

82. 201 MILLS ON THE CISMON TORRENT

On the Cison torrent, which flows into the Brenta, and along its affluents, there was little opportunity to transport timber, and the production was mostly destined to satisfy local demand, so in each village there was at least a small sawmill. The only significant exception to this rule was Fonzaso, as a result of its extremely strategic geographical position: the sawmills located at the point where the Cison emerges from the Pedesalto gorge dealt with most of the timber from Primiero, destined for the Veneto market, although there were other mills serving local demand at the stone bridge in Arsiè. As early as the sixteenth century, timber was sorted at the port of Fonzaso, duties were paid to the Bishop of Feltre and large amounts of unprocessed wood were sawed. The sawmills of Fonzaso were lined up alongside numerous other establishments along the semi-circle that sets out from the Cison at Pedesalto and continues round for about 2 kilometres at the foot of Monte Avena, lapping the sides of the village before running back into the torrent. This series of mills is marked by a number of place names that today have been forgotten. The history of the area can be divided up into three periods, dominated first by three local noble families from Fonzaso and the Primiero area (Angeli, Petricelli and Maccarini) and then by a group of merchants from the region, followed in the 18th century by the Bilesimo family of Fonzaso. The activities on the barrages of Fonzaso collapsed as a result of floods in the 19th century and the use of the water on the part of the Pedesalto hydroelectric plant in 1922.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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M. Reberschak, *il carbone bianco, ovvero l'industria idroelettrica* in S. De Vecchi, *Opere nel tempo. Le tradizioni dell'industria e dell'artigianato tra i monti della Provincia di Belluno*, San Giovanni Lupatoto, 1991

FILE COMPILED BY: Lonzi

ACCESSIBLE: yes, outside

MUNICIPALITY: Fonzaso

PLACE: Pedesalto

GEOGRAPHICAL COORDINATES: Plant X 1715019 – Y 5100204; Bridge and Dam X 1713890 – Y 5101079

PROVINCE: BL

INTERESTING FACTS

Along the Cison the first large dam and major power plant in the Belluno area were constructed by the SADE company. The Pedesalto plant, completed in 1905, is an interesting example of industrial architecture, despite the damage it suffered in the 1966 flood, which caused the transformer tower to collapse. The Ponte Serra dam was built in the early years of the 20th century to serve the plant, about 15 kilometres from the point where the Cison flows into the Brenta; the arch-shaped concrete dam has a stone face and is supported by a potent bridge structure. There is also a weir along the Senaiga torrent, an affluent of the Cison, featuring a particular structure to deal with the overflow waters.

HOW TO GET THERE

From Feltre, take the SS50 until the Fonzaso craft industry area. From here, follow the SR50 for the Primiero area. At the end of the straight that intersects with the old road coming out of the village of Fonzaso and the SP50, on the left of the road you will see the impressive power plant building, while the bridge\dam is at km 51, continuing towards the Primiero area, near the fork for the villages of Faller-Lamon.