

# Roman influence on Dacia

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## 1 Introduction

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In this paper I plan to cover the direct history between the Dacians and Romans but also some of the influence the Romans had on the descendants of the Daco-Romans, especially the future Romance language that would come to be the most important Eastern Romance language.

## 2 Direct influence before Trajan's ascension

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First of all, who were the Dacians? The Dacians were a Thraco-Phrygian people, who originated in north-west Asia Minor. The especially high mineral, and especially gold reserves of Dacia and its position had already lead to contact with the Persians, Egyptians, Scythians and Greeks, from which they borrowed many things. [1]

After Burebista unified the disparate Dacian septs organizing federations with the less-developed tribes on his frontiers, his kingdom became the nucleus to perhaps the only viable barbarian empire in Europe, powerful enough to rival Rome itself. Though the king Burebista would die, his kingdom split and losing most of its non-core territory, though still attempting to launch raids south of the Danube.

This eventually sparked a conflict as the Dacians launched a raid into Moesia killing the governor and destroying a Roman army while the emperor, Domitian was involved in a war against the Chatti tribe. Domitian quickly moved to fight the Dacians leading an initially successful campaign that led the Dacian king Diurpaneus to abdicate in favor of a certain Decebalus in 86AD, huh, I think we'll hear of this guy again, whom at first tried offering 2 peace offers to Domitian, both of which were rejected before

Domitian then left the war's conclusion to the Praetorean Prefect Cornelius Fuscus which ended up losing his life and the entire army to the Dacians.

In 88AD Tettius Julianus finally achieved a needed victory against the Dacians, though still at this moment military superiority could not be imposed upon the Dacians as Domitian was diverted to fight the (Danubian) Suebi and the Iazyges, leading to a peace treaty where money and artisans were sent in exchange for defense of the northern frontier from other Barbarians.

Domitian seemed to hope that he could go back to war with the Dacians after this, however he never did and in 96AD he was killed in a plot, leading to Nerva's ascension, and Nerva would come to adopt Trajan to get rid of the unrest, hmm, I think this guy Trajan will be important.

### 3 The Roman conquest of Dacia and the aftermath

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So Trajan recognized the threat of Decebalus now that he was in power and - more importantly he was sending a lot of money to this Barbarian king that he would rather have himself, and so he set on launching an expedition that for now would seemingly just be punitive, as indicated by coin issues of 101 which bear the image of Mars Ultor — Mars the Avenger and confirmed by Trajan not raising the troops needed for a permanent garrison.

Only fragmentary details survive of the conflict however it seems that after the Romans joined their forces at the hot springs of Aquae, a mere 20 miles from the Dacian capital, Decebalus surrendered, accepting to surrender the fortifications, a few too small concessions to be mentioned and the granting of some land such as the Banat together with becoming a more hopefully obedient client king of Rome.

However Decebalus did not become an obedient client king of Rome, and he rearmed, refortified, attacked Iazygian territory for their support of the treaty of 103, and authorized an attack on Roman forces in 105, so needless to say Trajan was quite surprised and he came back waging a final war of Decebalus' destruction.

Dacia and Decebalus were broken and vanquished at last. Crito reported that some 500K Dacians were taken prisoner, many to be sent to Rome to figure in the gladiatorial exhibitions that would form part of Trajan's triumph, while the systematic 'cleansing' of the conquered territory began. The manhood of Dacia exhausted, the surviving population was expelled from the core territory and the land given over to colonists invited in from nearby provinces.

from here to wrap up with the military and direct history between Rome and Dacia Rome would proceed to have a Thracian emperor as Rome's first "barbarian" (romanized barbarian that is, not from beyond the frontiers) emperor.

Also in the crisis of the third century we have a lot of issues with telling things due to contradictory sources, fabrications and more, but in essence Rome was in a cycle of trying to fix one leak by pulling troops from somewhere which ended up in another leak often and if the local governors somehow managed issues without aid they were hailed as emperor by their troops leading to civil war, also then the empire had split into 3 with when Aurelian took power chaos on almost all fronts despite some victories of the previous emperor Claudius.

By this point Dacia's gold mines had dried up, and no one that had been alive when Dacia was taken still lived, Dacia added 500 miles to the military perimeter of the empire, so Aurelian ordered the evacuation of the province, having a slow and steady evacuation, making it clear that the troops were to withdraw south of the Danube. Some did stay put in Dacia however most left with the Romans, with the Goths being allowed to migrate into Dacia, as a military buffer from Germanic tribes, making the frontier line shorter with an added buffer!

Though, the Romans believed that Terminus, God of borders once planting a Roman border could not be moved by even Jupiter, so understanding that the optics of abandoning a province that was fully incorporated were not really good this Aurelian named a new province Dacia south of the Danube, though even if there still was a province named Dacia, old Dacia was quite clearly gone. [2] [3] [4]

## 4 religion

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There was also a brief period during Constantine the Great's rule when lower Dacia was re-occupied. But at last this is it, Rome no longer controls Dacia, however the period of Roman direct control and influence especially after this Constantine guy together with Byzantine Orthodox Christian influence would play quite a big role, coming to determine the main religion of the state that would come to form the state of Eastern "Romans" left north of the Danube, and coming to define it's sometimes identifying itself as Byzantium after Byzantium [5]

## 5 language

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but that's not all of it, of course the language of the former Daco-Romans despite later influences retained much of the grammatical structure of Latin and some Greek influences, so let's explore some of them:

note: when talking about Greek we are going to be referring to roughly Koine Greek which was officially used by the Byzantines until their fall in 1453 and its properties. When talking about Latin we are going to use properties of non-vulgar Latin.

## •word order and inflection

Latin, Greek and Romanian have some form of a flexible word order which aids in placing emphasis on certain subjects, Romanian unlike Greek or Latin however lacks precise noun declensions based on the nouns' case which hinders total flexibility however with several constructions such as the active or passive it carries on some form of a flexible word order.

But let's look at the standard word order, the Romanian standard word order is SVO (Subject-Verb-Object) (i.e. *Eu îl îmbrac pe el*, *Eu mănânc* (mancare)) while in Latin and Greek it is SOV, still quite similar but it sort of gives the feeling of more attention to the object instead of what is being done. Also of course we need to talk about conjugation, inflection of verbs as well, verbs in all these languages are inflected to show time and aspect (i.e. simple, progressive, repeated, completed) in some form. [6] [7]

## •Common Vocabulary

Romanian shares about 75% of its vocabulary with Latin and splitting off from the empire early may have in essence led to less influence by and fewer borrowings from Germanic (E.g. 'white', instead of coming from Germanic *blank*, is *alb* from Latin *albus*). Though it is worth noting that a lot of Latin-origin vocabulary comes from the "re-latinization of the Romanian language". [8]

## References

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