## Predas Fittas

The area long known in archaeological literature as the locality *Predas Fittas* is notable for the presence of several *menhirs*. The monuments are mentioned for the first time in a document dated 1473, relating to the partition between the municipalities of Ovodda and Gavoi of the territories then belonging to the settlement of *Oleri*, which has now disappeared and of which the country church of San Pietro remains as evidence.

Subsequently, the *menhirs* are mentioned by Vittorio Angius, by Alberto della Marmora in his *Viaggio in Sardegna* ('Travels in Sardinia'), and by Antonio Taramelli.

Giovanni Lilliu provides an exhaustive description of the area, identifying eight *menhirs*, some of which were standing, some broken and lying on the ground, while others were reused in a nearby settlement that can be dated back to Roman times. Only two *menhirs* are currently standing.

In the wider area, there is evidence of human habitation dating back to the Recent-Final Neolithic (Ozieri Culture, late 5th - 4th mill. B.C.), the Recent Bronze Age and the Roman period. The intense occupation of the area, in correspondence with the valley of the *Aratu* river, is attributable to the proximity of the watercourse and the consequent availability of land favourable to human settlement.

Lilliu, in his work *La civiltà dei Sardi* ('The Civilisation of the Sardinians'), emphasises how *menhirs* or *predas fittas* were often erected along the route of old roads, some travelled during cattle drives, or at the confluence of several roads.

"It is plausible that the *menhirs* were conceived and constructed not only in the local function of cult simulacra... but also as landmarks, signs or resting places for travellers..."

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