



The use of Piasentina Stone in Friuli Region (NE Italy): a Summary of Recent Knowledge.

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Piasentina Stone is a calcareous breccia, still quarried from the hills of Friuli region (NE Italy), in the area close to the Slovenian border.

Its use follows the history of this country, from Roman domination, to Longobard Duchy, to Patriarch State, to Venetian domain.

Quarries of reduced dimensions were disseminated in the area, supplying dimension stones, slates, architectural and decorative elements for the constructions of the close towns of Cividale del Friuli (the Roman Forum Iulii, the early Middle age capital of Longobard Duchy and the later seat of Patriarchs State) and Udine (the main town of Venetian Government), as well as for the hilly area castles, for the buildings of minor centres, for villages vernacular architecture and for the 17th and 18th century countryside villas. In luckily circumstances archives documents, referring to the most important constructions, permit to define the provenance quarry and to give a name to people involved in quarrying, stone carving and sculpturing.

Due to its visible characteristics, Piasentina Stone is easily recognisable in dimension stone constructions, buildings façades, decorative elements and street paving: fine to coarse grained, with visible grey elements and a grey cement, giving to it a silver appearance, crossed by white calcite veins, the stone marks its relevance throughout the historical architectural heritage of the area.

A research carried on in last ten years, regarding the use of stone material in historical and traditional architecture of Friuli Region, gave the chance to focus the attention on Piasentina Stone presence, summarising recent knowledge on this historical stone resource, due to the input of local quarrying enterprises. In that, the work here presented

is intended to provide a reference framework of this activity, evidencing the specificities of the use of this stone, marking in such a strong way the building culture of the area.