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THE DOCUMENTATION AND CONSERVATION OF THE CULTURAL HERITAGE: 3D LASER SCANNING AND GIS TECHNIQUES FOR THEMATIC MAPPING OF THE STONEMWORK OF THE FAÇADE OF ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH (PISA, ITALY)

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Abstract

~~The role of the Cultural Heritage is central in our society and culture, and all the interdisciplinary studies that can be useful for its restoration have an undoubtedly interest for the researchers.~~ This paper reports the mapping of the stones, including marbles and brick masonry, used for building the façade of the medieval church of St. Nicholas (XI century A.D.), one of the most interesting church in Pisa also due to the nearby famous octagonal bell tower. Mapping of stone materials was undertaken using a CAD/GIS software package for storing and processing spatial information of the ashlars ~~and their non-spatial data~~, obtained by both 3D laser-scanning ~~data~~, combined with high-resolution images, and stone-to-stone observation.

Based on collected data, the façade of the church of St. Nicholas was mostly made up of rocks belonging to the metamorphic Tuscan sequence, quartzites and marbles from *Mt. Pisano* area. Black limestones quarried at some kilometres northwest from Pisa in the *Monti d'Oltre Serchio* area, white Apuan marbles and *Macigno* sandstones are also present, while intarsia are mainly made up of serpentinite and, subordinately, red limestones inlaid in white Apuan and *Mt. Pisano* marbles.

Keywords: laser scanning/CAD/GIS/thematic mapping/building stone/marble/cultural heritage/medieval buildings.

Research aims

This paper presents the mapping of the building stones used in the façade of the St. Nicholas church in Pisa, in order to highlight the potential of 3D laser scanning and CAD/GIS (Computer Aided Design/Geographical Information System) techniques in the field of restoration and conservation of stonework. In particular, the paper focuses on the workflow from the 3D laser scanner data to the thematic mapping of the stones and other building materials.

1. Introduction

The theme of the documentation and conservation of the Cultural Heritage is deeply rooted in the contemporary society. In a project in general and in stonework's restoration, one in particular, a detailed knowledge of the building materials and of their main characteristics is an essential pre-requisite for developing a good planning in the near future. A correct organization of the work and of its phases and priorities, in fact, can make the real difference in a good project, allowing to achieve the best results also considering the economic issues. A good and efficient analysis can be expensive, but all its cost are quite always saved during the construction phase of the restoration when, especially with ancient structures, a conscious and minimal interventions is required according to their considerable value. The theme of the economical resources is central, not only for mere commercial considerations, but also for the real possibility to proceed with the eventual restoration of the building. A good planning can, in

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5 fact, evaluate all the costs and give the real idea of the consistency of the
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7 operation ~~that is nowadays a plus to move the public commissions that hold the~~
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9 ~~great part of the Cultural Heritage, to put hand to the conservation of their vast~~
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11 ~~properties~~. All the techniques useful to reach the real knowledge of the object are
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13 then essential and especially the more advanced ones can ensure better results.
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15 From this point of view, the information technology applied to Cultural Heritage
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17 can be regarded as providing a tool box of techniques ~~and technologies~~ of wide
18
19 applicability to the achievement of stonework mapping and, more generally, to the
20
21 management of a full restoration project. Many studies have demonstrated the
22
23 utility of the laser scanning technology to generate virtual models of elements,
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25 buildings and cities [1], and in the investigation of world heritage sites [2-6] as
26
27 well as in the high-resolution documentation of lithic artifact and archaeological
28
29 finds [7-9]. ~~On the other hand,~~ Computer Aided Design (CAD) and Geographical
30
31 Information System (GIS) techniques are increasingly used to enhance our
32
33 understanding of the past producing a detailed documentation of recent restoration
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35 works [10-12].
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40 After the survey of the façade had been completed and the main geometry of each
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42 ashlar was known, the building materials have mostly been identified by visual
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44 inspection, with the aid of both a tripod-mounted Zeiss Victory DiaScope 85 FL
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46 and a field stereomicroscope at 20x, and by mineralogical and petrographic
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48 analyses. For recognition of the stones used for building the façade of St. Nicholas
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50 church, the macroscopic characteristics widely described in several papers on the
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52 stones of medieval buildings in Pisa [13-16 and references therein] has been
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5 exploited, while for marbles usual and topical provenance methods such as
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7 textural features, accessory minerals and C-O stable isotope data [17-19] were
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9 applied. The stone mapping was carried out identifying the lithotype of each
10
11 ashlar or stone fragment. Their spatial (i.e. the physical location of objects and the
12
13 metric relationships between them) and non-spatial (i.e. attributes) information
14
15 have been stored, processed and displayed into a specifically developed GIS
16
17 project. For this, ArcGis 10.1 software package by ESRI (Environmental Systems
18
19 Research Institute) was used.
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25 **2. The studied church**

26
27 The church of St. Nicholas (Figure 1) represents a typical example of the wide
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29 and high quality Italian Heritage spread all over the country and is situated in the
30
31 centre of Pisa (central Tuscany) near the *Lungarno Pacinotti*.
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34 It is mentioned for the first time, as a dependency of the nearby abbey of St.
35
36 Michael “alla Verruca”, in 1097, whereas the annexed monastery of St. Nicholas
37
38 appears in medieval documents from 1130 [20-21].
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41 In 1297 the religious complex of St. Nicholas passed from the Cistercian monks to
42
43 the Augustinian friars: this event is commemorated by a medieval stone
44
45 inscription currently located in the cloister of the monastery [21]. At the
46
47 beginning of the 14th century the friars of St. Augustine enlarged the building
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49 [22]. In the 17th century the church was restored with the addition of altars and
50
51 the valuable sacrament chapel by Matteo Nigetti, a Florentine architect assistant
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53 of Bernardo Buontalenti. The façade features pilaster strips, blind arches and
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5 lozenges, and it is decorated with 12th century intarsia. A covered passage
6
7 connects the church of St. Nicholas to the *Torre De Cantone* and then to the
8
9 *Palazzo delle Vedove*, which the Medici gentlewomen could use to reach the
10
11 church without passing in the streets. Around 1170, an octagonal bell tower, the
12
13 second most famous in the city after the Leaning Tower, was erected beside the
14
15 church, perhaps due to the work of Deotisalvi [23], using quartzites and
16
17 calcarenites laied by hydraulic lime mortars. Inside, there is a beautiful spiral
18
19 staircase with small arches supported by twenty-four columns made up of
20
21 granites, quartzites and marbles coming from both Apuan Alps district, *Mt.*
22
23 *Pisano* quarries and Mediterranean quarrying areas. Today the bell tower is
24
25 slightly tilting with its base under the current street level.
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3. Methods

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34 The key points of the desk study, field acquisition, post-processing and thematic
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36 mapping of the stones and other building materials, including the marble analyses,
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38 are detailed as below.
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3.1 Desk study

3.1.1 Geometry

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45 Before proceeding to the digital survey of the façade of St. Nicholas church, as for
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47 every object to be measured, an appropriate strategy must be developed to
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49 optimize the laser scanning acquisition. Taking into account the type of masonry,
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51 the area to be investigated (about 350 m²) and the minimum resolution (< 5 mm)
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5 required for determining the geometry of each ashlar excluding intarsia, the
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7 choice of an opportune instrumentation was done. On the basis of the selected
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9 instrument (3D-HDS4500 Leica Geostems), considering the low traffic in front
10
11 of the façade and the possibility to use the windows of the opposite buildings, as
12
13 points of view at different heights, we have decided to acquire a redundant
14
15 number of scanning with twelve reference points. In this way, the whole surface
16
17 of the façade was covered, minimizing the hidden or shaded areas.
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20 21 22 23 3.1.2 Building materials

24
25 A preliminary observation of the building materials used for embellishing the
26
27 façade of the studied church shown that the stones and the colored marbles could
28
29 be identified on the basis of their macroscopic characteristics which are available
30
31 in the literature through the research of several authors [13-16 and references
32
33 therein].
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36 With regard to white marbles, they showed the typical features of the Mt. Pisano
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38 and of the Apuan marbles, but to exclude the presence of marbles used in
39
40 antiquity coming from the Mediterranean area, it was chosen to sample and to
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42 analyze some of them. Latest provenance studies on white marble were recently
43
44 performed by several authors taking into account maximum grain size, accessory
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46 minerals and C-O stable isotopes [17-19]. Therefore, it was chosen to collect these
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48 data on some very small fragments by sampling in such a way as not to damage
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50 the façade.
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3.2 Field acquisition

3.2.1 Sampling

Some small fragments of white marble were sampled using a light hammer and a small chisel from nine ashlar in the central and right lower part of the façade, up to about 3 m in height. Samples were taken only where there were almost detached flakes in order to avoid damage to the façade of the church.

~~Sampling of white marbles was needed to collect data on their mineralogical and petrographic characteristics (texture, grain boundary shape, maximum grain size, dolomite content and accessory minerals) by thin section observations and X-ray powder diffraction of bulk sample, and on their carbon-oxygen stable isotope ratios, which are useful data for identifying the ancient quarrying areas [17-19].~~

3.2.2 Laser scanning

Laser scanning is a quite recent innovation in spatial information data acquisition, its intensive usage in Cultural Heritage subjects has a story long a little more than 10 years. This set of procedures allows the surfaces of buildings and other spatial objects to be digitally captured with high resolution and accuracy. In addition, the laser scanning is undoubtedly less time consuming than the conventional survey methods such as topographic and photogrammetric techniques.

In this study, a tripod-mounted laser scanner (3D-HDS4500 Leica Geosystems) was used for one day of fieldwork to capture with high accuracy the geometric features of all the ashlar in the façade of the church.

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5 The field of view of the used scanner is 310 degrees on the vertical and 360
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7 degrees to on the horizontal around the scanning position. A laptop running Leica
8
9 Geosystem Cyclone 7.1 was used in the fieldwork to control the scanner and to
10
11 store the laser scanning data. The capture rate of the laser beam was up to five
12
13 hundred thousand points per second. A Nikon D3x digital camera mounting an
14
15 AF-S Nikkor 50 mm f/1.4 G lens was used for covering with a series of
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17 photographs the whole area scanned by the laser; highly visible targets were used
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19 for linking laser scanning data. The measurement accuracy was less than ± 5 mm
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21 at the scanning distance (< 15 meters).
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25 The scans were captured from 9 different tripod positions (3 of them on the
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27 pavement opposite to the façade and 6 using the windows of both the first and
28
29 second floor of the opposite building) with their locations chosen to guarantee a
30
31 full coverage of the survey area. It was decided to do multiple scans from
32
33 different positions to minimize as far as possible the space occlusions that they
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35 could not be reached by the laser beam. Every new scan area had to contain parts
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37 of previous scans, thus providing overlaps for subsequent alignment into a single
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39 reference system and for the following reduction of the scan set into one single
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41 point cloud.
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47 **3.3 Post-processing**

48 3.3.1 Point cloud processing and map drawing

49
50 To obtain a detailed survey of the façade of the St. Nicholas church (Figure 1),
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52 including the features of each ashlar, the multiple scans were integrated into a
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5 single reference system by referencing together the scanned targets, later the point
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7 clouds were unified into a single point cloud. The objects of no relevance have
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9 been removed from the scans before to combine the multiple scans into a single
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11 point cloud (Figure 2a).

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14 The map of the façade was drawn by using AutoCAD 2012 (AutoDesk) drawing
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16 tools, tracing out the outline of each stone object on the point cloud colored by
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18 matching the rectified photographs. Intarsia had separately drawn using rectified
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20 high-resolution photos, in this way the details from the pictures were not lost.
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22 Afterwards, the intarsia pictures were imported and advisably scaled into the
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24 general drawing.
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27 All the objects of the façade (*i.e.* the stone ashlar) were drawn as closed polylines
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29 of which the perimeter and the area have been calculated.
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32 A detailed map of the façade has needed a little long time also including several
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34 controls that were made on the fieldwork.
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37 At the end of the drawing work, all the objects in DXF format were imported into
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39 a GIS project using ArcGis 10.1 conversion tool, useful to start the realization of
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41 the thematic mapping of stonework (Figure 2b).
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45 3.3.2 White marble analyses

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47 A small portion of each collected rock sample was used for producing a polished
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49 thin section using epoxy resin as impregnating agent. The thin sections were
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51 studied by optical microscopy (OM) using a Zeiss-Axioplane polarising
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53 microscope to observe the rocks up to 200 magnifications in order to evaluate
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5 maximum grain size (MGS) of carbonate crystals, their boundary shapes and to
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7 identify the accessory minerals. Scanning electron microscope equipped with an
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9 energy dispersive spectrometer (SEM/EDS) provided further information about
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11 the crystal features and the chemical composition of the accessory minerals. The
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13 remaining portion of the sample was hand-powdered in an agate mill and the
14
15 powder was analyzed for determining mineralogical compositions by X-ray
16
17 powder-diffraction (XRPD) using a Bragg-Brentano geometry and Ni-filtered
18
19 CuK_α radiation, obtained at 40 kV and 20 mA. 

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21
22 Measurements of the isotopic ratios $^{18}\text{O}/^{16}\text{O}$ and $^{13}\text{C}/^{12}\text{C}$ in the marble samples
23
24 were carried out using mass spectrometry of the rock carbonate phase. All
25
26 selected samples were extracted using phosphoric acid and analysed at the Stable
27
28 Isotope Mass Spectroscopy Laboratory of the Institute of Geosciences and Earth
29
30 Resources, National Research Council of Italy. The results are expressed in terms
31
32 of the deviation from a conventional standard, Pee Dee Belemnite, a carbonate
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34 fossil from South Carolina. This deviation, called δ , is expressed as $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ or $\delta^{18}\text{O}$,
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36 measured in parts per thousand (or per mil., ‰) and calculated as follows:
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38
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$$\delta (\text{‰}) = [\text{R sample}/\text{R standard} - 1] \cdot 1000$$

40
41 where $\text{R} = ^{13}\text{C}/^{12}\text{C}$ or $^{18}\text{O}/^{16}\text{O}$. The isotopic variability data are expressed as a
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43 scatter plot of $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ and $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ values. Analytical precision is $\pm 0.1\text{‰}$ for both
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45 oxygen and carbon.
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49 50 51 52 3.4 Thematic mapping of the stones and other building materials 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60

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5 Based on both 2D detailed map of the ashlar (Figure 2b) and stone-to-stone
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7 observation, the thematic mapping of the stones used for building the façade of
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9 the St. Nicholas church was realized. The spatial and non-spatial data were stored
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11 using ESRI ArcGIS 10.1, a software package even more used by geoscientists for
12
13 analyzing geological and archaeological datasets.
14

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16 Before to ultimate the graphic base, the digital map was yet edited to close the
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18 polylines, which had remained open by mistake, and to modify some hidden
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20 polygons, because they had not recognized like independent, but as a part of the
21
22 polygons that contained them. This problem had resolved using the command
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24 'Cut Polygon Features', available in the menu of the Editor. After the editing
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26 phase, a database containing records with the attributes of each object of the
27
28 façade has been created and the attributes linked to the objects of the graphic base.
29
30 The main fields of the database are as follows: 'Identifier', 'Perimeter', 'Area',
31
32 'Shape Factor' and "Materials".
33
34

35
36 Three outputs respectively show perimeter (Figure 3a), area (Figure 3b) and shape
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38 factor (Figure 3c) of the building materials used for building the façade of the St.
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40 Nicholas church in addition to the main view of the stone map (Figure 4) and to
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42 the some details showing the precious intarsia (Figure 5).
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47 **4 Results and discussion**

49 **4.1 The geo-materials identified in the façade of the church**

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51 In this section the building materials observed in the façade of the St. Nicholas
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53 church are listed, reporting for each of them the main characteristics and decay.
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4.1.1 Marbles

In the façade of the St. Nicholas church, marbles from *Mt. Pisano* area and Apuan Alps district have been recognised on the basis of their macroscopic characteristics, petrographic features and C-O stable isotope data (Table 1 and Figure 6).

From the macroscopic point of view, the *Mt. Pisano* marbles are easily distinguishable among the other ones because of the very fine grain size of the calcite crystals (MGS ~ 100 µm, samples SNF 1-3) as well as the presence of dolomite-rich veins, which enable the typical process of differential erosion [14]. Macroscopic characteristics and petrographic features of the other marbles observed in the façade of the church indicate a sure origin from the Apuan Alps district. They are fine-grained (MGS ranging from 400 to 700 µm, Table 1) white and, subordinately, gray marbles. The six analyzed samples (Table 1) show prevailing homeoblastic/granoblastic textures with grain boundary shapes ranging from straight to curved, but also polygonal textures with triple points (SNF 6) or homeoblastic/heteroblastic grain size uniformity with granoblastic texture characterized by grain boundary shapes ranging from straight to lobate are present (SNF 9). Petrographic features, including the maximum grain size of the calcite crystals (MSG < 2 mm), accessory minerals (pyrite ± quartz ± albite ± muscovite) and isotopic fingerprint ($\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ ranging from 1.76 to 2.33‰ and from -1.58 to -2.23‰, respectively) close to those reported in literature for Apuan marbles [17-19, 24].

4.1.2 Quartzites

The *Mt. Pisano* Triassic quartzites, widely used together with *Caprona* and *Agnano* Breccias for building the Pisa's Case Torre (Tower Houses) throughout the Middle Ages [15-16], belong to the Verrucano meta-sedimentary sequence of the Northern Apennines. Two geological levels were used for building the façade of the St. Nicholas church, the member 2 – *Quarziti verdi* (Green quartzites) and the member 3 – *Quarziti bianco-rosa* (White-pink quartzites) of the *Quarziti del Monte Serra* Formation [25]. As reported by Franzini et al. [15], the quartzites are made up of prevailing quartz grains (from 44 to 86 % by weight) embedded in a matrix with a rather constant chemical composition, represented mainly by phyllosilicates (muscovite and chlorite) with minor amounts of feldspars, paragonite and pyrophyllite. On exposure to the environment, the surface color of both the green and white-pink varieties alters to a light ochre-yellow shade. From a functional point of view, the quartzite ashlar were employed as structural elements and subordinately as ornamental ones. Both varieties have very good mechanical properties and great resistance to degradation. Although the *Mt. Pisano* quartzites show an excellent resistance to the most part of the degradation processes, they are susceptible to aeolian abrasion and may undergo the formation of superficial dusty, dark-colored deposits, which are favored by the surface roughness. When they are within permanently humid masonry, the water capillary rise induces severe degradation phenomena and substantial loss of cohesion, and Na-sulphate efflorescence occur.

4.1.3 Black limestones

The *Monti d'Oltre Serchio* limestones, black in colour with surfaces altered to gray, belong to *Calcari grigio scuri con selci nere* Formation [26]. These rocks were widely used together with *Mt. Pisano* marbles to realize the gray-and-white striped style of the Pisan Romanesque architecture, characterising also Lucca and other Tuscan cities. The most ancient quarrying area was on the slopes of *Mt. Bastione*, where the formation reaches 300 m in thickness and includes fine-grained black limestones, with or without lists and nodules of black flint, and interbedded pseudoolitic and oolitic limestones. As a result of weathering, the black limestones become gray in color. The discoloration is fast, but requires, however, a few tens of years, as evidenced by the scars of World War II due to bomb damage, in the bottom of which the color is darker than that of adjacent areas.

4.1.4 Sandstones

Sandstones used in the studied façade are grey to light bluish-grey in colour when unaltered and, from a geological point of view, belong to the *Macigno* Formation (Upper Oligocene - Lower Miocene) that crops out extensively in the Northern Apennines, from *Pontremoli* to the *Chianti* area, with some occurrences in the southern Tuscan region [27]. Historically, these rocks have been extensively employed in Florence and other Tuscan cities for monumental buildings, churches, castles and towers. In the Pisa's medieval architecture, the *Macigno* sandstones were mostly used for ornamental elements (pilaster, pillars, columns,

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5 window and door frames) and as paving stone for squares and streets of the city
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7 centre. The *Macigno* sandstones consist of well-consolidated, fine- to very coarse-
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9 grained, poorly to moderately sorted siliciclastic rocks made of sub-angular
10
11 detrital grains of quartz, plagioclase, K-feldspar, chlorite s.l., mica-like minerals
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13 (muscovite/illite and minor biotite), with minor amounts of rock fragments (<10%
14
15 by volume), including granites, felsic volcanites and metavolcanites, low to
16
17 medium metamorphic-grade rocks, ophiolites, quartz veins, limestones and shales
18
19 [27-29]. Carbonates occur as both detrital clasts and authigenic cement. Mixed-
20
21 layer chlorite/smectite and subordinate illite/smectite phases, as well as minor and
22
23 sporadic kaolinite may be present as clay minerals. Neofomed pumpellyte, illite,
24
25 epidote and chlorite have also been described, indicating incipient metamorphism.
26
27 Despite its good technical properties, when used outdoors *Macigno* sandstones
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29 often undergo a typical process of decay, consisting of delamination characterised
30
31 by a detachment of multiple thin stone layers sub-parallel to the stone surface
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33 (exfoliation), which in many cases may be exacerbated by the occurrence of
34
35 significant amounts of expansible clay components [29].
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4.1.5 Other building materials

43
44 Excluding brick masonry and mortars (some of which laid during recent grouting
45
46 works), the other building materials identified in the façade of the St. Nicholas
47
48 church are serpentinites of unknown origin, used as decorative stones for their
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50 marble-like qualities, a few ashlar of Agnano breccias [16] and small elements of
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5 red limestone probably belonging to the *Scaglia Rossa* Formation of the Tuscan
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7 sequence.
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10 11 12 **4.2 The GIS project of the stone mapping**

13
14 The resulting GIS project shows that the façade of St. Nicholas church is about
15
16 340 m² wide, excluding the surface of the openings in the first and second orders,
17
18 the four windows and the main door, and the surface of the rose window of the
19
20 second order.
21

22
23 The façade has been realized with 1855 elements. Based on stone-to-stone
24
25 observation, taking the macroscopic features reported in the literature for the
26
27 stones of medieval buildings in Pisa into account [13-16 and references therein]
28
29 and on both petrographic analyses and C-O stable isotope data on white marbles,
30
31 the identified litotypes are as follows (Table 2 and Figure 4): *Mt. Pisano* marbles
32
33 (579 ashlars, 18.37% of the stone surface), quartzites (516, 21.81%), serpentinites
34
35 (412, 0.47%), limestones (223, 5.93%), Apuan marbles (97, 5.42%), *Macigno*
36
37 sandstones (25, 1.48%) and *Agnano* breccias (3, 0.09%).
38
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40
41 Table 2 and Figures 3a-3b point out that stones characterised by higher values of
42
43 perimeter and area were used for realizing the elements of the main door of the
44
45 church in the first order of the façade, while those with smaller dimensions are
46
47 present in some ornamentations and in the frames of blind arches of the first and
48
49 second order, and only barely constitute whole recurrences.
50

51
52 Table 3 reports the shape factors of the building materials observed in the façade
53
54 of St. Nicholas church. The shape factors values, ranging from 0 to 1, have been
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5 computed as suggested by Russ [30] using the following formula: Shape factor =
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7 $4 \pi \text{ Area/Perimeter}^2$. The maximum value of the form factor corresponds to a
8
9 circle, while values lower than 1 are due to objects with more irregular shape (for
10
11 example, a square stone ashlar is characterised by a shape factor value of 0.785,
12
13 while the stones with a rectangular shape are characterized by lower values as
14
15 smaller as larger is the difference between the length of their sides). Observing the
16
17 average data of the shape factors, given in the last column of Table 3, the building
18
19 stones exposed on the façade have values ranging from 0.26 (*Macigno*
20
21 sandstones) to 0.79 (*Agnano* breccias). The average values of the other building
22
23 stones are 0.70 for quartzites, 0.63 for red limestone, 0.62 for *Mt. Pisano* marbles
24
25 and black limestone, 0.61 for Apuan marbles and 0.49 for serpentinites. The
26
27 arrangement of the stones approximately of squared shape (blue colour) and
28
29 highly elongated (red colour) seems to be related to the structural and ornamental
30
31 function more than to the type of building material or to the constructive phase
32
33 (Figure 3c) 

40 **5 Conclusion**

41
42 This case study shows how the acquisition and processing of laser scanner data
43
44 supported by high-resolution digital images, the CAD/GIS techniques and the
45
46 stone-to-stone mapping may contribute to enhance our understanding of the
47
48 building materials and techniques used in the past. Aside from the knowledge of
49
50 the spatial information of the façade of St. Nicholas church, our work has
51
52 provided a detailed mapping of stones, marbles and other building materials,
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5 which can be useful for a future conservation and restoration planning. The
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7 knowledge of the nature of stone materials used for building the façade of this
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9 church and of their provenance can serve for creating a comprehensive database
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11 of all the valuable buildings in Pisa; today data about *Palazzo Gambacorti* ,
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13 *Baptistry* and *St. Frediano church* are already available [12 and references
14
15 therein].
16
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18 It is noteworthy that the GIS project can be easily developed for historical and
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20 archaeological purposes or used as useful base for storing information relating to
21
22 future renovation works. As regard to education, the GIS project of the façade of
23
24 St. Nicholas church may certainly be used as an efficient and relatively
25
26 inexpensive educational tool to disseminate geo-archaeological information and it
27
28 can contribute to publicize a tourist route in addition to that represented by the
29
30 more famous medieval monuments in the well-known *Piazza dei Miracoli* in Pisa.
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35

36 **Acknowledgements**

37
38 We wish to acknowledge the fieldwork carried out by Antonio Nirta, which
39
40 served as the foundation on which this project is grounded. Sampling was carried
41
42 out under permit from the *Soprintendenza per i Beni Architettonici, Paesaggistici,*
43
44 *Artistici, Storici ed Etnoantropologici* per le province di Pisa e Livorno. For their
45
46 support and assistance we are grateful to Marco Gadducci, for the acquisition of
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48 laser scanning data including the high-resolution photographs of the façade, and to
49
50 Antonio Alberti, for providing some of the historical data about the St. Nicholas
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Titles of tables

Table 1 - Mineralogical and petrographic features of the marbles worked for structural purpose in the St. Nicholas church's façade.

Table 2 - Number, perimeter and area of the stone ashlar and other building materials used for building the façade of the St. Nicholas church.

Table 3 - Shape factor of the stone ashlar and other building materials used in the façade of the St. Nicholas church.

Captions for figures

Figure 1 - Photograph of the façade of the St. Nicholas church with on the left the octagonal bell tower.

Figure 2 - The façade of the St. Nicholas church: a) The point cloud of the façade as obtained for processing the laser scanner data coloured by the effects of the reflecting material surface properties; b) Drawing of the façade showing the ashlar features.

Figure 3 - Map of the main geometric features of stone ashlar and of other building materials used in the façade of the St. Nicholas church: perimeter (a), area (b) and shape factor (c).

Figure 4 - Stone mapping of the façade of the St. Nicholas church.

Figure 5 - Detail of the stone mapping of the façade of the St. Nicholas church showing some precious intarsia.

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5 Figure 6 - Isotopic signatures of some white marbles used for architectural
6
7 elements in the St. Nicholas church's façade. The isotopic fields for the
8
9 main Mediterranean fine-grained marbles (average MGS < 2 mm) used
10
11 in antiquity are those reported by [18], [31] and [32]: C = Carrara; Ca-1 =
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13 Campiglia M.ma; D = Dokimeion; Pa-1 Paros Stefani; Pe = Mount
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15 Pentelikon; Ti = Island of Tinos.
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Table 1

Sample	Cal	Dol	Qtz	Pl	Ms	Ap	Py	Ox	GSU	Texture	GBS	Fabric
SNF-1	+++	+						tr	He	M		Mosaic
SNF-2	+++	++	tr					tr	He	M		Mosaic
SNF-3	+++	+						tr	He	M		Mosaic
SNF-4	+++				tr		tr		Ho	G, w-A	St-Cr	Mosaic, with rare triple points
SNF-5	+++		tr	tr	tr	tr	tr		Ho	G, I	St-Cr	Mosaic, with rare triple points
SNF-6	+++		tr	tr			tr	tr	Ho	G, I	St-Cr	Mosaic, with triple points
SNF-7	+++				tr		tr		Ho/He	G, I	St-Cr	Mosaic, with rare triple points
SNF-8	+++			tr	tr	tr	tr	tr	Ho	G, I	St-Lo	Mosaic
SNF-9	+++		tr	tr	tr	tr	tr	tr	Ho/He	G, I	St-Lo	Mosaic

GSU, *Grain-Size Uniformity* = Ho, homeoblastic; He, heteroblastic; Texture: G, granoblastic; S, anisotropic; w-, weakly-; GBS, *Grain-Boundary Shape* = St, straight; Cr, curved; Lo, lobate; MGS = calcite; Dol = dolomite; Qtz = quartz; Pl, plagioclase; Ms, muscovite; Ap, apatite; Py, pyrite; present; +, scarce; tr, trace; $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ and $\delta^{18}\text{O}$ = carbon (C) and oxygen (O) isotopic values.

MGS (mm)	$\delta^{13}\text{C}$ (‰)	$\delta^{18}\text{O}$ (‰)	Origin
0.1	1.8	-1.9	Mt. Pisano
0.1	2.0	-1.9	Mt. Pisano
0.1	2.5	-1.3	Mt. Pisano
0.4	2.1	-1.8	Carrara
0.5	2.1	-1.8	Carrara
0.5	1.8	-1.6	Carrara
0.5	2.1	-2.0	Carrara
0.6	1.8	-2.2	Carrara
0.7	2.3	-1.8	Carrara

, sutured; M = microgranular; I, isotropic; A,
 = *Maximum Grain Size* of calcite crystals; Cal
 Ox, oxide and hydroxide; +++, abundant; ++,

Table 2

Litotype	Ashlars	Perimeter (m)				Area (m ²)			
		Min	Max	Average	Total	Min	Max	Average	Total
Mt. Pisano marbles	579	0.04	9.44	1.35	780.66	<0.01	0.56	0.11	62.69
Mt. Pisano quartzites	516	0.32	3.83	1.55	801.13	0.01	0.54	0.14	74.44
Serpentinities	412	0.04	4.97	0.31	129.47	<0.01	0.06	0.00	1.59
Black limestones	198	0.16	5.08	1.41	278.81	<0.01	0.55	0.10	20.23
Apuan marbles	97	0.01	24.39	1.82	176.15	<0.01	2.64	0.19	18.50
Macigno sandstones	25	1.05	5.32	3.25	81.32	0.05	0.47	0.20	5.06
Red limestone	25	0.05	0.16	0.11	2.65	<0.01	0.00	0.00	0.01
Agnano breccias	3	1.00	1.45	1.24	3.72	0.06	0.13	0.10	0.29
Mortars	-	-	-	-	755.91	-	-	-	10.63
Brick masonry	-	-	-	-	211.06	-	-	-	147.84
Total	1855				3220.89				341.27

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Table 3

Litotype	Ashlars	Shape factor		
		Min	Max	Average
Mt. Pisano marbles	579	0.01	0.99	0.62
Mt. Pisano quartzites	516	0.12	0.87	0.70
Serpentinities	412	0.03	1.00	0.49
Black limestones	198	0.14	0.85	0.62
Apuan marbles	97	0.03	0.85	0.61
Macigno sandstones	25	0.10	0.63	0.26
Red limestone	25	0.30	0.98	0.63
Agnano breccias	3	0.76	0.81	0.79
Mortars	-	0.00	0.79	0.20
Brick masonry	-	0.05	0.85	0.36

Shape factor = $4 \cdot \pi \cdot \text{Area} / \text{Perimeter}^2$

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Figure 1
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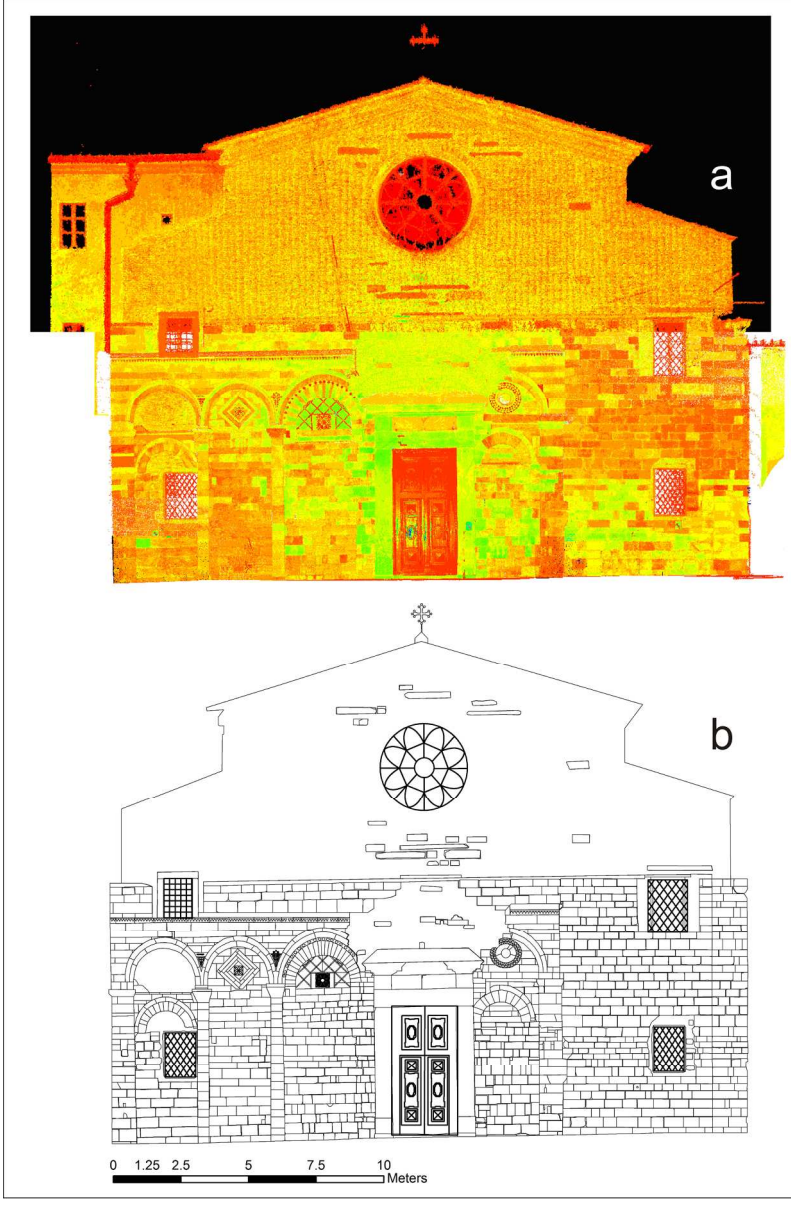


Figure 2
154x233mm (300 x 300 DPI)

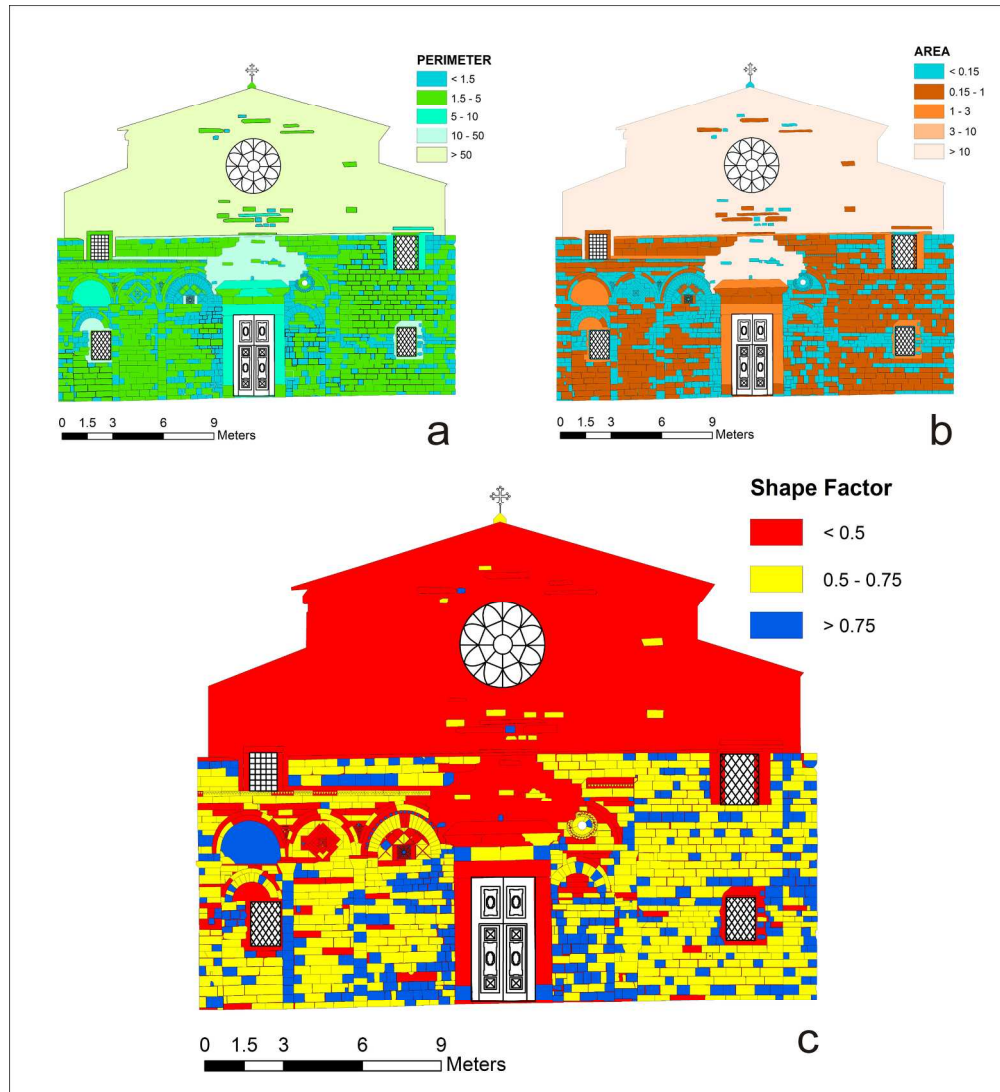


Figure 3
209x229mm (300 x 300 DPI)



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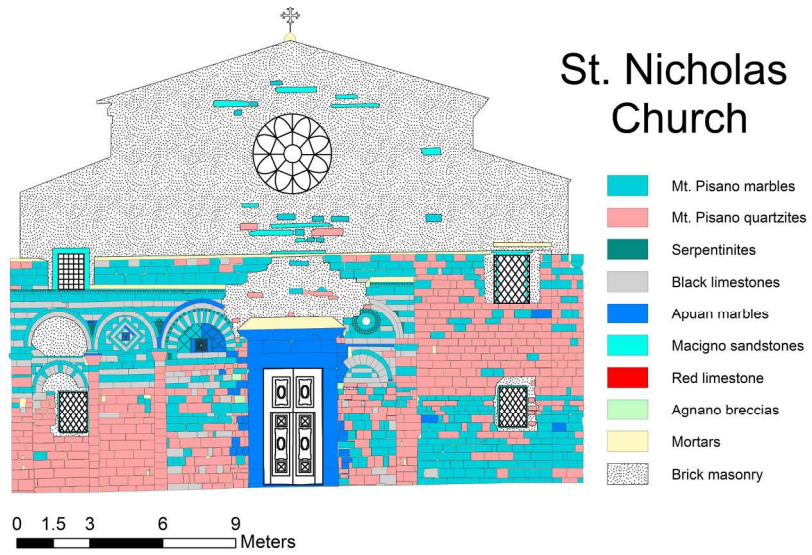


Figure 4
210x148mm (300 x 300 DPI)

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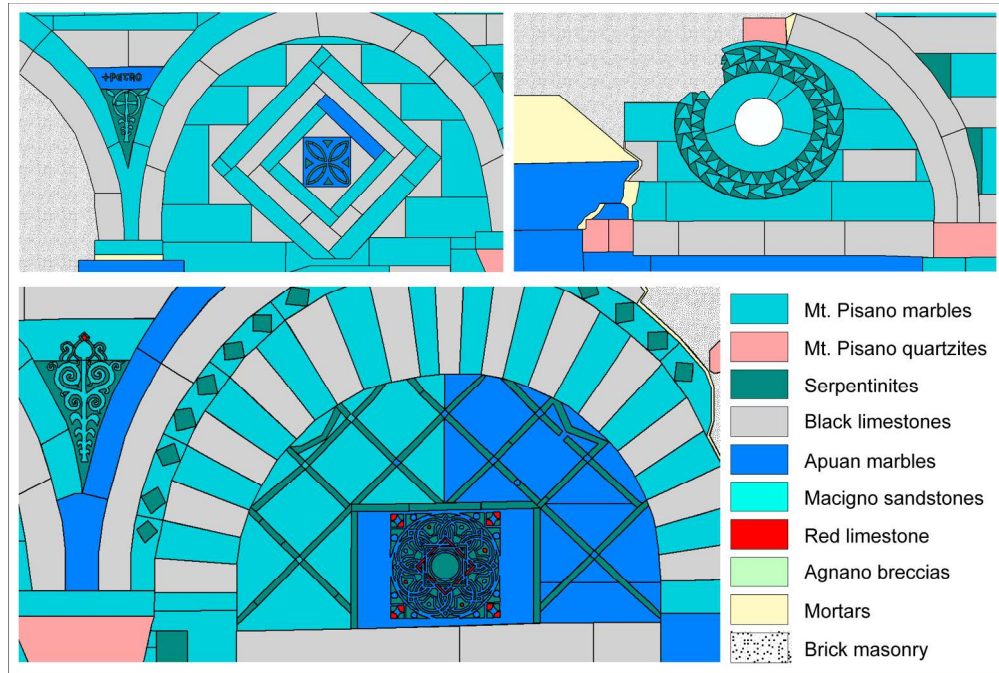


Figure 5
191x128mm (300 x 300 DPI)

Review Only

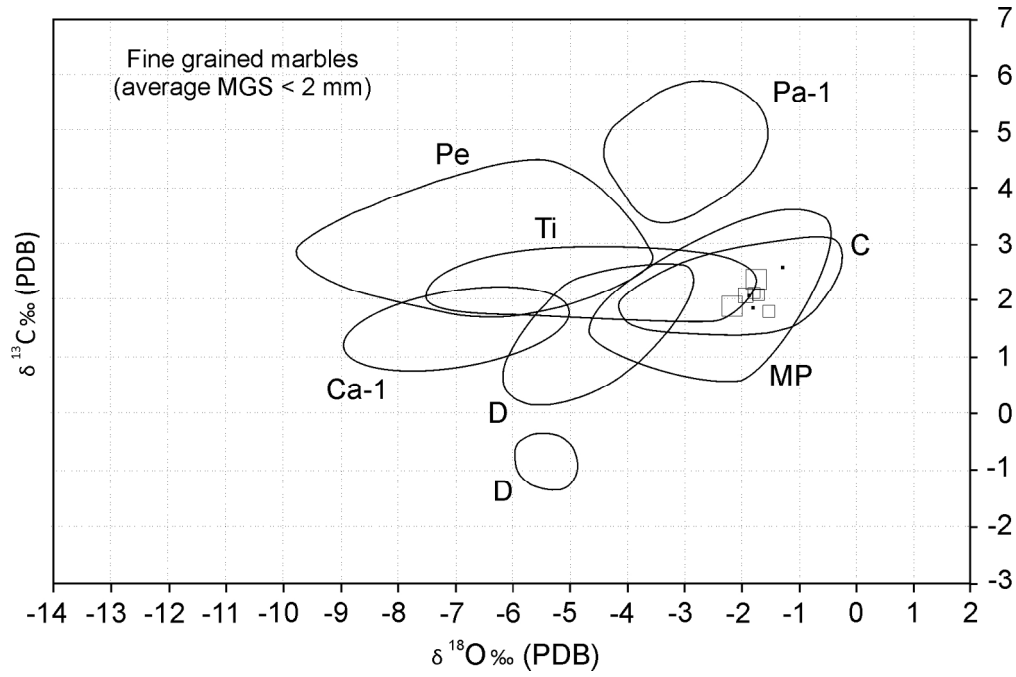


Figure 6
171x113mm (300 x 300 DPI)

Review Only