

CITY OF NIŠ
DAYS OF ST.EMPEROR CONSTANTINE AND EMPRESS HELEN

P R O J E C T
INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM

NIŠ AND BYZANTIUM

XVI

~ Roman Crown of the Orthodox Kingdom

- 800 Years since the Coronation of Stefan the First-Crowned ~



Niš, December 2016

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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 XVI“
 - His Holiness Serbian Patriarch Irinej
 - Bishop of Raška-Prizren Eparchy Mr. Teodosije on behalf of Bishop of Niš Eparchy
 - dr Dragan Antić, University of Niš, rector
 - Darko Bulatović, Mayor of Niš
 - 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 Kadijević (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 Geroov (Sofia)
- dr Bojana Krsmanović (Belgrade)
- dr Athansios Semoglou (Thessaloniki)
- dr Ioannis D. Varalis (Volos)
- dr Marta Nagy (Debrecen)
- dr Ivanka Gergova (Sofia)
- dr Evengelia Hagitriphonos (Thessaloniki)
- 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 XVI , with a symbolic subtitle: The Roman Crown of the Orthodox Kingdom - 800 years from the coronation of Stefan the First-Crowned, aims to remind the scientific scholarly public of the most significant event in the

history of Serbian statehood and of the interconnectivity and the Christian peoples and countries interaction as well.

In 2017, the 800th anniversary of the coronation of Stefan the First-Crowned is to be marked. It is about the first Serbian royal coronation by the crown coming from Rome as a gift of the Roman Pope Honorius III. It happened at the monastery Žiča in 1217 where "...by God's grace...Stefan was the first crowned (married) King of all Serbian lands" as written in Žiča writings. This is the first Serbian royal coronation and a landmark in the history of the ruler coronation of the Serbs. In the hierarchy of European Christian rulers, Stefan the First Crowned was equated with other kings and thus Serbia acquired full sovereignty. The awarding of the papal crown represented international legal recognition of Serbia as an independent state.

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 15th Symposium shall be published by the end of the current year
- The preparations of the scientific meeting have to start in November 2016 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 1, 3 June

Venue: Niš University Hall

- 17:00 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 – academician dr Ljubomir Maksimović
- Presentation of the Proceedings vol. 15

- Screening of the film “Byzantine Churches of Niš”
- Cocktail
- Presentation of papers until 19:30
- Meeting with representatives of local authorities, cultural workers and journalists
- Dinner

Day II, 4 June

- 10:00 - 19:30 Presentation of papers (break – lunch 14:00 -16:00)
- 20:00..... Dinner

Day III, 5 June

- 9,30 – Reception at the 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 accommodation with meals. In special cases authors may present the accepted papers at their own expense.
- Financial means necessary for the activities of 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. 15 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

Dr Miša Rakocija

SCIENTIFIC BOARD

PRESIDENT
Mayor
Darko Bulatović