

FOREWORD

2015 was for scholars or just history, and especially ancient history, interested people a significant date regarding the ancient site *Troesmis* and the region of the Lower Danube in the first decades of the first century AD and the early Roman time. It is for about 15 AD that the first written source, Ovidius (*Pont.* IV.9.78-80), mentions *Troesmis* on the Danube, where the Romans, led by the legate Pomponius Flaccus, managed to defeat the *Getae* from over the river and recapture the site.

During an ongoing joint project on *Troesmis from legionary fortress to Roman-Byzantine fortification*, started in 2010, by the “Vasile Pârvan” Archaeological Institute of the Romanian Academy in Bucharest and the “Gavrilă Simion” Eco-Museum Research Institute Tulcea, with the international participation of the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the University of Innsbruck, we had to deal with a wide range of questions, methodological issues and problems, for the ancient site, despite its importance, had a very short research history, even if older (starting with 1860!) than that of Troy.

Given the significance of ancient *Troesmis*, as fortress of the *legio V Macedonica*, Roman *municipium* and later fortification during the Late Roman and Byzantine time, it seemed of interest to invite colleagues researching other similar sites in the Roman Empire and in *Moesia/Moesia inferior/Scythia minor* in particular to a colloquium. It just happened to be possible in a period of 2015 quite rich in scientific events and meetings, several related or dedicated to the Roman Archaeology and Roman Frontier Studies. We were even more honoured and happy to have a very interested and interesting group of specialists from Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Poland and Romania, willing to discuss on the challenging topic of 'Romans and the Others in the Lower Danube Region in the first century BC - third century AD'.

The small international colloquium in Tulcea was a pleasant, successful and fruitful scientific meeting first of all due to the logistics and general conditions offered by the “Gavrilă Simion” Eco-Museum Research Institute Tulcea and his manager, our colleague dr. Sorin Ailincăi. He and his team as well as the Danube Delta Eco-Tourism Museum Center in Tulcea made sure that the guests from abroad and from Romania, some of them for the first time in Tulcea, enjoyed both the conference and the introduction into this unique world treasure that is the Danube Delta.

Our gratitude and warm thanks are to be expressed to our partners from Tulcea also for inviting and financing the publication of the proceedings of this meeting (within one year!) in the prestigious series of 'Biblioteca Istro-Pontica'.

During the two days of our colloquium the focus of discussion where besides *Troesmis*, the sites of *Noviodunum*, *Novae*, *Oescus*, *Ratiaria* and *Sexaginta Prista*. Even if the archaeological investigation and its different and standing expanding methods and their practice were one of our main bias, several papers presented special categories of archaeological material, like architectural decoration and ceramics, while other reconsidered epigraphical evidence. We regret the absence from the meeting of the colleagues working in the fortress and city of *Potaissa*, in *Dacia*. Due to the circumstances it was not possible for Gergana Kabakcieva and Marian Mocanu to submit their contributions, which would have only enriched the present volume as their papers on *Ulpia Oescus*, and, respectively, the fine pottery from old excavations in *Troesmis*, did at the conference.

The main aims for discussions during the colloquium were and their are also to be found within the individual papers in the volume: a) to present and discuss the methodology and the results of the first years of the ongoing *Troesmis*-project; b) to provide a discussion forum for several basic subjects of the

archaeological research of the early history of the region of Lower *Moesia* and the Roman Danube provinces in general and for presentations of ongoing research projects within the selected thematic of the colloquium.

The major interest was the methodological concept adapted or even created for particular Roman sites when approaching the period for this region, the reality for some very important ancient sites being that archaeological research *per se* was mostly limited to much younger remains (Late Roman and Byzantine) and the state of research confined to epigraphical or just selected archaeological materials.

One further task was, and still is, to approach and comparatively discuss, in the light of the specific problems and different stages of research, conservation as well as given changes in landscape and settlement through anthropogenic intervention (mainly in modern and present times) topics such as: development of ancient settlements, reasons for their location chosen and/or changed over decades, different pre-Roman populations and their settlements and trade, significance and eventual pattern of the legionary fortress and its surroundings, as well as knowledge and use of natural resources of the region.

Leaving the Tulcea conference was, for most of the participants, paying a visit to the core of the *Troesmis* site. And, as the meeting itself, this seems to have given an input for further research and exchange and for already planning a next meeting at the Lower Danube.



Visiting *Troesmis* - Eastern Fortification, 9th of October 2015 (photo by G. Mihai).