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<https://doi.org/10.26485/AAL/2022/68/16>

THE THIRTIETH VOLUME OF “QUADERNI FRIULANI DI ARCHEOLOGIA”

Quaderni Friulani di Archeologia: Pubblicazione annuale della Società Friulana di Archeologia, anno XXX, n. 1, marzo 2020, 192 pp.

The thirtieth volume of the yearly “Quaderni Friulani di Archeologia” has been published. The journal is recognized among researchers of antiquity and has a group of loyal readers, also in Poland. Taking advantage of this jubilee year, it is worth discussing the latest volume, which as usual has a high substantive level and interesting content, and thereby drawing attention to this journal among the youngest adepts of classical archeology – students and doctoral students. It is worth adding that ancient Aquileia and its surroundings are well known to archaeologists from Central Europe. In the local archaeological literature, however, for years it was usually mentioned as the starting point of the amber route, leading to the Baltic Sea. The idea of the amber route was very popular as a place of direct contact between ancient cultures and the inhabitants of the Vistula and Oder basins. One of its mildest manifestations have been attempts to identify the locations mentioned by Claudius Ptolemy with specific archaeological sites – Kalisia with Kalisz, or Askaukalis with Krusza Zamkowa near Inowrocław, and each Roman coin or fragment of terra sigillata was treated as a confirmation of this hypothesis. The current state of knowledge calls for a thorough revision of these views. This is one of the reasons why it is worth paying special attention to the history of Northern Italy. They are undoubtedly much more interesting than fairy tales about Roman merchants sailing on the Vistula or wandering between the settlements of the Wielbark culture.

The first part of the journal (7 articles) is devoted to Aquileia and its surroundings in the light of archaeological research over the last two decades (Aquileia e il suo suburbio nelle ricerche archeologiche degli ultimi due decenni. Atti dell'incontro di Aquileia (12-13 aprile 2019)). One of them is dedicated to the Roman theater, the research of which has been going on since 2015. The building,

whose cavea is 95 meters wide, is located in the south-eastern part of the city. As far as the research methodology described, the section devoted to the architectural elements and marble fragments recovered from the archaeological site under examination is very interesting. The text also shows effectively how one can combine scientific research with educational and popularizing activity. One of the articles is devoted to the so-called Great Thermae (Le Grandi Terme). Their area is estimated at 22,500-25,000 m², and the height of some rooms is over 20 m. The oldest construction phase is dated to the second quarter of the 4th century AD. According to the author of the article, it was one of the largest and most luxurious public bathing facilities in Northern Italy (“uno dei più vasti e lussuosi impianti termali pubblici dell’Italia settentrionale”).

The second part of the volume is devoted to the town of Pasiano di Pordenone. Particularly noteworthy is the article about the finds of terra sigillata. The vast majority of these vessels were made in Italy, and only a few percent in Gaul. 70% of the finds come from large villas.

The journal also contains an article about the Roman city of Caraca in central Spain and a text about fibulae of Central European origin from the 1st-3rd century AD, found in Spain. The work also includes a detailed table of contents for the years 2011-2020, which well illustrates the range of topics covered in this journal. This section constitutes an incentive to read older volumes, and to await impatiently ones in the future.

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