

18. 155 BAIN DE DONES (Bath of the women) LAKE - HAA/NS

The name Bain de Dones, at an altitude of 1892 m a.s.l., conjures up a series of legends and popular beliefs linked to the mythical *Anguane*, a sort of female water creatures. Legend has it that the lake was once lived in by the wives of the primitive *Salvans*, the *Anguane*, also known by a range of other names, such as *Longhe Longane*, *Aquanes*, *Agane*, *Aivane* and *Vivane*. These names, deriving from water, were common throughout the alpine area to indicate female creatures with goat's feet, particularly skilled in a number of domestic chores, benevolent guardians of Man, yet at the same time ambiguous, mysterious, menacing. Their presence is attested to in the Dolomites by a wealth of place names referring to lakes, rocks and depressions in the ground, particularly in and around the villages in the Cadore, such as Calalzo, Domegge, Perarolo, Cortina, to quote but a few. When the folk of the Ampezzo area used to make their way in procession towards the Sanctuary of Santa Croce in Badia along the *Ju d'Inzija* muletrack, it appears the women would stop to bathe in the icy waters of this little lake, disobeying the instructions of the local clergy, who disapproved of such behaviour. Legend has it that the nearby mountain, *Sass de Stria* is there in memory of a woman who was turned to stone as she emerged from the lake; and in Cortina, there is a saying that when a woman believed to be nasty does her washing, the weather will change for the worse, because if the *Anguane* realise they are being watched, they can invoke a raging storm. We find the *Anguane* once again in the legends that have arisen around lake Scin, on the road that leads to the Tre Croci Pass, above Alverà di Cortina and to Lake Noulù further south, at the Miramonti Hotel in Peziè. Along the road that goes down to Cortina from the Falzarego pass, other place names recall witches, or mythical figures linked to the waters, such as the *Ru de ra Verjines*, which runs to the road of the Giau Pass, the *Lake de ra Stries*, behind the village of Ronco or, from the other side, the *Sas de Ordia*, or *Lacusin*, where the *Anguanes* are said to hide.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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D. Perco, *Le anguane: mogli, madre e lavandaie*, in *Ricerca Folklorica*, n. 36, Oct. 1997
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K.F. Wolff, *L'anima delle Dolomiti*, Bologna, 1967
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FILE COMPILED BY: Lonzi

ACCESSIBLE: yes; may be visited
MUNICIPALITY: Cortina d'Ampezzo
PLACE: Bain de Dones
GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES: X 1733277 – Y 5156287
PROVINCE: BL

INTERESTING FACTS

The numerous small lakes in the mountains or at the valley bottom in the Ampezzo area form biotopes of considerable interest to naturalists, such as the lakes of *Aial*, *Bandion*, *Catina de Agnes*, *Costalares*, *Federa*, *Rudo*, *Foses*, *Ghedina*, *Limesdes*, *March*, *Negro*, *Rufiedo*, *Noulù*, *Pianozes*, *Ra ranes*, *Remeda Roses*, *Scin*, *Sorapis*, *Ra Stries*, *Socus*, *Tabarin*, *Vence* and *Maiorera*. Below Croda da Lago, near the mountain refuge of the same name, is **Federa lake (97 NS)**, also called Lago da Lago, which feeds the Ru da Comin near the sub-alkaline peat bog.

HOW TO GET THERE

The place is a hundred or so metres from the Cinque Torri cableway, just before the Falzarego pass, along the SR48.