

## THE SASSI OF MATERA

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Matera is not a beautiful city, using the standard definition of this adjective. In fact it does not follow the aesthetic standards that normally characterise art heritage cities. Carlo Levi's sister, Luisa Levi, a doctor who having arrived to Matera in a warm September of 1935, was right when she defined it as a "striking" city – that is to say, tragic. [...] The Sassi... do exist because there was someone who dug them, lived in them and preserved them for us to reflect upon, way before we started contemplating them. All things considered, this goes to signify that the Sassi were not rocks but men – or "heroes" in a certain sense – who turned their city into a "peasant capital" over the previous centuries, a "UNESCO World Heritage Site" in 1993, and the "Capital of European Culture" in 2019.