

FOREWORD BY THE EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Dwellings from Prehistory to the Early Middle Ages

The 20th volume of the review of the International Research Centre for Archaeology Brijuni – Medulin which forms part of the Centre for Archaeological Research of the Institute for Social Sciences Ivo Pilar is dedicated to an important topic for our civilisation: *Dwellings from Prehistory to the Early Middle Ages*. The topic, as presented in this archaeological annual review, offers in the best of ways to Croatian and worldwide experts and scientists the most important reports of the 16th International Archaeological Symposium held in Pula and Medulin from 24 to 27 November 2010. The former fifteen gatherings in Istria indicated without doubt that it was necessary and worthwhile to carry out the project idea of an international archaeological centre in Istria and to hold archaeological encounters of scientists in the north Adriatic. In the words of Isabel Rodà de Llanza, head of the Catalan Institute of Classical Archaeology in Tarragona, the idea finally resulted “in one of the rare encounters of Croatian and Adriatic archaeology, and we should not forget its Mediterranean and European dimension.” The annual “symposium in Pula took place among other large and regular meetings related to the Adriatic, like those held in Taranto or the ‘Settimana’ in Aquileia, while at the same time maintaining its individual quality thanks to the specific area it treats...”, of course, with an exotic touch “by introducing regular contributions from the extreme West, or more precisely from the Iberian peninsula and Gaul”, all the way to “the Danube Basin and Balkan countries, hosting participants from Austria, Slovenia, Hungary, Rumania, Macedonia and Albania” (Francis Tassaux, University of Bordeaux, the Ausonius Institute). These meetings of archaeologists, first held in Medulin, then in Pula, according to Guido Rosada, Professor of Antique Topography at the University of Padua, managed to “create, out of a close circle of friends and colleagues, an internationally recognised body which knew how to give an important stimulus to Istrian archaeology, and which set its roots in reality as a sort of laboratory where results of a large number of archaeological activities gradually poured in, and not only results of regional activities, but also those coming from all over Croatia and the Balkan area in general.”

It is precisely in this multiple sense that the contribution of the numerous published articles in the twenty-one volumes of the thematic review *Histria Antiqua* (1995 – 2011) is highly relevant as the result of years-long investigative work in Croatia, Europe and overseas.

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This 20th volume of the review, devoted to aspects of human dwelling from Prehistory to the Early Middle Ages, will find its place in 370 Croatian and other libraries around the world and in the hands of diligent readers and colleagues. From 1995, the review has been published with the emblem and under the high patronage of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Humankind, from its very beginnings, through Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages, has applied its mind and efforts to create habitable places. With the development of civilisation, people developed and built structures and created different functional dwellings in line with the level of civilisation of the time. The history of human habitation ranges from rudimentary shelters for protection against the natural elements or from aggressors, to different kinds of fixed or semi-permanent structures which developed as humankind also advanced. With the Antique and Early Medieval civilisations, human dwellings, apart from their

utilitarian function, assumed elaborate, sophisticated architectural forms, decorated and furnished by the perfectly simple or highly complex works of craftsmen and artists.

It should be noted that this year again the review gathers a large number of renowned participants from abroad (Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bohemia, France, Italy, Kosovo, Hungary, the United States, Slovenia, Spain and Romania) and, of course, from Croatia, which I consider to be very significant. It is evident that the circle of associates is being substantially enlarged thanks to younger generations. The volumes of the review so far published, including this recent one, also indicate the expansive scientific and expert drive of archaeological discoveries (in spite of many difficulties) and the well-founded words which interpret distant human history and indicate the life and course of changes in civilisation.

As I have stated in former introductions, I still firmly believe that the selected articles with reviews once again confirm the good choice of the interesting topic devoted to aspects of human dwellings from prehistoric beginnings to the Middle Ages. I also believe that this volume of the review, together with the current *Novitates*, which should encompass the whole Mediterranean, will provoke the interest of the scientific and wider reading public, especially of younger generations of experts in relevant scientific disciplines at a time when Croatia is striving towards comprehensive European scientific and educational cooperation.

It is my personal wish that in 2012, with the new volume of the review, I will be able to prepare and publish a complete bibliography of all the published volumes of the review, a bibliography that will undoubtedly show the wealth and importance of the published archaeological and relevant topics and which will also underline the constant hard work of all associates. I would like to express my gratitude to all contributors to this volume who have submitted their papers ready for print, because to design the review in contemporary conditions requires the careful and timely engagement of collaborators and editors. In this case, engagement is based exclusively on the personal enthusiasm of individuals, without the service of employed professional staff. As the long time editor-in-chief, I often wonder with my colleagues how long this can last!

As is customary, I would like to thank the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia for its financial support, and the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Croatia which purchases certain volumes of the review for Croatian libraries. Without their support the review could not be published on a regular basis. I would also like to express my gratitude to the co-publisher, the Society for the History and Cultural Development of Istria, and to reviewers, translators, the publisher's secretary and the executive editors in appreciation of their extraordinary commitment.

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