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www.saxa-loquuntur.org – a Comprehensive Interdisciplinary Information System for Antique Quarries and Monuments

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The provenance of monuments often is a striking question which science has to deal with. Especially petrographic and geochemical data of quarries are not or just partially published by various working groups. Often these data are hidden in “grey literature” and not available to the scientific community. These data, that also include photographs and maps shall be made accessible to the entire scientific community by the interdisciplinary information system www.saxa-loquuntur.org.

The information system consists of two main databases:
a) The quarry database, containing the following parameter: general quarry information, localization, material, geological information, dating of quarrying phases, quarry morphology, signs of treatment, historic infrastructure, semi finished goods, archaeological findings, authors and literature;
b) The sample database for quarries and monuments, containing the following parameter: sample information, material, macroscopical -, microscopical -, geochemical -, X-RAY data, material technical properties, authors and literature.
Because of the flexible structure of the analytical section new methods can be included easily.

For the communication between the scientific fields of archaeology on one hand and natural sciences on the other a simplified interactive rock thesaurus was developed based on the IUGS rock nomenclature.

An interlink between the sample database to various monument databases like VBI ERAT LUPA, Hispania Epigraphica etc. is established. This link provides additional information, like archaeological and epigraphical monument description and enables a full interdisciplinary monument analysis.

The databases can be queried by simple and advanced search methods. The information system will provide visualisation tools for geochemical data, a photo board for the comparison of thin sections, and a cartographical visualisation of the search results for the area of the whole Roman Empire.

Currently, the quarry and sample database contain mainly information and data of marbles from the Alpine and Carpathian region. But in the course of a well funded 5 year research project the database should be completed with quarry data available in the literature and provided by various research groups. The long time availability and keeping of data will be managed by the Bavarian State Library.