

Dioclețian in the Danube Provinces During the Great Christian Persecutions

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Abstract

The Roman emperors of the tetrarchy led by Dioclețian were imperial authorities of Danube origin and were very responsible for defending the Danube provinces and reclaiming the northern Danube territories of the Roman province of Dacia. Through his repetitive wanderings through the Danube territories and especially through his presence in the capital of the prefecture, at Sirmium in 303/304, Dioclețian accentuated the control over the observance of the laws and maximized the persecutions through the cities through which he passed. His direct authority felt even more negative about the Christians in these provinces who dared to confront him or other military or civilian authorities in these provinces directly. However, the province of Dacia Ripensis does not know, from the perspective of historical sources, too many martyrs during this period, probably due to a very large military presence in a small territorial province and the imperial authorities who inspected these provinces so frequently. In the period we are dealing with, of the three martyrs from Dacia Ripensis, from the time of Dioclețian, the situation was even more drastic as we could notice from the historical sources. The presence of the imperial authority on several occasions in these Danube provinces maximized the persecutions. The anti-Christian mood created by the imperial authorities was felt not only here but throughout the empire.