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Imperialism and Identities at
the Edges of the Roman World 4

Book of abstracts

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Imperialism and Identities at the Edges of the Roman World

Petnica Science Center, September 20 – 23rd 2018

The fourth conference Imperialism and Identities at the Edges of the Roman World covers the range of topics including the social interactions directly or indirectly connected to the Roman sociopolitical system operating for several centuries in the Mediterranean and continental parts of Europe, Asia and Africa. The term Roman world should be understood loosely, as diverse sorts of heterogeneities somehow related to the power centered in Rome. In other words, the Roman world here implies a number of social, economic, cultural and other ties that various communities and individuals had with the dominant sociopolitical structure of the age. In this context, the edges in the title do not mean only peripheral areas of the Roman Empire and dynamics between the “Roman” and various local societies in the border zones, but also the social groups and phenomena at the fringes of what could be called Roman elites’ social networks. The notion identities refers to different means of (self)identification, categorization, social positioning etc. and practices involved in such processes, both in terms of individuals and collectivities who were affected by Rome’s imperial politics. It is used primarily to emphasize the ongoing change of views on the “Roman world” from the static concept of “Roman/civilization” vs. “native/barbaric” dichotomy to more complex comprehensions of this segment of the past.

The goal of the conference is to enable an open discussion on variety of approaches to these problems from different theoretical positions, as well as variety of disciplinary perspectives (archaeology, history, anthropology, art history, heritage studies). The IIERW is set to establish a wide network of scholars with different academic backgrounds and research experiences dealing with the Roman imperialism and related issues. The main topics of the conference are:

- Relations between the Roman imperialism and regional/local communities, “non-elite” or “marginal” social categories of various sorts (global and local social/cultural trends and the creation of different life-experiences)
- Social and cultural dynamics in the areas of interaction (contact, conflict, resistance and coexistence)
- Complexity, variety and intersections of social/cultural realities and imaginations
- Diversity of construction and communication of identities
- Reflexive history of Roman studies
- Roman heritage

The conference Imperialism and Identities at the Edges of the Roman World 4 will gather 49 participants from 18 different countries coming mostly from Europe, but also from Australia and USA. Most of the participants are academics and PhD students, but the conference was also opened for undergraduate students in order to give young colleagues an opportunity to engage in academic debate as soon as possible.

Vladimir D. Mihajlović
Marko A. Janković

Naissus and Remesiana from the times of Saint Nicetas up to the conquest of the Huns. Sketches for the history and archaeology of two cities in the province of Dacia Mediterranea

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After Galerius' Edict of religious toleration from Serdica (311) and Constantine's Milan Edict (313), conditions were created for the free profession of Christ's faith in the Roman Empire. With the establishing of the Tetrarchy in the end of the 3rd century, systematic changes were initiated, and continued during the time of Constantine and his successors, which led to changes in economic, social and cultural life of the Roman society. Those changes were felt in all parts of the Empire, and the area of Eastern Illyricum had a significant role in those occurrences.

One of the most significant names from the period of the second half of the 4th and the first decades of the 5th century was Nicetas (340-414/420), the bishop of Remesiana. The tireless missionary, diplomat and philosopher had a very prominent role in the spreading of Christ's faith in the areas of Illyricum, deeply divided by religious schisms and diversity of religions. During Nicetas' time, the bishop of Naissus was Bonosus, Semi-Arian, whose teaching resonated far and wide and influenced their contemporaries. On a wider plan, it was the time of great migrations of barbaric tribes towards the area of the Illyrians and the time when Roman emperors (Valens, Valentinian I, Gratian) took measures to stabilize the limes and the Imperium. In the archaeological sense, this epoch is characterized by findings which testify about intense building activities, most prominently in the area of military, fortification architecture, but also of layers of intense settlements of large groups of people, which left numerous testimonies of their every-day activities. In this paper, we will attempt to give an overview of the results of archaeological researches, especially those conducted in the area of the Late Antiquity fortification and its' necropolis at Naissus, as well as those conducted in the wider area of the city, along with the archaeological remains discovered at Remesiana and its' territory, from the aspect of social, religious and economic dynamism, and we will attempt to give a wider picture of those two important cities in the heartland of the province of Dacia Mediterranea, which played an important, sometimes even prominent role in the shaping of the cultural scenery of the Eastern Illyricum.