

Pordenone, Town Hall

The Town Hall building, originally called "*lozza*", probably was built at the end of the 13th century (1291 is the supposed year), in the oldest and most elevated part of the town, in close relation with the Duomo and the river port on the Noncello. The original structure, entirely in terracotta, with a trapezoidal plan, consisted of a lower Loggia, open on three sides with three pointed arches on the facade and two on the sides, and a room on the upper level. The Loggia was used for the administration of justice and official meetings, the upper part was intended for different uses: "*fontego*", so warehouse of grain, place of custody of weapons, space for theatrical and entertainment, as in some moments also the underlying Loggia. On the outer west side, traces of the two-ramp staircase leading to the upper floor are still visible.

From 1540 in front of the facade there was a base with a pillar supporting the antenna of the flag with the Lion of San Marco, which was then eliminated in 1885 for viability reasons.

In 1542 the facade was enriched with gothic pinnacles and a tower forepart on the design of the artist Pomponio Amalteo, pupil and son-in-law of Pordenone, consisting of four blocks: access arch with coat of arms of the Lion of San Marco, balcony for proclamations, clock and summit die that holds the civic bell (the current one is from 1838) and two pages with shields, with the coat of arms of Pordenone and that of the House of Austria, which beat the hours, popularly called "*mori*".

In 1626 the upper room was adorned with the paint of Alessandro Varotari, known as "Il Padovanino" representing San Marco and the Justice, commissioned specifically for this space. The same council room then, starting at least from 1811, hosted other works of art, increased at the end of the 800 with the donation of Michelangelo Grigoletti, who constituted the city's art gallery until the establishment of the Palazzo Ricchieri Museum in 1970.

In the early twenties of the twentieth century the council decided to expand the town hall to place the offices that were distributed in several locations within the city. In 1925 it was given the task of enlargement to the architect Cesare Scoccimarro, who somehow tried to follow the formal characteristics of the ancient Loggia. The new building, completed in 1928, leaned against the original Loggia and, eliminating the narrow alley called "behind the loggia" or "calle Roviglio", took the place of the backward buildings in ruins that were demolished. In the mid-fifties of the twentieth century, due to the continuous growth of municipal activities, closely related to the increase in population and city life, it was decided to further expand the Town Hall. This new project bears the signature of the architect Ignazio Cardarella and was realized in different moments between 1957 and 1976. Cardarella's project took shape in the south part with a "hanging arcade gallery", which runs along the external perimeter of the building. Also in this case, the new building replaced the old and crumbling houses that occupied the area of the ancient village.

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December 2018