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The Romanization of Romania: A Look at the Influence of the Roman Military on Romanian History and Heritage

Colleen Ann Lovely
Union College - Schenectady, NY

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The Romanization of Romania: A Look at the Influence of the Roman Military on Romanian History and Heritage

By

Colleen Ann Lovely

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
Honors in the Departments of Classics and Anthropology

UNION COLLEGE

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Abstract

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ADVISORS: Professor Stacie Raucci, Professor Robert Samet

This thesis looks at the Roman military and how it was the driving force which spread Roman culture. The Roman military stabilized regions, providing protection and security for regions to develop culturally and economically. Roman soldiers brought with them their native cultures, languages, and religions, which spread through their interactions and connections with local peoples and the communities in which they were stationed. This thesis looks at that impact on the Halmyris Fortress and at the great province of Dacia. The effects this “Romanization” of the region influenced the culture, language, and heritage of the later Romanian state.

Within this paper I look at the circumstances of the Roman occupation of Dacia, how it affected the portrayal of heritage, and its affects in politics throughout the history of Romania. I spent four weeks participating in the excavation of the Halmyris Fortress. It is through the lens of archaeology that I look at the broader view of heritage and how excavations such as that at Halmyris affected those views. I also look at the portrayal of Roman influence on the country and how it has affected the larger political view of Romania and on a more localized area in the town of Murighiol. The Roman military was the driving force behind the spread of Roman culture, and it has affected the larger political and social history of Romania through ideas of heritage and identity.

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EXORDIUM

Halmyris is a Roman and Byzantine Military fortification and civilian settlement located in Eastern Romania located a few kilometers from the Danube Delta, and where the Danube meets the Black Sea. The small town of Murighiol is located about three km west of the archaeological site. In antiquity there were known Greek settlements in the surrounding area, and the name Halmyris has its roots in the Greek word for salt. However there is extensive evidence of Roman activity in the area since the first century BCE, and a military presence since the late first century and early second century CE. Literary and physical evidence suggest that a wooden fort was built in the Flavian period with a stronger, rectangular fortification built in the early second century CE, during the Emperor Trajan's Dacian Wars.

The site of Halmyris is a strategic point on the Danube for any who wish to control the region. In ancient times this was the site where the Black Sea and the Danube met, with the fort boasting a strong harbor at its Northern side. This access to the Danube and the Black sea was vital to the control of the area in two very important ways: protection, and money.

A fort such as Halmyris would have been a stone giant among the green and lush countryside. Before the conquest of Dacia by Trajan in the early second century CE, Halmyris sat on the very edge of Roman controlled land; looking over the river onto foreign and hostile territory. The presence of the fort and the legion that manned it was a constant reminder to the people on the other side of Rome's power and strength. Its mere presence on the mouth of the river would have caused many potential invaders to practice caution. Besides just being a symbol of power, the fortress boasted between four and five hundred professional Roman soldiers. These soldiers could be sent anywhere in the vicinity, and along the eastern Danube to

be reinforcements for the sister forts and the towns that lined the river. The sister fort of Halmyris located in Salsovia, on the hills to the west of Murighiol, and other military forts along the banks of the river would have created a supported network of protection, fortifying the then boundary of the Roman world. Halmyris was the base of the naval contingent of the Roman military in this region. With safe access to the river and Black Sea, troops and support could travel the Danube and the Black Sea quickly and with ease to help fortify the frontier of the Empire.

Besides protection from invasion, the fort also provided protection for trade. Waterways in the ancient world were highways to transport goods. The Danube provided fast and easy transport of goods from all over the Roman world to be transported into Eastern Europe. With control into the Black Sea from the Mediterranean through the Bosphorus Strait, the Romans controlled the most influential waterway into Eastern Europe. With this control, and the safety of water navigation protected by the Roman Navy, goods from all over the Empire had easy access to all corners of the Roman controlled world. Halmyris also boasted a large and protected harbor, which from literary sources, scholars can deduce was the base of the Roman fleet in this region. With this protection of the strait and the river, goods could easily flow from one end of the empire to the other. Water travel and transportation was advantageous in many ways over land travel. To transport amphorae filled with oil and grain, water travel might have been preferred over the costly and time consuming land routes. Amphorae are two handled ceramic containers that came in a range of sizes used to store and transport liquids such as oil and wine as well as other goods. When transported by ship, containers could be filled with sand around the amphorae to keep the vessel upright. The sand would also absorb shock from travel, leaving the amphorae and their contents unharmed. This method of travel is much easier to accomplish in the hold of a

ship, where weight of the cargo is less of an issue, rather than with land travel where all weight put on oxen and horses affected the rate of travel. Goods could be safely and quickly transported through water travel, as long as the passages remained clear of danger. The naval force at Halmyris served the region in patrolling the water ways and protecting the Danube, as well as the Roman lands it traveled through.

Besides the protection of the lands and waterways, Halmyris was also an important place for trade. This fort offered access to the lands beyond the Danube and the people that inhabited them. Besides offering protection for Roman goods and ships, this fort offered protection for all trading. People from outside the Roman Empire could use the safe waterways to trade goods from outside the province and empire. This trade of goods allowed money, resources, and culture to travel in and out of the fort, and in turn, the Empire.

With the access and ease of trade and contact with the surrounding region, Halmyris was the perfect catalyst for spreading Roman culture. By the second century the Roman military was a highly functional professional force. The efficacy of the Roman military was the driving force behind the expansion of the Roman Empire and the spread of Roman culture. Soldiers would spend an average of twenty five years in the military, and traveled where they were needed the most. While most of the auxiliary units made of local people tended to stay in the regions that they were created, professional soldiers and officers would move between postings during their terms of service. With this movement, soldiers brought with them the comforts of home, thus spreading Roman culture and practices throughout Empire and its provinces.

When a soldier joined the legion, he would be equipped with standard equipment and armor, the cost of which would be gradually taken out of his pay. After the equipment was bequeathed to a soldier, it was his to keep and maintain. Equipment was often passed down

within a cohort, allowing new members to inherit well used armor and weapons. This meant that maintenance of all weapons and equipment had to come from the soldiers themselves. Soldiers would use local blacksmiths and artisans.

Roman cohorts and even entire legions were often utilized to build infrastructure within the Empire and provinces. The fort of Halmyris was built this way, by two legions. The construction of buildings, forts, barracks, bridges, roads, and other building projects used local resources. This use of local tradesmen and resources brought money into the regions occupied by Roman military units. This economic advantage also had the benefit of protection from outside threats as well as the might of Roman law in these regions. Culture through economics came to the regions under Roman control through the use of the military.

Another cultural aspect brought to regions of the Empire by military presence was religion. The original fort of Halmyris was built by two legions, which erected a shrine to Hercules, the god of hard work and struggle. Different legions and cohorts would have different patron deities, however overall most soldiers looked to warrior gods as well as gods of protection such as Mars, the god of war, Hercules, the god of hard work, and Juno, the patron goddess of Rome itself. Religion was an everyday aspect of Roman life, and each family had a familiar patron god or gods who watched over their home and family. Cults of different gods were different depending on the mythology surrounding the area, and the aspect of the divinities personality represented by the cult. However, this polytheistic religion was welcoming of new gods, and so local gods and goddesses could easily find themselves incorporated into the Roman religious system by being associated with a Roman god. Examples of this retention of local gods and goddesses, and their incorporation into the religious system could be seen in many different regions throughout the empire, especially when it came to earth, nature, and fertility goddesses.

These religious practices were spread through trade and through the presence of Roman soldiers who brought their religion with them.

We are able to piece together these factors of culture thanks to archaeology. The site of Halmyris located on the Danube delta has been excavation since 1981 under the direction of Dr. Mihail Zahariade. The area of the fort can be seen as a sudden incline of the landscape in a relatively flat area. Since its beginning, the excavation has explored the northern, western, and eastern sides of the fort, revealing many different historical eras and changes of the fort itself. Literary sources tell us of the civilian settlement that surrounded the fort, however ground surveys thus far have been unable to find surface evidence to where that settlement might be.

Archaeology can tell us about the culture of the fort and the people who lived there through material culture that is found through survey and excavation. By finding inscriptions and being able to translate what they say, archaeologist can not only understand how important they are because of content, but also ascertain who the intended reader of these messages was. For example, if the message in an inscription has to do with local law or regulation, or is a message of dedication or notice, it is possible to grasp how literate the surrounding population was. If the information in the inscription has no seeable value to the common inhabitant, then it was most likely not intended for their understanding of the written language, meaning that the population had low literacy rates, or spoke and wrote a different language. However if the messages inscribed had value in terms of notices, and dedications meant for the eyes of everyone, as well as noting the abundance of inscriptions, it may be possible to surmise that that population once had high literacy rates. The language inscribed can also tell us a great deal. If the language is Latin, and used for more than just official markers and messages, than the language of literacy was most likely Latin for that area. To understand the culture of a site, archaeologists can try to

find evidence of their language, which is very important to the understanding of the culture of the people who once lived there.

Archaeological evidence also tell us, not only about the immediate culture of the site, but also of the site in the wider context of the Roman Empire. Coins from around the empire tell us about the trade and money that came in and out of the fort. Each province would mint its own coins, and the images on the coins reflect the time and place that they were minted. These images often portrayed the Emperor on one side and a symbol or god on the other. This can help archaeologist to date the layer in which it is found from that Emperors reign and afterwards, because coins would remain in circulation. This can also tell us from what parts of the empire trade with Halmyris came from.

Another way to gauge the trade in and out of Halmyris is the type of pottery found during excavation. Through the style and the type of clay used, archaeologists can understand where certain potsherds come from, linking that region with Halmyris. Larger sherds which show distinct features such as patterns, and lips and handles of vessels can not only help archaeologist identify the type of pottery it comes from, but style can help researchers identify the period in history in which it was made. Finding certain artifacts such as metal, bone, and pottery help archaeologists understand the uses of rooms and areas of the fort. This allows them to draw a plan of the fort during different times in the history of the fort and how the fort was changed overtime. These changes reflect the use of the fort, and tell us how changes in military patterns and obstacles affected the orientation of the fort and the concerns of the people who lived there.

Archaeological sites, such as at Halmyris, can affect the way the nations view their identity and their heritage. Modern politics and social views can affect the research that is done at historical sites, and vice versa, research of historical sites can affect the politics and social

views of heritage and nationality that countries have. Romania is no exception to this, and it has directly affected the research done at Halmyris. The region that is now Romania has a history of oppression and control by historical powers; first the Romans, and then later the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the Ottoman Empire. Scholars and leaders in the independence movement used the heritage of the Roman occupation of Dacia to justify the creation of an independent Romania that included the regions of Transylvania, Wallachia, and Moldavia, because they shared the same heritage. They viewed themselves as the decedents of the Romans, not the Dacians. As history changed, so did this political view. As a communist regime came into power the history books were changed, this time to portray the heritage of Romania to the legacy of Dacia, a country which had been oppressed, which fit more with the communist philosophy of a workers nation. Archaeology was made to fit with these changing models. Archaeological sites and excavations were funded by the government. At Halmyris itself, Dr. Mihail Zahariade was the director of forty Romania soldiers in 1981 until 1991 who worked as the excavators of the site. As political ideologies changed, so did the interpretations and analysis of finds change to fuel ideas of nationality and heritage. Even now, a museum is currently being built on site to promote tourism and national recognition.

Through time views of the heritage of Romania have changed with the changing political field, either emphasizing the influence of Rome on the region, or else diminishing it; either way, the influence of the Roman military can still be felt today.

CHAPTER I: THE INFLUENCE OF ROME AND THE ROMAN

MILITARY

The Rise of Trajan and the Roman Empire

The Roman Empire changed shape over the course of its reign, expanding rapidly from the time of the Republic until after the reign of Marcus Aurelius in 161 to 180 CE, after which the borders of the empire slowly collapsed inward back toward Italy. The Roman Empire stood at its height in size and military power during the second century CE. The beginning of the second century marked the ascension to power of the Emperor Trajan, who became Emperor of Rome in 98CE and ruled until his death in 117CE.¹

The emperor Trajan was born Marcus Ulpius Traianus in 53CE.² He was born in Italica, a town in Spain close to Seville, to a family who had only recently become noble among the patricians.³ He rose through the ranks of the military and senate, service as a military tribune when he was eighteen, later becoming Praetor in 86/87CE. Trajan seems to have moved swiftly in his career, which was not uncommon of Romans of his rank and class, being both a patrician and the son of a former consul and governor.⁴

Trajan was adopted at the age of 44 by the Emperor Nerva as his heir, who was crowned emperor by the senate after the Emperor Domitian's assassination in 96CE. Where Nerva was from a legal background and had no military experience, Trajan had spent his entire adult life

¹ Sherk 1988, 152.

² Bennett 1997, 13. The exact year of his birth has been debated in the past, however with evidence of the years that he held offices within the state and the known minimum ages those positions required it is strongly believed by scholars today that he was born in 53 CE. However if Dio's claim that Trajan was 41 when he became emperor in 98 it would suggest that he was born in 56 CE.

³ Henderson 1927, 174.

⁴ Bennett 1997, 13.

serving in its ranks, bringing military expertise and leadership that would help him cement his place as Nerva's heir.⁵ Nerva had no male heirs of his own, so he looked for a man who could succeed him as emperor who had the leadership and military experience, who could lead with the military's support, but also the support of the people. As Bernard Henderson states "[Trajan] was vigorous, experienced, loyal, a good soldier, a trusted administrator, a wise, plain, practical man of striking appearance."⁶ With Trajan by his side Nerva secured the loyalty of the military, and paved the way for Trajan to take full control of the empire and the army upon Nerva's death in 98CE.

At the time of Nerva's death, war across the Danube was looming, and Trajan was stationed with the army at the frontier. When news of Nerva's passing reached him, Trajan did not return to Rome once he was proclaimed Emperor, but rather stayed by the Danube, working with his army and preparing for what would a few years later launch the first of Trajan's Dacian Wars.⁷ Trajan treated the senate with courtesy during his reign, and although they tried to retain some influence and power, during his rule the senate "had little of importance under Trajan".⁸ Trajan worked to improve the empire, adding roads, bridges, harbors, and aqueducts to Italy and Roman provinces that still stand today. He was dedicated to improving Italy and Rome, using the empire's vast resources to its maintenance and care.⁹ Trajan died at the age of 64 in 117CE at Selinus, a small harbor town in the west edge of Antioch.¹⁰

⁵ Henderson 1927, 175-6.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid, 177-8.

⁸ Ibid, 181.

⁹ Ibid, 185-6.

¹⁰ Ibid, 336.

Under Trajan the empire grew stronger; its borders widened with the conquest and annexation of Dacia, more people were given Roman citizenship, he made education and financial reforms, and he reformed and improved the military to be a fighting force that would expand the empire to its greatest size under his successor Hadrian. Trajan's devotion to the empire is seen in the public works that he created and the buildings and infrastructure that he built that can still be seen today. The people who lived in the Empire under Trajan enjoyed a life of pleasantries compared to the past rule of Domitian and other emperors; they had no worry of compulsory military service, had no shortage of food, no internal class quarrels, and enjoyed a security that even the distant border wars could not shake.¹¹

Trade in the Roman Empire

Culture and ideas spread through the Roman Empire and to lands beyond its borders in many ways, the most common of which is trade. Once Halmyris was established as a military fortification, it secured the entrance into the Black Sea, which for military purposes was a strategic position, and for trade, was an avenue into the Eastern European trading market. Material culture is exchanged through objects and ideas. These objects can move from one end of a known world to the other, often being kept intact for hundreds of years and used for a variety of reasons, as we often see with pottery; made in one century of a purpose but being found leagues away in another culture often as funerary goods for a person who died hundreds of years after the pot or vessel was originally crafted.

¹¹ Henderson 1927, 338.

Trade in the ancient world was dangerous and posed many risks and hazards to the goods and the people transporting them. However, if all steps of transportation went well, a person could become very wealthy through trading endeavors. In Roman times there were two ways of transporting something from one end of the empire to another; land and water. Land travel was the most costly, dangerous, and time consuming of the two. Travel over land could face many dangers such as wild animals, bandits, bad weather, and the risk of the goods becoming damaged. These risks increased the further the goods had to travel. Roads in the Roman world were sturdy and well made. Most were laid down for military purposes, granting easy and swift passage for legions to traverse the Empire quickly and efficiently. However where the army went, the merchants and trade followed. A Roman road consisted of digging a trench, which was then filled in with stone or gravel to serve as a strong foundation with stone paving's laid down on top of the foundations.¹² Many Emperors including Trajan, worked to improve, maintain, and build new roads throughout the empire. However all roads could not be maintained to the highest standards, and so traders faced moving goods along roads that were not guaranteed to support the needs of a large merchant caravan, when the original purpose of the roads were military, not civilian.

All trade relied on weight, muscle, and weather. Land travel was very costly due to the fact that travel was slow and all members of the caravan needed to be payed; this included drivers and payed protection against dangers on the road,. The weight of the cargo also played an important role in land trade. Oxen, which were the primary means of animal labor to pull merchant wagons, were slow and the heavier the load, the longer it would take to transport from point A to point B. Cato the Elder wrote at length about the cost of moving an olive press over

¹² Meijer 1992, 141-6.

land, and this is one of the only bases that we have in ancient writing that gives us actual figures of money, rather than just stating the economic strain on a merchant trading over land.¹³ The more time that goods spent on the road, the likelier something would happen to damage or break the storage vessels of grain, olive oil, wine, or other goods. Larger building material would also pose the risk of falling and breaking, costing merchants small fortunes. Over all, land trade was costly, dangerous, and time consuming, and not the preferred means of travel of trade.

Trade over water was much more beneficial for the profit over cost ratio. A merchant who traded through sea and river routes had the potential to make very sizable profits through these endeavors. Sea trade could also transport goods from all over the Mediterranean to different parts of the Empire. Compared to land travel, sea barring vessels could hold thousands of pounds of goods for a very small cost. In the Roman world different harbors were known for different trade goods, and goods could be moved easily and with speed from one end of the empire to the other.¹⁴ This was a highly coveted trade avenue, as the many larger cities of the Empire, most notably Rome, needed grain and other goods shipped in from various places in the Empire to be able to feed its 1 million inhabitants.¹⁵

There were different types of ships in the ancient world for sea and river travel. Maritime archaeology can tell us a lot about how these ships were built, what they transported, and their trade routes. Depending on the cargo that is found, archaeologists can trace its routes by looking at coastal cities and what they were known for producing, the style of the material culture, where pottery came from, and what time period the coins were from, which can help tell us about the

¹³ Meijer 1992, 133.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid, 83-84.

time in which the ship set sail.¹⁶ Galleys were used for rapid transport of goods and people. Some of the largest ships were 40 meters long, and had a capacity for 400 tons. These ships were able to sail without oars while outside of harbors, did not need special harbors to dock, had large sails, and did not need to stay close to shore. Some of the smaller ships were entirely dependent upon oars and man power, and only used one sail in good winds. These smaller ships also had to stay close to shore. The amount of goods such as grains, olive oil, wine, textiles, and other goods could be shipped at little cost in extremely large quantities, making sea and river travel the most economically beneficial means of trade. The dangers of sea voyages was primarily weather, and may be the source of the shipwrecks that archaeologists now look at today to uncover the secrets of Roman trade and trade networks.¹⁷

Swift sea travel was made possible by currents and wind patterns. Going from North to South in summer was the fastest route, however making the trip in the opposite direction (South to North) would double or even triple the time at sea. Sailing season was during the summer and spring months, with sea travel considered “closed” between November and March. Only under special circumstances would sea travel be condoned, most notably for food shortages and for military reasons.¹⁸

Traveling up or on a river was not as swift or easy as sea travel, but if possible, river routes were more preferable than land routes. Rivers could get large quantities of goods inland quickly and relatively safely if the river in question was navigable and able to accommodate

¹⁶ Charlesworth 1926, 170; Meijer 1992, 152.

¹⁷ Meijer 1992, 152.

¹⁸ Ibid, 152.

ships. If a river became unnavigable, transporting goods over land was then the faster option, and necessary.¹⁹

The military protection that forts such as Halmyris provided was essential in protecting these trade routes. Pirates during the first century BCE plagued the important trade route along the coasts of Anatolia and Cyprus, causing Pompey the Great to be sent to rid the seas of them. He was able to accomplish this feat in six months, allowing trade from Anatolia, Syria, and Egypt to travel to Rome and the Western Mediterranean without fear. Roman roads were primarily built for the swift movement of troops and supplies for the army, but where the army went, trade followed; making the military the means of trade throughout the empire and beyond its borders.

Strategic placement of the fort of Halmyris was essential not just for the protection of the surrounding lands, and the military support for the chain of forts along the Danube, but also to protect and control the mouth of the Danube where the river meets the Black Sea. Halmyris possessed an important and protected harbor, where all boats and vessels would have stopped for trade and to resupply before going inland on the river, or out into the Black Sea. Two of the fortification walls at Halmyris faced the river delta and the Black Sea, making a perfect vantage point from the forts towers to view all activity through the mouth of the River.

These factors all contributed to the spread of Romanization. The military allowed safe trade routes to flourish, spreading Romanization. We can see this in the material culture that archaeologists find in what was Dacia. Different pieces of material culture can tell us about the trade that people conducted these areas. Coinage is the most prominent form of material culture

¹⁹ Ibid, 149.

that archaeologists can date and track through the empire. If the coin is preserved enough to see the engraving and stamp of a coin face, archaeologists can tell when the coin was minted, by who, and where. Many different provinces and cities in the empire would mint their own coins, with a stamp of the emperor or governor. Archaeologists can then have a date range for the coin and the corresponding context in which it was found. Trade can be tracked based on the type of coins that are found. Because different areas of the Empire minted different coins, if they are found in other areas of the empire, there has been contact through trade by those regions. Pottery is also a way to track trade. While the contents of a vessel such as an amphora do not survive the tests of time, the style of the pottery can tell archaeologists a lot about where it comes from and when it was made. Analysis of the clay used to make the pottery can also tell scientists what region of the world the clay is from. All these artifacts can show the extent of trade throughout the empire, and beyond its borders.

The Roman Military

The life of a Roman Soldier was a difficult one involving strenuous physical labor, long hours, and grueling conditions for, at times, sixteen to twenty years. Often they were stationed far from their home in a land where they did not speak the language and the army faced countless threats from the “barbarian hordes”. Why would someone, who in antiquity had a life expectancy of 40 years, choose to spend 20 of those years in the Roman Army where the chances of death were high and the work difficult? In the beginning of the Roman military during the formation and rule of the Roman Republic, a soldier would fight for Rome because it was his duty; his duty to Rome and his family as a citizen. To fight for Rome was to fight for Roman freedom and Democracy, and was considered not just a duty, but an honor. Although the reasons for fighting

in the Roman army changed over time, the prestige of being a soldier of Rome never faded; it only shifted from an honorable duty, to an honorable profession.

In the beginning of the Roman Republic, the army started out in its earliest form as guards of the small city of Rome on the Tiber River. These “guards” were comprised of the King, his body guards and retainers, and the members of the clans who lived in the city and surrounding territory. As the city grew, the army grew to comprise of nobility and their sons, who were known as the *Legio*, the levy. 3,000 men who could afford to equip themselves to fight, those who could afford horses and provide the proper equipment for themselves and their mounts were known as the Equites, in the Ordo Equester, these were the knights of the Roman Army in the mounted contingent.²⁰

The 6th King of Rome, Servius Tullius who ruled Rome from about 580-530 BCE is credited with reforming the military and creating the foundation of the Roman army that would evolve into the backbone of the Roman Empire. Five “classes” were created that separated men based on their wealth and age. All soldiers, at this point in time, had to provide their own weapons and armor. Those who could afford the best weapons and armor that included a bronze cuirass, oval shield, spear, sword, and greaves, were placed in the “first” class. The classes then went down until the “Fifth” class, where a soldier was armed only with a sling or stones, and most likely had nothing but a cloth tunic as armor.²¹ The class that a soldier was placed in determined his position in the phalanx, the rigid bodied fighting formation first introduced by the Greeks. The heavily armored men in the first and second classes would be towards the front to protect those who were less armored in the middle and back of the phalanx. As time went on,

²⁰ Kappie 1994, 14.

²¹ Ibid.

Rome continued to evolve; the kingship of Rome was replaced with a republic, the Republic expanded, capturing and incorporating neighboring cities into its growing territory.²² It wasn't until after the first attack by the Gauls from the North when Rome was sacked for the first time, did the army undergo a complete reformation. The ridged single-bodied phalanx was abandoned, and the maneuverable subsections of cohorts within the larger body of the legion became the standard formation of the army.²³ This led to the ability to change plan of attack in battle quickly, and allow fluid movement to strike at enemies from different directions. This transformation of the Roman Military would become the force that drove the Empire to all corners of the western world.

Recruitment of Soldiers

Recruitment methods of the Roman military changed over time. During the beginning of the Roman Republic, soldiers were recruited based on their economic status. Male citizens, from the ages of twenty to forty, were chosen for military service by a conscription system. Most soldiers' terms of service, which until 200BCE, was a full campaign, which could last an entire summer season. After their term of service, soldiers would return to their homes with the possibility of being called to serve again if Rome was in need of soldiers. A campaign season lasted from March to October. It wasn't until 200BCE that a core of "professional" soldiers began emerging in the army, owing to the need for fighting overseas and the need to leave garrisons of Roman troops in newly acquired provinces. These factors created the professional Roman soldier, a soldier who would serve the maximum of 16 years' service at a time, and then

²² Ibid, 17-20.

²³ Ibid.

reenlist when they were released back into civilian life. Veterans were given booty, treasure acquired during campaigns, as a reward for their service as well as their yearly pay. This “booty” was a major draw for recruiting young men as soldiers, who could leave the army with quite a bit of valuable treasure from seizing and looting enemy cities and territories.²⁴

A military recruit had to be a free Roman citizen. If a slave was found to have enlisted he could be put to death. Slaves could not be recruited, presented as substitutes, or conscripted. If this happened it would be the duty of the commander to see that they were punished, which usually meant put to death. It was the duty of the recruiting officers to recruit soldiers who were in good physical condition, mentally competent, and citizens of the empire.²⁵

The average age of recruits throughout the Republic and Empire was 20. Admittance into the Roman army required a physical examination, as well as background, and citizen checks. To become a Legionary, a recruit had to pass a rigorous physical examination which involved tests to determine his speed, strength, weapons handling, and courage. His age, height, and overall health were judged, and it wasn't until he passed these tests that he was allowed to swear the *sacramentum*, the military oath, and become a soldier of Rome.²⁶ Admittance to particular units was determined by a soldier's health and physical attributes. Only a Roman citizen could become a legionary, those who were unfit physically or were not citizens had the option of joining an auxiliary unit. Soldiers preferred to be placed in units that held the highest prestige, the largest amount of pay, and the shortest term of service.²⁷

²⁴ Ibid, 51.

²⁵ Campbell 2006, 11.

²⁶ Nicolay 2007, 158-9.

²⁷ Ibid, 165-9.

In the beginning of the Republic and into the Empire recruits had to be in good physical condition, however if physical ability was present, height was not as important, as “for brave soldiers are more valuable than tall ones”²⁸. As the empire expanded and there was a need for soldiers, emperors began to change the physical requirements needed to enter into the army. Trajan decreed that a man born with one testicle or a man with only one eye could serve in the army. Recruits who were not Roman citizens would be placed into auxiliary units and given official Roman names.²⁹

By the beginning of the 1st millennium the period of service was 16 years for the Praetorian Guard, the elite group of soldiers who were the personal guards of the Emperor, and 20 years for legionary soldiers.³⁰ However due to shortages of soldiers, a legionary could serve up to 30 or 40 years if they survived that long. It was not until the reign of the emperor Tiberius, who ruled Rome from 14AD-37CE that a standard term of service of 25 years was established, being discharged close to the age of 45. In the first and second centuries the term of service was made up of 20 obligatory years, plus an additional 5 years *sub vexillo*, however if a soldier refused to serve the auxiliary five years he could still be honorably discharged from the army after serving his 20 years.³¹

As the empire expanded, Rome was forced to rely more heavily on auxiliary forces and the militias that local rulers could provide. This later caused the military to allow local recruiting into the legions and auxiliary units. This allowed men to stay in their home provinces when

²⁸ Campbell 2006, 11-12.

²⁹ Ibid, 14.

³⁰ Nicolay2007, 159; Capmbell2006, 19-20.

³¹ Ibid.

previously they would have had no say in where they were stationed, and would have moved throughout the extensive empire during their tour of duty.

To join the Roman Legion a recruit had to be physically and mentally fit, of good legal and financial background, and a citizen of the empire. Everyone else who wished to serve in the military had to join the auxiliary units. Once a recruit was assessed and given his place among the legionaries he faced a demanding routine of physical labor, and bloody battle for up to 20 years. Passing the requirements of a recruit was one test, once a soldier gained entry into the ranks of a legion he faced many more tests and battles that could gain him glory and wealth, but could also see his death in the wars of the Emperors.

For auxiliary soldiers there was more specialty in the type of fighting that a soldier provided. Auxiliary soldiers were recruited from territories within or just outside of Roman control. These units provided specialty fighting such as cavalry or archery, but could also provide light infantry support for larger Roman legions. In the beginning of using such units auxiliaries were kept separate from Roman forces in ethnic groups and commanded by local leaders and chieftains, however in the later 1st century BCE they were integrated into the larger Roman forces, diluting their ethnic ties, which eventually caused the distinction between legionaries and auxiliary soldiers to become blurred.³²

The Legion

Roman Legions have their beginnings in the earliest construction of the army during the Republic. Roman citizens made up a body of 3,000 soldiers known as the *legio*, the levy, with

³² Campbell 2006, 33.

300 nobles and their sons. *Equites*, knights who could afford their own horses and equipment, and made up the mounted contingent.³³ As the Roman military continued to expand and grow in strength and numbers, changes were made to totally redefine the Roman Army. The strict Greek style phalanx formation became more flexible as it broke into smaller units that were able to adapt to changing enemy movement. These smaller units were the precursor for cohorts.³⁴

The Roman Legion was the core and strength of the Roman military. A legion was comprised of 4,600 legionaries, enlisted Roman citizens. The full capacity of a legion could be 5,000 soldiers when needed by the use of conscription, however these were few as they were not popular among the populations.³⁵ Each legion was split into ten cohorts commanded by officers called centurions. Within the cohorts, men were further divided into six smaller units called centuries of 80 men each. The first cohort of a legion was double the strength of the others.³⁶ In the beginning of the Empire Augustus raised 14 legions, and by 14CE there were 25 standing legions placed throughout the empire, most likely with an equal number of auxiliaries.³⁷

Military Life of a Roman Soldier

Once a recruit was given status as a soldier he was placed in a unit that fit his mental and physical abilities. Soldiers preferred to be placed in the cavalry units because they offered the biggest chance of advancement, largest amount of pay, and the shortest term of service besides the Praetorian Guard.³⁸ A soldier was put through training in military march, weapons handling,

³³ Kappie 1994, 15

³⁴ Ibid, 15-6.

³⁵ Ibid, 35.

³⁶ Campbell 2006, 48.

³⁷ Ibid, 80.

³⁸ Nicolay 2007, 169.

and military formations and strategy every day, even during peace time.³⁹ During the summer months all soldiers were taught to swim because at times soldiers would be required to swim across rivers when there were no bridges available and building one was not practical in time or resources. Soldiers were required to have weapons training every day; for new soldiers this required two training periods, once in the morning, and once in the evening. They trained in all types of weaponry, including throwing javelins to improve accuracy and strength. Older soldiers and veteran soldiers were required to have one longer period of weapons training every day where they would train in specific types on weapons based on their rank and unit.⁴⁰ Roman weapons and battle training was intensive and exhausting. Soldiers would perform military drills and maneuvers fully armed and equipped in military armor. As the Jewish-Romeo historian Josephus said in his writing of the Jewish Wars of the 1st century CE, “Indeed, it would not be wrong to describe their maneuvers as bloodless combats and their combats as sanguinary maneuvers.”⁴¹

By 14BCE there were 25 standing legions with most likely an equal number of auxiliaries.⁴² Each Legion had 10 smaller units called cohorts. 9 of the cohorts comprised of 480 men, while the first cohort had double that number. Each Legion also had a cavalry unit which was comprised of 120 soldiers who could fight while on horseback. When Augustus took sole power in 31 BCE he met the military needs of the Empire by establishing a standing, professional army. A soldier could now dedicate his life to fighting in the army and earn a living

³⁹ Campbell 2006, 16.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 17.

⁴¹ Josephus, Flavius, and H. St J. Thackeray. 1997, 3.75, pg. 26-7.

⁴² Campbell 2006, 80.

where pay and service conditions were clearly established to meet all categories of legionaries in the army.⁴³

Most soldiers spent their whole military careers among the ranks of the legionnaires, however there was some opportunities for special assignments and promotion. *Immunes* were soldiers who performed special services and were exempt from standard duties. This position was about the prestige and honor, *Immunes* did not receive any additional pay. The best opportunity for promotion was among the elite. Sons of prominent senators, generals, and knights had the advantage when it came to promotions, using their family name to get them better assignments and cavalry positions.⁴⁴ There were few defined paths to the promotion of centurions, the leaders and commanders within legions and cohorts; however it is known that a person of influence such as a high ranking centurion or general could write a letter to a commander in order to get a soldier transferred into another legion or unit with a promotion.⁴⁵

While most soldiers spent their entire career as legionaries, legions also had centurions, who were the leaders and commanders of the army cohorts. Not all of these centurions were well trained soldiers, some were wealthy elite and sons of influential senators and generals who enlisted as equestrians in order to obtain swift promotion in the ranks and further their career in the military as well as setting a future for possible political gain. As part of a wealthier class of Roman citizens centurions were normally well educated and would have had good promotion prospects. This also would have separated them from normal soldiers, which suggests that they were a separate group from the legionaries under their command.⁴⁶

⁴³ Ibid, 20.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 28.

⁴⁵ Ibid, 32.

⁴⁶ Ibid, 50.

A centurion was responsible for administration of his century, and issuing orders to the legionaries under his command during battle, as well as training and disciplining them.

Centurions were sometimes given temporary command of detachments of troops, providing opportunities to show off technical and leadership abilities that could be the stepping stone for a future promotion and more command opportunities. Unlike normal soldiers, centurions had more ability to move from legion to legion throughout their career and might serve in multiple units across the empire.

A soldier's life consisted of more than just military maneuvers and battles. Where-ever the legions went, they brought with them the protection of Rome, as well as Roman culture, and economic opportunity. Detailed records were kept on each soldier and the overall strength of the army. Soldiers were responsible for the building and maintaining of the forts and camps they lived in, and this activity affected the areas in which they were stationed. By the late second century there were legions and auxiliary armies permanently stationed in 19 Roman provinces.⁴⁷ The Roman army brought with it protection under which settlements could expand and grow economically as well as culturally. Archaeological evidence has found military weapons and tools in villages and structures throughout the empire and on its borders. This suggests that soldiers were partly responsible for construction projects, as well as the layout and design of towns and buildings.⁴⁸ Settlements would pop up around military fortifications and veterans would often create villages and cities close to their military posts when they were discharged from the army. Soldiers and forts would bring money into local economies because soldiers

⁴⁷ Ibid, 110.

⁴⁸ Nicolay 2007, 190-1.

would need to buy food, clothing, and tools from local traders as well as use local resources to build and maintain fortifications.⁴⁹

Military Fortifications

A soldier's life involved more than just weapons training and battles. Soldiers lived within military camps and forts which they built and maintained themselves using local resources. Roman forts changed over time, and their formation varied from fort to fort, however the basic principle behind them stayed the same. Roman forts always tended to utilize the high ground, being built on top of hills in the immediate vicinity of rivers, although there are some exceptions to this.⁵⁰ The higher ground was a strategic advantage, allowing visibility of attacking forces as well as the ability to shoot downward at enemy troops from above. Being close to a river provided the fort with water transportation for troops and supplies as well as fresh water and food.⁵¹

The military fort of the Empire shows little variation from the Roman military camp of the Republic. The layout of forts is basic, and generally has little deviation from base to base although the shape in which it is laid out in might vary. The fort was centered around the *Principia*, the command center of the fort which housed the commander of the Legion who might be a general, Praetor, or Consul. Next to the *Principia* was the forum, where an open air market where soldiers would gather, and in times of the Republic, assemblies would be held. The *quaestorium* would flank the *Principia* on the opposite side of the forum. This building (or tent in

⁴⁹ Campbell 2006, 142.

⁵⁰ Boon and Brewer 2000, 30.

⁵¹ Ibid.

the case of temporary camps) would house the quaestor, who in times of the Republic would handle the resource needs of the army.⁵² This post was later merged with the duties of the Principia during the empire, however it may have carried out some administrative tasks.⁵³

The barracks were placed in rows facing the Principia and Quaestorium.⁵⁴ There is little archaeological evidence of building within forts and camps to serve as the barracks. This suggests that they were made of light material such as wood with no foundations or they were simply tents erected in rows, however material goods have been found in numerous military sites to suggest this standard layout of barracks.⁵⁵

Roman forts and camps had a system of roadways. The primary road was the Via Principalis which ran in front of the Principia, separating it from the barracks of the troops. The Via Principalis cut perpendicular to walls of the camp that ran along the right and left sides of the fortification to the main gates, the Porta Principalis Dextra, and the Porta Principalis Sinistra.⁵⁶ A Roman fort ideally had four main gateways, one in the middle of each perimeter wall. However in practice this was not always the case, some excavated fortresses in Germany and other sites show that walls were sometimes not perfectly perpendicular to one another and roadways and gates were not always straight.⁵⁷

Roman Fortification tended to vary according to the terrain that they were built on, following the contours of the ground, even in situations where a more regular shape could have been achieved. These irregular shapes forced some fortifications to have asymmetrical roadway

⁵² Kappie 1994, 36; Boon and Brewer 2000, 35.

⁵³ Boon and Brewer 2000, 35.

⁵⁴ Kappie 1994, 36.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 35.

⁵⁶ Kappie 1994, 37.

⁵⁷ Boon and Brewer 2000, 37.

grids. Fortresses tended to vary in size based on the placement of the base and the number of troops stationed there. However the size of the fort and the number of tribune houses found on a site still gives us no indication of exactly how many troops may have been stationed there at any given time.⁵⁸ The archaeological artifacts found military sites throughout the expanse of the Roman Empire as well as letters and documents that have been found tell us much about what we know about military fortifications, the soldiers who fought in the army, and the equipment that they used.

Equipment of a Roman Soldier

Roman soldiers carried a variety of weapons and types of equipment that varied during the course of the Republic and Empire. From the beginning of the Army soldiers bought or brought weapons with them upon enlistment. Soldiers who could pay for better weapons and armor were among the higher classes and held more prestige in the army. As the Republic expanded and the career of professional soldier was created a more standardized list of equipment was established. By the time of the Empire and Trajan's Dacian Wars of 101 and 106, the Roman Army had a system put in place that retracted the cost of the weapons and armor from a soldier's pay over time. The soldier would be given standard weapons and armor upon enlistment and through a period of time their pay would be adjusted to accommodate the expense, meaning that even if a man was unable to pay for the arms, he could still join the army.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Nicolay 2007, 166-8.

Upon discharge from the army a soldier had the opportunity to sell his arms back to the army, keep them as symbols of status and inheritance, or to keep them to be buried with them upon their death. If a soldier died during his time in the army, his weapons may have been either given to a member of his unit, or to new recruits coming into the army. Weapons could also be given to soldiers as rewards for service and loyalty.⁶⁰ The Praetorian Guard did not have to pay for their weapons or have any of its costs subtracted from their pay, rather they were freely given their arms upon entrance into its ranks.⁶¹

Once given to a soldier, light weapons and armor would be the responsibility of that soldiers. This would mean that the soldier had to maintain and care for their weapons, causing soldiers to use local artisans and crafts man to repair and maintain their armor and weapons. This usage of local resources would have brought money into local economies, helping the regions where Roman soldiers were stationed. All heavier weaponry would be stored in rooms off of the praetorium in the camps for use when needed.⁶²

The dress, armor, and weapons of soldiers were uniform and provided by the army by the formation of a professional standing army. The dress of a soldier was a military tunic which was somewhat longer than the traditional Roman male tunic, which was the standard dress for male citizens through the 3rd century BCE.⁶³ The military tunic would be belted at the waist making the tunic fall just above the knees of a soldier. Ordinary soldiers were also outfitted with a cape or cloak. The first such option was a simple rectangle of heavy wool clasped by a broach on the right shoulder leaving a soldier free to swing his sword with his right arm. The other type of

⁶⁰ Ibid, 169.

⁶¹ Ibid, 170.

⁶² Ibid, 171.

⁶³ Goldsworthy 2003, 118.

cloak depicted in sculptures and motifs is a larger piece of fabric worn in the manner of a poncho. Military tunics were worn with a belt, and a soldier would wear boots with a hard sole, although depictions often show soldiers marching barefoot.⁶⁴

The armor of a soldier consisted of a helmet, shield, and mail armor. Helmet design varied depending on the legion and position of the soldier. Helmets typically had a metal head covering, with a lip at the back to protect the neck, some of which extended in multiple metal sheets to fully protect the neck. All helmets had some form of metal pieces extending from the head piece to cover and protect the sides of the face with could also support a strap that ran under the chin to secure the helmet. Leather covers were placed over the long rectangular shields called *scutum* that were carried by soldiers. Only during battle or formal parades were these covers removed. On the shields were the symbol and number of a soldier's legion.⁶⁵

Soldiers of Trajan's reign would have carried with them two standard weapons, a throwing spear and the *gladius*. The *pilum*, or throwing spear was a common weapon in the army until it fell out of use in the third century CE. Many spear heads from *pila* have survived in archaeological sites. The *pilum* consisted of a large iron spearhead attached to a long wooden shaft. It had an effective throwing range of up to 15 meters.⁶⁶ Some soldiers may have carried different javelins and throwing spears. It appears that only the first four ranks may have carried *pila* while the fifth to eighth ranks may have carried other forms of throwing spears. Soldiers also carried a *gladius*, a single handed sword with an iron ring pommel and a short blade that tapered to a sharp point. The length and width of the *gladius* varies over time, with the main

⁶⁴ Ibid, 118-19. Because cloth and linens don't survive except in rare, exceptional circumstances it is hard to know what the clothing of a soldier was based on archaeological record. What we do know is based off of the depictions of soldiers in images such as those on Trajan's Column, funerary monuments, and other reliefs.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 121-4.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 131-2.

difference between types being the handle and fittings, however the general design of the sword stays consistent.⁶⁷ Soldiers may have also carried a *pugio*, a roman dagger that varied in length from nine to fourteen inches. These daggers diminished in use and by the 2nd century BCE were very scarce, so much so that they do not appear on Trajan's Column. Auxiliary soldiers had different equipment, which depicted on Trajan's Column consisted of long chainmail shirts, flat oval shields, and they did not carry *pila*.⁶⁸

Soldiers were required to carry more than just their weapons and armor. A pack was carried from a pole that a soldier carried on his shoulder, or possibly from his *pilum*. A soldier also carried a *dolabra*, a roman military pickaxe which combined a spike with a cutting blade. These tools could be used to break up earth during construction on camps, or possibly to undermine enemy walls.⁶⁹ Other equipment that soldiers carried include surveying tools, spikes, tents, and bedding.

Weapons and armor held a strong symbolic and status value. Weapons and decorated armor showed the personal history of a soldier, and was a symbol of pride and honor that helped to shape their identity.⁷⁰ Both weapons and armor could be brought home by veterans after their term of service and could be used for a variety of things. Weapons could be used as votive offerings to Mars, Minerva, Jupiter, or other gods. Arms could also be passed down as family heirlooms, or given to sons to take into the army themselves.⁷¹ The weapons of a soldier were symbols of power, honor, purpose, and service.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 133.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 134-6.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 135.

⁷⁰ Nicolay 2007, 182.

⁷¹ Ibid, 177-180.

CHAPTER II: THE HISTORY AND POLITICS OF ROMANIA

From Dacia to Romania

Politics might not be the first thing that pops into mind when thinking about archaeology, but throughout the world politics has played a major role in the excavation and presentation of archaeology and its discoveries. Politics has a large role in how a people view themselves, and ideas of heritage have a lot to do with that perception. Politics can change, and with that the ideas of heritage and identity that ruling powers used to legitimize control also change. Not only do changing political powers shape the way a people see themselves, but history is used to justify control, and that means the use of archaeology and archaeological finds.

Romania is no exception to this political and historical dance. Ever since the Romans first stepped into the provinces of Moesia Inferior and Dacia, identity has changed for the people living there. Before the conquest of the region by the Romans, Dacia was a united kingdom under King Burebista, who was able to unite the smaller tribes of people against the growing threat of the Celts from the north, and the Romans from the south after 82BCE. As the Roman state began to turn from a republic to an empire, Burebista supported Pompey the Great in the Roman civil war. With the defeat of Pompey by Julius Caesar, the Dacian kingdom crumbled, splitting into four or five principalities.⁷² It wasn't until 87CE that Dacia reemerge as a united kingdom under a man named Decebalus. Decebalus fought against the Roman threat but eventually was defeated in 106CE by the Roman Emperor Trajan, during his Dacian Wars of 101-102CE and 105-106CE.⁷³

⁷² Pop 1999, 14-15.

⁷³ Ibid, 16.

With the conquest of Dacia by Rome, Roman influence spread throughout the region. The Romans brought military units, administration, their laws, their economy, and their language. They brought administrative figures, their religion, and of course, colonies of Roman citizens. These people brought with them their culture, and it mixed with local practices and culture as Romans and Dacians started to live together. They took on Roman material culture, evidence of which can be found in gravesites and ruins of settlements.⁷⁴ One of the biggest influences on the Dacians, and the later Romanian state was the influence of the Latin language. This language would later be the origin of the Romanian language. As the Romans retreated from the greater Dacian province, and the Slavs settled in on all sides of Romania, the Latin influences continued, creating a Romanic language with in a sea of Slavic.⁷⁵

The region of Dacia north of the Danube was a part of the Roman Empire for over 150 years until Roman administration retreated to south of the Danube in 271CE. However archaeological evidence shows that there still was a strong Roman influence at least in material culture north of the Danube. Trade and the Latin language continued to be an influence on Dacia, creating what Pompei Cocean calls the Proto Romanian stage from 275CE through the 6th and 7th centuries.⁷⁶ Christianity also played an important role in the creation of the Romanian identity. The Byzantine Empire still controlled areas south of the Danube and along the Black Sea, clear evidence of which can be seen at the site of Halmyris.

Roman rule of the region had heavy influence on the culture of Dacia. Latin mixed heavily into the regional languages which created the modern day Romanian language. Material culture found through archaeology also shows Roman influence through burials, trade goods, and

⁷⁴ Ibid, 20-23.

⁷⁵ Cocean 2008, 35; Pop 1999.

⁷⁶ Cocean 2008, 31.

architecture. All of these factors would contribute to the creation of the Romanian state, and the modern Romanian identity.

The identity that people carry is very important. People look to the past to understand who they are. Children are taught in school about their history. Identity and heritage are crafted from childhood. The Romanians have always referred to themselves as *Români*, which distends from “the Romans”, adapted to the Romanian language. This shows that the people at the time considered themselves to have Roman heritage, as they chose such language to describe themselves.⁷⁷

After the withdrawal of Roman administration in 274BCE, people separated into smaller communities, such as villages. With them they brought Roman law and administrative practices, and adapted them to fit to the smaller settlements. Gradually the once elected headman of these settlements became an inherited position, and the settlements and surrounding land became small kingdoms lead by the equivalent of a Duke. As a result of the conjoining of these smaller kingdoms for protection and power, the 13th and 14th century Romanian state was born, and Romania moved from the Latin age through the medieval period.⁷⁸ As the Middle Ages progressed, the territories of Transylvania, Wallachia, and Moldova were constructed. With increased military pressured from the Hungarians and the Slavs, Romania could not have a strong hold on all these regions. Transylvania was the settling place of many Hungarians, and the Hungarian Empire in the 12th century took it over, colonizing it with more Hungarian people, as well as pushing Roman Catholicism into the region. By doing this, the hope was that the religion

⁷⁷ Pop 1999, 34-6.

⁷⁸ Ibid, 136-7.

would spread beyond Transylvania into Wallachia and Moldova, making it easier for Hungary to gain control of these areas.⁷⁹

It is with this push of Catholicism that the spark of a Romanian state as we know it today was born. To try and gain converts to the Catholic Church, Romanian priests were sent to Rome by Hungarian authorities to study. There they learned of the power and reach of the Roman Empire and learned Latin. They brought back with them the idea of a Roman heritage, and preached Romanian ties to the Roman Empire, and the west. The fact that the Romanian language is a Romanic language, and the cultural and political remnants of a Roman past lead a trend in social thinking that Romanians were morally and socially superior to their Hungarian and Saxon neighbors in Transylvania.⁸⁰ Meanwhile social and political pressure lay on the Romanians from the Hungarians to the north and west, and the Byzantine and later the Ottomans from the east and south. The Byzantine Empire continued to have influence in the region of Dacia that would become the modern Romanian state. They continued to operate and control fortifications and cities along the South of the Danube and the western coast of the Danube, such as forts like Halmyris, until the Byzantines were forced to withdraw into Constantinople by the Ottomans, and eventually completely conquered by them. Although the Ottomans did not directly control territory in Romania, their influence was a constant pressure on the southern Romanian lands.

By the 14th and 15th centuries, Romania was divided into three principalities: Transylvania, Moldova, and Wallachia. Transylvania continued to be under the control of the Hungarians. Wallachia and Moldova became stronger in state against the increasing pressure and

⁷⁹ Ibid, 37-43.

⁸⁰ Deletant 1991, 61-66.

influence of the Ottoman Empire and Islam. To defend the Christian faith, these principalities and the Hungarian Empire waged war with the Ottomans. From this struggle came great Romanian heroes that are today remembered in Romania as national heroes and defenders of the state. They include Prince Vlad Dragulea, more commonly known as Vlad Dracula, or Vlad the Impaler, who in Romania is remembered more for his resistance to the Ottomans and his great military skill than for his often cruel and bloody practices. Prince Vlad ruled Wallachia between 1456 and 1462.⁸¹

Another Romanian leader to come out of the struggle against the Ottomans was Stephen the Great, whose rule is credited with the formation of the later Romanian state as a whole, and who was a defender of Christendom. Prince Stephen ruled Moldova for almost half a century between 1457 and 1503. He is credited with increasing the size and ability of the military, as well as increasing the economy and strengthening the monarchy.⁸²

By the end of the 16th century, the control and power of the Ottomans began to strain the principalities of Moldova and Wallachia. Prince Michael the Brave of Wallachia took control of his state in 1576 with support of the Ottomans, but once in power he turned against them by joining a coalition with Moldova, Transylvania, and the Hungarian Empire in a “holy league” for an anti-ottoman revolt.⁸³ Michael gained more political power by defeating the princes of Transylvania and Moldova in consecutive military moves, thus expanding his reign over all Romanian states. Prince Michael was assassinated in 1601 after a series of revolts of Transylvanian nobility in which the unified rule was broken up in 1600. While Michael the

⁸¹ Pop 1999, 63-4.

⁸² Ibid, 64-7.

⁸³ Ibid, 71.

Brave did not intend it, this brief unification of what had been Dacia was the foundation for the creation of modern Romania.⁸⁴

As the Romanian states entered into the 17th century, they were divided among the powers of the time; Transylvania fell under the rule of the Habsburgs. Moldova and Wallachia, while maintaining their autonomy, came to become dependent on the Ottomans. While they were still under Ottoman rule, they were not ruled directly such as Greece and the Balkans, which allowed their economies to flourish and their cultures to remain largely intact.⁸⁵ As the century progressed, Romanians continued to hold on to their Orthodox religion, a practice that had survived since the Byzantines controlled the region, keeping that aspect of Romanian culture alive in an otherwise catholic dominated area.⁸⁶

Romanians continued to be pushed and pulled between the European powers of the Polish, the Russians, the Habsburgs, and the Ottoman Empire until the mid and late 1800s. In 1848 a strong independence movement spread throughout the Romanian countries, resulting in Moldova and Wallachia joining into the first official Romanian State. Romania struggled for international recognition of its independence. Romania was not internationally recognized as an independent state until after the Romanian War of Independence, also known as the Russo-Turkish War of 1877 to 1878, during which Romania fought alongside the Russians against the Ottomans. Before that however, the government of Romania needed a leader, and they turned to foreign princes to come in and establish a monarchy, crowning German Prince Charles the First in 1866. During his reign, Prince Charles and the Romanian government took great strides to gain its independence, but meet with few results. It wasn't until the Russo-Turkish war in 1877

⁸⁴ Ibid, 71-3.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 80.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

that Romania was able to back Russia and other European political powers to gain its independence, and was officially recognized with the signing of peace accords in Berlin. Romanian lands along the Black Sea, and the Danube Delta, which after the Berlin peace accords where first left under Russian control, and were united with greater Romania in 1878. In 1881 Romania was declared a Kingdom, and Charles I was declared King of Romania.⁸⁷

At the turn of the century the Romanian economy was strengthening and industry was on the rise. Transylvania was still under the rule of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. When World War One broke out in 1914, due to political, familial, and social ties, King Charles and the Romanian government chose to keep the country neutral in the coming conflict. However that same year King Charles died, leaving his nephew Ferdinand I to take the throne. Looking toward the countries interests rather than familiar ties, King Ferdinand I declared war against the Austro-Hungarian Empire and her allies. Romania suffered severe losses in the first years of the war, however in the Central Powers final push into Romania, the Romanian army was able to hold them back and win important victories which saved the state. After the war ended, Romania was able to regain many territories that had not been a part of Romania for 100 years. In 1922 Transylvania officially became part of the Kingdom of Romania, making a complete and unified Romanian state.⁸⁸

Between World War One and World War Two, Romania's economy grew and strengthened, as did its standing and relationship with other European nations. Romania was a founding member of the League of Nations. During the outbreak of WWII, Romania allied itself with Germany, as an attempt to regain territories under USSR control. However these actions

⁸⁷ Ibid, 110-116.

⁸⁸ Ibid, 115-122.

and the political ramifications of a German and Axes Powers alimnet caused the Romanian monarchy to crumble, creating a totalitarian state lead by the military and leaving a young King Michael with little authoritative power. Eventually King Michael was able to break military control of the state, appoint a new government, broke allegiance with the Axes Powers and sided with the Allied Powers. Romania then fought alongside the USSR to liberate Northern Transylvania that remained under Hungarian control. After the war, Eastern European countries were divided between the west and the USSR into spheres of influence. This division left 90% of Romania under Soviet control, and the communist era of the country began.⁸⁹

Under communist rule the traditional political parties were abolished and the Romanian Communist Party took power. In 1947 King Michael I was forced to leave the country, and with the last remnant of the former political reign, Romania was officially declared “a people’s republic”. (Pop 1999:138-9) Romania under communism saw massive oppression and economic decline. In 1989 civil unrest grew to its breaking point, and the communist dictatorship fell.⁹⁰

The Importance of Heritage

Throughout the history of Romania, the heritage and identity of its people have played a vital role in shaping the country. From the Dacians to the Romans to Romanians, people have looked towards the past to shape who they are and where they come from. Trajan’s Dacian Wars in 101-102 and 105-106CE cemented Roman influence on the entirety of the region that would become Romania; however even before that Dacian culture was shaped by outside cultural

⁸⁹ Pop 1999, 133-5.

⁹⁰ Ibid, 145-6.

influence through trade and cultural contact with fortifications and settlements like Halmyris on the Danube Delta. The lasting Roman impact on the region was the spread of the Latin language, which shaped the Romanian language, as well as “Romanization” of Dacian culture through trade, administration such as laws, schools, and political practices, and the spread of Roman religion. The Roman army brought with them their culture; their language, religion, economy, and social customs. These, along with the influx of Roman colonists to the region integrated the province into the Roman Empire, impressing Roman culture onto the people and region. Without the initial military influence, as well as the stability and protection that the army supplied, the power of Roman influence would not have been felt so acutely in this region. It is in this way that the Roman Army was the catalyst for the cultural and social influence of Romanization.

As time went on, the Roman administration of Dacia retreated, and the pressure on the former province from the Hungarians and Slavs settled in around it. However the strength of the Romanized culture prevailed, and it can be seen in the Romanian language. Romania became a “Latin island in a Slav sea”⁹¹. As time went on and the former province broke down into smaller settlements and fiefdoms, Roman laws and policies were adapted to fit the new model of living, and the Roman-Dacian people continued to keep the cultural practices developed through the Romanization of the region alive.

Romanian priests from Transylvania, sent by Hungary to study in Rome, brought back with them the idea of a Roman heritage. They studied Latin, and found the roots of their language in that of Rome’s. They learned about the legacy and power of the Roman Empire, and brought that back as the heritage of the Romanian people. This idea spread into Wallachia,

⁹¹ Cocean 2008, 35.

Moldova, and other Romanian regions, and gave the Romanian people claim of decent from the Romans. This allowed the Romanian people to consider themselves of nobler stock than the Slavs, Ottomans, and Hungarians that were oppressive forces in these regions; especially in Transylvania where they were denied many political and social rights by the Hungarians.⁹² Following WWI, the Romanian political powers used this idea of Roman heritage to argue for Transylvania and other small regions, defending Romania's "Historical Right" to Transylvania, claiming that they shared a common Roman heritage based on the presence of the Romanian language.⁹³ It was through this argument that European Powers ruled in favor of Romania gaining control of the region from Hungary. This Roman heritage also linked Romania to the Western world, rather than the east, the Ottomans, and to Russia, as darkening political times loomed with the spread of communism and threat of war.

During the communist regime of Romania, the Soviet Union used political manipulation to isolate its satellite states, including Romania, away from western influence. To succeed with this in Romania, the Latin root of the Romanian language had to be suppressed, and the Slavic influences of the language were pushed to the forefront of social views of heritage.⁹⁴

During the Romanian movement for independence, leaders stressed inheritance of Rome. They claimed that they were the descendants and true inheritors of Rome, saying that during Trajan's Dacian Wars, the Dacian people were wiped out and the Roman colonized the region. By taking up this identity, Romania aligned itself more with Western nations and Romanic nations than the surrounding Germanic, Ottoman, and Russian Nations. Under the influence and control of the Soviet Union, the politics surrounding heritage shifted dramatically. Instead of the

⁹² Deletant 1991, 65-7.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

pervious stance of a completely Roman heritage, the communist regime chose to claim a Romanian heritage from the Dacians, distancing themselves as much as possible with the legacy of a Latin origin.⁹⁵ The Dacians were a resilient and hard-working people who were oppressed by numerous powers, including the Romans. By claiming this inheritance, the Communist government claimed decent from such people as the values of communism held in high esteem, the hard-working people or the land.

The Archaeology of Heritage: Looking at the Past through the Eyes of its Archaeology

Now, Romania is attempting to distance itself from its communist past. The communist government fell in 1989 with the overthrowing of the dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. This can be seen in the use of his unfinished palace at the center of the historic district in Bucharest. After his fall and execution, Romanians wanted to distance themselves from his legacy. They chose to make the palace into the house of the Romanian Parliament, and highlight the architectural and artistic feats of the Romanian artisans who created it. Tourism has forced the Romanian state to highlight the architectural and artistic features of the building which highlight Romanian skill and craftsmanship, while guides avoid mentioning the communist past and origin of the building.⁹⁶

Tourism, like in many countries around the world is shaping how countries present themselves and their pasts to the people who visit their museums and national and historical monuments. Many countries saw dramatic increases in tourism after the fall of communism.⁹⁷

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ Light 2000, 170.

⁹⁷ Ibid, 162.

These countries seek to present their national identity and uniqueness through their history and their culture. They do this through their museums and the historical sites, which can relate a country's national story and cultural identity.⁹⁸ For Romania, this means emphasizing its Roman and Dacian heritage, as well as its medieval history and the popularity that it has received through the works of such authors as Bram Stoker, who wrote the novel *Dracula*. The Romanian government has funded archaeology throughout the communist and modern periods of the country, and has used those excavations to promote the national identity that they wish to relay to their citizens and the world through museums and archaeological sites which allow tourism.

Tourism can have different effects on archaeology, which can both benefit and hurt a site and the scientific and historical data it produces. Because excavators and directors of sites go into an excavation with the direct purpose of preparing the site to become a tourist attraction, liberties are taken to ensure a good experience for the average person who may not have any prior knowledge of the site or the time period which it covers. This is a cause for excavators to only excavate to certain contexts, where a section is then left with a level context of the same time period as to not confuse visitors as to the layers that they are viewing. This also means that any finds and contexts below the one stopped at by excavators cannot be examined, which means that any important finds and data that can tell archaeologists about earlier occupation and activity of sites is untouchable and unknowable.

Rather than excavating context by context until you hit bedrock or sterile soil to see all periods of human habitation and development, archaeologist participating in this type of public archaeology must always be aware of the greater picture in how tourists will see the site and

⁹⁸ Ibid, 157-8.

understand it. People who have no prior knowledge must be able to read information signs, understand them, and interpret the archaeology accordingly. A director of an excavation working in this frame of mind is always conscious of the public aspect and relation to their work, which affects the way that sites are presented and excavated. In the end, which this type of public archaeology and heritage tourism the information and presentation of sites are controlled by organizations, governments, and the media.⁹⁹

Sites can also be damaged by the number of tourists who travel through them. Even just the act of repeatedly walking along the same paths erodes the soil, and touching stones, tiles and walls of trenches slowly degrades the artifacts, the features, and the buildings of sites. In America, things tend to be roped off, there are places that you can walk, and places that you can't, however in many sites in Europe, including Romania, there are no ropes stopping tourists from jumping into trenches or touching columns and walls. You also get vandalism at sites, people who carve their names into ancient stone walls, and trash left at the sites. Restaurants, gift shops and other commercialization also creep into and around sites, changing the dynamic and spirit of the historic site.¹⁰⁰

This type of public archaeology which is geared towards catering for tourism has pluses and minuses. The public interest provides money for the site which can allow for more excavation. It also allows for the protection of the site as well as maintenance and restoration. Having more of a public face can provide education about the site and the regional and national history and cultural identity, as well as providing economic development around sites because of

⁹⁹ Baram 2011, 123.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 115.

the increase in traffic through those areas, and the shops and restaurants that can flourish around tourist attractions.

All of these effects of public and heritage archaeology can be seen at the site of Halmyris. During the five week excavation seasons which I was a member of the archaeology team we saw tourists almost every day wandering through the site. Parts of the site which were already excavated and some of which have seen restoration work were complimented with signs in both Romanian and English to help visitors understand what they are seeing. The West Gate, which has been partially restored served as the entrance to the site, where tourists saw the late phase fortification walls which protected the military fort. From there they move on to later Byzantine periods with the Basilica and bath house, only to move back in time to successive stages of the North Gate and towers. From there they moved on to the current excavation where they could see actual archaeologists hard at work! Which often meant seeing sweaty undergraduate and graduate students haling dirt and rock, and listening to a variety of hip hop and rap music.

It is because of this influx of tourism in recent years that the directors of the site, Dr. Mihail Zahariade and Dr. John Karavas view archaeological development always with tourism on their mind. In my trench, trench B2, we had to leave paving stones surrounded by level context soil in “steps” which would allow tourists to see different occupation phases, rather than be able to see what lay beneath those contexts which may have given more clues as to what was going on in later contexts. It is because of this that the whole picture may have been denied to us, however for the purpose of tourism, those “steps” had to remain as they were.

Another large improvement for the site is the construction of an on-site museum which will house many of the artifacts discovered at Halmyris. During the summer of 2015 which I worked on the excavation, the museum was being built. Many of the artifacts that have been

found previously have been both housed and displayed at the archaeology museum in Tulcea, or in storage in Bucharest. Dr. Zahariade will be the curator of the new museum, deciding what to display and what to highlight about the site, although when asked he denies the title of Curator but admits to all the responsibilities of that position. The museum will be a major improvement to the site, which does not even have a sign to announce its presence from the road, which could draw more tourists. The site also has a small shop, run by the site handyman and daytime guard Mikhail. Through this the excavation gets some funding, as it is hard to get the funding needed to maintain the site from the grants of the government and the University of Bucharest, where Dr. Zahariade is a professor.

Halmyris, and other sites like it in Romania have seen a surge in tourism of both national and international people. The region of the Danube and of Romania where Halmyris lies has seen an increase in economy and accessibility in the last five years. Improved and paved roads, as well as a bus service make transportation much easier. While I was excavating at Halmyris, and living in the local town of Murighiol, I saw tourists from Romania, Britain, Turkey, Australia, Canada, and the United States come through the site, as well as school groups of Romanian children. The fact that the site itself doesn't even have a sign marking its location makes it all the more impressive that people are interested in exploring this site, seeing its history, and its link to Romanian history, and ultimately reinforcing its linkage between Rome and the Romanians.

CHAPTER III: THE HISTORY OF HALMYRIS AND A PERSONAL LOOK AT THE ARCHAEOLOGY

Halmyris

Along the Danube River, close to where it's delta empties into the Black Sea, there are a series of three Roman Forts which in ancient times protected the land south of the Danube from barbarian invasions. The ruins of these once great Roman forts can be seen scatted in the bush and dirt that is now their resting place. The fortress of Halmyris was the last fortification on the Danube, standing fast and tall on the point where the river met the sea. Its ruins are being uncovered to this day, and its secrets trying to be revealed. Halmyris gets its name from Greek, and is a reference for the salted lakes in the region.¹⁰¹

Halmyris is located 3-4 km northeast from the town of Murighiol, Romania. It is surrounded by sunflower fields on one side and corn fields on the other. The site rises against the relatively flat landscape in the form of a rounded grassy hill; these are the remains of the fort. Halmyris as it stands now went through many periods of construction and destruction throughout its occupation. The early Roman fortress was built on top of a documented 1st century Roman settlement, which presumably had been moved to accommodate the new structure. The site itself shows three main periods of occupation; the native settlement from the 4th-1st centuries BCE, the Early Roman settlement and fort occupied through the 1st-3rd century CE, and the later Roman fort and civilian settlement from the late 3rd century to the 7th century.¹⁰²

The early fortress was a replacement for a suspected wooden, temporary fortification from the time of the Emperor Vespasian. The early stone fortress is suspected to have been built

¹⁰¹ Zahariade 2015.

¹⁰² Zahariade 1991, 312.

in the early second century CE, which would correspond with the first of Trajan's Dacian Wars in 106CE. The construction of the early fort is marked by the construction of a shrine dedicated to Hercules by a legionary detachment of the Legions *I Italica*, and *XI Claudia pia fidelis*.¹⁰³ During the middle of the 3rd century, the fort saw its first major reconstruction along the southern, western, and northern sections of the fort, due to destruction caused by Gothic invasions. During this reconstruction, the towers some of the 15 towers, shown in the excavation of tower number 7, which were spaced at intervals along the fortification walls, were changed. The previously rounded tower that jutted out of the wall was reconstructed to become larger and rectangular. The walls and the gates of the fort were reconstructed in various ways over its life span. Between the second and third century CE during one phase of reconstruction the normal, rectangular construction of Roman forts was abandoned at Halmyris, and the northern wall was reshaped, the top corners of the fort were removed leaving the walls to form a point at the Northern gate. (Have image reference). The Northern gate was also fortified with a double gate, towers that projected 9meters from the wall for better visual of the gate and surrounding area, the gate itself was thickened, and the walls along the Northern side were thickened as well.¹⁰⁴ The Northern wall was at the banks of the Danube River, and where the corn fields are currently was in ancient times the protected harbor of Halmyris. There was also another gate opened along the north-east, which might have been used for better access to the harbor for movement of goods.¹⁰⁵

The fort went through multiple phases of reconstruction over time as the military applications of the fort were diminished by the gradual movement of the Danube away from the fort, and the slow shift to a more civilian outpost. It is also known that as the empire progressed,

¹⁰³ Ibid, 314.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Zahariade 2015

the military changed from a policy of professional soldiers sent to the frontier, to having local soldiers stationed at military posts. The archaeology shows multiple destruction layers through evidence of burned floors, pottery, and layers of ash and charcoal. . The largest, and most extensive reconstruction of the fort seems to be the Justinian reconstruction of the fort. At the end of the military occupation, the Northern gate was blocked off with a rubble wall, prohibiting its use. This abandoning of the gate may be related to the movement of the course of the Danube. As the military function of the fort diminished, it would have housed fewer and fewer soldiers, making the closing of the gate logical from a military and defensive standpoint; the fewer gates that needed to be manned, a fewer number of soldiers were needed to man the fort.

Excavation of Halmyris started in 1981 under the direction of Dr. Mihail Zahariade. Before excavation began, ground survey found pottery sherds, traces of walls, and stone blocks which suggested to researchers that the fortress written about in archaeology literature lay there. Between the years of 1981-3, and 1985-6, a series of five excavation campaigns from the grass to the bedrock. These were executed in the primary method of the time with the digging of two main trenches, East-West 220x2 meters, and North-South 285x2 meters.¹⁰⁶ These primary excavations revealed the three main levels of occupation as stated above through the artifacts and superposition of walls and floors of buildings. It appears that the abandoning of Halmyris as a military fort only happened after the siltation of the river and harbor at Halmyris to shift the banks of the river and sea northward. While the military function of Halmyris was gone, the site continued to be a civilian center until well into the 7th century CE.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Zahariade 1987, 1.

¹⁰⁷ Zahariade 2015.

Another transformation of the interior fort was the building of an early Christian basilica late in the Constantine era. The area on which it was built was cleared for holy ground thus the previous archaeological records appear to have been destroyed with its construction. Within the basilica, directly beneath the floor was uncovered the grave of a woman from the medieval period, who appears to have been a warrior due to the nature of her death, an arrow head to her neck. Beneath the basilica was uncovered a crypt which held two individuals. The crypt, which was robbed in antiquity had frescos painted on the walls and two shelves on which the bodies would have lain. When discovered by archaeologists however the bones of the bodies were strewn on the floor and mixed with one another. After analysis, it can be said conclusively that these are the remains of two martyrs who were known in literature to have been martyred at Halmyris, but otherwise were unknown in the archaeological record until this point. These are the bones of the Christian martyrs Epictet and Astion, who were executed in 290CE.¹⁰⁸ The fact that an early Christian Basilica is found not only within the walls of the fort, but in fact at the near center of the fort is significant to the social and religious changes of the period. The basilica is located where the headquarters of the fort would have been had the fort continued as a prime military fortification. The fact that the Quaestorium was removed to build the basilica at the center of the fort is telling; at the time of its construction Halmyris had shifted from a military operation to a civic and civilian one.

¹⁰⁸ Zahariade and Phelps 2002, 31-35.

An Archaeologists Look at the Halmyris Excavation and the Town of Murighiol

To understand what the dynamic of the group of archaeologist working on the site of Halmyris was, you must first understand the area in which we were living. The site of Halmyris was three or four kilometers east of the town of Murighiol, depending on which sign on the main street you chose to believe, there were three which told you differently. Murighiol is located just east of the Danube delta on the banks of Lake Murighiol, in the larger municipality of Tulcea. There are a little over 3,700 people living in and around the town proper currently. There were a mix of people in the village; younger families who were embracing more modern ideas and technology and stepping away from the traditional means of income, which were farming and fishing, to open up shops, restaurants, and to get jobs in the nearby city of Tulcea. There are also many people who work as fisherman and farmers. It is some of the farmers that you see still using horses and carts to move around the village and country side.

The village had two main streets interesting perpendicular with each other at the main junction. At this junction there is the main pub of the village called Girus that also serves as a restaurant and hotel for tourists and other travelers. There are three pubs in the village, all of which had their own patrons who were loyal customers. The excavation team that I worked with mainly frequented Girus, but also went to Marion's pub, to give her the business as well as to keep a good relationship with her and her small store that she kept as well. The other pub was only frequented by locals, and it was an unspoken rule that the team would not go there, perhaps because the intimidating local men always sitting out front, and the fact that the Greek Director of the site had no immediate connection to that pub.

There was one general store in the town that served as a market and a hardware store. You could buy things ranging from your groceries, to soap and detergent, to extra pipe joints and

sock wrenches. Almost everyone in the village had to frequent the general store, or spend the hour long, 11 Leu bus ride to Tulcea to visit one of the city's supermarkets. If the general store did not sell what you were looking for, you would have to spend the time to get it in Tulcea, or else try to get what you were looking for from a neighbor. There were a few small kiosks that sold drinks, snacks, and other small grocery items, and it was one of these kiosks that turned into the local heavy bar at night.

Food in Romania was heavy on meat and cooked vegetables, mainly potatoes. They enjoyed fried foods such as strudel. Soups are another staple in their diets. Every lunch hot soup would be served along with meat and vegetable as an entrée. While at first it was a little strange to be eating hot soup on a day where the hottest temperature could reach over 90°F, it soon became normal. The hot soup acted to increase your body temperature, making you more comfortable in the heat of the day. The soup often contained fresh fish caught in the Danube. Many of the residence of the village were fisherman, including the family who housed many of the excavators. Fresh fish was easy to find in this region was the main food staple behind meat. To my displeasure, I soon realized that Romanian food uses a lot of cilantro and dill in their dishes, not my favorite herbs. If you do not like chicken, fish, cilantro, or dill, you may have trouble finding food that you like to eat in this region of Romania.

Wild Packs of Murighiol

Throughout all of Romania, stray cats and particularly stray dogs roam the streets in packs. Murighiol was not exception to this. Each street dog pack of from 2-5 dogs had their own territory within the town. Often you would have a companion of one of the more social dogs who

would follow you to trips to the bank, store, or bar. These packs of animals would war against each other during the night. From about 10pm to dawn, if you wandered the streets of Murighiol you could be at risk of being surrounded and threatened by one of the dog packs. Indeed, one member of our team did walk home one night from a party only to discover himself being followed by four or five dogs. He took a ceramic roof tile that was lying broken on the ground around him and was ready to defend himself if it proved necessary. Thankfully it did not, as the dogs ran when he yelled at them to get away. He was happy about this, because when he got back to his hut where he was staying at Girus, he discovered that the tile had the same markings on it as a Roman roof or floor tile, making him believe that it might have been ancient. He boasted for two days how he was able to stare down the “vicious” pack of dogs and claim a prize (he kept the tile propped up in his room). However he decided not to show it to one of the directors of the dig, Dr. Karavas because he was afraid of being told it was modern; he decided to keep his story of events in tacked, that he found a piece of history, and used it to defend his life.

Stray dogs and cats were everywhere, wandering the streets, and although they became territorial to the point of violence at night, during the day and around people most were very friendly. There were two in particular that attached themselves to different members of the team and would follow them as they walked down certain streets (probably within their territory), as well as stay with us while we waited for the bus in the morning to take us to the site. Some of the girls on the dig started naming the dogs, and soon the names stuck with all of us using them. By the end of the four week excavation I think that every dog in the town had been named at least once.

Cats were also very numerous in the town, although they seemed to be more shy of humans than the dogs were. However one group of excavators did find a black kitten on the side of the road and decided to give it to Dr. Zahariade, the head director of the site, and a known lover of cats. However it soon became clear that although the little kitten was welcome in his home, he did not have the time to look after it as it was still very young. Some of the girls of the excavation became very attached to the little kitten and a plan was formulated to get it vaccinated and taken to live with one of the girls in Brussels.

The residence of Murighiol had mixed reactions to the many cats and dogs that shared their streets. Some residence had their own pets; well groomed, well fed dogs and cats. You could tell the pet dogs from the street dogs because they were never outside without their owners, and when they were, they stayed close to their humans. Some residence liked the street dogs and cats, and left out food for them. Some residence obviously did not, although so many animals roamed the street that you couldn't walk outside without seeing more than one. The dogs of the street had the run of the town. They would walk right into the general store, or into the kiosks and restaurants.

Social Life in Murighiol

There were three bars in Murighiol, two that the excavation team frequented and one that was unofficially locals only. Girus, the main restaurant in town was also a bar. This restaurant was where the excavation team ate their meals during the week. They had an outdoor covered area where they could seat all 30 of us. There were tables inside the bar and on the sidewalk outside frequented by the locals. Each bar had their own regulars who were loyal to their favorite

bar.¹⁰⁹ Girus' bar stood on the corner of two main roads in Murighiol, catty-corner to the "auditorium", and adjacent to the town hall. It got a lot of traffic, not just from locals but also tourists who were passing through the area. The inside always smelled heavily of cigarette and cigar smoke, you could see the haze in the air by the low lighting of the room. The bar had a pool table that was most frequently used by the excavation team, however some of the younger Romanian patrons also used it. There were three electronic gambling machines in the corner that were most popular with Romanian men over the age of 50. The most common thing to do in the bar for its patrons was to drink and play a game that looked like a cross between dominoes and cards. It was a gambling game, and could get quite heated. This game was played every afternoon and evening by men ranging from younger, mid-twenties, to 60 and older.

Almost no Romanian women entered the bar, except the women who worked there. Girus' wife and daughter ran the bar and restaurant because he was almost always in Tulcea working on another business project. His daughter's son would also hang around the bar. He was no older than 10 years old and would often hang out with some teenagers who frequented the bar drinking Coca-Cola and playing cards. He would also help his mother with wiping down tables and restocking the drinks. The bars were the place to be for the older men of the town. There are no other restaurants or public spaces for people to idle and chat. Every night the same men would sit, smoke, and play card and domino games, and talk; generally ignoring completely the 30 odd Americans, Australians, and other Europeans that had descended on them for a month.

Children would roam the small plaza outside the auditorium and town hall. There was one school in the town with a hard court that had soccer goals at either end as well as a

¹⁰⁹ These statements come from many observations over the four week excavation period.

playground, however I never saw any children playing there, perhaps because school was not in session. Instead, starting around 3 or 4 in the afternoon small groups of kids ranging from ages 6-12 would run around the plaza. When the excavation team had lectures in the auditorium, the kids would look through the windows, propping each other up to get a good vantage point; trying to see what we were up to, watching lecture PowerPoints even though they probably could not fully understand what was being said.

I found that many of the younger people in the town spoke English, at least a little bit. A few times when I was in the general store, a young girl who must have been helping out relatives working at the store would pass me and say “speak English” to tell me that she could help me if I needed help. Another time an older women was trying to say something to myself and two of my companions. A young man came out of the kiosk and was able to help up translate and answer the women’s question as he could speak rough English. While the adults in the town generally could not speak English outside of maybe a few words, it seems that some of the younger people and children could. This may have something to do with the increase in tourism and modernization of the town in the past five or so years.

The Changing of Murighiol

Murighiol has changed drastically since the time of the first excavation. Dr. Mihail Zahariade started excavating Halmyris in 1981 with 40 Romanian soldiers as his excavators. Murighiol during that 80s was home to 2,000 people, now it is home to close to 4,000. Cars and paved roads only came to Murighiol stating 5 years ago. Before that the town was hard to access because of the dirt roads and lack of transportation. Even today some of the residents, many of

them still farmers, still use horse and cart to get around, as well as to get their goods to markets. Cars are becoming more and more prevalent in the town, and traffic through the town has become more frequent. This is helped by the bus system that now allows residents more frequent and easier access to neighboring towns and cities, such as Tulcea. There was one bus company that made a circuit of the towns and Tulcea. The Buses were 20 passenger busses that would tell you their stops by a sign in their front window. The trip to Tulcea from Murighiol was about an hour long, and some residents would commute on the busses every day to go to school or work in Tulcea, something that before had not been possible. The bus line opened up travel and greater access to areas outside the town.

These improved roads and access to Murighiol brought money into the economy through more access, and thus more traffic through the town. For being a small fishing and farming town, Murighiol's main street was very busy with motorist traffic. Tourists began passing through, and stopping in the town. I had a nice conversation with a couple who were British expats who were now living in Turkey. They were on holiday in Romania visiting different archaeological sites. Funnily enough they hadn't heard of Halmyris, the site not having a large website or even a sign to mark its place on the road, and were happy to hear about the site and know where it was located.

According to Dr. Zahariade, the residence of Murighiol and the surrounding county are taking advantage of the increased tourist traffic. The amount of motel type accommodations for tourists have increased dramatically in the last five years. The general store as well as been able to increase its food variety as well. The amount of tourists in the area has increased enormously. In Murighiol on the main street there were at least three houses with signs outside of them

boasting Danube River tours, and if you walked down toward the river, which was about a 4-5 km walk, you would see many more.

The amount of tourism the area was generating has culminated in a five star hotel resort, which was built between the summers of 2013 and 2014. This resort is right on the banks of Murighiol Lake with fantastic views. The resort has a pool with lounge area and a bar, which outsiders can use for a fee of fifty Leu, which in US dollars was about \$12. Many people on the excavation team took advantage of this close by luxury to go and spend a weekend afternoon easing aching muscles in the warm sunshine and cool waters of the pool; and of course visiting the five star restaurant that served a variety of dishes including Italian, after their dip. The resort would give you a green plastic wristband clipped around your wrist, so if you decided to keep it on, or were able to take it off without having to cut it off, you could visit the resort pool multiple times on the same wristband. It shows how fast the area is modernizing, having a five star resort right next to farmers who are still using horses and carts.

The Excavation Team, and the Excavation

To really understand my experience in Murighiol, it is important to understand the excavation team I worked with as well as the site I worked on. There were about 30 people on the excavation team, mainly students, graduate students, and archaeologists with their masters or undergraduate degrees in Archaeology. The majority of people on the dig were Americans in their 20's, although one girl, an undergraduate, was still 19 years old. There were two Australians on the team, both in their 40's, and both just on the dig for fun. One of them, Adam, was a geologist, which came in very handy when trying to identify certain rocks (or trying to

differentiate ceramic from sedimentary rock). He was doing this for a vacation because he always wanted to be an archaeologist as a kid, but went on to geology as he got older as the next best thing. The other Australian in the group fit almost every stereotype for Australians that I have ever heard. Murphy was loud, boisterous, and had one of the foulest mouths that I have ever heard. He was a musician, playing in different bands in Australia, but had a Bachelor's degree in Archaeology, and said that he hadn't been on a dig in probably 20 years. Murph was just here for a good time, and I do believe he found one. There wasn't a night that went by that you wouldn't find Murphy in the "pub", offering to buy everyone who came through the door a beer. He made it a point to buy every single member of the team a beer at one point. More than once he showed up bleary eyed in the morning, more than a little hung over. However Murphy never skipped a day of work because of it, and was always ready with a joke and a laugh.

The other members of the group who weren't Australian or American were European. We had two members from the UK. Adam (another Adam) was a ceramics expert, studying to get a PhD in Roman Ceramics and preservation. He was our pottery expert on the team, and so frequently got the age old "is this rock or pottery" question at least tens of times a day. Adam was always cheerful and really loved his pottery. During pottery washing, which happened every evening, he led a few workshops on pottery identification and preservation. (To distinguish him from the other Adam, I always called him "British Adam", and the other Adam "Australian Adam", although many people referred to them as "Pottery Adam" and "Geology Adam".) The other Britt in our midst was Linda. Linda, originally from Scotland, now lives in Paris as a French Translator; although she knew many more languages besides just English and French. Linda was a fascinating individual. She must have been in her early 60s and had lived all around

the world. She was short and rather squat and had large round glasses which made her eye look like insect eyes. Linda was fantastic to speak too.

The other Europeans in our group were two girls in their mid-20s from Belgium and one in her mid-20s from the Netherlands. All three girls were studying Archaeology in graduate programs in Europe, and had lots of prior archaeology experience. There was also our fearless leaders. Emily was our site coordinator. A PhD student at Durham, Emily has been on the Halmyris dig for five years, two of which have been in this position. She, along with three other members of the team who were well experienced at the Halmyris site, Natty, JQ, and Graham, were all trench leaders. Each trench was divided into three or four sections with a section leader who looked toward the trench leaders for larger instructions, who looked toward Dr. Karavas and Dr. Zahariade for overall instructions and interpretations. Dr. Karavas would walk around the site, cigarette in hand and supervise, occasionally stopping to stare contemplatively in a trench or take a trowel and scrape at something. Dr. John Karavas is a Greek and Roman Archaeologist who is a professor at College Year in Athens, an institute which teaches American and Canadian college students on terms abroad. He became a co-director of Halmyris in 2004, when he and a small team first came onto the project. Before the summer of 2014, the Halmyris excavation team was kept small and private. To get onto the team you had to know either Dr. Karavas, or be recommended by someone who has been on the dig previously. Now the application is on the website, however it seemed that everyone on the 2014 excavation knew a returning member, Emily, or Dr. Karavas.

Like any group of people, all of us took a little time to warm up to each other. A small number of people had been on the dig previously, some of them like Emily, Natty and Graham had returned to the excavation for five years or more. The new members such as myself took a

little time to be comfortable and get to know everyone, however in almost no time at all we were all friends. The team was split up between two main housing accommodations; Casa Halmyris and Mariana's. Casa Halmyris was located about a five minute walk from the center of town right on the lake. It had been the original dig house for the excavation and was owned by Dr. Zahariade, and was where he lived every summer while he was working on the dig.

About 9 people lived at Casa Halmyris with Dr. Zahariade, his daughter Anna, and their dog Laura. Two others lived with a woman in the village who was friends with Dr. Zahariade and who sometimes provided us with meals. Murph, the two Adams and Linda each had a small cabin at Girus, while the other 15 of us lived at Mariana's. Mariana and her husband Nikou had housed people on the excavation team for the past few years, and with the money that they were able to earn through this added a whole wing on rooms equipped with their own bathrooms which opened onto a small patio in the back of their house. They built this wing to accommodate the excavation team, and were making a good amount of money doing so.

During the four week season, Mariana, Nicou, and their family would retreat to one of the new rooms opening up more space in the main house as well to house more members of the team. They would also make lunch and dinner on Sundays for us all when we couldn't get meals at Girus. Nicou was a fisherman, and would go out early in the morning to fish, and spend the afternoons working on the house and doing other odds and ends. Mariana worked in the general store, and worked very long shifts from what I could tell. Mariana also had a washing machine, and would wash loads of laundry for the dirty archaeologists at 10leu a load, or you could wash your laundry yourself by hand. It is instances like Mariana's which shows how much money the excavation team was bringing into the town. The general store as well as Girus made large amounts of money off of the group.

Girus was the restaurant and bar that the team ate all their weekday meals at. The bar had a covered back cabana which had a long table which could fit us all. We paid in advance for three meals a day Monday-Thursday and breakfast and lunch on Fridays. We had to pay in advance, unlike the housing accommodation which we paid by the week, because the owner Girus, would have tried to up the price each week to take advantage of the opportunity as he had done previously. Even this summer, when a deal was made to pay for all the meals in advance, he tried to negotiate more from John and Emily.

An Average Day

An average day in Murighiol consisted of waking up at 6:30am to get to breakfast at 7am at Girus. Breakfast usually consisted of the same things: bread, jam, fried eggs, sausage, possibly fruit, and a cream filled croissant. Breakfast was always accompanied by Nescafe coffee or tea. We used the regular bus company to bring us to the site and back. The bus would take two trips to bring us all to the site around 7:10 and 7:20. We had an agreement with the bus company to bring us to and from the site each day. The problem with this is they were often late because of their normal routes, and on the way back they would have passengers besides us. They were supposed to come for us separately so that there would be enough room, however they didn't like to do this. This often meant that we had to stand in the aisle of the bus, squished up against Romanian passengers who would scrunch up their noses and be visibly annoyed and distressed at our stench. We were forced to stand however, rather than wait for the next bus because we posed the risk of not being able to fit on the next bus, being that they were only 20 passenger buses.

We would work from 7:30 am in our trenches, and then break for half an hour at 10:30am. At the beginning of break time we would all trudge up to the site dig house and plop down in the shade created by the shadow of the house. Tired and sweaty we would eat our crackers and snacks and drink our water until it was time to get back to work at 11am. We would then work until 1pm, where we would clean up the trenches and pack up the equipment, gather the bags of pottery for cleaning and head up to the road where we would wait for the busses. We would then have a precious 30-40 minutes decide whether or not you had enough time to shower before lunch, or to cut your losses, get a drink from the bar, and relax until 2pm when lunch was served.

Girus provided us with meals, however if you wanted a drink you had to bring it yourself. Some people would stick with the water that they brought while some would get a Fanta, soda, or beer from the bar. Meals at Girus were typical Romanian food as described earlier; lunch would be hot soup and an entrée, while dinner was just an entrée, always with some form of meat. Bread was also served at every meal. In the beginning, the women who made the food would just place out the trays of food and let us fill our own plates, however as time went on they thought that we were taking too much and not leaving enough for people who came later, so they started to serve the plates of food themselves. The problem with this was that they would start serving before 2pm for lunch or 7pm for dinner, fill the plates and take away the leftovers. This posed a problem sometimes when someone came late to lunch or dinner and found no plate for them and no leftovers. This also meant that even if you felt that you did not get enough food, by the time you finished your first serving the leftovers were gone.

After lunch we had free time to nap, read, or really do whatever we pleased. Most people cleaned up, napped or hung around. At 5pm everyone headed over to Casa Halmyris where we

would wash pottery before dinner. Potter washing consisted of carefully dumping the bags of pottery sherds collected over the course of the day or days into a plastic washing tub filled with water. You would then gently scrub the pottery sherds one at a time until they were devoid of dirt, or as clean as they could be, and then laying them in the sun to dry. Once the pottery sherds were dry, you would paint a small corner or edge of a sherd with clear nail polish, wait for that to dry, and then write the context number in which the sherd was found on the nail polish with a thin permanent marker. You would then wait for the marker to dry, and then paint another coat of clear nail polish on the writing to preserve it. All of this pottery would be sent to labs in Bucharest to be cataloged. If there were pieces which we knew to be from the same pot, or appeared to fit together, we would place them in separate bags to be sent to the labs to be reconstructed.

Dinner was at 7pm every day, and after dinner we would either be free for the night (usually retreating to Girus or the other bar in town to play cards, or pool, and drink) or we would have a lecture from one of the directors or a member of the excavation team. The lectures all focused on either Halmyris itself, or the Roman activity in the area. They were very educational, if not a little dull. Many members of the team decided to pass the lecture time by participating in drinking games with what the lecturer was saying. All the while small children tried to look in at the windows, to see what the foreigners were watching.

The Site of Halmyris.

Halmyris is a Roman military fort constructed in around 106AD during Trajan's Dacian Wars. Dr. Zahariade has been excavating the site since 1981, and started the excavation with 40

Romanian soldiers under his command who were the first to dig excavation trenches here. Today, the East and North sides of the fort have been excavated in the four by four grid methodology, where you dig square trenches four meters by four meters leaving a half meter balk to separate the trenches. These balks serve as barriers between trenches, ways to see stratigraphy of the soil, as well as walkways between trenches. Over the years many of the trenches made in the 1980s have been allowed to be reclaimed by nature. Dr. Zahariade knows the site like the back of his hand, and so knows where each trench is, when it was excavated, and if it should be kept. During excavation in the summer of 2015, which I was a part of, we kept three trenches near the active excavation for the disposal of dirt. As long as the Roman walls in the trenches were not covered by our dirt, Dr. Zahariade could still be aware of what was there in relation to the newly excavated material. Once one trench was deemed full by Dr. Zahariade, we would hack at some plants to make another path for our wheelbarrows to the next trench; and digging continued.

The site of Halmyris contains hundreds of years of history, all shown through the archaeology that is preformed there. Archaeology is governed by the Law of Superposition, meaning that the layers of rock, soil, and archaeological material are placed down one after the other as time goes by. Each consecutive layer is older than the last. Therefore, the layers at the top are younger, and as you continue to excavate downward you come upon older and older layers. There are different ways for archaeologists to go about uncovering these layers. You can excavate each trench until you come upon the bedrock, or sterile soil, meaning that evidence of human activity of the site ceases because you have reached a layer of time before humans occupied the site. This method is called vertical excavation. There is also horizontal excavation,

where you bring the entire site down context by context, keeping each trench roughly at the same time period. You then may stop excavation to keep later features exposed.

The problem with all excavation is its destructive nature. That is, once you have excavated a layer, you can't get it back, that evidence is essentially gone except the records that archaeologists have kept and the artifacts that they have collected. However these excavations can never be repeated because of the loss of material, meaning that when accidents and mistakes happen, and they do happen, that evidence cannot be re-excavated by other scientists.

Not all layers, or strata, are as cut and dry as one on top of the other. Different forces can shift strata, and some might not carry all the way through the area that you're excavating. Nature can also disrupt strata, tree roots can make holes and turn soil disrupting the archaeological layers. Other disruptive forces are animals. This was the case in my trench, Trench B. We had evidence of mole like animals which burrowed in the ground creating holes. Their bones were everywhere. Burrowing animals such as these create holes within the strata layers and can move small artefacts from one layer to another. These disturbances have to be documented on every context sheet for the trench.

Another form of archaeology is survey. There are different types of surveys that can be conducted, aerial survey, regional survey, and geophysical survey. All surveys look at surface finds, or finds that can be seen just below the ground surface through ground penetrating radar. All of these types of surveys are nondestructive. This means that you can revisit the site and continue to find and document material. It also lets archaeologists see the wider context of the landscape and the relationship of the site to the surrounding land, whereas excavation shows you a narrower view of life solely inside the areas of excavation.

Let's get Dirty!

During the 2015 season, we opened up three new trenches and continued excavation on a trench opened the previous year, right next to the new trenches. (See Figure 1) We were hoping to spread some light on what exactly was going on architecturally, and how the rooms of Trench B fit into the fort. The new trenches were 16x4 meters, and separated into 4x4 sections with three excavators per section. I was placed into Trench B in section 2. Trench B was Emily's trench, and the section leaders were Matt, my section leader, and Cassie, the section leader of B1. (See Figure 3) Trench B was a room where lots of pottery fragments were found and some coins. Trench B started as a single room with two doorways facing south. (See Figure 2) The North wall of the trench was the large fortification wall of the fort. For these reasons, before excavation in 2015, the room was thought to be a possible storage room or perhaps barracks. As we excavated, Trench B became somewhat of a mystery.

The process of excavation is rather simple, remove the top 3-5cm of soil as a contaminated context layer, bagging any finds it contains, after which you remove soil and rock layer by layer in contexts, keeping track of all finds. A context changes when there is a change in soil type, meaning that it might become finer, grainer, be made of different types of soil, or if there is an obvious change in types of finds, increase in pottery sherds, or if there are obvious features which warrant their own contexts. In Trench B, the top layer was a destruction layer, and we could continue to find destruction layers at various points during the excavation. At each change in context, new find bags would be labeled and used, and the trench would be swept clean and photographed for documentation. Photographing the trench also required the use of visual measurements to provide researchers with points of reference, and the corners and average depth of the trench was taken after each context was finished. A sketch would also be done of

each context as it was finished, soil texture and grain size was noted and logged, and all finds and methods were documented on a context sheet along with all the conditions and dates in which the context was excavated. For measuring the depth of each trench section, there was a reference point at the highest point along the walls of the trench which was used for each measurement.

Methods of excavating were determined by the type of soil of each context. For destruction layers which comprised of rock fall from when the walls and ceiling collapsed, a large pickaxe was used along with shovels. Shovels, hand picks, and trowels were great tools not just for removing soil, but for also keeping track of depth and keeping the entire trench level. You would remove the soil across the whole trench at certain centimeter depth making sure to keep the whole trench section level as you moved. For compact soil hand picks and shovels sometimes have to be used. If you find something larger that needs to be excavated around, an archaeologist will use a trowel and leave the object *in situ*, or as it lies until it is fully excavated around as to not remove it prematurely from the context and risk breaking it or disturbing the layers underneath it. (See Figure 4) It was always hard when we found something that did not pop out of the ground when prompted, and have to leave it in the ground because we had gone the depth of the context. Our first instinct is to pull it up, but that can damage it, and cause holes to be formed in your context which go too deep.

In Trench B2, one of my trench mates, Phil, kept meeting with this problem. He found nails, large pieces of pottery, and bone that had to be left for a while until the whole context was down to the proper depth, documented, and all finds catalogued before he could excavate his finds as part of a new context. Poor Phil also met with the reoccurring instances of leaving his area of work, only to have a small find be found in the immediate area where he was just working.

Documenting finds worked in different ways. All pottery and bone had their respective bags. General pottery was placed into a large bag containing other sherds from that same context. Fine ware, larger sherds, and sherds with distinctive markings such as engravings, paint, or decoration were placed in another context bag. All bone was placed in a bag and documented as well, except worked bone which went into its own context bag. All other artifact finds were documented as “small finds”. These small finds were cataloged separately, their location in the trench was noted along with their depth, when they were found, what context they were found in, and who found them. All small finds were then placed in labeled bags in a box by the directors table. Small finds ranged from metal sling shot balls, to nails, to coins, and oil lamps.

Coins were especially coveted finds, and their discovery always was a cause for celebration and excitement. Coins can be dated, which gives a general reference date for the areas that we excavated. Dr. Karavas was especially happy about coin finds, and bought a bottle of beer for whoever found it. During the 2015 season, only three coins were found, which is a small amount considering the previous season when over ten were discovered. My trench, led by Matt and Cassie, made a bet with the next trench over, headed by JQ, which was whoever trench found a coin first would be bought and served beer by the opposing trench. It was fun, competitive, and Trench B was victorious. Two of the three coins found were found in Trench B Section 2, and both were found by Erika, who was one of the luckiest people on the excavation when it came to small finds. Matt has excavated in various places, on various continents for six years, and has yet to find a single coin. Lucky Erika.

Days excavating took a routine pattern, which was fun and soothing. We took shifts standing on the trench’s fortification wall being passed buckets of dirt to be wheelbarrowed away. We would each do five wheelbarrows full of dirt, before switching with the next person on

rotation, making sure that whoever started that day did not start on wheelbarrow duty the next day as well. As the trench became deeper it became impossible for those in the trench to lift the heavy buckets up to the person standing on the wall, and so the person on wheelbarrow duty had to move to the doorways of the room. No one in the trench complained about taking dirt duty and there was mutual understanding and comradery among us. This was not true in every trench however, where there was no system of wheelbarrow duty set up. I often heard how some of the stronger students were tasked with moving more wheelbarrows than some of their companions, which after a few weeks started to grate at some people. However for the most part, people worked hard, and there were few issues that needed to be sorted out with the work load spread among the 30 archaeologists.

I myself was very happy and fortunate with my trench and my trench mates. The first day I brought a small speaker so the whole trench could enjoy music as we worked. Having earbuds in was dangerous with the tools being used and the risk of injury, so were thus prohibited; but as long as we turned off the music when one of the directors was giving instruction and we could all hear each other, our music could play away. After our example, the other trenches followed suit with music of their own, and different types of music could be heard depending on what trench you were in. As for Trench B, we were blessed with having Murph in our presents, our very own crass musician, which facilitated hysterical and engaging conversations about the music we were listening too, and about his many crazy Australian adventures. Our music tastes ranged from Rap, to country, to 80s pop music, and you never knew what would be on when the tourists came around. One memorable day saw me almost fall face first in the dirt as I hastened to turn off the Eminem that was blasting obscenities as a school group of small Romanian children toured our site.

Conversation flowed easily in our trench, and although I cannot say to the dynamic and nature of other trenches, work moved quickly as we talked. The sections of Trench B soon became separated by a wall as we excavated, separating it into two rooms. A step down into each section from both doorways showed their continued relation to each other. We found paving stones at the north end of the trench along the fortification wall which was at one time a floor, with another floor some centimeters deeper, showing different phases of occupation. A raised walkway as well as a basin was discovered in Section 1, and a strange formation which might have been another basin, or perhaps a hearth were found in section 2, although the lack of charcoal and burn layers leave it doubtful of it being a hearth.

Tourists Everywhere!

Many times Dr. Karavas and Dr. Zahariade made sure to keep certain finds and features present, so as to display them and show context to future tourists. Tourism was always on the minds of the directors, and they had a whole plan for how a tourist would walk through the site, and what needed to be emphasized and explained. A large section of B2 was left unexcavated leaving floor paving stones *in situ* so that possible tourists could see their connection to the doorway and step, despite the hole found against the wall separating the two sections of the trench. This hole, and the possible finds it may shelter most likely will never be excavated all so that the tourists can understand objects relation to each other and the time periods that the trench spans.

Despite not having a sign at the road marking the actual location of the site, we saw many tourists from all over the world visit. We had Romanian school groups, Canadian vacationers,

Australians, Britons, Italians, and Romanians visiting the site. Often times they would stop and chat for lengths of time with Dr. Zahariade. The whole site was geared toward public and tourist archaeology. Signs explaining different finds and features of the fort were placed all around the site at points of excavation. A museum was being built on site, next to the farm house which houses the equipment. This museum will house the finds of the excavation and will draw more tourists to the area. The museum will be curated by Dr. Zahariade, although he denied being the curator, but did say that he would decide what is displayed and what is written about the pieces (which we all laughed at because that is almost the very definition of a curator). Everything that we did had the looming thought of tourism in the background, and accessibility and presentation of the site were often the topics of conversation between John Karavas and Mihail Zahariade.

This increase in tourism has already been felt by the local community through its increase in paved roads and the money that it brings to the area from traffic through the town and its stores and restaurant, as I have mentioned previously.

The Town and the Excavation Team

During the four weeks of the excavation, most members of the team stayed within the town except to go on weekend day trips to the resort across the lake to relax by the pool. The sudden arrival and stay of 30 odd Americans and Europeans is something that I think the town has become accustomed to during the summer, and according to Emily, the source of entertainment and gossip for the locals.

For the most part, people went about their business as they normally did. According to Emily, most of the older people didn't really know why we were there, and those younger people

that understood the excavation, didn't care why we were interested in the site in the first place. Emily said that the excavation team was the source of gossip for the town, and that it was always a big deal when the season started, however beyond the gossip, people were not directly affected or benefited by our presence and really paid us no mind. Only visitors to the Murighiol were interested as to why there were so many foreigners here, and when they learned about the excavation they seemed interested in the site, but not in its larger social and political implications. The only one who seemed to associate the site with Romania and its heritage was a man from Moldova who was biking across Romania, and stopped to help out for a few days. The man, whom I will call Andrei, stopped at the site to inquire what it was and for a drink of water. Learning that only Mihail was Romanian, he set about helping to carry buckets of dirt and rock, and take wheelbarrows to be emptied, and other helpful things in the trenches. He said that it was a shame that there were not more Romanians working on a *Romanian* site, and as a Romanian, felt he should lend a hand. This was the only person who I met that directly associated the Roman ruins as being directly Romanian in nature. He worked with us for two days, and gave us all watermelon and ice cream as a parting gift.

The people in Murighiol were well aware of the site, but besides the tourist traffic through their town seemed to have no interest in the excavation. They did however have a local legend associated with it that was not told to me by a local, but rather by Mihail, John, and other members of the team. Mihail first heard the story from the locals, and now loves to tell it to the team. The story is an Urban Legend which states that if you go out to the site on a full moon, a woman dressed in white and riding a white horse will appear and ride around the inside of the fort at midnight. The legend says, that if you see her you will die within 24 hours. Mihail always thought the story was an interesting old wives tale, but in 2004, they uncovered the body of a

women, a warrior judging by her injuries and the arrow head in her spine, buried beneath the Basilica on top of the crypt which held two Christian saints. They gave the women the nickname “Xena” after the fictional warrior princess. Mihail always thought that it was interesting that there was a kernel of historical truth to the legend: that there was a warrior woman buried at the site. Urban Legends like this often pop up around archaeological ruins. People can see that people once lived there, and that ruins had been abandoned. Legends such as this one often involve ghosts and curses to explain why sites were abandoned and people no longer live there.

Beyond the urban legend, which I was told about not by the people of Murighiol but rather Mihail, there really was no interaction between the town and the site. No one besides Andrei who was just passing through, seemed to have any interest in the actual archaeology and the history of the site. They were more interested in our being there than the work being done.

People who directly benefited from the money that the team brought into the town were very willing to accommodate our needs. As mentioned previously, Girus, the general store, and Mariana’s were the business who seemed to me to gain the most, however other people benefitted as well. One Saturday, which was a day off of excavation, the fisherman, mainly Nicou and his friends, offered to take us on the Danube in their fishing boats for a fee. This fee was around 70 Leu per person, which in American Dollars was about \$17.30. The Danube cruise was a fun relaxing morning, in which the fisherman zoomed us around the Danube and the delta, and then had us eat in the restaurant of one of their brothers. In Murighiol I saw at least three houses with signs out front which advertised Danube tours, and as you walked toward the Danube inlet where the fisherman docked their boats, which was about 4-5 km from the town, you saw more of these “tours” being advertised; another effect of the increase in tourism in the area.

The day of the cruise, was also the day of one of the more significant local political and social events of the town; although I was not aware of its importance until about an hour before the party. Every year the excavation team throws a birthday party for Mihail at his home at Casa Halmyris. This is the biggest event of the summer and everyone important in the town is invited. There is masses of meat cooked on an outdoor fire and Emily and I were in charge of making a cake with multiple tiers. Four other members of our team were tasked with making about ten pounds of pasta and sauce to go with it. This was a big event in such a small town.

What took me off guard was who was not invited: Mariana. Mihail has been living in the town every summer for the last 30 years. He and Mariana had a falling out when it came to housing the excavation members. Since then, Nicou and Mariana have not been invited to his birthday parties, all because pride was hurt. These parties are the social event to go for the year, to be invited is an important social standing, saying that you have connections with Mihail and therefore Bucharest and the foreigners. According to one longstanding member of the excavation team, tensions between Mariana and Mihail have created a social and political rift through the town.

Through my time in Murighiol and at Halmyris I was surprised to find an almost lack of interest in the Roman ruins just a few miles down the road. Where the government and education system seem to use the Roman and Dacian heritage of the region to their political gains, on a local scale there is not much interest either way. The people of Murighiol may see themselves as the decedents of the Romans and the Dacians, I am not sure, but through their everyday lives it does not affect them; the ruins are a tourist attraction, and have a much bigger role as an economic tie to the area then a landmark of their heritage.

Archaeological Findings

Through the excavation, we uncovered artefacts that support the ideas that Halmyris was connected to the rest of the Roman Empire through trade. While the excavation of the summer of 2015 focused on contexts that date closer to the 4th through 6th centuries, the finds within these contexts can tell us a lot about what life was like, and the connections of people and places outside of Halmyris to the fort and surrounding region. During excavation we found two coins, worked bone, large amounts of pottery and ceramic material, and a type of rock called porphyry.

While the ceramic ware was not dated while on excavation, it can be inferred that some contexts are from after the martyrdom of Epictet and Astion in 290 CE, because of the Christian iconography depicted on them, such as crosses, and inscriptions. Christianity did not come into this region before the mass conversions performed by the martyrs before their deaths. In the previous year's excavation, one oil lamp was even found with an inscription which said "I am the light", which could be both a reference to the function of the lamp as a source of light and the fact that the lamp was also stamped with Christian crosses, referring to Jesus. These crosses and other Christian iconographies show the spread of Christianity through the empire during the late Roman and early Byzantine periods. The region was connected to others through shared ideologies, and the spread of religion. This religion would spread through the Dacian province and become the foundation of Romania's modern day Orthodox Church. Other ceramics that were found include different sizes of fishing weights which shows the support of the fortress through practices such as fishing, and which could also suggest that there may have been a commercial fishing industry in the civic period of the fortress. (See Figure 5)

The coins that were found can also point to strong connections both socially and economically to other areas of the empire. The coin that was the most identifiable and well

preserved was a Byzantine coin with the mark of Constantinople. This coin dating roughly to the 4th century CE shows that Halmyris was connected to Constantinople through trade and through people. (See Figure6) While we do not know the circumstances of how the coin ended up at Halmyris, its origins are in Constantinople as only coins minted in the city could bare the stamp. This means that either the coin wound up in its final resting place because its owner traveled from Constantinople to Halmyris, or that it is passed through many hands because of trade and the economy before finding itself in the archaeological context of the site. Either way, this shows the connections of Halmyris to the rest of the empire: where money travels, so does culture and ideas.

Another significant find was the discovery of three different pieces porphyry. This stone is only found architecturally in a handful of other places in the Roman Empire. It is normally used for temples, basilicas, and important civic buildings. To find it in Halmyris is very significant, but it was found in no context which would point to the nature of the building in which it was found. Two pieces were found during the excavation, while the third was found on a shelf in the dig house where the guard must have placed it after picking it up on one of his walks around the site. The pieces were found on their own, and it is impossible to tell if they were a part of floors or walls. Having such an important architectural feature might infer that Halmyris had a much larger importance and role in the region than even previously thought.

Being a port for both the Black Sea and the Danube River, as well as being a boundary between the empire and barbarian lands (at some points in its lifespan), means that Halmyris was a hub for the transfer of ideas and culture, as well as goods. The finds that the excavation continues to uncover only add to the evidence of the connection the fort and region had to the greater empire. Without this exchange of peoples, ideas, economy, and culture, Romania may not

have been able to develop a culture that would withstand the pressure and influence of outside political and social forces in the hundreds of years that it took for Romania to gain its independence and become modern day Romania.

ARGUMENTUM

Romania has a history that has seen countless influences from outside forces. The Roman army paved the way for Romanization of the Dacian region, and was the driving force for the Roman influence through law and culture which would ultimately shape the history and drive of the modern Romanian state. Through the push into Dacia by the Emperor Trajan during his Dacian Wars, the region was flooded with Roman culture, codes of law, and the organized structure of the Roman military order.

The Roman military was a political, social, and military force in the regions in which they were stationed. Soldiers would bring their religion, their language, and their culture to the regions in which they were stationed, and often these legions were originally from the same regions of the empire, meaning that they transferred as a whole the different cultures of the empire. Legions were more than just fighting forces, they were also constructed and maintained the fortification in which they lived. They used local resources and the help of local craftsman to build and maintain them. This brought close social interactions between the soldiers of the army and the local people. These social connections spread the Roman culture, along with Roman code of law which would continue through Dacia even once the Roman administration retreated south in 274BCE.

The Roman military was not only the catalyst of the spread of Roman culture through the soldiers and sailors who served Rome, but also through the security they provided to the lands they protected. Trade along the Danube would have been protected and controlled by the presence of the string of Roman forts along the river, where the fort of Halmyris controlled not just the river, but also the delta where all traffic going in and out of the Danube would be forced

to pass to and from the Black Sea. The economy of the region would have stabilized and flourished under the protection that the military provided. Trade by water was the safest and fast way to transport goods through the empire and beyond its borders. Land transportation could only transport as much as a team of oxen were able to pull, and everyone on the cargo caravan had to be paid per day of transport, including the drivers and the hired protection.

Transportation by ship however was preferred by merchants because of the ease of transport. Ships could hold much more cargo than a team of oxen, and depending on tide and weather conditions goods could be transported quickly from one end of the empire to another. By allowing safe and controlled waters, and safe access to the Danube River and the land it flows through, the Roman army allowed culture, ideas, and goods to flow through Dacia. By providing such protection, the army also allowed for Roman colonists to spread and to settle in Dacia, which further cemented the Roman legacy in the region.

Politics after the withdrawal of Rome from Dacia never truly got rid of the Roman model. Roman Codes of Law and administration were scaled down to meet the needs of the smaller settlements which popped up after the Romans retreated. Latin is what firmly cemented the legacy of Rome as well; when Romania became surrounded by the Slavs, it held onto its Romanic language which had its origins firmly planted in Latin. Throughout the political history of Romania, it is the language which kept being brought into the argument for having a Roman heritage, and made the people of Romania the inheritors and descendants of Rome. Manipulation of Romania's Roman past were used by those who proposed unity and Independence of the Romanian provinces such as Stephen the Great, Prince Michael the Brave, and King Ferdinand I. They used the common language of Romanian to argue that Moldova, Walachia, and Transylvania should be one nation, with the Romanian language as proof of a common heritage

and identity. They also used it as a link to the West and Western Europe rather than the Slavic dominated East and the rising power of Communism. However during the communist era of Romania, the leaders suppressed the ideas of the Latin origin of the language and highlighted instead the small Slavic influences on the language.

Roman heritage was used by those in power in the 13th through 19th centuries to support an idea of a common heritage through Rome; saying that the Romans came in and wiped out the Dacians, leaving only Roman settlers behind. This meant that they were descended from Romans alone, and therefore were the inheritors of the Roman culture. During the reign of the Romanian Communist Party, these ideas of heritage were turned on its head to link the country with the east, saying that the modern day Romanians were decedents solely of the Dacians. While the truth is much more confusing and complicated than that, the views and ideas of heritage that have changed over time is an insight into how perception can change based on the push and pull of political systems. In reality, the two cultures of Dacia and Rome, and the soldiers and settlers who colonized Dacia mixed socially, and the result was the medieval culture which continued to adapt and change to form the culture of today. Heritage and culture are things that change through time, and are influenced by numerous internal and external forces.

On a larger political scale, the influence of Rome and the heritage that is being portrayed by the government and ruling body have little effect on a smaller local level that can be seen at the archaeological site of Halmyris and in the town of Murighiol. There the local politics and social culture is more revolved around the money and tourism that the excavation brings into the area, rather than the history and the potential link to the Romanian past it may signify. In my own experience working at Halmyris, people were more interested in the business that was brought into the area rather than why people were interested in the old site to begin with, and no

one but Andrei seemed concerned that a group of foreigners were excavating a Romanian site. The only group or organization that had a problem with the excavation preceding as it did was the Romanian Orthodox Church, who took particular interest in the site after the discovery of the two saints buried in a crypt under the basilica. This history of the site, where the first conversions to Christianity and the martyrdom of two saints occurred mark Halmyris as a holy site, and if it were up to the church there would be no further excavation. However even with this interest and this obvious link to the Christian heritage of Romania, the Orthodox Church still will not allocate the funds to help the excavation preserve the basilica, the crypt, and the frescos, which are slowly succumbing to the test of time. So even while this obvious link to heritage is found at the site, the local interest is not there. Instead the interest is from the government and the Universities in Bucharest, who fund the excavation and use it as a tool to boost tourism to the country, and further link themselves with the West and their connection with a Roman past.

Throughout all of this, the one factor that made the whole history of Romania possible was the Roman Military. Without that driving force, the culture of Rome would not have had the foothold in Romania that it did and it would not have lasted, at least in part, to the test of history without the Roman Military. The Roman Military brought Roman culture into Romania, and made the region stable and secure enough for it to spread, adapt, and flourish to become the legacy that Romania now holds claim to.

PHOTO CATALOG



Figure 1

Location: East Precinct of Fort

Description: The opening of the three 16x4 trenches, second day of excavation.

Photo Credit: Colleen Lovely



Figure 2

Location: Trench B, East Precinct of Fort

Description: Building B, which had been opened in the summer excavation of 2014. The building had two doors at the west wall, and stood along the Fort fortification wall on the east side. First day of excavation 2015.

Photo Credit: Colleen Lovely



Figure 3

Location: Trench B, East Precinct of the Fort

Description: The members of trench B two weeks into excavation. Through two destruction layers it became apparent that Room B was two rooms, separated by a wall.

Photo Credit: Megan McCloud



Figure 4

Location: Trench B2, East Precinct of Fort

Description: Excavation team member Shelly performing the proper way to use a trowel for detailed excavation.

Photo Credit: Colleen Lovely



Figure 5

Artefact: Fishing weight

Description: A ceramic fishing weight found in Building B. This fishing weight and others like it indicate that there may have been urban fishing network connected with the fort.

Photo Credit: Colleen Lovely



Figure 6

Artefact: Coin with the seal of Constantinople

Description: This coin was found in trench 12 on the East Precinct of the fort. Dated during the reign of Constantine, c 4th century CE. This shows movement of goods and people through the Empire, as this coin has to have been minted in Constantinople to bear this seal.

Photo Credit: Colleen Lovely

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