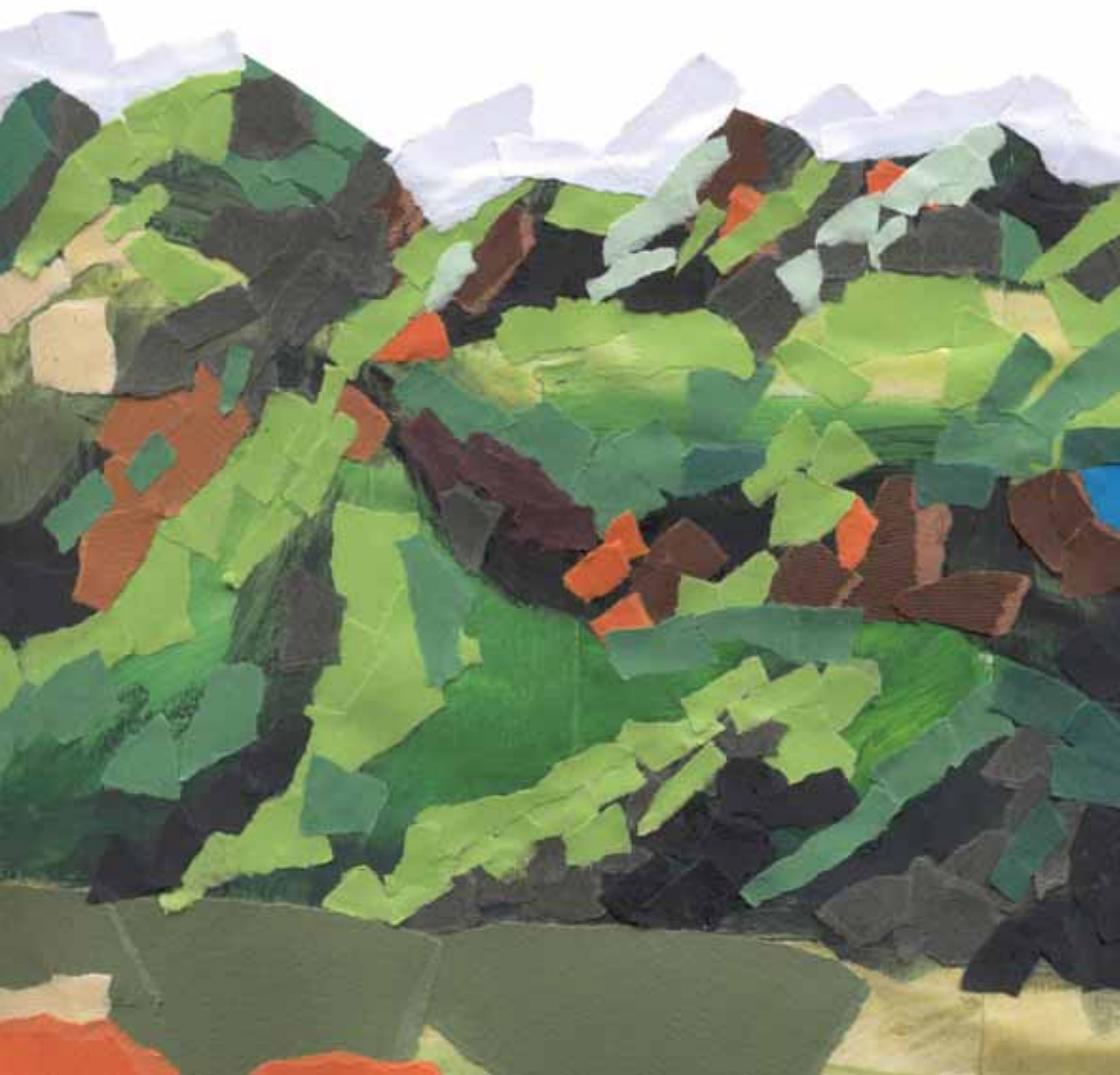
Library with children's books - *tel. 0782 73423 - 0782 760000*

lucky stars that he had been so honest as to play by the ancient rules of the game.

"Perhaps I'll come and visit you one of these nights," he said with a smile, "and jump up and down a bit on your tummy..." "Come whenever you like," replied the shepherd boy with a laugh. "But if I wake up, I'll take your cap, and then your treasure will be all mine!"



From this time on, Matzamurreddu and the little shepherd boy became the closest of friends. But the person who told me this story, never told me who managed to win the game of the cap, of tummy-jumping and of the treasure.





# Le storie del vecchio ulivo

Rossana Copez

The Old Olive Tree whispered:  
*"...Today let me tell you the story,  
of the sandal-shaped island  
lost in the middle of the sea..."*

Long ago there was, and still is today, a village called **Santa Maria Navarrese**. Behind the village the high limestone peaks are the first to enjoy the rising sun and below it, long beaches of golden sand lap the sea, together with constellations of red rocks, whose tips festoon the air.

And I, the Old Olive Tree, was born thousands of years ago in the square of this village. And in all this time, I have heard so many of those stories circulating in the wind that blows through my branches and makes my leaves rustle, that every now and then I want to tell one too... Those red rocks, do you see them? The ones that are poking out of the sea? They say that they hide the den of a creature born in the shadows.

An old barn owl with eyes as big as the full moon? A frightening owl coloured as dark and black as night? Nobody has ever known the truth. But of course, once upon a time, this winged creature was the terror of all the young mothers. They called it the Stria - Surbile, and it is said that it hated sunlight and that when darkness came it sucked the blood of newborn children.

One night the Stria-Surbile, attracted by the nice smell of talc and mother's milk coming through the open window

## Then and now

A legend tells that in 1052, Princess Isabella of Navarre had a lucky escape from being ship-wrecked and found shelter for her ships on the east coast of Sardinia. As a way of giving thanks, she had a little church built here, in honour of Santa Maria, which with the name of "Navarrese" announces the name of one of Sardinia's favourite tourist destinations. Santa Maria Navarrese, a hamlet of Baunei in Ogliastra, is framed on one side by the Supramonte and on the other by a splendid sea. Within the old country churchyard, we find a gigantic olive tree, more than a thousand years old, considered a natural monument. The beach is bordered by a pine forest and protected by a seventeenth century Aragonese tower. In front of the beach lies the huge pyramid-shaped rock of the Agugliastra pyramid or Sa Pedra Longa [Long Stone], a thin calcareous pinnacle that rises out of the sea for 128 m. It is easily reached in just a few minutes from the little port, which is also the departure point for boat trips to Cala Luna, Cala Sisine and Cala Goloritzè. From the sea, you can also catch a glimpse of the famous "Red rocks" of Arbatax.

Despite living so close to the sea, the locals from Baunei have never been great fishermen. This may also have been due to the fact that the coast, just after Santa Maria and for another forty kilometres, has extremely deep waters and is practically inaccessible from the sea. The area has very few landing places and numerous wrecks have been found at the bottom the sea, telling the sorry tale of all those ships that were not as lucky as Isabella of Navarre and her crew.

## How to get here

From the SS 131bis towards Nuoro, take the SS 129. Turn right onto the SS 125 and continue as far as Baunei. From Olbia, take the SS 125 in the direction of Siniscola, turn right onto the SS 131-dcn for about 36 km.; turn left and return on the SS 125 as far as Baunei. 10 minutes from the port of Arbatax.

## Things to do here

Excursions, even including a typical lunch, by sea, via land and on horseback. Day Trips with the Trenino verde [Little Green Train], Montarbu Tour, from Tortoli-Arbatax to Montarbu - [www.turinforma.it](http://www.turinforma.it)  
Petting zoo, fishing at the fish-farm, Arbatax-Tortoli - tel. 0782 2667827  
Ass. Pro Loco Santa Maria Navarrese - tel. 0782 615330  
Library with Children's Section, Via San Nicolò 2, Baunei  
tel. 0782 610823 - 0782 610923

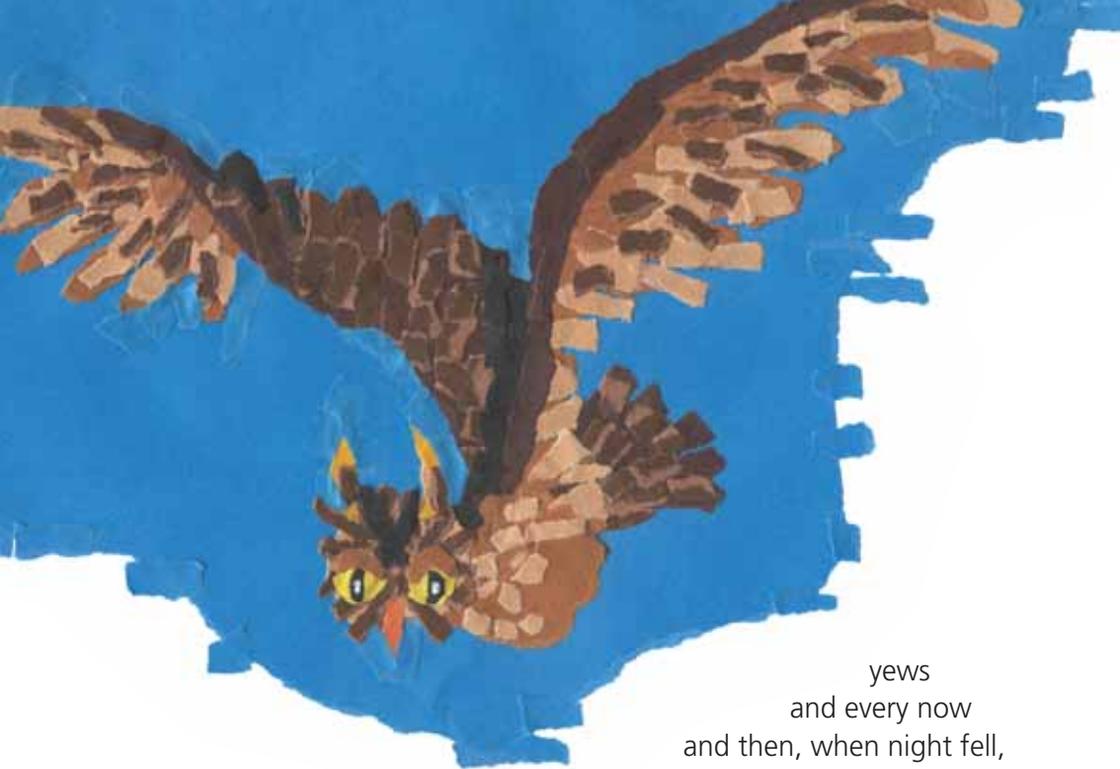
of a little house, went down the chimney into a room where a child was sleeping in his cradle, made from wood and straw. It fluttered over the baby, flapping its wings in such a skilful way to sound like the sweet sound of a lullaby, then it bit him on the finger, sucked quite a bit of blood and flew off to its den before the sun rose again. The next morning, the child's mother had no idea what to think when she saw her child's pale pale face and realised that something had bitten him on his finger. And when this mysterious event happened for three nights on the trot, she decided to tie a filigree gold and silver bell onto his cradle.

Then the woman hid and lay in wait and when she heard the bell ring, because the flapping wings of the Striasurbile were making the cradle move, she rushed out with a knobbly stick in her hand.

Thus it was that this mysterious creature, be it old barn owl with eyes as big as the moon or a frightening black and blue coloured owl, learnt his lesson because she hit him so many times, but oh so many times, that he never set foot or wings in that part ever again. However, there are some people who say that he is still hiding there, in his den amongst the red rocks whose tips festoon the air...

The Old Olive Tree whispered:  
*"...Today let me tell you the story,  
of the sandal-shaped island  
lost in the middle of the sea..."*

Once upon a time a frightening and terrible creature called s'Erchitu lived on the rugged slopes of Mount Corراسi. He used to hide amongst the age-old oaks and



yews  
and every now  
and then, when night fell,  
would go around the streets  
of the village of **Oliena**.

Now s'Erchitu was certainly not a pleasant sight. This was because he had the head, skin and hoofs of an ox on a man's body. And on the long bent horns that encircled his head, he had two candles with flames so dark that they could only be seen when high up in the sky, the moon became round and potbellied.

But this was not the reason why people were frightened of him. It was said that the sound of s'Erchitu's hoofs on the cobblestones foretold plagues and terrible misfortune. And this was why people kept well away from him, if they wanted to keep trouble at bay.

"Grandpa, have you ever seen s'Erchitu?" a child called Guianne asked his father's father one day. "Is he really so bad?"

"Not at all," replied the old man. "In my opinion he's not bad at all. I think you should know that the only time I

## **Then and now**

Rocky ramparts, deep gorges and peaks that stand out towards the sky; this is the Supramonte of Oliena and Mount Corراسi is the highest point of the whole mountain range. In the Lanaittu valley, we find the Corbeddu cave, which takes its name from the famous bandit who took refuge here in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Palaeontologists believe that this cave is very important, since the remains of the "Prolagus Sardus Wagner", a small rodent extinct twenty million years ago, were found here. Also the most ancient human fossils in Sardinia came to light in the area, together with a considerable number of stone handmade objects that date back to the Palaeolithic (15000/18000 BC).

The Tiscali mountain range rises on the edge of the Lanaittu valley with the two nuraghic villages of Tiscali and Iscali, characterised by two groups of small round and square shaped stone huts.

It almost seems like a secret village, hidden away deep in the heart of the mountain. Not far from Oliena, we find Su Gologone, Italy's most important Karstic spring, pouring out the waters that have hollowed their way through the mountain rocks and which flow into the Cedrino river. Typical species of wild fauna find refuge here: moufflons, boars, martens, foxes, wild cats, weasels, dormice, wild rabbits and the Sardinian hare. There are also numerous birds of prey: golden eagles, goshawks, sparrowhawks, peregrine falcons, buzzards and griffon vultures.

## **How to get here**

Take the SS 131 bis towards Nuoro and before entering the town, turn right following directions for the village, after 10 km turn right following signs for the stadio [stadium] and Badde e Carros.

## **Things to do here**

Outings on foot, horseback and guided tours.

Typical lunches in the shepherd's huts, the famous "pinnette"

Presidio Turistico SuSole, Oliena - tel. 0784 286078

came across him..." And thus, the grandfather told the little boy about the time he had seen s'Erchitu in a wood on Mount Corراسi. He was sitting at the mouth of a huge cave, crying his heart out and when then man asked him what the matter was, the creature explained that once

he had been a happy carefree man just like all the others, but because he had committed a grave sin, he had been transformed into this being of whom everyone was afraid.

"What sin, grandpa?" went on Gianne.

But the grandfather did not know the answer to this question.

However, he did tell his grandson that whatever s'Erchitu's past mistakes, he had already paid enough for them. And that perhaps there was a



a way to free him from the wicked spell that had changed him to half-man, half-ox, on condition that a pure-hearted child had the courage to go near him. With these words, the grandfather bent over and whispered something else to his grandson, who first of all opened his eyes in amazement and then, that very same night, when the moon was round and potbellied in the sky, slipped out of his house and clambered up the slopes of Mount Corراسi, where he found s'Erchitu, sitting astride a rock with a sad expression on his ox's face and the two burning candles on his long horns. "Why have you come all the way here?" the creature asked the child, after he had given a tremendous roar. And in reply the child said: "I'll show you why." The child drew a little closer to the horrible creature, puffed up his cheeks, held his breath and then blew and blew on the dark flames of the two candles, until they went out.

This was how the spell that had bewitched the creature was lifted and blown away with the rustling noise of a gust of wind. And thus it was that a smiling and carefree happy young man appeared before Giuanne.

"Thank you," said the young man to the child. He was so moved that he could not say another word. However he did pick up his long horns, which on falling to the ground had turned into pure gold, and gave them to the little boy who, thanks to his great courage, lived happily ever after for a hundred years more.

The Old Olive Tree whispered:  
*"...Today let me tell you the story,  
of the sandal-shaped island  
lost in the middle of the sea..."*

In the west of Sardinia, where you can wonder at the sun setting over the sea, you find the river Temo, which once upon a time was studded with forests of oaks where lots of wild animals used to live.

Right here, in a little house not far from the village of **Bosa**, there lived a fisherman, who every day took his little boat down the river as far as the sea where he gathered the red and white coral from the deep blue waters.

One evening on his way home, he was feeling tired and sad, because his work did not allow him to earn enough money for his seven children, who were certainly happy and good but who were also pale and thin, since there was never enough food to go round for their ever hungry and wanting mouths.

The fishermen, sighing heavily on his way back up the Temo, stopped to look at the sky and the shape of the clouds. He found it an enchanting sight since he spent so much time at the bottom of the sea, looking for those branches of coral that were becoming evermore rare.

But what appeared suddenly before his eyes that evening, was certainly not a cloud in the sky.

It was the dust rising from a herd of galloping horses.

The fisherman brought his boat near to the bank and wondered where this herd, that had nearly obscured the sun with that cloud, might have come from.

He went ashore since he was curious to find out and on and on he went, until the cloud of dust was right above his head, near to the tiny village of **Monteleone Rocca Doria**.

And right here at the foot of Mount Germinu, the horses appeared before him. They had powerful shanks and smelt of fern and moss and their coat was turquoise

## Then and now

Bosa lies on the banks of the Temo which is the only navigable river in Sardinia. It is a place of indisputable charm with the Sas Conzas buildings; the sheds once used for tanning and working hides, mirrored in the waters of the river and also the Sa Costa quarter, perched on the Serravalle hills, all little streets and flights of steps. All that remains of the imposing castle of the Marquises of Malaspina, are the towers and the boundary walls, inside which the church of Nostra Signora di Regnos Altos was built in the fourteenth century. The presence of the river has had a great effect on the flora and fauna of the valley. Here we find griffon vultures, red kites, golden eagles, the Bonelli eagle and the peregrine falcon. Large coral colonies are found on the sea bed around Capo Marrargiu. Near the little town the beach of Bosa Marina, (Legambiente Blue Guide Five Sails Award), is the site of the XV century Aragonese Tower of the Red Island, also known as the Torre del Porto [Port Tower]. The origins of the city date back to the Phoenicians (IX century BC.), followed by a long period of Roman domination. In the rural area of Calmedia, on the left bank of the Temo, we find the Romanesque ex-cathedral of San Pietro, in red trachyte, dating from the second half of the XI century.

## How to get here

From the SS 131 towards Sassari, at km. 134 turn at the crossroads for Macomer. Cross the village and take the SS 129.

After 27 km, you reach the town.

## Things to do here

Visits to the Malaspina Castle, Boat trips at sea and on the River Temo, Guided tours around the historic centre on a little train, Trenino Verde [Little Green Train] from Bosa Marina as far as Macomer, Birdwatching - the Griffon's Path, Guided walking tours, Museo Collezione Etnografica Stara [Stara Ethnographical Collection Museum], Windsurfing and canoeing lessons.

Ass. Pro Loco M. Melis *Via Azuni 5, Bosa* - tel. 0785 376107

## Then and now

This tiny village counting just over 100 inhabitants lies within the province of Sassari, perched on a plateau called "Su Monte". During the Middle Ages, the village belonged to the Genoan Doria family, who built a castle-fortress here. The ruins of the fortress, the fortified walls, broken towers, prison walls, a chapel and several cisterns are still visible even today. In 1400 following a lengthy siege, the inhabitants of the Monteleone village moved to a land rich in woods and springs, founding today's Villanova Monteleone. Not far away, in the valley of the Temo, near Mount Germino, there is a place called "Sa urmina de su caddu irde", where legend says you can see the hoof-print of one of the "Caddos irdes" etched into the rock; these Green Horses, were famed for their splendour but were almost impossible to catch sight of. Several scholars have asserted that this belief dates back to the existence long ago of tiny wild horses, whose coats were naturally of a greenish hue. The area is characterised by the spectacular beauty of the coast, skirted by the panoramic Alghero-Bosa route with its often sheer drops down to the sea and from which you can admire the sea on one side and the mountain covered with lentisk, rockrose and myrtle shrubs on the other. The surrounding area is studded with Prenuraghic and Nuraghic sites, confirming the fact that man has lived here since the Prehistoric Age (2000 - 1800 BC.). There are plenty of things to do here: a trip to the archaeological sites, or fishing in the lake, or an outing to the Poglina beach or excursions on foot and on horseback. In this respect, Villanova Monteleone is one of the major breeding centres for the Sardinian anglo-arab, particularly suited for horse-riding events (horse-jumping and cross-country). An important horse show and fair is held here in June and July with a prestigious national Horse Racing event.

## How to get here

From the SS 131 take the exit for Cossoine, Pozzomaggiore and Padria and continue along the SS 292bis in the direction of Villanova Monteleone. On leaving behind the crossroads for Romana on the right, a few kilometres further on you find the turning for Monteleone Rocca Doria.

## Things to do here

Museo Etnografico Comunale [Civic Ethnographic Museum] *Via Roma 13, Villanova Monteleone - tel. 079 960400*

Visits to the archeological sites, *Villanova Monteleone - tel. 079 960309*

Excursions on foot and on horseback

Library with children's section, *Via Alfieri, Villanova Monteleone - tel. 079 960309*

green, the same colour as the sea bottom where he fished for his coral.

“Don’t be sad,” the tallest and most majestic horse said to him, pawing with his hoofs on a rock. “From tomorrow, every time you go out to sea, you will have more luck. And your children will no longer go hungry and they will lead a happy life.”

The fisherman rubbed his eyes because he couldn’t believe this was really happening or if it was just a dream, and at the very moment, the horses disappeared, leaving behind them only a cloud of dust that gradually dissolved into the blue sky.

From that day onwards, every day that he went to sea, the fisherman returned home with so much red and white coral, that he and his family never went hungry again.

And if ever you pass by Monteleone Rocca Doria, keep your eyes peeled. Because the mark of that magical green horse, “Sa urmina de su caddu irde”, is still there, impressed on the living rock.



# Storie dell'isola a forma di piede

Bepi Vigna

These stories are very old, the oldest that have ever been told. They say that man invented words and language just so that he could tell these stories. When the Universe had just been finished and time had not yet begun, the Lord of the Universe divided everything up between his two daughters: Luce [Light], the queen of the day and Tenebra [Darkness], the lady of the night.

The world then was very different to how we know it today. A huge continent, Tirrenide, lay where Sardinia stands today and the Great Father had entrusted this to his daughter Luce. Man had not appeared yet and the animals lived happily amidst the huge spaces to be found on the earth.

But this situation was doomed to change, because Tenebra, jealous of everything that her sister Luce had, was getting ready to launch a mighty attack. Thus one day, the world was shaken by sudden and profound tremors. Huge waves were formed far out at sea which violently lashed the coast. The water invaded the plains and the earth started to shake; volcanoes brought forth lava and stones and huge chasms opened with flames shooting up high into the sky.

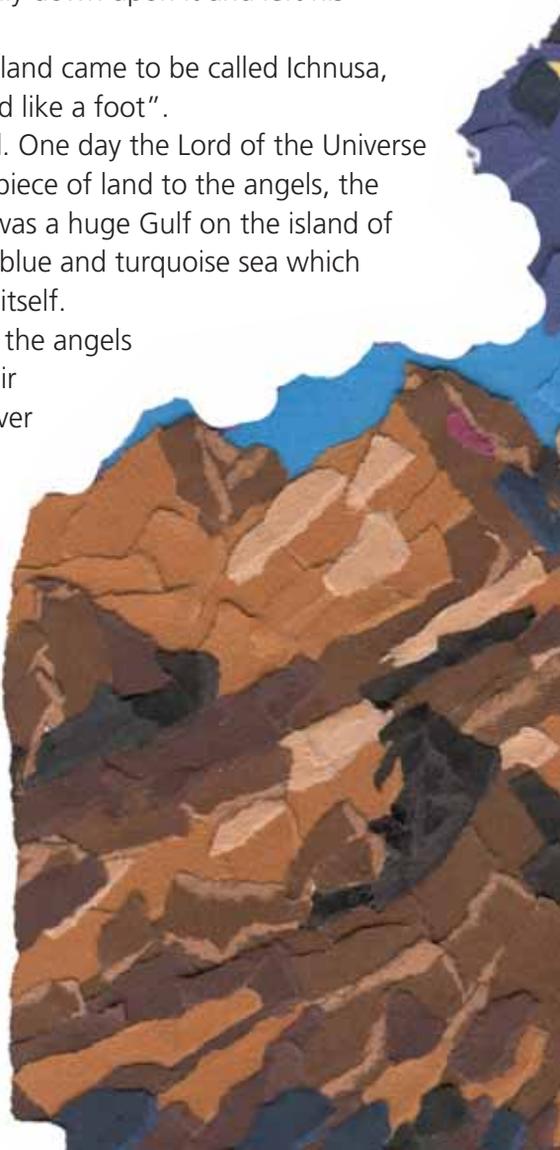
When this fury calmed down, only a meagre part remained of what had once been a great continent: a few solitary rocks in the midst of an immense stretch of

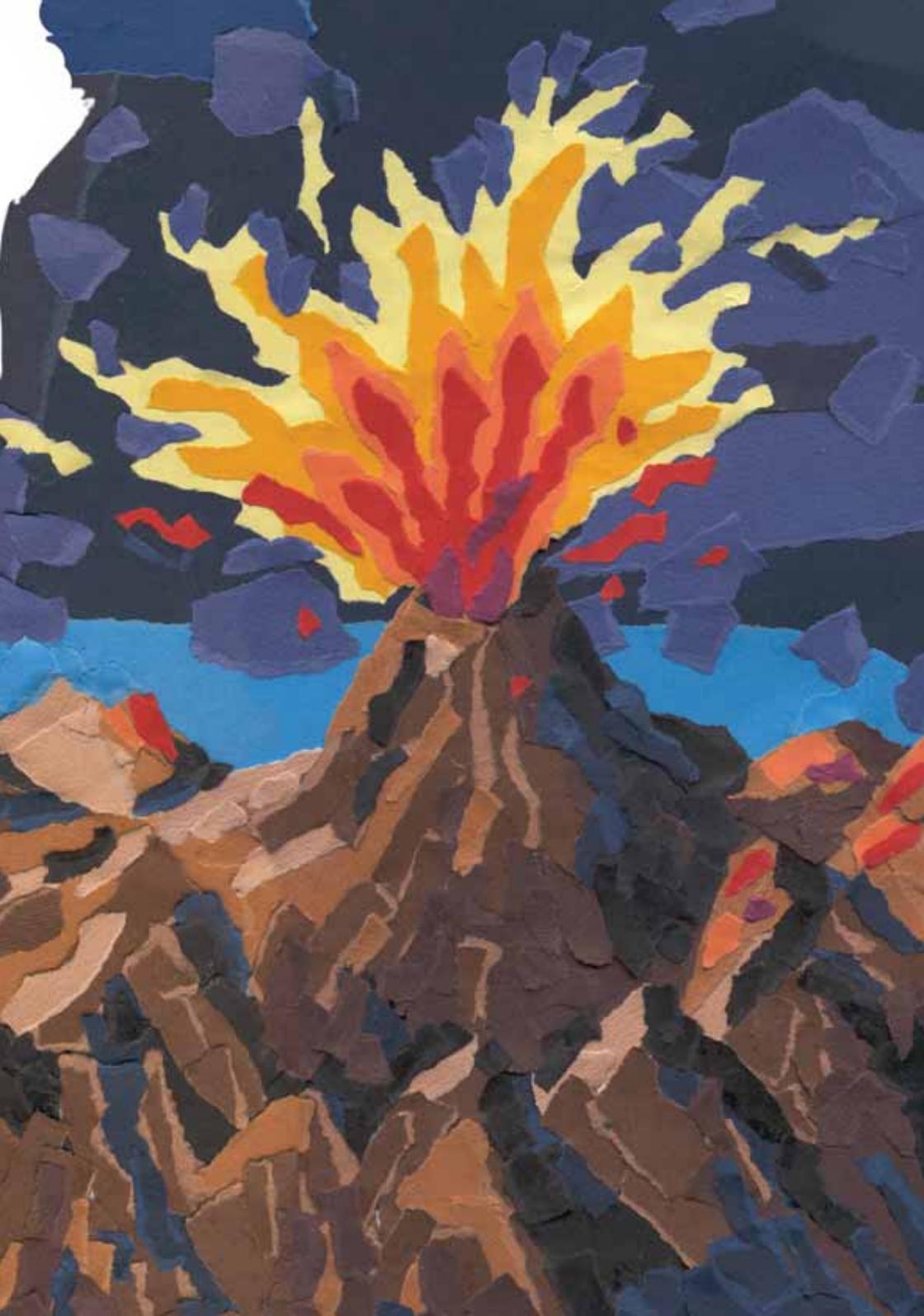
water. It was then that the Lord of the Universe stepped in and re-established the old division: Luce and Tenebra would once again have had their own equal parts. As for this tiny shred of land, he decided that it should remain as a memory to the ancient and happy Tirrenide. And in order that no-one would ever dare to forget his will, he pressed his foot heavily down upon it and left his footprint there.

For this reason, the Island came to be called Ichnusa, which means "shaped like a foot".

Many seasons passed. One day the Lord of the Universe decided to donate a piece of land to the angels, the sons of Light. There was a huge Gulf on the island of Ichnusa, lapped by a blue and turquoise sea which seemed like Paradise itself.

It was right here that the angels decided to set up their earthly abode. However one of these was Lucifer, the son of Aurora, who thought he was far better than anybody else and could not bear having to share that wonderful land with his brothers. First of all, he tried to split them up by spreading hate





## Then and now

The Sella del Diavolo headland, overlooking the Golfo degli Angeli [Gulf of Angels], offers a panoramic view of the town of Cagliari and the long Poetto beach. No natural and archaeological itinerary would be complete without a stop here to appreciate the sea and vegetation. The area has been inhabited since the VI millennium BC when men lived in the caves here. A sun-city and the gateway of the Mediterranean, Cagliari, the regional capital, was probably founded by the Phoenicians. All the peoples who arrived on the Island made it their centre: from the Carthaginians to the Romans, from the Vandals to the Byzantines, from the Pisans to the Aragonese and the Piedmontese. The town developed around the Castello quarter which with the two Pisan San Pancrazio and Elephant towers offer a cross-section of the old fortification system. A visit to the Museo Archeologico Nazionale [National Archaeological Museum] is a must; it is the most important museum in Sardinia as regards the Nuragic civilisation, but also has rich Punic-Phoenician collections; and then there is the Roman Amphitheatre; the Basilica of San Saturnino, the oldest Church in Sardinia (V century AD); the Castle of San Michele, which today houses the Città dei Bambini [Children's City] and the lively quarters of Stampace, Marina and Villanova. Almost right behind Poetto beach, we find the Molentargius lagoon, a natural oasis of extreme importance. The area, which for many centuries hosted the city's salt works, owes its name to the "molenti", that is to say the donkeys, who in the past used to transport the salt. The area has been declared a Regional Park for its precious eco-system and is the habitat for one-hundred and eighty species of birds, some of which are extremely rare. Among these you can admire the egrets, gallinules, black-winged stilts, shanks, cormorants, herons and the pink flamingos, known to Sardinian people as "Sa Gente Arrubia" [The Red People].

## How to get here

Sella del Diavolo: from the port of Cagliari go along Viale Diaz to the beginning of Viale Poetto, which leads to the c. 9 km long beach. Turn right at the first crossroads on Viale Poetto, to get to Calamosca Beach and the Sella del Diavolo.

## Things to do here

Walking trips to the Sella del Diavolo, excursions to the Parco di Molentargius, Consorzio del Parco Naturale Regionale "Molentargius-Saline" - tel. 070 381246

Ass. per il Parco del Molentargius Saline Poetto; tel. 070 684000

and disaccord and by convincing a few of them to back his project for conquering the Gulf; then he brought about a ferocious endless war against the other angels which caused the sky above the Gulf to turn red. Astride his black steed, Lucifer and his troops launched themselves against the angels faithful to the Lord of the Universe, led by Gabriel, the Archangel with the fiery sword. It was a fight to the death: Gabriel hit the rebels with all the might of his thunderbolts, causing them to fall into the sea. After the battle, only the saddle of Lucifer's horse poked out from the waters of the Gulf, the only remaining evidence of the fight. Then the saddle turned to stone and was joined to the land of Ichnusa, taking on the form of a headland, which later on which people would call "**La Sella del Diavolo**" [The Devil's Saddle].

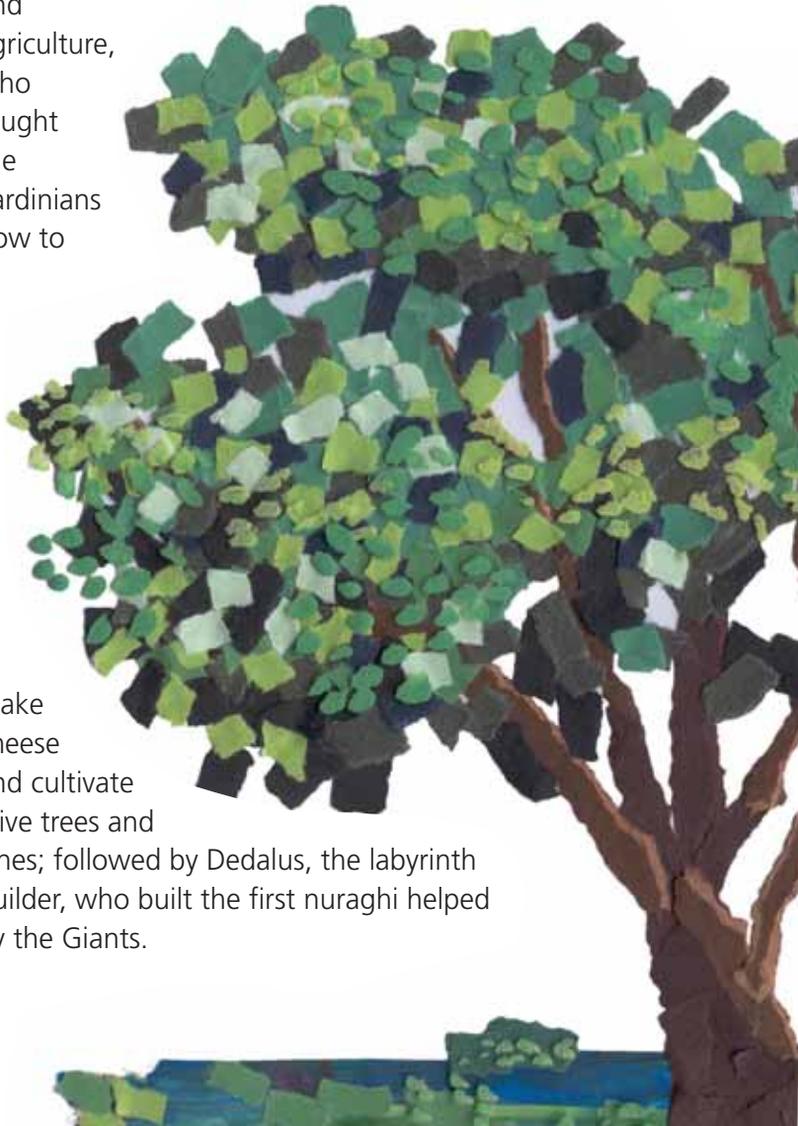
After this war, many other peoples arrived on this island shaped like a foot. The first were the Giants and the tombs, where they laid their kings to rest, are still conserved here. Near Buddusò, in the area called Sa Mesa de sos Zigantes, you can still find the crockery that they used to eat off and the table around which they used to sit to hold their private meetings. It was these Giants who taught man how to sculpt stone.

After the Giants, the next to arrive were the Fairies, winged creatures who used to spend all their time weaving on golden looms and embroidering marvellous shawls. They set up home in the depths of the land, where they hid their precious treasures. It was the Fairies who taught man how to fuse metals.

After the Giants and the Fairies, Man finally arrived here. The first men were navigators, who leaving behind the

shores of Libya, had set sail for the west. When they landed on the island called Ichnusa, they changed its name to Sardegna, in honour of their patrician and leader Sardus Pater. Later, Norace, King of the Tartessos, arrived and founded **Nora**, the oldest Sardinian town. Then it was the turn of Aristaeus, Apollo's son, the protector of herds and agriculture, who taught the Sardinians how to

make cheese and cultivate olive trees and vines; followed by Dedalus, the labyrinth builder, who built the first nuraghi helped by the Giants.



## Then and now

Nora, an archaeological park offering the most important traces of the Phoenicians, Carthaginians and Romans, lies within the commune of Pula in the south of Sardinia. It still has the walls and the foundations of the Phoenician temple of "Tanit", the Great Mother and the goddess of fertility and war. In the park you can admire not only the wonderful mosaics in the "Casa dell'Atrio Tetrastilo", but also the "santuario di Esculapio" and the theatre from the Roman period, capable of holding hundreds of spectators. The names of the town of Nora and Sardinia first appeared, written in the Phoenician Alphabet, on a sandstone stele dating back to the IX century BC. But the name Nora is even older and has the same root as nuraghe, which means a pile of stones with a hole. According to tradition, it was the hero Norax, son of Hermes and the nymph Erytheia, who founded Nora, the first of Sardinia's towns. The Romanesque Church of Sant'Ef시오 of Nora is also extremely interesting. It was built at the end of the IX century and was where Ef시오, Roman warrior turned Christian, was martyred. This is the arrival point of the Sagra di Sant'Ef시오 [Feast of Sant'Ef시오], a religious procession that leaves the Stampace Church in Cagliari every first of May, with a parade of the traditional costumes from all over the island. It is an ancient rite which gives thanks to the saint for having saved the local community from an outbreak of plague in 1657. Not far from the archaeological park, you can also visit the lagoon of Nora, an incredibly beautiful natural oasis which today houses an aquarium and the Cetacean and Sea Turtle Rescue Centre.

## How to get here

From Cagliari take the SS.195 to km 27, where you turn left for Pula (follow the tourist signs). Cross Pula and take Via Nora for 3 Km leading to the sea.

## Things to do here

Visits to the archaeological site, Visits to the Archaeological Museum, Educational Visits: Workshop for creating mosaics; Phoenician writing workshop

Nora Zona Archeologica [Archaeological Zone], tel. 070 9209138

Guided tours to the Aquarium; canoe outings

Centro di educazione ambientale di Nora [Environmental Education Centre] tel. 070 9209544

Parco Scientifico e tecnologico della Sardegna [Science and Technology Park] Polaris, Sardegna Ricerche Pula - tel. 070 92432204

## Then and now

The Greeks used to call it the happy town. Olbia has the feel of a modern city and is well known for its closeness to the Costa Smeralda [Emerald Coast]. It lies in a sweeping natural gulf bordered by the splendid islands of Tavolara and Molara. It was probably founded by the Phoenicians between the VI and IV century BC. During the Roman period, thanks to its prosperous markets and flourishing port, it became an important link with Ostia. It became the capital of one of the so-called "giudicati" around about the year 1000 with the name of Civita or Terranova, when the historic centre began to build up around the Romanesque Church of San Simplicio. It currently shares the role of capital of the new province of Olbia-Tempio with the town of Tempio. Right at the heart of the city, behind the historic centre, lies the "Fausto Noce" Park, a well-equipped park for sporting and recreational activities. Not far from the city you can visit the Marine Reserve of Tavolara - Punta Coda Cavallo. One of the beaches that deserves a mention is "Cala Sabina", with its shallow waters that go out as far as you can imagine and which is reached on the special little train. Just a few kilometres from the town centre in the area surrounding Olbia, you find important remains of its history: from the Nuraghic sacred well of "Sa Testa" to the "Riu Mulino" Nuraghe at Cabu Abbas, from the nearby Roman Aqueduct to Pedres castle and the "Su Monte de s'Ape" Giants' Tombs. The nearby island of Tavolara was once the world's smallest kingdom: in fact, it is said that Carlo Alberto, King of Piedmont and Sardinia, landed on the island in search of the mythical golden-toothed goats, and was so enchanted with the place, that he nominated its only inhabitant "king of the island". An important Cinema Festival is held here in the month of July.

## How to get here

Cala Sabina: on the little train from Olbia station

Isola di Tavolara: by sea from Porto San Paolo.

During the summer private boat trips leave from Olbia and Golfo Aranci.

## Things to do here

Trips to the archaeological sites, walking tours of the natural areas, boat trips in the areas where bathing is permitted.

Ufficio Provinciale del Turismo, *Olbia* - tel. 0789 21453

Comune di Olbia - tel. 0789 52000

Azienda di Soggiorno e Turismo - tel. 0789 21672

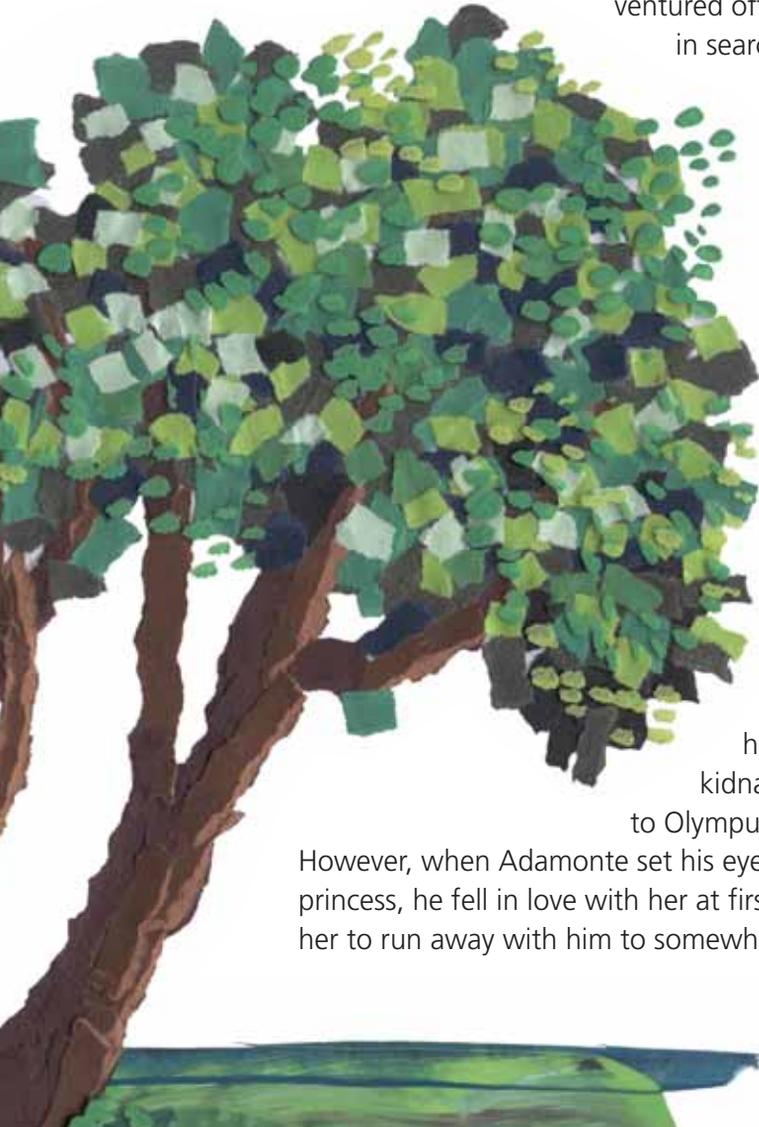
Then Iola arrived from Thebes and founded the town of **Olbia**. Even Aeneas, the hero who escaped from the ruins of Troy, landed on the Sardinian coasts. In fact, a storm blew his ship onto the headland of Capo Pecora. The beautiful Helen was also on Aeneas' ship, the woman whose kidnapping had caused the war with the Greeks. Once they had landed, Helen ventured off into the hinterland in search of something to

eat. Near a stream, she saw a huge boar, who was rolling around in a puddle.

Fearing that she might be attacked, she tried to run away but all of a sudden, the beast assumed the form of a handsome youth; it was Adamonte, the son of Zeus, who

had been sent to kidnap her and take her to Olympus.

However, when Adamonte set his eyes on the Trojan princess, he fell in love with her at first sight and asked her to run away with him to somewhere his father Zeus



could never find them. Thus the couple took refuge in the north of the island, in the dense forests around **Mount Ruju**. But the Fairies, who were jealous of Helen's beauty, revealed their hiding place to Zeus. To punish the two fugitives, the king of the gods turned Helen and Adamonte to stone: two statues smoothed by the wind and the rain that even today still stand out against the sky. More and more seasons passed. One day, a young king with the name of Nur, a descendant of the Sardus Pater, decided that it was about time he took a wife. Since he felt that there were no young women in his court worthy of him, he turned to the Giants, among whom lived Iddoca, a princess who was famed for her great strength.

"If you wanted to be my bride, what would you bring me as a dowry?" Nur asked her.

"I would bring my strength," answered Iddoca. "Let me become your queen and I will move mountains for you." Perplexed, Nur shook his head: "I will not marry you," he said. "Why move mountains, when you can walk around them without any effort?"

After leaving the village of the giants, Nur went to the **Sulcis mines**, where a Fairy called Feliciania lived whose long hair seemed to be made of gold.

The king asked her the same question: "If you wanted to be my bride, what would you bring me as a dowry?"

"If I were queen," answered the fairy, "I would embroider a cloak for you with all the flowers in the universe and from that moment on they would all belong to you." Nur, once again, was not entirely convinced: "The flowers of the universe belong to everybody," he said, "and thus to me too. I'm sorry but I

## **Then and now**

Mount Ruju, in the north of the island, is an extinct volcano whose lava flow formed a full-blown wall, Su Muru 'e Ferru (the wall of iron), which goes all the way down the side of the mountain as far as the end of the valley. This phenomenon is unique in Italy and in Europe, with something similar only to be found in Iceland. At just a few kilometres from Mount Ruju lies Viddalba, a village that extends over a luxuriant flat area crossed by the River Coghinas. Its hamlets were the scene for the raids of the Muto di Gallura, the legendary ruthless and romantic bandit, who actually lived in the second half of the nineteenth century. It is said that he was involved in a bloody feud, either due to a dispute over animals violating another man's lands or over a broken promise of marriage to a young girl called Gavina. The little fluvial beach of Li Caldani lies not far from Viddalba. On the other bank of the river, at the foot of the Doria Castle of Santa Maria Coghinas, we find numerous thermal springs that spring forth from the rocks. In certain periods of the year, the temperature of these waters can be as high as 65° and 75° C. Sports lovers can have great fun canoeing on the River Coghinas, going down river as far as its mouth. Horseback excursions are really special here, since you come into close contact with nature as you ride along the sandy dunes of the Quaternary era, stretching all the way along the coast and covered with dense Mediterranean shrub. The bizarre Roccia dell'Elefante [Elephant's Rock] pokes out between Castelsardo and Sedini, an imposing trachytic mass that has been eroded into the shape of a pachyderm with its trunk in the air. Numerous domus de janas [Giants' Tombs] have been dug into the rocks, dating from the Neolithic age with taurine heads sculpted on their walls.

## **How to get here**

Monte Ruju: from the SS 131 in the direction of Sassari, take the turning for Siligo, and from here the road for the Bonifica di Paule; take the SS 131 underpass and continue for about 2 km. On your left, you will see the unmistakable crest of Mount Ruju. Roccia dell'Elefante [Elephant's Rock]: from Castelsardo go along the SS 134, after passing the crossroads for Valledoria, continue towards Sedini.

## **Things to do here**

Horseback excursions, Canoeing and fishing on the River Coghinas  
Museo Archeologico [Archaeological Museum] di Viddalba  
*tel. 079 580514*

Comune di Viddalba - *tel. 079 5808010*

## Then and now

A land of mines and tuna-fishing, a landscape covered with Mediterranean shrub and with beaches of the finest sand, the Sulcis area stretches to the south-west and comprises the islands of San Pietro and Sant'Antioco. Despite the fact that its name derives from the ancient Phoenician city of Sulci di Sant'Antioco, the archaeological sites of Sant'Antioco, Mount Sirai and Montessu are major examples confirming the fact that the area had been inhabited from a previous age. In fact this land was, and still is rich with coal, lead, iron and zinc mines, around which numerous centres sprang up. The ex-mining village of Buggerru, to the south of Capo Pecora, is situated at the bottom of a valley overlooking the sea. From the village going south, you reach the wildest coast of the island, steep and craggy around the bay of Cala Domestica, and well-protected by a rocky fiord guarded by a Spanish tower. Once the ores extracted from Montecani used to be loaded onto ships from the beach above Masua. Opposite the beach, the Pan di Zucchero [Sugar Loaf] Island seems almost to be suspended in the middle of the sea; its light colour making it look like a huge sugary lump and creating a suggestive backdrop. Despite its rather pleasant name, in the past "disobedient" miners from the nearby mines, were transferred here and left in isolation to extract the galena. On the other hand, Carbonia owes its birth to the Serbariu coal mines, which during the fascist period attracted thousands of people from all parts of Italy in search of work. One of the favourite tourist spots in the area is the Mount Arcosu Nature Reserve, a WWF oasis.

## How to get here

From Cagliari, take the SS 130 towards Iglesias. After the town take the SS 126. For the Pan di Zucchero Island: boats from Portoscuso

## Things to do here

Guided tours Henry Gallery, *Buggerru*, Museo Macchine da Miniera [Museum of Mining machinery] *Località Masua, Nebida* IGEA Spa, *Interventi Geo Ambientali*, tel. 0781 491300 - 348 1549556 - 349 5503147

won't marry you". Feeling most disillusioned the young king set off to return to his castle, when he heard shouting coming from the depths of the forest. He rushed there and saw a young maiden who was being attacked by a brigand. Without any hesitation, Nur unsheathed his sword and lunged at the wrongdoer, who let his prey go and took off as fast as his legs could carry him.

The king noticed that the young girl was dressed in rags. "Who are you?" he asked.

"My name is Lughia," replied the young girl, lifting her head and staring at the king with eyes that twinkled like silver shining stars.

Nur was fascinated by her.

"Where do you come from?" he went on.

"I come from the village of Nudda, the smallest and poorest in the whole of Sardinia," answered Lughia, "so small and poor that nobody ever remembers where it is."

Nur was charmed by the beauty of the young maiden.

"If I asked you to be my bride," he asked, "what would you bring me as a dowry?"

"I have nothing," answered the young girl, "the only thing I could give you is my true love."

The king was pleased with this answer and said: "You shall be my queen."

Nur took Lughia to his castle and a few days later they celebrated their wedding.

When Iddoca and Feliciana learnt that Nur had chosen a poor little woman over them, they were most offended and swore that Giants and Fairies would never have had anything more to do with human beings. These are the ancient stories of the island shaped like a foot.

I learnt them from my grandfather, who had heard them from his grandfather, who had been told them by his grandfather before him.



# Around the Island

## Museums, events and other spaces

### **Museo della Montagna sarda o del Gennargentu**

via G. Marconi, Aritzo  
tel. 0784 629801

### **Museo di scienze naturali**

via San Sebastiano 56, Belvi  
tel. 0784 629263 - 339 7531025

### **Museo della Fiaba**

via Savoia 1, Boroneddu  
tel. 348 3943842

### **Museo dei castelli**

vicolo Castello, Burgos  
tel. 347 9018930 - 079 793705 - 349 4487275

### **Biblioteca per ragazzi Is Bingias**

via dei Partigiani 6, Pirri Cagliari  
tel. 070 564491 - 070 568310

### **Parchi della città di Cagliari**

Colle di San Michele, Monte Claro e Monte Urpinu

### **Galleria Comunale d'Arte, Giardini Pubblici**

largo Giuseppe Dessì, Cagliari  
tel. 070 490727



**Monte Claro d'Estate,  
L'angolo delle storie per bambini**

Cagliari, periodo: luglio agosto  
tel. 070 4092754 \ 751 \ 746

**Museo di storia naturale Aquilegia**

presso S.Elementare "A. Riva",  
piazza Garibaldi 1, Cagliari  
tel. 070 662220

**Orto botanico**

via Sant'Ignazio da Laconi 13, Cagliari  
tel. 070 6753522

**Osservatorio Astronomico**

Punta Sa Menta, 09012 Capoterra  
tel. 070 725426 - 070 711801

**Museo geo-mineralogico naturalistico**

Loc. Stagnali, Centro di educazione ambientale, Isola di Caprera (La Maddalena) tel. 0789 720044 - 45 - 46 - 51

**Museo della Foca Monaca**

viale Bue Marino 1, Cala Gonone Dorgali  
tel. 0784 920049

**Festival Letterario della Sardegna**

Gavoi, periodo: luglio  
tel. 0784 52207 - 333 5362767

**Museo del cavallino della Giara**

sezione multimediale per ragazzi  
via Chiesa snc, Genoni  
tel. 0782 810100 - 348 2494729 - 340 9243829

**Museo dell'arte mineraria**

via Roma 47, Iglesias  
tel. 0781 350037 - 347 8333257

**L'Isola che non c'è**

teatro, cinema, danza, illustrazione al festival teatro ragazzi  
Irgoli, periodo: settembre  
Ass. Pro Loco, via C. Soro, Irgoli - cell. 3494997200

**Parco Aymerich**

via Don Minzoni, Laconi

**Museo del territorio "Sa Corona Arrubia"**

loc. Sa Corona Arrubia, Lunamatrona Collinas  
tel. 070 9341009 - 070 939387

**Museo delle maschere mediterranee**

piazza Europa 15, Mamoiada  
tel. 0784 569018

**Man**, Museo d'Arte della Provincia di Nuoro

via Sebastiano Satta 15, Nuoro  
tel. 0784 252110

**Museo faunistico dell'oasi di Assai**

Oasi di Assai, Neoneli  
tel. 0783 34341

**Museo Deleddiano e Casa natale  
di Grazia Deledda**

Via G. Deledda, 42 Nuoro  
tel. 0784 258088  
0784 253810

**Museo Etnografico  
Sardo**

via A. Mereu, 56  
Nuoro  
tel. 0784 257035  
0784 242900



**Museo del baco da seta Tramas de seda**

Via Mercato 3, Orgosolo  
tel. 0784 403207

**Museo dei teatrini in miniatura "Don Giovanni Guiso"**

via Musio 2, Orosei  
tel. 0784 997084

**Museo del grano**

via Kennedy 25, Ortacesus  
tel. 070 9819027

**Museo del cavallo**

via Convento 39, Pozzomaggiore  
tel. 079 802049 - 079 802254 - 348 4460672

**Museo archeologico "Ferruccio Barrecca"**

piazza Insula Plumbea, Sant'Antioco  
tel. 0781 800596 - 389 7962114

**Museo geo-mineralogico "Aurelio Serra"**

via E. De Nicola, Sassari  
tel. 079 229350 - 079 229264

**Museo naturalistico parco degli uccelli**

Loc. Codiles, Scano di Montiferro  
tel. 0785 32582 - 340 4970705

**Museo Ornitologico**

piazza Leonardo da Vinci, Siddi  
tel. 070 939888

**Collezione di strumenti musicali Don Giovanni Dore**

via Adua 7, Tadasuni  
tel. 0785 50113

**Museo del sughero**

via Limbara 9, Tempio Pausania  
tel. 079 672269 - 070 672200

**Parco della Sardegna in miniatura**

**MusA: il Museo dell'Astronomia**

via Michelangelo 6, Tuili

tel. 070 9361004 - 348 5612826 - 329 2108675

**Museo Archeologico-Industriale dell'attività mineraria**

Loc. Su Suergiu, Villasalto

tel. 070 5435109 - 329 3625017



*Information about the museums, events and other spaces mentioned in the itineraries can be found in the special inserts in each fairy tale.*



1

Sunskinned Marta and Moonskinned Mena



2

The three mothers of the Mountains



3

The Orcs' and Giants Congress



4

The seven caps of Matzamurreddu



5

The Tales of the Old Olive Tree



6

Tales of the Island shaped like a foot



**SARDEGNA**