
Once in two years at the beginning of the summer, somewhere in Europe a Conference is organized for archaeologists interested in the whole range of expressions of Roman sculpture in the former provinces of the Roman Empire: the International Colloquium on Roman Provincial Art (ICRPA). The original initiative came from the Austrian archaeologists Erwin Pochmarsi and Manfred Hainzmann with their first Colloquium in Graz in 1989. Their objective was to provide for the scientific community, which started since the 1960s the Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani series, a forum for exchange, discussion and review of ideas and research results. Initially both the thematic and the participating archaeologists were limited to the – predominantly German-speaking – countries intersected by the rivers Rhine and Danube, both border rivers in the North of the former Roman Empire. Since the Colloquium of Cologne (2001) researchers of Roman sculpture from every province of the Roman Empire are invited to the scientific meeting. Apart from the expanding series of the corpus (CSIR) volumes in a growing number of countries, the colloquium initiative from 1989 resulted in a complete series of Proceedings in which the contributions of all those conferences are published.1


In this century, the International Colloquium on Roman Provincial Art called in, in the agreed change from the Roman Eastern and Western Europe at the Balkans three times already. In 2003 Zagreb (Croatia) was visited, Pula (Croatia) in 2011 and recently Bucharest (Romania) in 2013. The Balkans area was visited also in 1995 during the Colloquium at Celje (Slovenia) and it took place twice in Hungary (1991 Veszprém and 1999 Budapest). In Pula, participants were surrounded and inspired by the Roman past of the city, as was also the case in Merida 2009 (Spain) and in Arles 2007 (France). The 12th Colloquium on Roman Provincial Art “International Corpus Signorum Imperii Romani Colloquium/Roman stone sculpture” in the Headquarters of the Italian Community in Pula was organized by the Archaeological Museum of Histria and directed by Alka Starac.

The contributions and discussions during the ICRPA–colloquia should, to a large extent, fit in a thematic framework. In Pula the main subject was ‘Dating of the stone monuments and criteria for determination of chronology’. Secondary subjects were ‘Representations of women and family’ and ‘Recent finds’. The organization had also in mind to focus on some specific objectives such as to offer to the colleagues direct knowledge of the main and other subjects to be dealt with and their discussion points, a high-level educational opportunity for Croatian and foreign students in the process of specialisation, making progress on the subject of the dating of the stone monuments and criteria for determination of chronology, the creation of a body of reflection on the phenomenon of representations of women and family in Roman Art. And further: presentation of the newest archaeological finds and scientific results in a brief and informative way, providing the opportunity for scholars to exchange research experiences and to plan future scientific projects. The proceedings of the 12th Colloquium on Roman Provincial Art aimed to serve as a reference for the most prestigious international universities and research centres, and to bring to attention the rich archaeological heritage and scientific work of the Archaeological Museum of Istria itself through organising this international scientific conference. At the end this colloquium was expected to give an impetus to the development of studies on Roman Art in Pula and Istria and in the wider geographical region, and also to improve acceptance and understanding of archaeological heritage and Roman Art in the local and regional social context.

The publication of the Proceedings ran some delay by the interim fall out of the organizer of the colloquium. However, this was perfectly captured by the leadership of the responsible museum, so that in 2014 a beautiful book, with great layout and rich in high-quality colour illustrations could be presented. A disturbing element is the Croatian title. This title is a for the international archaeological community meaningless and incomprehensible text, which on the other hand is followed by excessive subtitles, i.e. four (!) translations into English, German, French and Italian. During the Colloquium were presented 56 lectures and 17 posters,

1 For a list of the proceedings see the website of the colloquium at www.IRPAcolloquium.arheomedia.ro.