

Directions

10 km south of Sartène, RT 40 then direction Tizzano (D 48)
Then follow signs for *Stantari*, *Funtanaccia*, *Rinaghju* (D 48a).
Follow the track on the right; to reach the site walk: 10 mn.
Allow 1 to 1 h 30 to visit the site

Learn more :

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Fax : 04 95 23 27 72

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<https://www.isula.corsica/patrimoine>

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<https://www.instagram.com/patrimoniuisula/>

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I Stantari Alignments

FROM MYTH TO REALITY

Funtanaccia is Corsican for “evil fountain” (ill waters). The dolmen is also called *stazzona di u Diavulu* (Corsican for the devil’s anvil). Christian doctrine versus pagan idolatry? The standing stones (*stantare*) are arranged in a *filarata* or line much as the death row of Evil’s quarry. The island’s superstitious culture crowned the megaliths with mystical rituals, whilst on the other hand livestock breeders and farmers of the 60’s looked to them in hope of an exceptional harvest. Tales handed down the generations tried to explain the reason for their existence: fertility, supernatural powers or geological forces.

The presence of these sites confirms the birth of the first Mediterranean societies; the settlement of groups in the Western Mediterranean basin started around 5900-5800 BC. Against a backdrop of economic and cultural exchange, social hierarchies developed during the Neolithic, or New Stone Age period, and Corsica, as

archaeological evidence has brought to light, was part of this massive expansion. The origins of these standing stones remain unknown. In Corsica, near byways, mountain passes, fords or water – as are the *Stantari* and *Renaghju* – the alignments run North-South, the statue-menhirs facing east. Markers in time of the relationship organised society had with the land, these sacred stones testify to mysterious rites and rituals. The nature of such rituals - magic, religious or the stuff of legend, - remains open to question. What did the stones represent: the elements (Earth, Fire, Air and Water), ancestors or friendly Gods, worship of community leaders, protection for those departed, or were they designed to help the community fully purify their soul? Not so long ago, and in spite of the fact that bishops forbade it, funeral rounds in honour of the defunct (*voceru*, *caracolu* and *chjerchju*) ritualised, in pagan fashion, the passing to the After Life. Do the stones originate from these times? Studies in ethno-archaeology have shown that, the world over, man seeks to enter into contact with the spirits.

STUDY, PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION

The study and maintenance of the sites, as well as preservation and restoration works are carried out by archaeologists appointed by Corsica’s regional government.

Restoration work was carried out at *I Stantari* from 1964-65 (under Roger Grosjean), during which time the toppled stones were raised again to the standing position. Few other sites are so remarkably intact, the monuments seemingly indestructible.

What legacy will be left for future generations? Natural erosion and the disappearing sculptures call for the stones to be rapidly removed and preserved. Lichens, roots, rain water acidity and gulying, further stones laid on top, miniscule earth tremors, animals and humans all take their toll. The stone slab roof of *Funtanaccia* is fissured (no sign of this in photos from the 1950’s-60’s). Experts (the Historic Monuments Research Laboratory and the Inter-regional Centre for Heritage Conservation and Restoration) have made their diagnosis. Already in an advanced state of decay, the damage is worsened by rainfall and a new crack has appeared in the slab. Scaly salt deposits allow lichens to take hold. The orthostates are leaning. The whole thing weighs 15 tons. A non invasive solution that will protect the structure without despoiling it is under study.

The *Stantari* will be replaced with copies to recall their presence allowing the originals to be preserved and put on display.

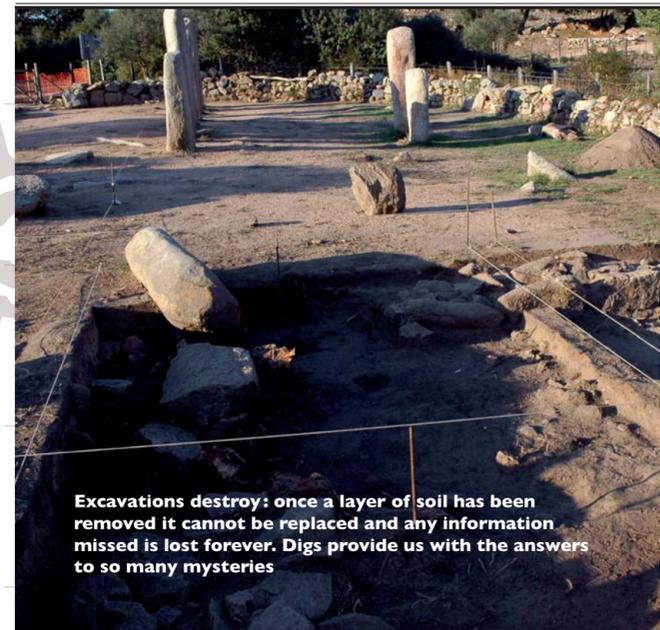
Corsica’s regional government, the *Collectivité territoriale de Corse*, aims to offer visitors the most representative experience of the island’s culture whilst at the same time seeking to protect her archaeological sites, listed as historic monuments, as well as their unspoilt natural surroundings.

In order to develop and promote these sites, suitable structures for welcoming visitors need to be in place. The provision of such structures, appropriate to the landscapes and monuments, requires time and careful consideration if sites are to be enhanced in such a way as to avoid spoiling the environment, and to avoid a

flux of visitors that could be severely detrimental to preservation efforts. Forging links with nearby museums is important, whilst both financial aspects and projects conducive to regional development command our undivided attention.

The ongoing tasks, not only for archaeologists but for all those responsible for the island’s combined heritage, whether natural or historical, are threefold: to study, safeguard, and enhance Corsica’s heritage for the benefit of present and future generations.

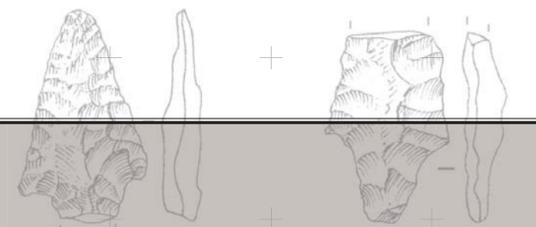
Supplying information that will at once awaken and satisfy visitor curiosity is an additional imperative.



Excavations destroy: once a layer of soil has been removed it cannot be replaced and any information missed is lost forever. Digs provide us with the answers to so many mysteries

RESEARCH

In 1840 P. Mérimée (1803-1870), Inspector of Historic Monuments, spent two months surveying the island. He cited the *Renaghju* alignment. Then in 1883 A. Mortillet (1853-1931) gave a description of them to the Commission of Megalithic monuments. It was Roger Grosjean (1920-1975), founding figure of Corsican Prehistoric archaeology, who in 1964 uncovered the *I Stantari* statue-menhirs, listing some 45 menhirs at *Renaghju*. In close collaboration with A. D’Anna (CNRS/University of Aix-en-Provence) a research team have, over the past 15 years, made many exciting new discoveries.



Excavations at the *I Stantari* site (under the direction of A. d’Anna)

Grosjean’s theory was that the statues represented the Shardanes. Sardinia inherited her name from these “Sea Peoples”, whose exact origin is unknown. From the end of the 13th century BC, we find warriors united against the Egyptians (Medinet-Habu bas-reliefs, in Karnak). Depicted with horned helmets, they present similarities with Corsica’s megaliths. Roger Grosjean suggested that they were erected by native shepherds and farmers, whom he calls “Toreans”, to express their fear of, and at the same time their allegiance to, their invaders. This theory was abandoned due to a major anachronism and the reinterpretation of Egyptian texts.

U FILU DI A RICERCA

In 1840, P. Mérimée (1803 – 1870) visitaghja a Corsica in 2 mesi. Mintuveghja a infilarata di u Rinaghju. A. Mortillet (1853-1931) ne face una descrizione in 1883 pà a Commissione di i munimenti megalitichi. U fundatore di l’archiulugia Preistorica Corsa, Roger Grosjean (1920-1975), mette à palesu in 1964 e statule arritte di I Stantari.

À u Rinaghju rileva 45 stantare. Issi ultimi 15 anni, cù A. D’Anna (Università d’Aix-en-Provence) un cullittivu di ricerca apre chjassi novi.

Roger Grosjean avanza l’ipotesi ch’è isse statule riprisintarianu Sardani. A Sardegna tene u sò nome da issu “Populu di u mare”, ch’è vene d’un si sà induve à u ghjustu. À u XIIIu seculu nanzu à Cristu, si truvavanu aghjā issi guerrieri uniti è upposti à l’Egizziani (bassirilievi di Medinet-Abu-Carnac). Infigurati cun elmi curnuti, presentanu e sumiglianze cù i megaliti corsi. Suggirisce Roger Grosjean ch’elli sarianu stati arrizzati da pastori agricoltori nativi ch’ellu chjama “Turriani”. Fendu quessa avarianu cercu di significà paura è suttumissione à l’invasori. A tiuria bè stata abandonata causa d’un impurtante anacrumisimu è d’una intarpritazione nova di i scritti egizziani.

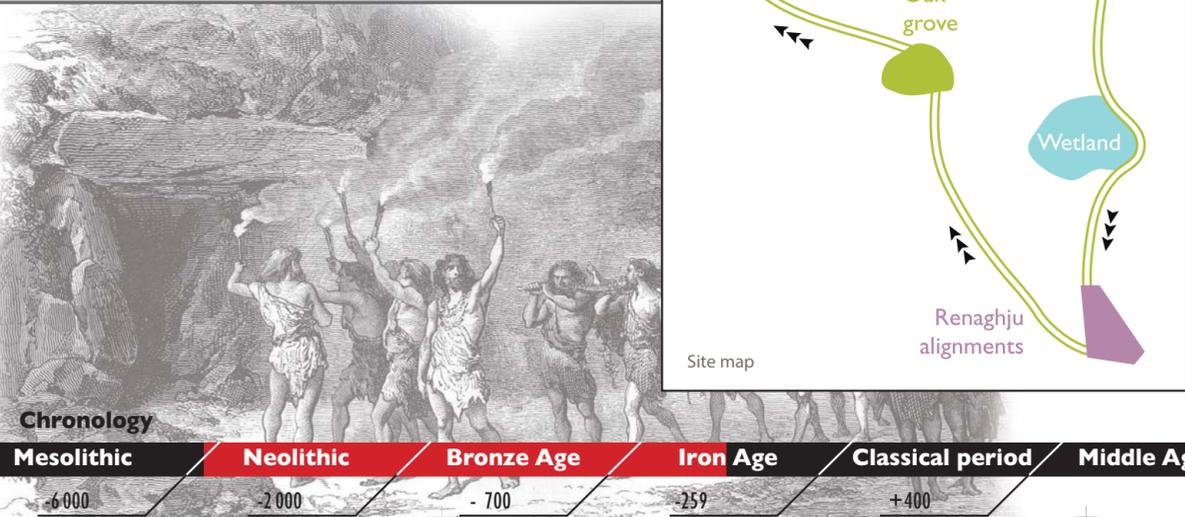
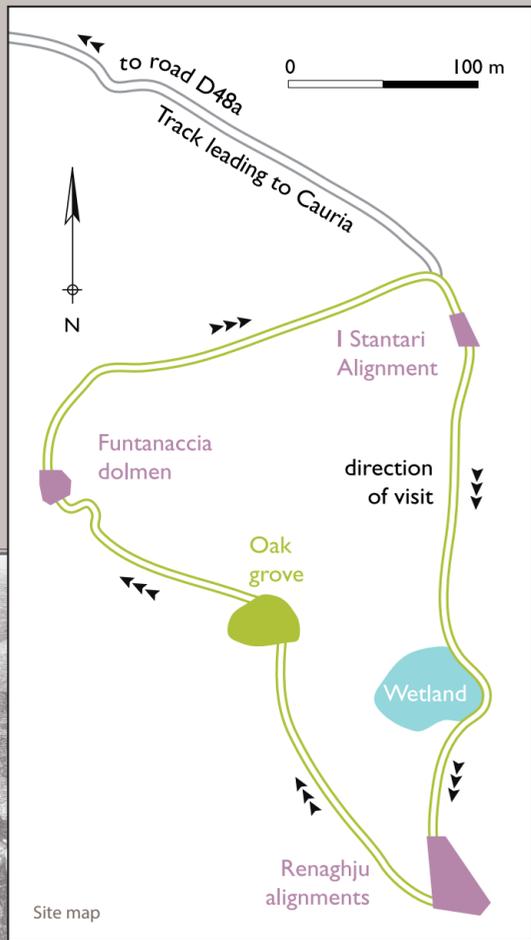


• CAURIA •
FUNTANACCIA DOLMEN,
I STANTARI AND RENAGHJU
ALIGNMENTS

Lying just 2 km inland and covering some 60 ha, the Cauria plateau is home to 3 historic sites emblematic of Corsica: the megalithic alignments of *I Stantari* and *Renaghju*, and the dolmen of *Funtanaccia*.

Una vista à u pianottolu di Cauria (cumuna di Sartè), à 2 km di u mare, vi permette di scopre 3 siti emblematicchi di a Corsica nantu à 60 ha: l'aliniamenti megalitichi di I Stantari, quelli di u Renaghju, u dolmen di a Funtanaccia

For further information:
L-J Costa & M-CI Weiss - Qui sont les statues-menhir? *Stantari* n° 1 (http://issuu.com/stantari/docs/stantari_n1)
Prosper Mérimée - *Notes d'un voyage en Corse* (1840) (<http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k102660n/f5.image>)



The *Stantari* erected between the end of the Neolithic and the Bronze Age (D'Anna's research), provide considerably more information than the dozens of other statue-menhirs in Corsica

Portanu di più infurmazione issi "Stantari" cà e dicine d'altre stantare di Corsica. Sò state arizzate trà a fine di u Neuliticu è l'Età di u Bronzu (ricerche d'Anna)

STANTARI ALIGNMENTS

This site once boasted at least 30 stantare. Two groups have been identified: one running northeast/southwest, the other in a north/south direction.

When do they date from? Since the stone is impossible to date archaeologists look to other findings such as prior occupation, ditch fillings, packing materials. The stones' sculpted elements provide clues. The shape of the weapons in the scabbard is non conclusive whilst the type of metal used is a mystery. The only certainty is that the use of metal excludes the Neolithic or New Stone Age (use of cut stones).

In Europe, statue-menhirs make their appearance between the end of the Neolithic and the Bronze Age. In Corsica they were made up until the Iron Age. Certain features can be distinguished: belts, "loincloths", arms and hands, and cup-shaped hollows either side of the head. Roger Grosjean is of the opinion that horns were attached here. Nowhere else in the world other than in Corsica does one find sculpted stone alignments, with the exception perhaps of Ethiopia.

I STANTARI

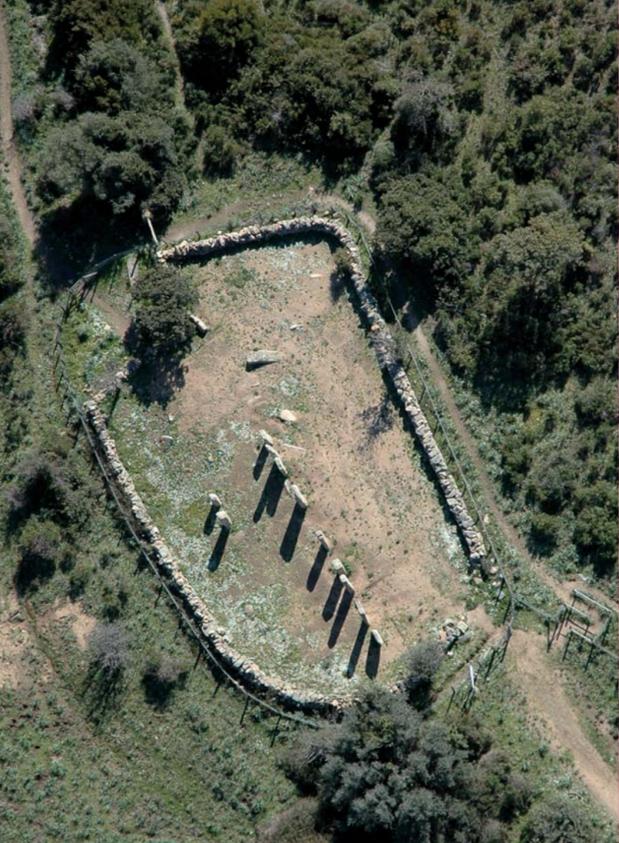
Nantu à issu situ ci eranu almenu 30 stantare. Ci sò dui gruppi distinti: unu urientatu Nordeste/Sudueste, l'altu versu u meziornu

Di chì epica sò e stantare? L'ità di a petra ùn si pò dì. L'archiuloghji studiaghjanu l'indizii: uccupazione, culmera di e fosse, cuzze. L'elementi sculpati portanu una tistimunianza. ùn vole di a forme di l'arme à u stucciu chì ùn si pò sapè a natura di u metallu. Una sola cosa hè certa: essendu ci a mitallurgia, u Neuliticu ùn pò esse (adopru di petre zuccate)

In Europa e stantare cumpariscenu trà a fine di u Neuliticu è l'Età di u Bronzu. In Corsica si ne hè criatu fine à l'Età di u Farru. Certi ditagli risortenu: cinte, paraciva, bracci è mani, coppule zuccate da ogni latu di u capu. Pensa Roger Grosjean ch'èlle ci eranu fissate e corne. For di in Etiopia podassi, infilarate di stantare sculpite ùn si ne trova inlocu cà in Corsica.

I Stantari Alignments

Between 200 and 50 BC (Romanisation), the site appears to have fallen to rack and ruin. Agricultural practices dictated how the plateau was organised with some monoliths being incorporated into the outer walls



Infilarate d'I Stantari
Trà 200 è 50 anni nanzu à Cristu (umanizzazione) u situ pare esse statu più o menu distruttu. U pianu s'organizeghja ingiru à l'attività agricule. Certi monoliti ghjovanu pà i muri di sarrenda

RENAGHJU ALIGNMENTS

A community established itself here around 5700 (Neolithic Period), up against the rocky outcrop of *Punta di u Grecu*, near a spring and a still water pond. In 2006 a 20 m² rectangular shaped dwelling was identified (D'Anna's excavations), with wooden posts, earthen walls, hearths and braziers. Two areas with anvils were located (for knapping obsidian, quartz and flint). The pottery – some of the oldest discovered and notable for its cockle shell imprint decoration, is known as Cardial Ware (remains on display in Sartène Museum).

After a period of temporary abandon, the site was occupied anew. Some 60 "petre zuccate" (raised stones or menhirs) existed around 4500 BC, rising in number to 180 towards the first millennium BC. This is the first time, in Corsica, that it has been possible to establish a precise timeline for such a site. Elsewhere, shovels or metal detectors have despoiled the stratigraphy to little or no gain.

SITU DI U RINAGHJU

Ver di l'anni -5700 (Neuliticu anzianu), un gruppu s'arrughjuneghja, arribatu à i monti di a Punta di u Grecu, vicinu à una surgente è à un pozzu. In 2006 (scavi D'Anna) hè identificatu un alloghju rettangulare (20 m² cù cantelli di legnu, muri di tarra, fuconi è brasgeri). Sò rilivate duie aghje cù une poche d'incudine (da zuccà l'ossidiana, u quarzu, u scagliu). A ceramica – di e più antiche – si distingue cù a stampatura urnamintale d'una chjoppula di baioncula: u cardium – calcinellu – (pezze prisintate à u museu di Sartè)
Dopu à un tempu d'abandonu, u situ hè uccupatu torna. Si ponu cuntà 60 "petre zuccate" (petre arritte o stantare) ver di 4500 n. à C, è 180 ver di u 1a millenariu n. à C. In Corsica, hè a prima volta chì una crumulugia fina hè stabilita pà un situ cusì. Altrò, e pale è i dittittori di mitalli anu sacchighjatu a stratigrafia senza prufittu.

FUNTANACCIA DOLMEN

Sitting atop a naturally occurring hillock, this is Corsica's best known and preserved dolmen. As well as making a deep impression on people, it served as a place to pay one's respects to the deceased. A collective burial chamber, the roof consists of a single stone slab (3.40 m x 2.90 m) placed on 6 vertical stones (orthostates: 3 to the west, 2 to the east, 1 to the north). Built using two different types of granite (coarser grained for the vertical stones or orthostates, finer for the stone roof), it dates from the second millennium BC (the first megalithic tombs date from around 3000 BC). Running in a north-south direction, the funeral chamber was sealed by a stone slab, although nowadays only the threshold remains.

STAZZONA DI FUNTANACCIA

Issa stazzona, in cima d'una cuccula naturale, hè a più cummisciuta è a megliu cunsirvata di Corsica. A so funzione: fà onore à i difunti è marcà e mente. Issu munimenti funerariu cullittivu hè fattu d'una

tighjona di cupertura monolitica (3,40 m / 2,90 m) posta à nantu à 6 pilastru ritti (ortostate: 3 à punente, 2 à livante è 1 à u nordu). Edificatu cù dui graniti sfarenti (granellu rozu pà i muntanti, più finu pà a sciappa di cupertura), data di u II millenariu n. à C (prima sipulture megalitiche ver di 3000 n. à C). Urientata Nordu/Meziornu, a stanza funeraria fù chjosa cù una teghja. Ne ferma solu avà u mutale.



Funtanaccia dolmen

Renaghju site

What, exactly, motivated the men of Cauria to construct these monuments? Where did the stone come from and how was it transported to the site? What do the sculptures represent? Archaeologists' findings and theories merit being shared with a much wider audience.



Situ di U Rinaghju

Chi mutivi ponu purtà l'omi à arizzà issi munimenti? Da duve hè stata stratta a petra? Chi tecniche di trasportu sò aprudate da ghjunghje le? Chì ripresentanu e sculture? E risposte è l'ipotesi di l'archiuloghji si devenu fà cumnosce à tuttignunu