

PhD thesis abstract:

Late Antique Person in the Perspective of Authors Writing in Latin

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This PhD thesis – “*Late Antique Person in the Perspective of Authors Writing in Latin*” – discusses the late antique society with an emphasis on the historical role of the Goths. The main goal is to try to gain a new understanding of the cultural life of the Goths through translation and commentary to the letters of the bishop Sidonius Apollinaris and his (almost) contemporaries.

His texts provide the reader with insights on the behavior and conduct of the Gothic nobility, everyday life of the royal court, customs, dining and many other aspects of cultural life of the Goths. Sidonius’ view, however, sometimes seems biased. That is why the thesis presents also the views of other selected late antique historians, whose works dealt with the Goths (Ammianus Marcellinus, Jordanes, Zosimos and Procopius of Caesarea), in order to create a deeper comparison of the views of the individual Roman authors.

The thesis also attempts to offer a constructive view on the historical role of the Goths in shaping a new, medieval Europe, using the knowledge of both older and contemporary academics.

The main outputs of the thesis are: an analysis and commentary on the letters of Sidonius Apollinaris (related to the Goths), analysis and commentary on the texts of his (almost) contemporaries and a treatise on the role and importance of the Goths in shaping the history of Europe in the thoughts and works of the leading European academics. The focus of the anthropological research is on these issues: identity crisis (Sidonius Apollinaris), self-identification of the individual (Jordanes) and the perception of “us and them” (all of the presented authors).