

HADRIAN'S UNIFYING SPIRIT: The emperor's three 'homelands' in dialogue

ITALICA

ROME

ATHENS

Thursday, November 20, 17:00

auditorium of the National Gallery, Alexandros Soutsos Museum

50, Vasileos Konstantinou Avenue



ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
Υπουργείο Πολιτισμού



**National Hellenic
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ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
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Directorate of Prehistoric & Classical Antiquities
&
Ephorate of Antiquities of the City of Athens



INSTITUTE OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH
NATIONAL HELLENIC RESEARCH FOUNDATION

Section of Greek and Roman Antiquity
“Roman Attica Project”

cordially invite you to the conference

HADRIAN'S UNIFYING SPIRIT:

The emperor's three 'homelands' in dialogue

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Hadrian's personality combined a variety of elements and balanced both universal and local values, being the ultimate expression of an empire that encompassed diverse cultures, languages, and traditions. The unity of the empire through diversity is evident in his relationship with each of the three cities that can be considered as his 'homelands': Italica -his ancestors' place of origin; Rome -the city where he grew up, the heart of his empire; and Athens -his beloved cultural 'homeland' whose citizenship he proudly held about his mid-thirties.

Efforts of three countries -Italy, Spain, and Greece- have been united in an innovative proposal for submitting a joint application for awarding the European Heritage Label to the three cities, based on Hadrian's legacy. On the occasion of a meeting of this three-partite team in Athens, distinguished scholars from institutions of the participating sides, specialists on Hadrian and his three cities, will emphasize aspects of the emperor's presence and influence in them, as well as on shared values that, inspired by him, united the Roman world.

PROGRAMME

17:00-17:30: Greetings from the organizing institutions

Introduction

Constantina Benissi, Hellenic Ministry of Culture, Head of the Department for the Supervision of Greek & Foreign Scientific Institutions & Coordination of International Cooperation & Organization, Directorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities

“The European Heritage Label”

17:30-18:30: First session: The cities

Prof. Emanuele Papi, Dipartimento di Scienze Storiche e dei Beni Culturali, Università di Siena
Direttore della Scuola Archeologica Italiana di Atene

“Hadrian as Homo Oeconomicus: Welfare, Trade, and Cultural Prestige in Athens”

Dr. Elena Kountouri, Hellenic Ministry of Culture, Head of the Directorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities; Deputy director of the Ephorate of Antiquities of the City of Athens

“Hadrian’s Athens: recent excavations and old finds”

Prof. Elena Muñoz Grijalvo, Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Sevilla

Prof. Fernando Lozano Gómez, Universidad de Sevilla

“Ceremonies for the Roman Empire: The Case of Hadrianic Italica”

18:30-19:00: Coffee break

19:00-20:00: Second Session: The empire

Prof. Juan Manuel Cortés Copete, Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Sevilla

“Hadrian: The Metamorphosis of the Roman Empire”

Prof. Elena Calandra, Università di Pavia; Direttore del Museo di Archeologia

“Hadrian and his network”

Prof. Panagiotis Doukellis, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens

“. . . ἐπομόσας μήτε τί ἔξω τῶν δημοσίων συμφερόντων ποιήσεν: Aims and mechanisms of Hadrian’s unifying policy”

ABSTRACTS

Prof. Emanuele Papi, Dipartimento di Scienze Storiche e dei Beni Culturali, Università di Siena
Direttore della Scuola Archeologica Italiana di Atene

“Hadrian as Homo Oeconomicus: Welfare, Trade, and Cultural Prestige in Athens”

This paper examines Hadrian’s legacy in Athens, focusing on his role in food supply, trade regulation, welfare, and monumental building projects. Beyond material contributions, his patronage of education and philosophy reinforced Athens’ cultural prestige, leaving a lasting impact without constituting a formal economic policy.

Dr. Elena Kountouri, Hellenic Ministry of Culture, Head of the Directorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities; Deputy director of the Ephorate of Antiquities of the City of Athens

“Hadrian’s Athens: recent excavations and old finds”

During the last five years, the Ephorate of Antiquities of the City of Athens has carried out excavations at various locations within the public area of the ancient *polis*, where finds from the Roman period have come to light. Some of these have been already associated by certain scholars with Hadrian’s interventions into the urban fabric of Athens.

Prof. Elena Muñoz Grijalvo, Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Sevilla
Prof. Fernando Lozano Gómez, Universidad de Sevilla

“Ceremonies for the Roman Empire: The Case of Hadrianic Italica”

Under Emperor Hadrian, Italica underwent a profound transformation: it was elevated to *colonia* status and reshaped into a monumental ceremonial centre. Inspired by models from the Greek East—such as Athens, Ephesus, Pergamum, and Smyrna—Hadrian’s project integrated religious, urbanistic, and ideological dimensions, creating spaces for festivals that honoured both traditional deities and deified emperors.

Italica thus became a western counterpart to the great ceremonial cities of the Greek East, projecting a unifying imperial ideology that resonated across the Mediterranean. This imperial programme manifested itself in the processional routes that traversed the city, while the recent discovery of a temple of Isis—probably dating to Hadrian’s reign—near the theatre further points to a Hadrianic Italica conceived as a stage for the ceremonies that symbolically unified the Empire.

Prof. Juan Manuel Cortés Copete, Universidad Pablo de Olavide, Sevilla

“Hadrian: The Metamorphosis of the Roman Empire”

In 129, following his adoption of the title *Pater Patriae*, Hadrian began using the Greek *ethnos* as the sole translation for Latin *provincia*, instead of *eparcheia*, the usual Greek term till then. This shift was not merely a stylistic choice influenced by the artistic preferences of the Second Sophistic. If there was one voice in the empire capable of creating or transforming reality, it was the voice of the emperor. It was then, in 129, that the imperial mint began the issuing one of the most unusual—and perhaps most politically significant—monetary series in the history of the empire: the Hadrianic province series. The Emperor, named *Restitutor*, is accompanied by a female allegory representing the region, province or city, in appropriate attire and with distinguishing local attributes. Hadrian, standing, extends his hand to the female image, who on her knees, rises with the emperor’s help.

It is my belief that the interpretation of these coins is enriched, and makes better sense, if the title of *Restitutor* is linked to the change from *eparcheia* to *ethnos*, in order to designate the territories and populations of the Roman Empire. The *ethne*, the *gentes* and the *nationes*, that had existed before the

Roman conquest and before the creation of the Roman provinces, were restored by Hadrian's actions. Consequently, Hadrian should be regarded as the architect of a culturally diverse and politically inclusive empire, which led to the Metamorphosis of Rome.

Prof. Elena Calandra, Università di Pavia ; Direttore del Museo di Archeologia

“Hadrian and his network”

I will consider the figure of Hadrian as the center and the promoter of a network of connections: through his travels, before becoming emperor and then, when his travels in all the empire inaugurated a system for exercising power and connecting people, with the awareness, at the same time, of the limits imposed by the dimensions of the empire, more and more fragile. The "mobility" of Hadrian caused a transformation of the meaning and of the impact of the capitals, changing from Rome to Athens, where Hadrian spend a long part of his reign, revealing his centralising capacity and more generally his unifying cultural policy - this talent of Hadrian is particularly useful if we think in transnational terms.

Prof. Panagiotis Doukellis, Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens

“... ἐπομόσας μήτε τί ἔξω τῶν τῷ δημοσίῳ συμφερόντων ποιήσεν: Aims and mechanisms of Hadrian's unifying policy”

According to recent scientific bibliography, the case of Hadrian seems to respond to the current explicit and/ or implicit aims to search for emblematic historical moments and phenomena, suitable to consolidate ideas for unity or federation of our own goals and aspirations. Through his travels primarily, but also through the emperor's decisions in general, a specific form of a unifying political culture is exemplified, which was culminated in the first decades of the 2nd century AD. However, it had begun to emerge much earlier. The present intervention concerns the goals and mechanisms applied in order to carry out this aim of the Roman policy during the years of Hadrian.