

AKTI VIII. MEĐUNARODNOG KOLOKVIJA O PROBLEMIMA RIMSKOG PROVINCIJALNOG UMJETNIČKOG STVARALAŠTVA

AKTEN DES VIII. INTERNATIONALEN KOLLOQUIUMS ÜBER PROBLEME DES PROVINZIALRÖMISCHEN KUNSTSCHAFFENS

THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE 8<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON PROBLEMS OF ROMAN PROVINCIAL ART

LES ACTES DU VIII<sup>ÈME</sup> COLLOQUE INTERNATIONAL SUR LES PROBLÈMES DE L'ART PROVINCIAL ROMAIN

ZAGREB 5.-8. V. 2003.

RELIGIJA I MIT KAO POTICAJ RIMSKOJ PROVINCIJALNOJ PLASTICI

RELIGION UND MYTHOS ALS ANREGUNG FÜR DIE PROVINZIALRÖMISCHE PLASTIK

RELIGION AND MYTH AS AN IMPETUS FOR THE ROMAN PROVINCIAL SCULPTURE

LA RELIGION ET LE MYTHE COMME INSPIRATION POUR LA SCULPTURE ROMAINE PROVINCIALE

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PROVINCIALE

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# STATUE OF A ROMAN GODDESS FROM THE FORUM OF PULA

BY ALKA STARAC

Motivated by the finding of a breast part of a female figure at the forum of Pula, Mario Mirabella Roberti was the first to recognize that this marble piece of the larger than life-size female statue belongs together with an earlier finding of a lower part of legs, which are conserved in the Lapidarium at Augustus' temple. This paper is dedicated to his memory.<sup>1</sup> In his article, Mario Mirabella Roberti mentioned by way of comparison a statue of Victoria from the forum of Ostia (which has been recently restored) as similar type of statue.<sup>2</sup> Starting from this point, we found in the Archaeological Museum of Istria two pieces whose similarity to Victoria, however, could not be undoubtedly confirmed. Indeed, the chest with highly belted hyton reminds us of Victoria, while the legs are obviously put in a different position. There is also another important difference between the two statues from Ostia and Pula: the first is obliquely strained in advance as an acroterium, while the other stands firmly on plinta. The upper part, the clothed breast of the figure from Pula, was the first to be identified (fig. 1). It was discovered at the Communal Palace of Pula during reconstruction of the building. Since its discovery in 1921, it has been situated in the storage room of the Archaeological Museum of Istria (inventory number A 435). Its height measures 46 cm. An iron nail is stuck on the back side of the right shoulder, near the neck. The lower part of the legs (A 443), once in Augustus' temple, is momentarily exhibited in the second floor corridor of the Museum (fig. 2); its exact provenience is uncertain.<sup>3</sup> The statue stands firmly upon its left leg,



FIG. 1 THE UPPER PART OF STATUE.

<sup>1</sup> M. Mirabella Roberti, *Notiziario archeologico (1940–1948)*. Atti e Mem. Soc. Istriana Arch. n.s.1, 1949, 231–275, 257. Many friends and colleagues have helped me while working on this paper and I would like to thank: Annetta Alexandridis, Laura Boffo, Roberta Geremia Nucci, Đeni Gobić Bravar, Isabel Rodà, Claudio Zaccaria.

<sup>2</sup> E. Calandra, *Documenti inediti sul tempio di Roma e di Augusto a Ostia*. Mitt. DAI Rom 107, 2000, 417–450; 437–439.

while the damaged right leg is slightly curved back at the knee. The preserved height measures 70 cm. Two pieces brought together show the same type of white Greek marble, seemingly Pentelic, covered on the surface by a yellow layer, with the same proportions and dimensions. The approximate reconstructed height of the sculpture measures about 223 cm (fig. 3). It evidently represents a female statue of supernatural height, 30 % higher than natural height, standing on the left foot with the right foot held slightly back, dressed in hyton and hymation and fine open sandals. The right foot is missing, as is the entire section between the knees and belt. The arms and head are missing too. It is visible on the broken neck that the head and the whole body were carved from one block of stone. The Greek costume, as well as the supernatural height, high artistic qualities and expensive imported marble, lead to the conclusion that the statue represented some kind of a goddess. The upper part of the statue was found in 1921 at the Communal Palace, situated on the forum of Pula, just on the precedent position of the central and eastern forum temple. Beside this tripartite forum complex, the building of the imperial cult was situated on the eastern longer side of the forum.<sup>4</sup> That building, open to the forum, had three apses. Inside of it, a lower part of the marble statue of a roman emperor, presumably Augustus with a kneeling barbarian slave, was discovered. The western forum temple was dedicated to Roma and Augustus. According to local tradition regarding the eastern temple, it was dedicated to the goddess Diana. As for the completely destroyed central temple, it can not be said with certainty anything more than that this temple was built prior to the other two, and that it had one cela.<sup>5</sup> From an iconographical point of view, our statute could not be identified with the goddesses Roma, nor with Diana, Venus, Juno or Minerva, whose cults are allegedly linked to the forum of Pula. It bears a strong resemblance to a large number of statues from Fortuna.<sup>6</sup> Like many statues from Fortuna, the statue from Pula is



FIG. 2 THE LOWER PART OF STATUE.

FIG. 3 (RIGHT) THE APPROXIMATE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE STATUE.

clearly derived from the initial prototype of Themis from Rhamnus in Attica, made by Hairestratos in about 300 BC.<sup>7</sup> Thereafter, there obviously exists a great amount of similarity regarding the pose and costume to the nu-

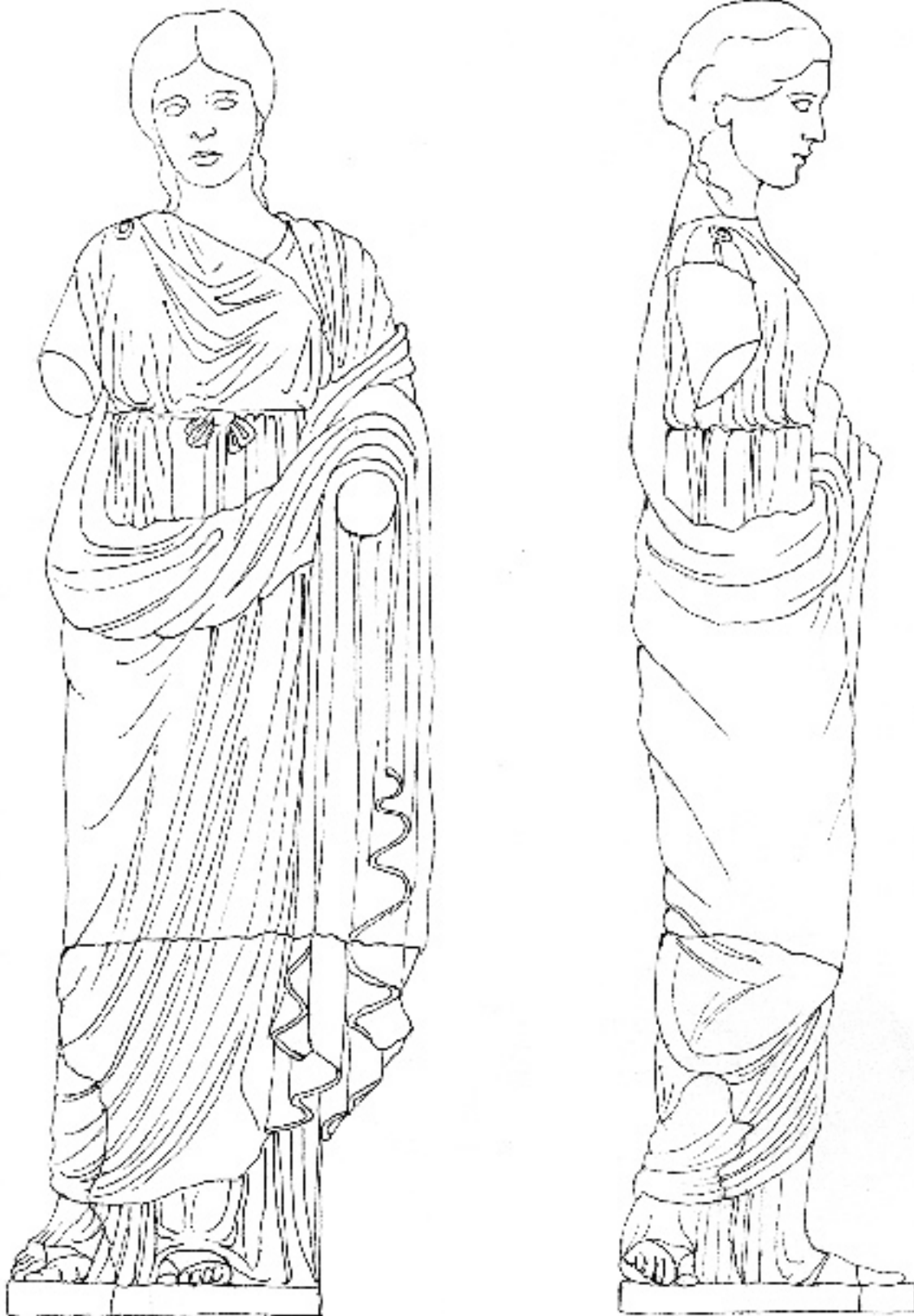
<sup>3</sup> W. Reichel, *Beschreibung der Sculpturen im Augustustempel in Pola*. Arch.-Epigr. Mitt. Österreich-Ungarn 15, 1892, 151–169; 153–154. – A. Gnirs, *Pola. Führer durch die antiken Baudenkmäler und Sammlungen* (Wien 1915) 158.

<sup>4</sup> A. Gnirs, *Neue Funde vom Forum Civile in Pola*. Jahrb. Altde. 4, 1910, 172–187; 184. – G. Fischer, *Das römische Pola. Eine archäologische Stadtgeschichte*. Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische klasse 110 (München 1996) 92. – A. Starac, *Forum u Puli*. Opuscula Arch. (Zagreb) 20, 1996, 71–89; 76.

<sup>5</sup> P. Kandler, *Degli scavi di Pola. L'Istria I*, 6–7, 1846, 21–28, 22. – Mirabella Roberti (note 1) 257. G. Cavalieri Manasse, *La decorazione architettonica romana di Aquileia, Trieste, Pola* (Aquileia 1978) 176–183. – R. Matijašić, *Breve nota sui templi forensi di Nesazio e Pola. La città nell'Italia settentrionale in età romana. Morfologie, strutture e funzionamento dei centri urbani delle regiones X e XI*. Atti del convegno organizzato dal Dipartimento di scienze dell'Antichità dell'Università di Trieste. Trieste 13–15 marzo 1987. Collection de l'École française de Rome 130 (Trieste, Roma 1990) 635–652. – A. Krizmanić, *Komunalna palača – Pola. Razvitak gradskog središta kroz dvadeset jedno stoljeće* (Pula 1988) 240. – Fischer (note 4) 70–87. – Starac (note 4) 74.

<sup>6</sup> F. Rausa, Fortuna. LIMC VIII 1 (1997) 125–141, Fortuna 16; 18 a, b; 20, 22, 23, 26–30.





0 10 50 100 CM

merous statues of Antonia Minor, Agrippina Maior and Minor dispersed throughout the Roman Empire and represented with the attributes of Fortuna<sup>8</sup>, as well as to the certain fragmentary conserved statues which can be also interpreted as goddess-like imperial empresses or princesses.<sup>9</sup> The representation of the women from the Julian-Claudian dynasty as goddesses – Fortuna, Venera o Juno, is a rather common feature of imperial propaganda in the first half of the 1st century AD.<sup>10</sup> In conclusion, we can suppose that the statue from the forum of Pula most probably belongs to the second third of the 1st century AD, and to the reign of Claudius or Nero. Originally, it represented a female member of the Julian-Claudian dynasty, most probably a mother of one of the later emperors of this first roman imperial dynasty, i.e. Antonia Minor, Agrippina Maior or Agrip-

pina Minor, probably represented as Fortuna. None of the existing female marble heads at the Archaeological Museum of Istria belongs to our statue, concerning primarily the so-called heads of Agrippina Minor and Antonia Minor.<sup>11</sup> These two heads are only of natural dimensions, not to speak about the fact that they are adapted to be inserted into a hole on the shoulder, while the larger than life-sized female statue was made in one piece of marble only. Momentarily, it can not be answered with certainty whether the statue originally stood in the building of the imperial cult beside the colossal cuirassed Augustus statue, or whether it stood in the eastern forum temple or perhaps elsewhere in the forum of Pula. In spite of imported marble and extremely high artistic qualities, one can not exclude the possibility of local production of the statue in Pula.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> L. Guerrini, Chairestratos. EAA II (1959) 531–532.

<sup>8</sup> Sebasteion at Aphrodisias: K.T. Erim, *Aphrodisias. A guide to the site and its museum* (1989) 64 Abb. 91. – Altar at Ravenna: E. Lippolis, *Cultura figurativa: la scultura "colta" tra età repubblicana e dinastia Antonina*. In: Aemilia. La cultura romana in Emilia Romagna dal III secolo a.C. all'età costantiniana. A cura di Mirella Marini Calvani (Bologna 2000) 250–278, 264–268.

<sup>9</sup> F. Benoit, Cemenelum. EAA Suppl. (1970) 197–200. – J.A. Garriguet, *La imagen del poder imperial en Hispania. Tipos estatuarios*. Corpus signorum imperii romani. Corpus de esculturas del imperio romano. España, vol.II fasc.I (Murcia 2001) 42; Lam.17, 4, nr. 58. – V. Galliazzo, *Sculture greche e romane del Museo Civico di Vicenza*. Collezioni e musei archeologici del Veneto. Collana diretta da Gustavo Traversari (Treviso 1976) 106–107.

<sup>10</sup> Th. Mikocki, *Sub specie deae*. Les impératrices et princesses romaines assimilées à des déesses. Étude iconologique. RdA Suppl. 14 (Roma 1995). – E. Bartman, *Portraits of Livia. Imaging the imperial woman in Augustan Rome* (Cambridge 1999). – A. Alexandridis, *Die Frauen des römischen Kaiserhauses. Eine Untersuchung ihrer bildlichen Darstellung von Livia bis Julia Domna* (dissertation, Universität Rostock) 329–519.

<sup>11</sup> N. Cambi, *Imago animi* (Split 2000) 43–44 nr. 46–47 Tab. 54–57. – R. Matijašić, *Novi primjeri antičke portretne plastike iz Pule i okolice*. Umjetnost na istočnoj obali Jadrana u kontekstu europske tradicije. Zbornik radova sa znanstvenog skupa održanog u Opatiji u svibnju 1992. posvećenog djelu prof. dr. Radmile Matejčić (Rijeka 1993) 47–52.

<sup>12</sup> The recent excavations in the centre of Pula behind the roman forum conducted in 2002–2003, proved the existence of a local workshop specialized in elaboration of diverse types of imported marbles and production of architectural ornamental elements as well as figural pieces.