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## **EPLO International Conference: What does Europe owe to the Eastern Roman Empire?**

The administrative, and to a certain extent, cultural unity of contemporary Europe is the result of the influence of the Greco-Roman civilization, an influence which continued uninterruptedly from antiquity until the fall of Constantinople, but also later, during the Renaissance.

During the "Dark Ages", however, history is unclear and largely distorted by national antagonism, personal ambitions and religious hatred. It is the age during which kings and princes appeared as self-appointed successors of the Roman Empire, questioned the scepters of Constantinople, fought against the latter during the fourth Crusade and concealed its great contribution to the formation of the West.

This topic preoccupied top European and Greek scientists during the two-day international conference on "The Presence and Contribution of the (Eastern)

Roman Empire in the Formation of Europe", which took place in Athens on the 18 and 19 April at the initiative of the European Public Law Organization (EPLO).

The aim of this initiative of the EPLO is to explore, once again, the contribution of the Empire of Constantinople to the creation of Europe and to regenerate the Roman idea "of the State which belongs to its citizens" which it served until its fall. As was emphasized "the European Union, having the need for greater cultural unity, now needs to re-examine its history and to restore it, highlighting the elements of a common past at the cultural, legal, educational, religious and institutional level, among others".

Among the foreign speakers were the Professors Yves Sassier and Jean-Claude Cheynet (Universit  Paris-Sorbonne), Sylvain Gouguenheim (Ecole Normale Suprieure de Lyon), Sophie Laws (Regent's College London), as well as Maurice Aymard (Maison des Sciences de l'Homme), all well-known to the Greek audience.

The work of the first day took place in the French School of Athens over two Sessions: The first was entitled "The model of power", while the second "Oikoumene: New Frontiers - Novel Way of Acquaintance and Interaction". The second day was held at the central offices of the European Public Law Organization, with yet another session, "The world of ideas" and a round-table on the topic "Discovering historicism in the administration of justice" in which high-level members of the judiciary and Professors of Law from England, France and Greece participated.

The conference was realized with the kind support of the French School of Athens and the Hellenic Bank Association.