

## Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum Roman - Germanic Central Museum

### Research Institute of national significance

Since its foundation in the year 1852 the Roman - Germanic Central Museum has developed into an internationally active institution. Its research extends from the Stone Age of 2.5 million years ago until the Middle Ages and from the Middle East to China. Some 40 scientists and 30 conservators, supported by a further 80 fellow workers are occupied with the broader relationships of the history of culture. The diversity of the methods used to understand and explain humanity and its overall cultural heritage identifies the RGZM as a research institute ideally equipped for the future in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The RGZM is a foundation under German law with its seat in Mainz. The foundation is borne by the state of Rhineland-Palatinate and the town of Mainz. As a research institution of national importance and federal scientific interest the Roman - Germanic Central Museum has been financed since 1977 by both the Federal and the individual German States with the substantial involvement of the state of Rhineland-Palatinate and a contribution by the town of Mainz. External research funding is provided by scientific foundations, the German Research Foundation (DFG) and the EU. Analogous to other institutes with national status the RGZM is today also a member of the Leibniz Association.

### Research Museum for Archeology

The Roman - Germanic Central Museum is, above all, a research institute and its exhibitions serve as a window onto its investigations. At two locations in Mainz – the Residence of the Prince Electors and the Museum of Ancient Shipping on the Rhine - and at several external departments archeological remains ranging from the Stone Age until the Middle Ages and from the Middle East to North Africa are presented in their historical context by a permanent exhibition covering some 9,000 m<sup>2</sup>. In some of its areas the collections of the RGZM are of major international importance. However, the reproductions of objects located in other great museums of the world also play a major role in the RGZM. They allow cultural historical comparisons to be made at a single location, a possibility which cannot be offered by any other archeological museum.

### Conservation workshops and laboratories

The highly specialized conservation workshops and the laboratories with their state of the art methods of analysis form one of the cornerstones of the international reputation of the RGZM. Here, major archeological finds from all over the world have been restored, conserved and reproduced since 1852. Among the most prominent assemblages of finds to have been restored here are the equipment of "Oetzi", the South Tyrolese Glacier Man, and the priceless grave goods of a pre-Inca ruler from Peru. In the meantime, the RGZM has become one of the most significant training centers for archeological conservators in Europe.

### Books about archeology – the RGZM Press

The RGZM Press regularly produces some of the most important publications on archeological research in the German language, among them the Yearbook of the RGZM and the quarterly

Archäologisches Korrespondenzblatt. In addition, about 10 new books about archeology appear annually.

### **The RGZM library**

The RGZM library is a non-lending facility and one of the largest archeological reference libraries in Germany. The emphasis is on the archeology of Europe and the Near East. The collection contains approximately 120,000 volumes, among them 1,100 journals on permanent subscription.

### **Internationally active**

International cooperation led to the founding of branches abroad. As an example, between 1996 and 2003 an ambitious project was carried out in collaboration with the Egyptian Museum at Cairo. This had as its goal the restoring and conservation of a group of copper figures of the Pharaoh Pepi I, which are, to date, the oldest surviving large sculptures in metal.

Skull fragments of the oldest humans in Eurasia (1.75 million years old) are among the most significant discoveries made by excavations between 1992 and 1999 in the context of a collaboration at Dmanisi in the Caucasus republic of Georgia.

At present, the most comprehensive foreign project of the RGZM is to be found in the Chinese province of Shaanxi and is concerned with, among other issues, the mausoleum of the first emperor of China, known for his terracotta army. Since 1990 the conservation and investigation of finds, classed by the Chinese government as cultural heritage at the highest level, has been carried out in workshops newly established in the provincial capital Xi'an.

### **Close cooperation with universities**

Several of the RGZM scientists are involved in teaching at German and foreign universities and hand on their knowledge to the upcoming generation of archeologists. Particularly close cooperation exists with the Johannes Gutenberg University at Mainz, in the form of a contractually agreed collaboration with the Institute of Proto- and Early History and a Chair for Paleolithic research.

The close interdisciplinary collaboration of archeologists, conservators and natural scientists are visible not only in the close links between these fields within the institute, but also in the existing cooperation with the Institutes of Archeology and Geosciences at the Johannes Gutenberg University at Mainz and the Institute for Spatial Information and Surveying Technology (i3Mainz) of the Mainz University of Applied Sciences.

### **Several locations in Rhineland-Palatinate**

In accordance with the broad spectrum of its studies, the RGZM today comprises the Department of Protohistory, and those of the Roman and Early Medieval periods, which are accommodated in the Mainz Residence of the Prince Electors and an adjacent building from the 1960s. Here are also located the Institute Press, the conservation workshops, the photographic studio, the drafting room and the comprehensive library.

At the beginning of the 1980s the RGZM began to expand and additional research facilities were created in Mainz, Mayen and Neuwied. The Old Stone Age Research Department and associated Museum for Ice Age Archeology were founded in 1986 at the Monrepos palace close to Neuwied.

Following the discovery and excavation of five Roman warships in Mainz and following a recommendation of the RGZM's scientific council, the Department of Ancient Shipping was established in 1989 within the previous market hall at the southern edge of the Mainz Old Town.

The building also contains the comprehensive photographic archive and the guest rooms of the RGZM.

The youngest external branch of the Institute (founded in 1996) is the Research Department for Volcanology, Archeology and the History of Technology in Mayen. From its beginnings, scientific investigation and its presentation in a form attractive to tourism have here gone hand in hand. The East Eifel Volcano Park exists since 1996 as a Limited Company in the form of a joint venture of the District of Mayen-Koblenz and the RGZM.

### **Information**

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