


**CITY OF NIŠ**

**DAYS OF ST.EMPEROR CONSTANTINE AND EMPRESS HELEN**

  
 Удруženje "Српска  
 историјска заједница"  
 4205/2017-01  
 08.12.2017. год.  
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**PROJECT**

**INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM**

**NIŠ AND BYZANTIUM**

**XVII**

*~ Restoration of Byzantium in the Balkans in 1018 ~*



Niš, December 2017

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## **I – GENERAL DATA**

### **1. Organizers**

- City of Niš, University of Niš and Niš Orthodox Eparchy, as co-organizers
- Scientific Board within the Committee for the Celebration of the Festivities of Saints

Czar Constantine and Czarina Helena

### **2. Project holder**

- City of Niš, University of Niš and Niš Orthodox Eparchy

### **3. Project Management**

- Organizing Committee and Redaction of the symposium „Nis and Byzantium XVII“

- His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Irinej
- Bishop of Niš Eparchy Mr. Arsenije
- dr Dragan Antić, University of Niš, rector
- Darko Bulatović, Mayor of Niš
- Zoran Radenković, Assistant to the Mayor
- Jelena Mitrovski, member of the Niš City Council for the field of Culture
- dr Miša Rakocija (Niš)
- dr Franz Curk (Niš)
- dr Irena Ljubomirović, secretary (Niš)
- dr Slobodan Ćurčić (Prinston, New Jersey)

- academician dr Ljubomir Maksimović (Belgrade)
- academician dr Cvetan Grozdanov (Skopje)
- academician dr Renate Pilinger (Vienna)
- academician dr Vera Bitrakova Grozdanova (Skopje)
- dr Branko Vujović (Belgrade)
- dr Aleksandar Kadrijević (Belgrade)
- dr Hranislav Andjelković (Niš)
- dr Graham Jones (Oxford)
- dr Lars Ramskold (Stockholm)
- dr Vujadin Ivanišević (Belgrade)
- dr Miodrag Marković (Belgrade)
- dr Dragan Vojvodić (Belgrade)
- dr Radivoje Radić (Belgrade)
- dr Giordana Trovabene (Venice)
- dr Ioannis Sisiou (Kastoria)
- dr Georgi Gerov (Sofia)
- dr Bojana Krsmanović (Belgrade)
- dr Athansios Semoglou (Thessaloniki)
- dr Ioannis D. Varalis (Volos)
- dr Marta Nagy (Debrecen)
- dr Ivanka Gergova (Sofia)
- dr Elizabeta Dimitrova (Skopje)
- dr Carolyn C. Snively (Gettysburg)
- dr Ivana Popović (Belgrade)
- dr Irina Oretskaya (Moscow)
- dr Aleksandar Popović (Belgrade)
- dr Aiello Vincenzo (Messina)
- dr Miomir Vasov (Niš)
- dr Jasmina Ćirić (Belgrade)
- Jovan Mandić (Niš)
- Milica Todorović (Niš)
- Reverend Aleksandar Djordjević, coordinator, Niš Orthodox Eparchy
- Olgica Davidović, coordinator, Rector's Office, University of Niš
- Ana Mišić, coordinator, Mayor's Office, City of Niš

## **II – PROJECT OBJECTIVE**

Eminent national and European scientists dealing with the history of arts and cultural attainments of the Byzantine and Post-Byzantine world are invited to the International Symposium "Niš and Byzantium". This implies the participation of art historians, historians, archaeologists, classical philologists, theologians, architects and philosophers whose sphere of interest is Niš, the Balkan region and Europe. The intention of the organizers of the Symposium, which would be concentrated around the Early-Christian, Byzantine and Post-Byzantine cultural heritage of the city and region of Niš, is to comprehend its position in the cultural mosaic of Europe. *The wish* of the organizers is to contribute to a better understanding of the Byzantine past of Niš, as

well as its reverberation to the later spiritual, cultural and artistic creative endeavors in Niš, the Balkans and Europe. Gathering of reputable European, and particularly Balkan scientists and targeting their knowledge to the area of our city would contribute to the illumination of many question marks related to the Early-Christian and Byzantine past of Niš and its region. The real picture of the city of Niš can only be created on the grounds of knowledge about our rich Christian past, which has been relegated to a marginal status in scientific research during the last 50 years. *The task* of the Symposium is to divert the attention of the European scholarly public to the significance of Niš for the entire Christian world and to point out the effects of the Byzantine culture on the modern Europe. The misunderstandings, lack of comprehension and old delusions related to Byzantium shall fall into oblivion due to scientific argumentation. Cultural rapprochement leads to a national consolidation, to the long-forgotten Byzantine dream about the unity of the Empire.

### **III - PROJECT RATIONALE**

The medieval past of Niš is still insufficiently known. It seems that the incomplete investigation, even of known objects, can be explained by the indifference and not only by the lack of funds. The result is, thus, a withering level of knowledge about the Christian past of Niš, although it occupied a prominent political, economical, religious, cultural and artistic position in the vast Byzantine Empire, whose achievements are firmly integrated in the foundations of European culture and arts. Even the fact that Niš is the birthplace of Saint Czar Constantine, to whom the Christian part of the world owes its own existence, did not represent a sufficient reason to pay due attention to it. On the other side, the known monuments have not been properly protected and preserved. For this reason, and with the awareness of the inseparability of the historical and artistic heritage of Niš from the European culture and arts, the organization of the Scientific Symposium "Nis and Byzantium" has been initiated.

The International Symposium *Niš and Byzantium XVII* with its symbolical subtitle "*Restoration of Byzantium in the Balkans in 1018*" aims to remind us of the time of the return of Byzantium to the Balkans and the restoration of its spiritual, cultural and civilizational heritage, that we all share together.

After the great crisis that shook the Empire in the V century, the first renewal and revival of the state, including the territory of the Balkans, happened during the reign of the Emperor Justinian.

However, the Byzantine rule again will be threatened by the great successes achieved by Samuil who founded the new empire in the Balkans on the foundations of the Bulgarian one. With the arrival of the Byzantine Emperor Basil II (976-1025) and his great offensive in the Balkans (1001), the process of returning the Byzantine rule over Samuil's territory began. The war officially ended with Basil's siege of Dures and his entry into Ohrid in 1018. The restoration of Byzantine authorities in the Balkans meant also the renewal of the cities on the Balkan Peninsula. The city of Niš also experienced its revival and these events marked the beginning of its rich medieval history.

In the period of settlement of the Slavs, the city of Niš was destroyed and the Roman state structure together with the old bishopric, temporarily disappeared. After almost four centuries, Niš - now with the Byzantine name Nisos (Νίσος), was first mentioned at the end of the X century. Thanks to the victory of Basil II over Samuel, Byzantium returned the previously lost territories of the Balkan Peninsula, which led to the necessary reorganization of political and ecclesiastical administration. Thus after the year 1020, the most important cities in the conquered areas were restored and became military, administrative, economic, cultural centers and the spiritual stronghold of Byzantium, including Nisos. Niš is again a big city, the main intersection and the pillar of the Byzantine authorities of this area, the episcopal seat, the military and administrative base, the center of Byzantine culture and civilization, from where it radiates into the interior of the Balkan continent.

#### **IV - PROJECT PROGRAMME**

- The expected number of participants is 35
- Presentation of papers shall last for 2 days
- The third day of the Symposium shall include a reception at the City Hall and a tour of cultural monuments of Niš and its surroundings
- The Proceedings of the 16th Symposium shall be published by the end of the current year
- The preparations of the scientific meeting have to start in November 2017 in order to enable invited participants to have enough time to write their respective papers

- Details shall be defined by the programme of the scientific symposium

## **V – WORK PLAN**

- Day I, 3 June

*Venue: Niš University Hall*

*- 17:30 Ceremonial opening and work start*

- Introduction - Dr. Miša Rakocija - art historian
- Blessing – His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Irinej
- Welcome word – Mayor of Niš, Mr. Darko Bulatović
- Address of welcome – University of Niš Rector prof. Dragan Antić
- Opening ceremony - dr Marko Popović (Beograd)
- Presentation of the Proceedings vol. 16 - dr Nebojša Stanković (Niš)
- Screening of the film “Byzantine Churches of Niš”
- Cocktail

I working session - presentation of papers until 20:30

- Meeting with representatives of local authorities, cultural workers and journalists
- Common Dinner

- Day II, 4 June

- 09:00 - 19:30 Presentation of papers with a break time from 14:00 to 16:00
  - 09,00 - 14,00 - Presentation of papers
  - 14,00 - 16,00 - break for lunch
  - 16,00 - 19,00 - Presentation of papers
  - 19,00 – 19,30 - Discussion

- Day III, 5 June

- 9,30 – Reception at the Niš City Hall
- Tour of cultural monuments and historical sites
- Departure

## **VI – PROJECT FINANCING**

The Project is financed by the City of Niš.

- Expenses related to the invited paper presenters include a common dinner on 3 June after the ceremonial opening of the symposium.
- Material means necessary for the activities of the Project organizers (Task Force of the Scientific Board within the Committee for the Celebration of the Festivities of Saints Czar Constantine and Czarina Helena).

- Proceedings vol. 16 (along with CD version) publishing costs
- Remuneration for logistics engagement and work of coordinator in charge and the website designer

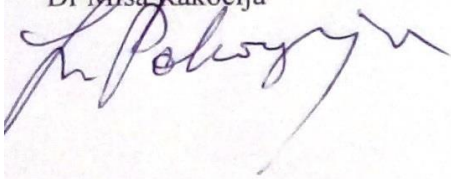
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Considering the exceptional importance of the early Christian and Byzantine Niš, as well as insufficiently exploration of this area, the invited researchers' response and the great interest of the European scientific community should be expected. The findings coming on this occasion are very important for our city, but also for the cultural heritage of Serbia, the Balkans and Europe. Gathering of prominent researchers, who properly process the cultural and historical treasures of Nis and Byzantium, has resulted in greater interest of the world scientific public and has increased the City of Nis reputation.

**On behalf of the Scientific Board**

**Editor in chief**

Dr Miša Rakocija



**SCIENTIFIC BOARD**

**PRESIDENT**

Mayor

Darko Bulatović

