The Dacian Wars and the 'Barbarian Other'

It is thought that Romanian people (once called 'Dacians') underwent a process of 'Romanisation' following the Dacian wars and the Roman conquest under Trajan in 106 AD. The legacy left behind by the Romans in the aftermath of Trajan's conquest in 106AD is Romania's name itself, their language (70% deriving from the Latin language) and an advancement of their trade networks with other peoples along the Danube. There is, however, no evidence from any other perspective than that of the Romans that they were at this time primitive 'barbarians'. At the time of the Roman invasion the Dacians were themselves an advanced civilisation; Roman colonisation was resisted by aristocratic groups who took advantage of the situation to gain political dominance and managed a definitive defeat against Roman emperor Domitian's first attack. A complex social hierarchy, codes of law and impressive technological advances were all in place in Dacia before the Roman conquest. The main purpose of the Roman conquest of Dacia was to separate, and so weaken, what they perceived as the 'barbarian' lands to the north of the Danube- coalitions between Dacia and her neighbours had the potential to threaten the stability of the Roman empire. The naming of Dacians as 'barbarians' can be seen as a means of exploitation, well suiting their cause and gaining them support in their campaigns; such a notion of the 'barbarian others' can be seen reflected throughout the history of the Danube henceforth. Follow the QR code for examples of such thoughts reflected through 19th century travellers. The conquest of Dacia was seen as Trajan's greatest triumph - the famous column erected in Rome reflects upon his success through a series of detailed reliefs depicting his campaign.