

ISSUES OF IDENTITY, INTEGRATION AND PROVINCIAL BOUNDS IN ROMAN ILLYRICUM

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Abstract

It has been called into question whether a cohesive Roman identity was ever fully integrated within the manifold provincial identities in the Adriatic and beyond. This issue will be interpreted through the exemplum of Albania, situated within Roman Illyricum. Though this region is also referred to simply as Illyria, this investigation is centered on the region's status as a Roman province; therefore this region will only by this formal designation. Disunity in the region, as seen with the Pannonian Revolt, does not suggest a successful Roman takeover, but rather continuing discord. Indications of this dissonance are evident in the literary, historical, and physical record, as will be explored in this paper. It has been found that despite literary claims of incorporation in Illyricum, predominantly during the Augustan era, current archaeological findings in two critical sites do not support these declarations of control. The symbolic and tactical importance of these provincial areas will be explored through an examination of Augustan policy; this analysis will include an in-depth investigation of primary source materials including that of Appian's *Illyrian Wars* and fragments of Augustus' *Res Gestae*. Secondary sources including the works of Wilkes and Syme, as well as the recent work of Dzino, MacMullen, Mattingly and Cooley will supplement these primary source materials. Lastly and most importantly, findings from two archaeological projects – the Projekti Arkeologjikë i Shkodrës, located in northern Albania at Shkodra, and the Projekti Arkeologjikë i Rajonit Mallakastër, or Mallakastra Regional Archaeological Project, in the south of Albania at Apollonia will complement and validate hypotheses drawn from the literary sources. Through the examination of these key materials, it has been found that in fact, integration of identity and political control was not successfully achieved through Roman attempts at expansion.

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