

Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum Mainz announces new international cooperation »Caričin Grad«

The Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum Mainz will in 2014 start a long term interdisciplinary research project in order to investigate the early byzantine city of Caričin Grad in today's Serbia. The project is being funded by the Wissenschaftsgemeinschaft Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (Leibniz Association) and will be undertaken in cooperation with the Institute of Archaeology, Belgrade (IA), and the École française de Rome (EFR). Both institutions have already been working together very successfully in Caričin Grad since 1978. The project is affiliated with the 'WissenschaftsCampus Mainz: Byzanz zwischen Orient und Okzident'. Dr Rainer Schreg is the Leading Principal Investigator on behalf of the RGZM.

In times of cultural transition changes with often irreversible effects occur. The societies involved in these processes are thereby being confronted with manifold challenges. The analysis of how exactly societies react to and interact with these effects is a topic of increasing importance in archaeology. Caričin Grad is a particularly suited object for the investigation of these processes. The site's history and its excellent state of preservation offer unique conditions in order to study a city at the transition from late antiquity to the early medieval era.

The ruins on this byzantine site in southern Serbia are reckoned to be identical to 'Iustiniana Prima', a city newly founded by the emperor Justinian and known from written classical sources. According to the finds, the city existed from circa 530 to circa 615 AD. In case the identification as 'Iustiniana Prima' is correct, it had the status of an archbishopric and was the administrative and religious center of the region. Caričin Grad is considered to be the youngest and last example of a settlement founded in the antique tradition. It combines the characteristics of a hellenistic-roman city with the comparatively newer features of a settlement in christian tradition. Its architecture, especially the buildings of a representative character have already been the subject of comprehensive investigations.

Therefore, mainly questions concerning its economic, environmental and social history, also taking the site's hinterland for a reconstruction of its cultural landscape into consideration, will be the main objective during the following years. Eventually, an impression of the city as a system of human ecology will evolve, which incorporates environmental as well as societal factors. The first field campaign will take place in summer 2014.

“The short period of occupation as well as the fact, that it remained completely undisturbed after its abandon make Caričin Grad a site with extraordinary potential for research. We are very much looking forward to the cooperation with our serbian and french colleagues in this exciting project”. (Prof. Falko Daim, Director General RGZM).

Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum (RGZM)

The Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum (RGZM) is an archaeological research institute that operates globally. Research subject is the human in his natural and cultural environment, from the beginning of humanity up to the early modern period. One of its great strengths is the collaboration between academia, restoration and archaeometry. Thanks to its interdisciplinary and international orientation, the institute has a strong network of cooperation partners. The RGZM makes its research results available not only to the scientific community but also to the general public.

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Press Pictures

Download:

http://web.rgzm.de/fileadmin/Gruppen/Presse/2014/Pressebilder_CaricinGrad.zip



View of the Acropolis from the north.
(Photo: Archaeological Institute of Belgrad / Dr. Vujadin Ivanišević)



Excavation by the Archaeological Institute of Belgrade (Summer 2013).
(Photo: RGZM / Rainer Schreg)