

Roman province of Dalmatia was one of the internally most varied regions of the ancient world. Seaside cities, among them especially the capital *Salona*, developed quickly, gaining high political status and immense wealth, while their inhabitants quickly adopted Latin language and Roman customs. At the same time, the hinterland of the province developed slowly, was scarcely populated, and old traditions lasted much longer. The consequences of those "two paces" of development and of a cultural frontier in this part of Europe were huge up till the 19th and 20th century, when their reduction - but not disappearance - was influenced by the advancement of industrialisation and conscious political decisions.

The surroundings of Ljubuški in modern Bosnia and Herzegovina are ideally suited to study the historical-cultural processes that were the cause of those differences. In antiquity this area lay on the edges of the hinterland of Roman colony *Narona*, one of the major cities in the region, constituting a kind of a transitory zone between the coastal zone and the interior. Its Romanization and development was influenced not only by the vicinity of the city, but also by the presence of the military, which was there to protect the farming population well disposed towards Roman rule from the rebellious pastoral inhabitants of the province's interior. During the rule of Tiberius a group of veterans released from the army and given plots of land as an award for their service was also settled there. Due to this the area chosen for research constitutes a kind of a miniature of the whole province, containing different landscape and economic zones and having as among its ancient inhabitants diverse categories of people with very dissimilar origins and lifestyles. The answers to questions about processes taking place there will allow to get to know the mechanisms causing dissimilarities of development's pace of different areas not only in the region under research, but in the whole Roman Dalmatia.

In order to reconstruct the cultural-historical changes that happened to the population and economy the project must answer the questions who and in what ways inhabited those areas - that is reconstruct their ancient social and settlement landscapes. Non-invasive methods of archaeological prospection - those that do not demand excavations - will serve to recognize the structure of settlement. They include first and foremost fieldwalking surveys, during which the archaeological material visible on the surface is collected, the relicts of the past documented and photographed and the precise localisation of all remains of antiquity precisely marked with GPS devices; and also geophysical research conducted at selected, most interesting sites, which allows the recognition of remains of walls and archaeological objects hidden underground and their preliminary interpretation without the need for time-consuming excavations. In addition, satellite images and aerial photography made from a drone will be used; sometimes, remains of ancient buildings or roads can be recognized on them and then verified in the field. Data thus obtained will be collected into a GIS database (geographical information system), which allows their combination and comprehensive analysis. In order to recognize the people inhabiting the area in the past the information needs to be supplemented with data which can be collected through the analysis of ancient inscriptions on stones, mainly the grave monuments. Names, places of origin, age, occupation or military ranks displayed on them allow the recognition of the social structure of the researched area and the reconstruction of the composition of population in various periods.

Thanks to the project historical and cultural processes will be recognised, those leading to the seaside cities of Dalmatia becoming imposing centres of classical culture, in many cases retaining their role and wealth also in the Middle Ages and pre-modern period; and those that caused the areas in the interior of the province to remain at a much lower level of development. This will also reveal the long-term and difficult to overcome consequences of the uneven development's pace of neighbouring areas.