

## Roman period

Numerous artefacts found in various localities in the vicinity of today`s Banja Luka bear witness to Roman`s existence in the region. The Romans were first to have discovered the healing power of mineral springs in the surroundings of the city - Gornji Šeher, Slatina and Laktaš. At that time Banja Luka was situated along an important road built by the Romans, which spread from Split (Salona) to Gradiška (Servitium). In today`s heart of the city, embellished with the *Kaste/* fort, a monument of cultural and historic importance, the Romans had built a military fort *castra*, within whose walls the life of a Roman military settlement progressed. With the Roman Empire break-up, Slavic tribes began to settle the region about 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The Medieval Ages brought the increased number of forts springing into existence along the Vrbas banks. Unfortunately, the reliable information about the then settlement and the life of people inside and outside the walls are still hidden under the veil of history, inviting ethnographers and historians to bring them to light.