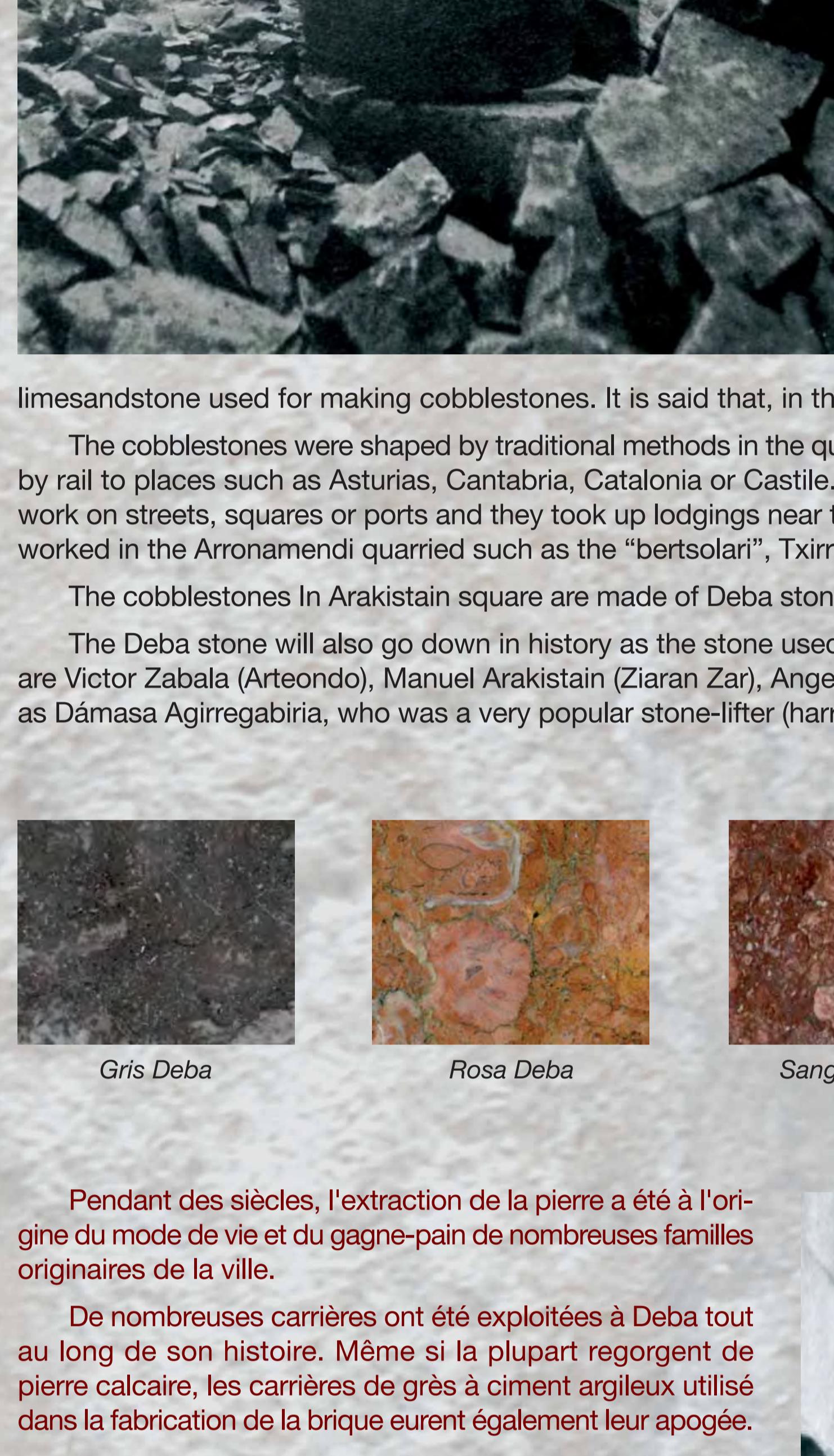


DEBA AND ITS STONE

DEBA ET LA PIERRE



The Arronamendi quarries (1925) - Les carrières d'Arronamendi (1925)



For centuries, quarrying operations have been the way of life and the livelihood of many families of the town.

There have been many quarries which have been exploited throughout Deba's history. Although most are of limestone there were times when limesandstone was of great importance and used especially for making cobblestones.

Deba limestone has been so greatly appreciated that the town lent its name to one of the most well-known marbles: the *Gris Deba* ("Deba Grey"). This marble, as well as others such as *Gris Duquesa* ("Duchess Grey"), *Rosa Duquesa* ("Duchess Pink"), *Rosa Deba* ("Deba Pink"), *Rosa Estrella* ("Star Pink"), *Gris Paloma* ("Dove Grey"), *Sangre de Toro* ("Bull's Blood"), *Brecha Estrella* ("Brecha Estrella") or *Albigrís* ("Grey-white"), come from the Lastur quarries.

The limestone known as *Gris Deba* has been used in the construction of numerous well-known buildings. The limestone formed in what were once coral reefs over 100 million years ago and here, we can see some excellent examples of coral, algae and bioconstructor organisms.

In 1948, the local stonemason, Francisco Albizu "Soarte" was commissioned to make and supply 7,000 stones in the shape of a diamond tip to be used in the building of the towers of the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Arantzazu. The stones, which were cut in the traditional way by "Soarte", were taken from the Urkullu quarry in Lastur.

But limestone is not the only stone to come from our quarries.

Up until the 1950s the Arronamendi quarries, on the coastal cliffs of the Geopark on the Basque coast but no longer in existence, were home to as many as six companies which exploited the limesandstone used for making cobblestones. It is said that, in the 1930s, up to one hundred people worked in the Arronamendi quarry.

The cobblestones were shaped by traditional methods in the quarry and later loaded onto wagons in its loading yard to be transported by rail to places such as Asturias, Cantabria, Catalonia or Castile. Generally, the people who worked in the quarry were also in charge of work on streets, squares or ports and they took up lodgings near their work for the duration of the job. Some well-known characters have worked in the Arronamendi quarried such as the "bertsolari", Txirrita.

The cobblestones in Arakistain square are made of Deba stone as are various ornamental stones in the Basque Country and Navarre.

The Deba stone will also go down in history as the stone used in the rural Basque sport of stone lifting of which the major exponents are Victor Zabala (Arteondo), Manuel Arakistain (Ziaran Zar), Angel Albizu (Soarte), Jose Manuel Aguirre (Endañeta) and even women such as Dámasa Agirregabiria, who was a very popular stone-lifter (harrijasotzaile) in the 1930s.



Gris Deba

Rosa Deba

Sangre de Toro

Brecha Estrella

Albigrís

Pendant des siècles, l'extraction de la pierre a été à l'origine du mode de vie et du gagne-pain de nombreuses familles originaires de la ville.

De nombreuses carrières ont été exploitées à Deba tout au long de son histoire. Même si la plupart regorgent de pierre calcaire, les carrières de grès à ciment argileux utilisé dans la fabrication de la brique eurent également leur apogée.

La pierre calcaire de Deba était tant appréciée que le village donna son nom à l'un des dix marbres les plus connus: le «*Gris Deba*». Ce marbre tout comme le *Gris Duquesa*, le *Rosa Duquesa*, le *Rosa Deba*, le *Rosa Estrella*, le *Gris Paloma*, le *Sangre de Toro*, le *Brecha Estrella* ou l'*Albigrís*, sont extraits des carrières de Lastur.

La pierre calcaire connue sous le nom de *Gris Deba* a été utilisée dans la construction de nombreux bâtiments extrêmement célèbres. Ces pierres se sont formées sur les anciens récifs de corail datant de plus de 100 millions d'années. Dans la formation des pierres, on peut constater la présence de superbes exemplaires de corail, d'algues et d'organismes bioconstructeurs.

En 1948, le carrier local Francisco Albizu «Soarte» fut engagé pour tailler et livrer 7 000 pierres en forme de pointe de diamant pour la construction des tours du Sanctuaire de Notre Dame d'Arantzazu. Les pierres confectionnées artisanalement par «Soarte» furent extraites de la carrière Urkullu de Lastur.

Mais la pierre calcaire n'a pas été la seule pierre extraite de nos carrières.

Jusque dans les années cinquante, les carrières d'Arronamendi, aujourd'hui disparues, et qui étaient situées sur les falaises du Géoparc de la Côte Basque, accueillirent un total de six entreprises d'exploitation de grès à ciment argileux utilisé dans la fabrication des briques. On raconte que dans les années trente, plus d'une centaine de personnes travaillait dans la carrière d'Arronamendi.



Sanctuary of Arantzazu - Sanctuaire d'Arantzazu



Ziaran Zar

For more information:



Pour plus d'information:

