



THE SET OF THE LEGENDS



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

ŠIS PUSLAPIS NEGALI BŪTI REDAGUOJAMAS

Tai vidinė viršelio dalis

Myths and legends are important to us today for a number of reasons. They have value as literature, offering timeless and universal themes; they give us insight into other times and places; and they help us to see how much humankind had and has in common.

Myths and legends are stories that are based on tradition. Some may have factual origins, while others are completely fictional.

During the ERASMUS + project FOLKLORIKA (2019-2022), Lithuanian team from President Valdas Adamkus gymnasium, as a final product, collected a set of myths and legends from the six participating countries: Cyprus, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Spain and Turkey. We hope that it will help to gain an even deeper understanding of the folklore, traditions and history of these countries.

Enjoy your time with the set of legends.



Gymnasio Apostolou Pavlou, Cyprus
President Valdas Adamkus gymnasium, Bitininku st. 31, Kaunas, Lithuania
Szkoła Podstawowa Nr 2 im. Michała Kajki w Nidzicy, Poland
Liceul Teoretic „Constantin Noica”, Sibiu City, Romania
Sahinbey Vali Mehmet Lutfullah Bilgin Ortakulu, Gaziantep, Turkey
IES Pérez Galdós, Spain



CYPRUS

The Legend about the chase of Rigena and Digenes to Akamas

Rigena is associated with the epic Digenes Akritas who acted in Cyprus during the Byzantine Empire, fighting the Saracens and protecting the island from raids. Digenis was, according to popular tradition, always in love with Rigena, but he never managed to get her, because she was elusive and asked for favors and oppressed him to the extent that he angered him - so much so that he snatched a stone and threw it near her house. But Rigena reacted, dragging her shaft that fell near Vikla where Digenis was sitting. In confrontation, Digenis kicked a large stone, slashing it. To this day, the Sword of Digenes and the Adraktin of Regina can be seen in Paphos.

Tradition often refers to Digenis's love to Rigena, with Digenis always running after her, getting angry and throwing stones at Rigena. Thus, there is the stone of Digenis in Trikomo, the Ligrin of Digenis in Hapotami in Paphos, the Ligrin of Digenis in various parts of Cyprus, the Apidkia of Digenis or the Padkia of Digenis in Argaka and Lysos, the Rings of Digenis on the beach of Akamas on a rock he threw at her, and other natural phenomena that people have connected in their imagination with the action of Digenis and his relationship with the elusive, approachable and mysterious Rigena. The fact remains that Digenis never managed to convince Rigena to fall in love with him, as she always deceived him, escaping to mountains and caves.

There is a strong tradition that persists to this day regarding the solitary rock, located north of Fabrica Hill, en route to Pafos harbour. Legend has it that Digenis desired Rigena, whose house was on the top of this hill. Rigena would only agree to marry Digenis if he could transport water for her from some distant location, which in this case was either Mavrokolympos or Tala. Although the task required great strength and effort, Digenis undertook it, and managed to transport the water through clay conduits - traces of these are still evident in the village of Chlorakas today. However, Rigena failed to fulfil her end of the promise, thereby enraging Digenis who then threw a huge rock at her which landed in front of her house. Rigena reciprocated by throwing her spinning needle, a granite stele, which landed in the fields underneath the Moutallos rise.

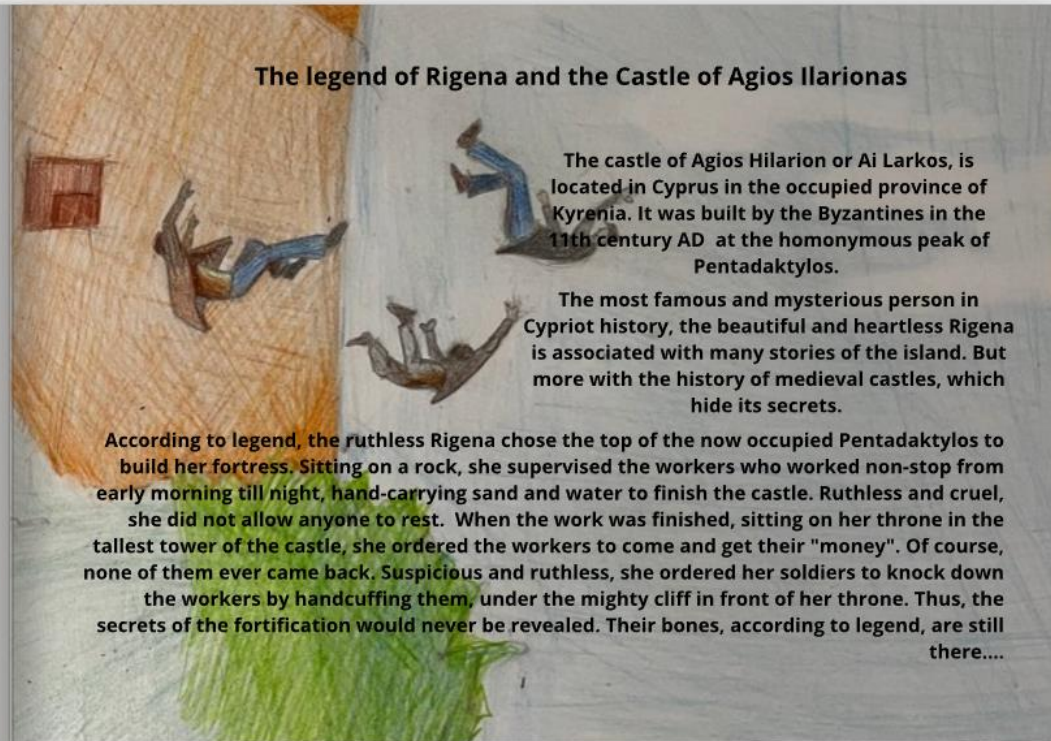


The legend of Rigena and the Castle of Agios Ilarionas

The castle of Agios Hilarion or Ai Larkos, is located in Cyprus in the occupied province of Kyrenia. It was built by the Byzantines in the 11th century AD at the homonymous peak of Pentadaktylos.

The most famous and mysterious person in Cypriot history, the beautiful and heartless Rigena is associated with many stories of the island. But more with the history of medieval castles, which hide its secrets.

According to legend, the ruthless Rigena chose the top of the now occupied Pentadaktylos to build her fortress. Sitting on a rock, she supervised the workers who worked non-stop from early morning till night, hand-carrying sand and water to finish the castle. Ruthless and cruel, she did not allow anyone to rest. When the work was finished, sitting on her throne in the tallest tower of the castle, she ordered the workers to come and get their "money". Of course, none of them ever came back. Suspicious and ruthless, she ordered her soldiers to knock down the workers by handcuffing them, under the mighty cliff in front of her throne. Thus, the secrets of the fortification would never be revealed. Their bones, according to legend, are still there....



LITHUANIA

Vilnius is the capital of Lithuania and today Vilnius is about 700 years old.

This city is an outstanding example of a medieval foundation which exercised a profound influence on architectural and cultural developments in a wide area of Eastern Europe over several centuries. So how was it founded?..



Picture by Neringa S., Lithuania



The legend of the establishment of Vilnius

Once upon a time the Grand Duke of Lithuania Gediminas was hunting in the holy woods of the Valley of Šventaragis.

Tired after the successful day of hunting the Grand Duke settled for night there. He fell asleep soundly and had a dream. A huge iron wolf was standing on the top of a hill and the sound of hundreds of other wolves inside it filled all surrounding fields and woods.

Upon wakeup, the Duke asked the pagan priest Lizdeika to reveal the secret of the dream.

Lizdeika told him: 'What is destined for the ruler and the state of Lithuania, let it be: the iron wolf means a castle and a town which will be established by the ruler on this site.

The town will be the capital of the Lithuanian lands and the dwelling of rulers and glory of their deeds shall echo throughout the world'.

And Gediminas built the city and the castle.

Although there are no dukes of Lithuania anymore, Vilnius is still beautiful and large. There are many beautiful churches here! In the place where the church of Perkūnas stood, now the most beautiful cathedral stands, and, under the high altar of it, you can see a place where ancient Lithuanians burned fire to honour Perkūnas. This place is for everyone to see how our forefathers prayed and what houses of prayers they had.

Picture by Gabija G., Lithuania

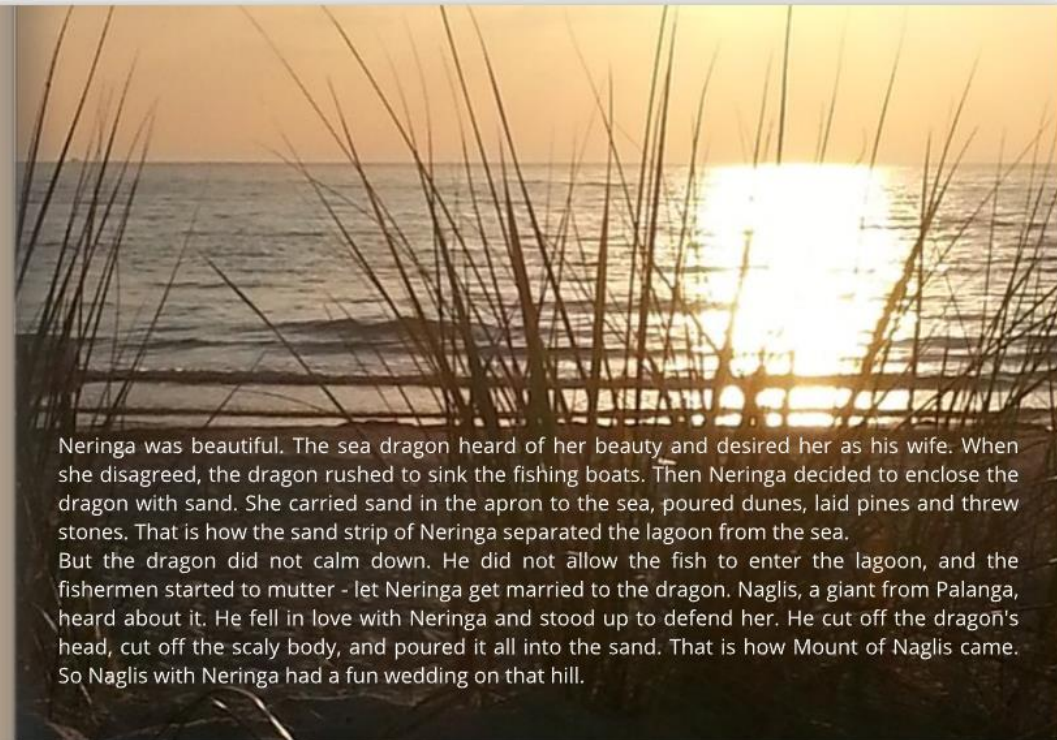
The legend of Neringa

The next story is about two giants, beauty and love.

In one village of Kuršiai, a daughter was born in a poor fisherman's family. The wife died, so the fisherman had to raise the daughter alone. But the girl was extraordinary: she grew very fast and she was very strong. She seemed to be slow and awkward to people, so they called her Neringa. Neringa grew giant - she easily uprooted a pine or cast a huge stone. Most of all, she liked to stand on the sea shore and wait for the returning fishermen. When fog or clouds fell, she released her long braids and waved them in the sky until the sun went down.



Picture by Nojus D. Lithuania



Neringa was beautiful. The sea dragon heard of her beauty and desired her as his wife. When she disagreed, the dragon rushed to sink the fishing boats. Then Neringa decided to enclose the dragon with sand. She carried sand in the apron to the sea, poured dunes, laid pines and threw stones. That is how the sand strip of Neringa separated the lagoon from the sea.

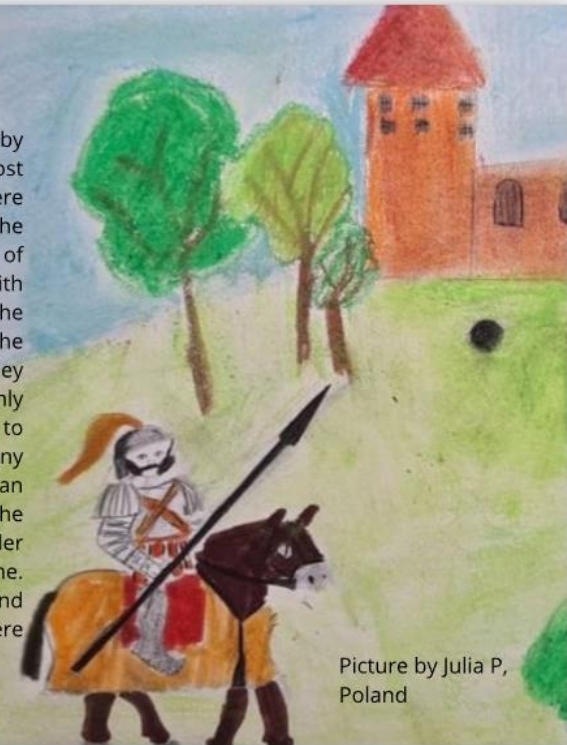
But the dragon did not calm down. He did not allow the fish to enter the lagoon, and the fishermen started to mutter - let Neringa get married to the dragon. Naglis, a giant from Palanga, heard about it. He fell in love with Neringa and stood up to defend her. He cut off the dragon's head, cut off the scaly body, and poured it all into the sand. That is how Mount of Naglis came. So Naglis with Neringa had a fun wedding on that hill.

POLAND



The legend of the Tatar stone

One evening at the edge of the forest, by the fire Siegfried on the order of the starost of Nideburg, looked for warriors who were called tatars. When he fell asleep tired, he was suddenly awakened by the sounds of 'horses hooves. He immediately rushed with his information, the starost called the inhabitants and gave orders to defend the city. Once the townspeople thought they had the enemies let go, the guards suddenly alerted that they were coming. They tried to defend themselves, but there were too many enemies. Then a certain young boy Yan Nowak fired a cannon and the bullet hit the leader of Mongolow, who was buried under a large head, now called the Tatar stone. Then the troops of enemies withdrew and this way the castle and the whole city were saved.



Picture by Julia P, Poland

The Legend of Łyna river

Once upon a time, in the depths of Masurian lakes, the King of a Thousand Lakes, who had a beautiful daughter Łyna, lived in a beautiful palace. She loved a poor fisherman, Jasiek, who sang an old Masurian love song beautifully.

One night, the King became entangled in old Fishing nets. A young fisherman Jasiek found him together with his old guardian Mateusz. In return of releasing him, the Lord of the lakes offered to give the fisherman his beloved daughter for a wife. Łyna was very pleased that Jasiek would be her husband, but her father set a strict condition:

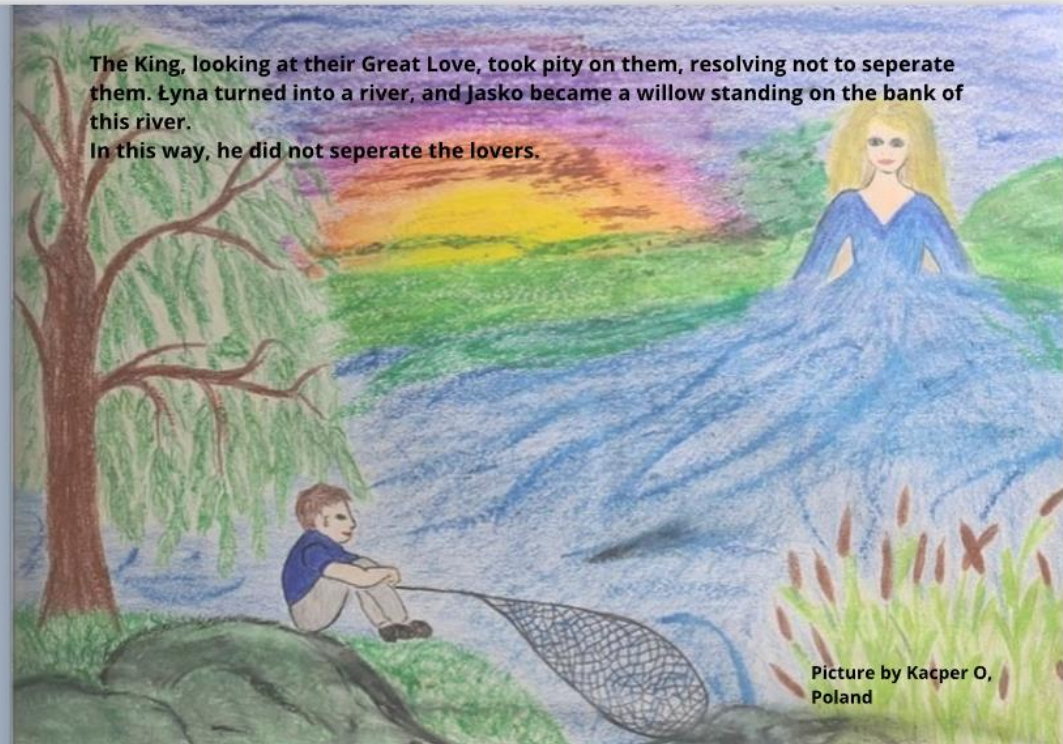
-Remember, daughter, you must never enter the Water Kingdom, and your foot must not even touch the lake water – said the King and disappeared into the depths.

Łyna agreed to it. Life with Jasiek was like a fairy tale and it brought a lot of happiness. But then happiness is laughing in life, misfortune is sown alongside the seed. And it was so in the case. A misfortune interrupted the idyll of love. One day Jasiek was crushed by a tree and despite the fact that he was pulled out from under a thick trunk, it was fading out overnight. Łyna's heart was bursting with pain, losing any hope of saving him.

The broken Łyna, seeing that there was no help for Janek, remembered that a miraculous plant was growing at the bottom of the lake, with the power to heal. Without thinking about the consequences, she jumped into the water, swam to the bush, touched its flowers, spoke the spell and felt a great relief because she knew that her beloved would receive it.

The King, looking at their Great Love, took pity on them, resolving not to separate them. Łyna turned into a river, and Jasko became a willow standing on the bank of this river.

In this way, he did not separate the lovers.



Picture by Kacper O, Poland

ROMANIA



The Legend of the Little March Amulet

Once upon a time, there was a time when the Sun, embodied in a handsome man, used to descend to earth to dance the dance in the villages. Knowing what the new passion of the Sun is, a dragon followed him and in one of these forays into the earth, he kidnapped him and threw him into a cellar, in his castle. The birds stopped singing and the children could no longer laugh, but no one dared to face the dragon. One day, a brave young man decided to descend into the cellar and save the Sun. Most of the people accompanied him, giving the young man their strength to succeed in defeating the mighty dragon. His journey lasted three seasons: summer, fall, and winter. At the end of the last one, the young man managed to find the dragon's castle, where the Sun was imprisoned. And the battle began, which lasted for days until the dragon was defeated.

Powerless and wounded, the young man released the Sun, managing to make happy all those who had put their last hopes in him. Nature has revived, people have begun to smile again, only the lad has not seen spring coming. The warm blood from his wounds was falling on the snow. As the snow melted, white flowers, called snowdrops, messengers of spring, rose from the desolate ground. When the last drop of the young man's blood spilled on the immaculate snow, he died happy that his life had served such a noble purpose. Since then, people have been weaving two tassels: one white and one red. At the beginning of March, men offer this amulet, called martisoru, to the girls they love.

The color red represents the love for all that is beautiful and remains the symbol of the blood of the brave young man. White symbolizes purity, health and snowdrop, the first flower to appear in spring. The literary significance of the martisoru is: Little March. A smaller March to wear on our chests so that winter can be forgotten and the new year begins.



Picture by Laurențiu Anastasia, Poland

The Legend of Dragobete

The elders said that Dragobete was the son of a beautiful woman, Dochia, who was believed to be the daughter of Decebalus, and that Trajan himself, the Emperor of the Romans, wanted her as his wife. Anyone who saw her with her hair tangled in two tails hanging from her back, her eyes as clear as the sky, her cheeks white as marble, and her red lips smelling of strawberries, was astonished at her beauty.

The girl lived in a hut at the foot of the mountain, and had a flock of sheep that she took to graze daily in the meadows with tender grass. One day, enchanted by the delicate colors of the flowers and their intoxicating scents, she spent the night on the shore of the lake from which she watered her sheep. It was a full moon night, and Dochia fell asleep on a bed of flowers, smiling in her sleep. Around midnight, when the girl was asleep, a cloud of fog rose from the depths of the mountain, covering the moonlight, and enveloping in a tender embrace the body of the sleeping virgin ... The next day, when she opened her eyes, the sun was at noon. Awakened as if from a long sleep, she looked around, and everything seemed to change. On his lips, he still wore the delicate scent of a kiss. Not knowing what was going on with her, she looked in the mirror of the lake, and the forest began to tremble, and a soft whistling voice could be heard in the distance.

Picture by Laurențiu Anastasia, Romania

Life went on normally, but Dochia did not know what was happening to her body, which was changing day by day. At 9 months old, since the incident with Ceața, on February 24, Dragobete was born. Cursed and godmother were four fairies, Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. Each of them brought as a gift what they thought was most beautiful and useful in life. Spring sowed Love in his heart, giving him the freshness of flowers and youth without old age. Summer did not go unnoticed, and gave the child the warmth of love, the fulfillment of love and the sweetness of fruit. The Autumn Fairy brought him a whistle as a gift to keep them ugly, but to cheer people up with his songs. Finally, the godmother-Winter wove a white robe with diamond glitter. As a girdle, he gave her a red belt sewn with pearls. The coat was designed like this... it grew with the lad, remaining white as snow, no matter how much he wore it. At the age of 19, Dragobete had black hair as night and green eyes like silky grass on the mountain, his words were as sweet as honey, and his kiss was as hot as embers. He was a cheerful young man who played the whistle and loved the girls who looked upon him as a god. The virgins, who met him and felt his enchanted gaze, sometimes even the kiss of fire, swear that he had come from another realm. The old men also said that there was a spark of truth in what the girls said. Because no one knew who his father was, it was rumored that he was conceived by the very Spirit of the Mountain, during his time with Dochia, when he turned into a fog... The truth is that for a while no one saw the boy, and he didn't even hear the whistle.



Picture by Stoia B, Romania

In the heart of the mountain, in a cave whose walls grew "stone flowers" in bouquets of white, blue, gray, pink and purple, lived a wise old man. As he was tending the sheep in the clearing where he had been born, the boy came face to face with this Wise Man who told him his name and urged him to follow him. Astonished by surprise, Dragobete followed him without saying a word. By becoming his disciple, he learned the secret lesson of reading the Secret Book of Nature. Thus, he recognized the medicinal plants, he knew how to talk to the birds, he understood the magical signs of the forest, he was no longer afraid of wild. When she returned to the world, she welcomed him with open arms. More than ever, it awakened love in the hearts of girls. He traveled with the speed of thought, and appeared where he was called... Men loved him too. No one knew the secret that made men like him and not be jealous of him. That, until one day, when an old man revealed the secret. When he was a young man, on the evening of February 23, Dragobete would show himself to the bride and groom in a dream... and teach them the secrets of love. Everything was done under oath... The old man broke the silence, because, being over 100 years old, he is considered not to be under oath anymore.

Legend has it that after hundreds of years of living on earth, during which time the people of these lands had learned to love, and the teaching was passed from father to son, and from mother to daughter, the Spirit of the Mountain called his child to his bosom. At his father's request, the Mother of God transformed it into a magical plant called Năvalnic. Thus, Dragobete, also known as Năvalnic, sleeps in his father's "flesh", being reborn every spring.



Picture by Tamun M, Romania

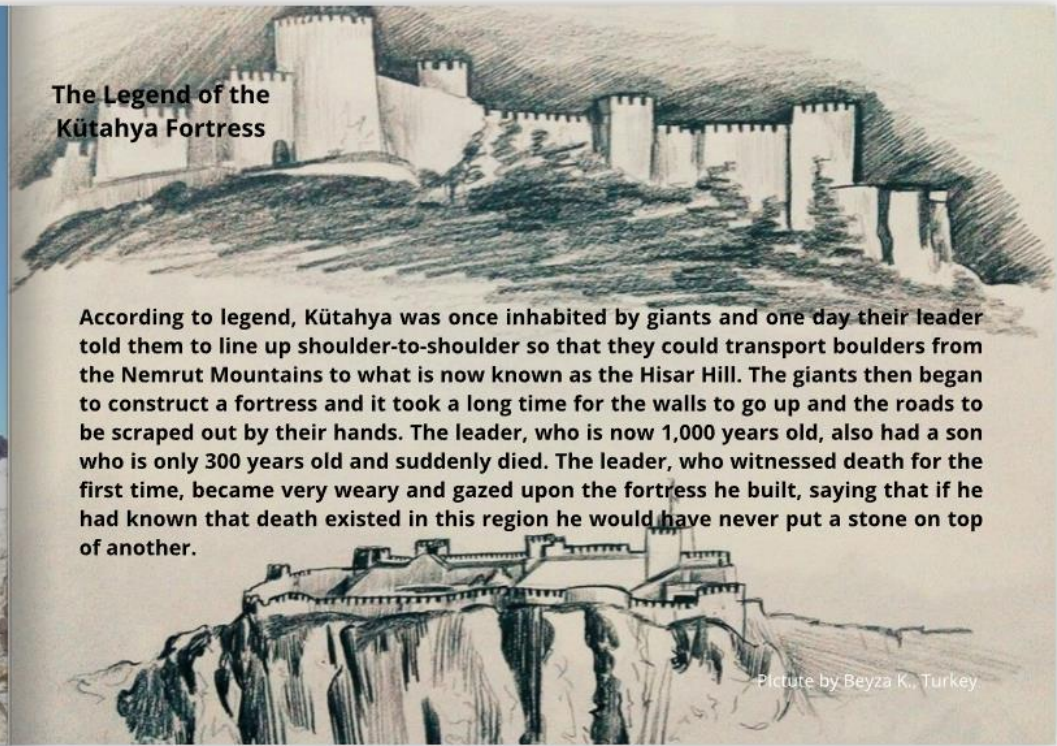
They carry a silk bag in their breasts in which they hold fast. It is a sign of appreciation and remembrance of the one who was Dragobete, the "god" of Romanian love. Wondering what happened to Dochia? The villains say she became a stubborn and stubborn old woman. They also say that in March, he wore 9 coats and went up the mountain with his sheep. Because it was hot, she began to take off her skins, one by one, and on a frosty night she turned into a stone sheepfold with her flock. Others, wiser, claim that Dochia went to her lover, Mount Ceahlau, and asked him to turn her into a stone sheepfold... to be together forever...

Love, enter the door of my heart!
Come closer! Admire the stars!
Ruby sparkles flow through my veins
When our lips touch.
Kiss Me!
Again and again...
Until it melts

TURKEY



The Legend of the Kütahya Fortress



According to legend, Kütahya was once inhabited by giants and one day their leader told them to line up shoulder-to-shoulder so that they could transport boulders from the Nemrut Mountains to what is now known as the Hisar Hill. The giants then began to construct a fortress and it took a long time for the walls to go up and the roads to be scraped out by their hands. The leader, who is now 1,000 years old, also had a son who is only 300 years old and suddenly died. The leader, who witnessed death for the first time, became very weary and gazed upon the fortress he built, saying that if he had known that death existed in this region he would have never put a stone on top of another.

Picture by Beyza K., Turkey

The Myth of Aynalı Mağara (Mirrored Cave)

This legend comes from Amasya and is about a king's daughter who was so exceptionally beautiful that she had to cover her face. When her father decided it was time for her to marry he sent out news that whoever was able to lift her veil and withstand her beauty, looking upon her as more than just a beautiful face, would become her husband. Upon this news, a mass of eligible young bachelors arrived in Amasya. One by one the young men arrived on the throne, set up at Amasya Square, to lift the princess' veil but were immediately overcome by her beauty as their hands shook or knees buckled. This continued for days, until one day a very poor but very brave young man said that he wanted to try his luck. When the young man lifted the beautiful princess' veil, such an electrifying and illuminating force was set off that a fire surrounded the two as they died in the heat of their connection. Their bodies are buried in a cave outside the town and every time the sun shines on the rock façade of their tomb, the surface shines as bright as the princess' beautiful face.



Picture by Asiye G., Turkey

SPAIN (GRAN CANARIA)



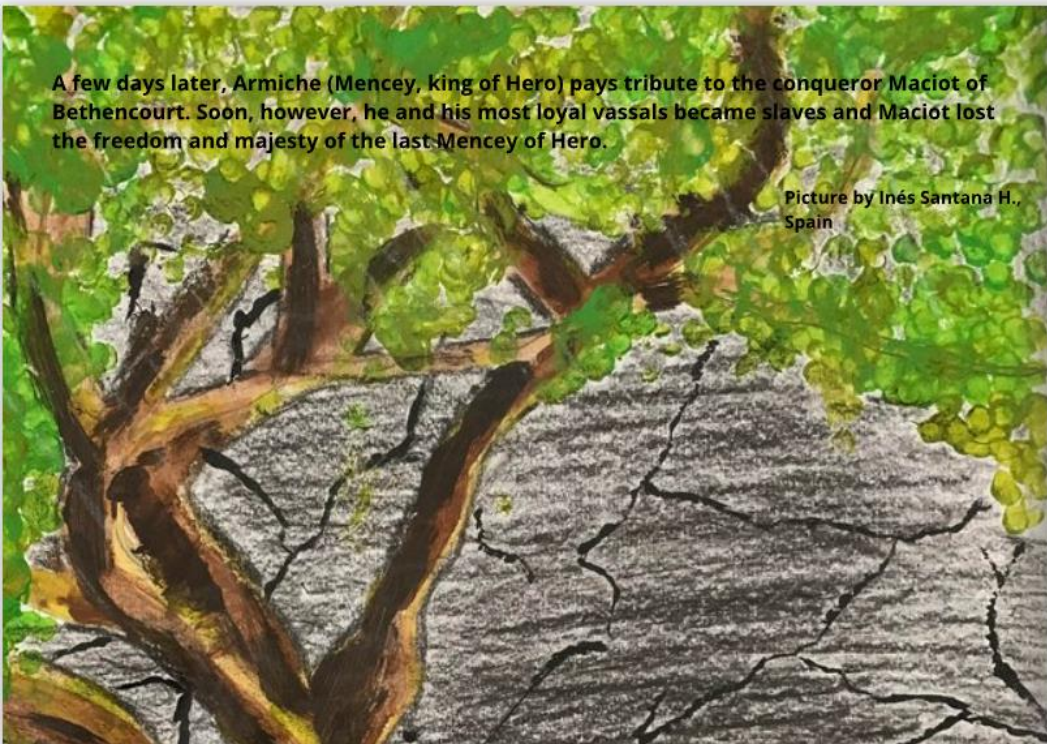
GAROÉ´S legend

At the time of the Canary Islands´ conquest, there was on the island of Hero (Iron) a tree called Garoé and no one did not know of another similar tree in the entire archipelago or known land. This tree could distil the water from the mists that reached it, due to its large leaves. The water was collected in holes made in the ground by the Bimbaches (ancient Herreños). There was no more water in Hero than the water distilled by the Garoé. It was for this reason that Bimbaches looked after this tree. They were always watching over its well-being and safety. However, when they saw the conquerors arrived at the port of Tecorone, they feared for their own freedom and gathered the whole island in Tagoror, since it was not the first time that pirate ships had come to those islands to sell the population as slaves in countries beyond the sea.

At the meeting, named above, the Herreños decided to cover the tops of Garoé so that foreigners would not discover it and thus abandon the island when they could not find water. They kept large reserves of water so as not to return to the Garoé for several weeks and imposed hanging on anyone who revealed the precious secret. They also watched as Maciot Bethencourt's Franco-Spanish expedition began to suffer the hardships of thirst. It was then that an aborigine, Agarfa, fell in love with a young Andalusian from that expedition and letting herself be carried away by the love she professed for him, revealed the valuable secret of the Garoé without thinking that she was condemning all her people to lose their freedom. The conquest was to be carried out, so the Bimbaches kidnapped Agarfa from the foreign camp and hanged her at dawn the next day.

A few days later, Armiche (Mencey, king of Hero) pays tribute to the conqueror Maciot of Bethencourt. Soon, however, he and his most loyal vassals became slaves and Maciot lost the freedom and majesty of the last Mencey of Hero.

Picture by Inés Santana H.,
Spain



Legend of the Timanfaya's devil

An old legend of Canary Islands tells that, on 1 September 1730 in Timanfaya, where the photographer Juan Méndez Quesada spent nine months until he could take this photograph, there was taking place a wedding. The lucky couple was the son of one of the wealthiest inhabitants of the island and a beautiful young woman whose family was dedicated to the cultivation of curative plants.

It is said that in the middle of the ceremony, a huge explosion made the land shake. Hundreds of rocks and pieces of lava rained down from the sky, destroying everything in their path. Unsurprisingly, all the wedding guests and the villagers fled in panic to seek shelter. Many were saved, but on this occasion, fate would have it that misfortune befell the young couple.

Thus, a large rock from the volcano crushed the bride, leaving her buried. The groom, seeing the scene, took a five-pointed forge to try to move the huge rock and save her. But when he finally succeeded, to the misfortune of both of them, he sadly realised that his beloved was already dead.

In despair and desolation, without letting go of the forge, he picked up his wife's body and began to run through the valley in search of a refuge that no place in the world could offer him.

Despite the smoke and ashes, some villagers were able to make out the moonlit young man on a hill. He raised the five-pointed forge with his two arms and, before disappearing into the burning ground of Lanzarote, the witnesses present sighed in pure sadness: "poor devil".



Amara's legend

In old romances of the Canary Islands, everyone talked about the sad story of Amarca. Her figure was very elegant and her beauty was so exotic that she came to be envied by all the maidens. Her rustic lodge in Icod looked like a nest hung on the mountain crests, to avoid glances and ambitions of those birds of prey, the tricksters, who carry off beautiful girls. One day Belicar, the last Mencey, King and Lord of the dominions of Icod, arrived at the maiden's home and was astonished and dazzled by the extraordinary beauty of the young woman. From that memorable day her fame grew and spread like happy news throughout the whole Menceyato. There was one thing about the girl that contrasted with her humble lineage: her haughty and disdainful nature. Amarca was constantly besieged by many men and on many other occasions she sowed sorrow and disappointment in her lovers. Who will Amarca love? The young men wondered. Who will the heart of that beautiful daughter of Teide be for? Sheltered at the foot of the colossus, always among the snows. One of the most hardened vassals of the Kingdom, Garigaiga, the shepherd, had gone mad for Amarca. She shunned his affection and repudiated his local, unbridled passion. She repelled the son of the Volcano, the one with the dark skinned and arms as strong as oaks.

Maddened by the pain of being spurned, one evening as the horizons were tinged with blood and the dying sun turned silver the waters of the ocean like a stream of moonlight on a night of mystery, he saw Garigaiga, on the edge of a high cliff, waving his arms like flags in haste. He saw his body arching forward, his head dipped on his chest, and he was hurtling towards the abyss. News of the tragic event spread far and wide.

By Dennis García H., Pilar Cabrera F. and Lara García M., Spain

The women blamed their own selfishness and attributed the shepherd's death to their own disdain. Suddenly, Amarca disappeared, and no one knew what had become of the maiden's fate. One morning, an old man had seen her descend from the peaks and walk like a sleepwalker to the shores of the sea. Her cold, tremulous lips seemed to say, folded forever, and the old man told everything. A week later, as the first glimmer of sunlight shone, he saw Amarca throw herself into the abyss, and after struggling with the rough surf, she was carried out to sea by a wave as merry child.

It was the time of the "Beñesmén", of the season and the richness of the harvest, the days of placidity and light, and everything was submerged in shadows and tears. Amarca had been found dead on the beach. Mencey Belicar ordered to sing sad dirges, to lit lights on the hills, and that the strongest young men beat the waters of the sea with their sticks. He also ordered that her body be anointed with the most fragrant perfumes, for it was not in vain that she was the most precious flower in the region. Over the years, when a night walker crossed the peaks of Mount Teide, a strange, chilling wailing stopped him in distress. It was a weak, muffled, pained voice that seemed to emerge from the bottom of the ravine. It was the same clamour of request, of sorrow, of death agony that the feverish lips of Garigaiga had so often stammered: "Amarca, sister Amarca".

THE DIGITAL VERSION:

Youtube channel: THE SET OF THE LEGENDS

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLC8N-9e1NiNoBnB1pq366uht3XSOF5XIm>

The publication was carried out with the financial support of the European Commission. The publication reflects only the position of its authors, and the European Commission and the National Agency of the Erasmus + Program are not responsible for its substantive content.

ŠIS PUSLAPIS NEGALI BŪTI REDAGUOJAMAS

Tai vidinė viršelio dalis