



The greek colony of Tarente:stone artifacts and quarry materials in the area of Saturo shrine.

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In the coastal area to the South-east of Taranto various quarries for the extraction of calcarenitic materials have been found. These materials were used in ancient times, probably for various buildings of archaeological and architectural interest belonging to periods ranging from the Greek colonisation to the renaissance. The aims of the research, started by CNR-IBAM in Lecce (1), were to identify the ancient quarries and to characterise the materials extracted from these; in addition, the materials used for buildings of archaeological and architectural interest found in the surrounding area were studied, in order to ascertain their origin. Of special interest in this field are the quarries discovered in the area of Torre Saturo, since they lie within the territory of the Greek colony of Taranto. They were the subject of research carried out under the “Pilot project for the exploitation of the archaeological heritage of the Ionian-Salentine area”, whose objectives include identification of the materials used in archaeological artefacts and their sources. The area of Torre Saturo also boasts an ancient Greek shrine, a Roman villa and a renaissance tower, all built with calcarenitic materials whose macroscopic characteristics are similar to those of materials from nearby quarries. In order to verify that the materials with which the above-mentioned artefacts were built did indeed come from these quarries, samples from both the quarries and the monuments were taken. The samples were analysed to determine their properties, be they physical (porosity, real and bulk density), geo-chemical (major, minor and trace elements) and mineralogical-petrographic (mineralogical components and their structure). The results obtained, while still of a preliminary nature, show that there is a certain affinity between the materials used in the constructions and those of the quarries, supporting the hypothesis that the quarries studied may have been the source of the materials used in the artefacts.