

economy and comparative material are discussed. A further frustrating element is the lack of analysis of the settlement structure. Even in the comparative chapters, where books are quoted in which social analysis of settlements is carried very far, this is neither mentioned, nor attempted for Melenkop. It is only in the first pages of the analytic chapter on house plans that one feels that the author may have considered such an attempt, but for some reason he refrains from this. The only result in this direction is the reconstruction of the five settlement phases (pages 410–14, fig. 237–241), but this is done and presented without an attempt to interpret what it means. While looking at and comparing the plans it is striking that it is not until the fourth phase that the space between the eastern and the western building clusters is occupied. This area is the topographically highest point of the settlement and when it finally is settled, it is by the largest house at the site (house 4b). That is surprising compared to contemporary settlements elsewhere, where the founder farm is usually the largest and occupies the commanding position of the settlement. This anomaly is surely worth of discussion, but Lütjens refrains from this, though his distribution analysis shows that the high quality pottery was concentrated to the area around this house, and he had previously paralleled this observation with the situation at Hodde. Another discussion that is lacking is the fact that one farm has two to three outhouses, while most have none. And what was the difference in social status between people living in houses with and without byre? In the very brief chapter on economics, the economy of the site is described as a subsistence economy, but does that refer to the individual households, and if so, how did the settlers in the byreless houses survive? A further lacking element is a critical discussion of excavation methods and source criticism, and even a short review of the progression of the excavation would have helped the reader to fully understand the limitations and the potential of the site.

In conclusion – there is no doubt that this publication is an important contribution to the settlement archaeology of north-western Europe offering a unique insight into the settlement tradition in a corner of this region so far less well illuminated. The weaknesses pointed out above are understandable on the background of the immense work connected with the mere reconstruction of the plans, but the work would have presented itself better if the consequences of this had been taken and the analytical chapters omitted for future further study. Therefore the main value of this book lies in the plans that are presented which constitute excellent grounds for further research and interpretative studies. One may hope and can only encourage the author to make use of this material in future papers.

N-0130 Oslo
Postboks 6962
St. Olavs plass
e-mail: jes.martens@khm.uio.no

Jes Martens
Universitetet i Oslo
Kulturhistorisk Museum

ERIC MICHAEL VRBA, *Ancient German Identity in the Shadow of the Roman Empire*. The impact of Roman trade and contact along the middle Danube frontier, 10 BC–AD 166. BAR International Series 1881. Archaeopress, Oxford 2008. £ 48,00; € 56,00. ISBN 978-1-4073-0361-1. 355 pages, 208 figures and 58 plates.

The monograph reviewed here is a modified version of Eric Michael Vrba's dissertation 'Beyond the Roman Frontier: A Case-Study in Slovakia of the Impact of Roman Trade and Culture on Ancient German Settlements', which was defended at Boston University in 2007.

The theme of trade and contact between Romans and Barbarians has become the subject of several publications (e. g. H. J. EGGERS, *Der römische Import im freien Germanien*. Atlas Urgesch. 1 [Ham-

burg 1951]). The area of the middle Danube region provides a relatively good basis for its treatment. Also the time period is well chosen, as along with finds (though largely from graves) the historical and cultural events in the middle Danube region are well documented in ancient authors (mainly in *Germania* by Tacitus). As we learn on pages 7 and 8, this was one of the factors that influenced the choice of the topic. The second reason was the author's own origins (a descendant of American Slovaks) and his good knowledge of both languages. He notes that he wanted to acquaint the English-speaking academic community with works written in the Slovak language.

The work appears to be written systematically at first sight, but in reality it is not. The reader can clearly see that its title does not correspond to its content, two thirds of which are related to the analysis of Roman finds from sites Urbárske Sedliská and Mást researched by E. M. Vrba in 2002. Another serious weakness is the choice of literature. The author's obvious problems with German language publications made him restrict their use, which is unacceptable in the Central-European area where fundamental literature is published in German by both domestic and foreign authors.

The publication is divided into three parts. Although in the title the author firmly sets a time framework for his research, a glance at the subheadings reveals that he does not respect it, and usually starts with a rather detailed description of events and facts from around 100 BC (if not earlier). Furthermore, it is unclear whether the author is aware of the meaning of the notion 'middle Danube region'. Even if we overlook the thorough descriptions of the situation in Central Bohemia, the text completely omits (apart from two maps) the sites in the territory of Austria, north of the Danube (e. g. Oberleiserberg, which is geographically closer to the studied sites). Why he mentions (e. g. p. 47) central, northern and eastern Slovakia (while not distinguishing between its southern and northern parts) is equally unclear, as they are not related to the theme of the publication from at least the ethnic point of view.

The principal purpose of the first part (pp. 3–97) is to introduce the reader to the situation in southwestern Slovakia (and no longer the middle Danube region!) and create an image of the cultural, historical, but also archaeological background of the studied sites in the Roman period. These aspects are analysed in separate chapters, but the analyses are mostly summaries of results from other publications, again less fortunate. The first chapter is a kind of introduction to the subject of Slovakia's settlement, while the author goes as far as informing the reader about who the Romans, Celts and Germans were.

The second chapter deals with historical events on the territory of Slovakia with reference to reports by ancient authors. Interestingly enough, E. M. Vrba does not exploit his knowledge of the publication *Pramene k dejinám Slovenska* compiled by R. Marsina (R. MARSINA / P. VALACHOVIČ / D. ŠKOVIERA / E. KOLNÍKOVÁ / T. KOLNÍK, *Pramene k dejinám Slovenska a Slovákov I. Územie Slovenska pred príchodom Slovanov* [Bratislava 1998]), but draws mainly on the older work by J. DOBIÁŠ (*Dějiny československého území před vystoupením Slovanu* [Praha 1964]) and on E. Droberjar's encyclopedia (E. DROBERJAR, *Encyklopedie římské a germánske archeologie v Čechách a na Moravě* [Praha 2002]), which, however, was compiled for the territory of Bohemia and Moravia. From the terminological point of view he sometimes does not distinguish between the territories of the Czech Republic and Bohemia (e. g. p. 24 ff), which has likely been caused by incorrect translation from the Czech language, and in some sections he even does not distinguish between the territory of Bohemia and that of Moravia. Daring are also the author's maps of ethnic movement in years 80 BC–7 AD (Fig. 2,4–2,6; 2,8). The basis for such a reconstruction is unclear, and to wholly rely on the fragmentary reports of ancient authors without confronting them with archaeological material is more or less speculative.

The third chapter includes characterization of the situation in Slovakia as based on archaeological finds. The description of the La Tène settlement draws on an older work by K. KUZMOVÁ (*Nížinné*

sídliská z neskorej doby laténskej v Strednom Podunajsku. Slovenská Arch. 28, 1980, 313–340), which does map the situation in the 1980s, yet has been supplemented with newer publications mostly by G. Březinová. In subchapter 3.2 – Period B1 (AD 10–70 / 80) – and in the following chapter he does not mention an important cemetery from this period situated within the city boundaries of Bratislava-Devín containing graves of all three ethnic groups (the Celts, the Romans and the Germans) (T. KOLNÍK, Zu dem ersten Römer und Germanen an der mittleren Donau. In: B. Trier [ed.], Die römische Okkupation nördlich der Alpen zur Zeit des Augustus. Koll. Bergkamen 1987 [Münster 1991] 71–84), which would illuminate the subject much better.

The dating of the cemeteries in Kostolná pri Dunaji and in Sládkovičovo (p. 48) only into stage B1 of the Roman period is startling, since they were used for burials also in the next stage at least. In this case E. M. Vrba seems to have just mechanically adopted the information from T. Kolník's overview report (T. KOLNÍK, Prehľad a stav bádania o dobe rímskej a sťahovaní národov. Slovenská Arch. 19, 1971, 499–548), and has not further studied his monograph from 1981 (T. KOLNÍK, Römerzeitliche Gräberfelder in der Slowakei I [Nitra 1980]), even though he lists it in the bibliography. I assume that chapter 3.7 – 'Overview of Roman Style Structures in the Barbaricum' completely exceeds the time framework that the publication deals with, as the majority of the structures date back to Late Antiquity, including the relatively minutely described structures in the so-called military station in Stupava (though only on the basis of a popular article I. STANIČ / V. TURČAN, Rímska stanica v Stupave. Pamiatky a Múzeá 3, 2000, 22–26). The map in fig. 3.13 is completely anachronistic; it depicts important Roman sites in Stupava area together with Bratislava *oppidum*, which ended around fifty years earlier. A serious weakness, not only in this chapter, is the incorrect terminology, for instance "*patera*" instead of "Griffschale" (p. 49, 318; see also H. U. NUBER, Kanne und Griffschale. Ihr Gebrauch im täglichen Leben und die Beigabe in Gräbern der römischen Kaiserzeit. Ber. RGK 53, 1972, 1–232) or "blue mosaic glass" instead of "millefiori" (p. 46 ff).

Chapter 4 deals with the role of the Roman border, Romanisation, and Germanic identity. In contrast to traditional works on this topic, E. M. Vrba draws exclusively on English language publications, which certainly offers the reader a different outlook on the overall situation. On the other hand, it would be interesting to compare the English speaking author's opinions at least with J. Bouzek and I. Ondřejová's work about the so-called "third zone" (J. BOUZEK / I. ONDŘEJOVÁ, "Třetí zóna" mezi Římem a barbarikem. Arch. Rozhledy 42, 1990, 22–35). In addition, neither in this chapter nor in the whole publication do we find any mention of the coin with the inscription *REX QVADIS DATVS* (RIC III, 110 No. 620), which is immediate evidence of the contact between the studied area and the Roman Empire.

The second, most extensive part of the reviewed monograph (pp. 105–306) deals with the archaeological excavation / project on the abovementioned two sites. First (in chapters 5 and 6) the author minutely describes the methods of preparing and conducting the excavation, and subsequently (in chapter 7) treats find circumstances, the architecture of two excavated, so-called Grubenhäuser and their relation to anthropogenic layers, and dating. The publication's biggest contribution is chapter 8 (pp. 188–265), a catalogue of Germanic pottery finds divided mainly on the basis of V. Varsík's typology (V. VARSÍK, Besiedlung in der älteren römischen Kaiserzeit am östlichen Rand von Bratislava. Slovenská Arch. 50, 2002, 127–152). But also this chapter reflects the author's unsystematic and illogical approach. One example is the choice of sites (structures) for the comparison of pottery spread. For instance, table 8.10 would have a greater testimonial value if the author compared finds from Bratislava area (Bratislava-Dúbravka or Ivanka pri Bratislave), which he must have been familiar with, since they are listed in the bibliography. The same problem occurs in the following chapter 9 (tab. 9.2–4), where he first describes Roman and then La Tène pottery (pp. 266–291). Interesting yet improbable is also his assumption at the end of this chapter that the pottery concerned

influenced the development of Germanic pottery shapes. The assumption is based on five La Tène sherds, which I believe to have got into huts 1 (2 pcs) and the settlement layer (3 pcs) by secondary or tertiary means and are thus not related to the original material at all. The author even claims that the Celts also had an impact on the architecture of Germanic huts (p. 227).

Chapter 10 could be called an analysis of small objects. It opens with a short passage about Roman imports, again only from the territory of Slovakia, yet the listed finds contain perhaps just two such items (a bead and a brooch). Vrba draws on works by E. Krekovič and E. Droberjar, cited in the bibliography. However, my opinion is that this subchapter would be more meaningful if it contained examples of finds from the studied period instead of the whole Roman period. Among the silver items he includes a lanx from Stráže from a grave dating to around AD 300, instead of silver skyphoi from Zohor, which were found in Early Roman graves, i. e. a period closer to the studied finds. This chapter further deals with lamp finds (though only a few such items are known from the barbaric environment in Slovakia and they do not figure in the studied finds), beads, worked stone and archaeozoological material.

E. M. Vrba concludes his work with the third part, which he has named synthesis (pp. 317–326). Here, in chapter 11 he tries to summarize knowledge from the two previous parts. He again focuses on Roman products on the territory of Slovakia, particularly their function for the Germans, and opens a long ago discussed question of their use by the Germans (e. g. NUBER loc. cit.). Similarly to H. U. Nuber, he concludes with the assertion that they had a wide range of use. These and other conclusions, such as the questions of Romanisation, are justified by the finds from Stupava. My opinion is, however, that they are not sufficiently backed up by archaeological material, as such conclusions can only be drawn after studying and evaluating a much larger amount of finds. For instance, detailed examination of trade relations between Germans and Romans based on just around 30 pottery sherds (from the total number of around 600) and perhaps two imports is rather daring. Moreover, a relatively detailed publication by J. Hečková has escaped the author's attention. Though of an older date, it deals with the same topic, and would provide him with many parallels as well as inspiration for more constructive conclusions (J. HEČKOVÁ, Podiel výrobných centier rímskych provincií na spoločensko-ekonomickom vývoji naddunajského barbarika vo svetle rímskych importov. *Slovenská Arch.* 30, 1982, 55–77).

At the end of the monograph are included: Appendix A: Data collected from Shovel Test Pits, and Appendix B: Catalog of Finds from the Survey Phase and Units: Non-Roman Period Artifacts (which briefly describes non-Roman finds obtained during the project), and bibliography. It is a pity that the publication lacks at least a short sites register, which would make working with it easier.

On the whole we can state that the title of E. M. Vrba's publication does not correspond to its content despite the attempt made in the book's first part; it remains only a typological analysis of finds from the excavation (which he calls a project) in Stupava, at the sites Urbárske Sedliská and Mast. Problematic is the author's methodological approach as well as his unfamiliarity with basic literature to its full extent, and therefore unfamiliarity with the overall situation and historical context. The text of some of the chapters reveals that the author has only looked for parallels to the finds in the territory of Slovakia and not, as the title would suggest, in the middle Danube region. As I have noted in the introduction, the period that was the subject of research was chosen very appropriately, but the methodological approach has not brought the expected results. Examination of trade and contacts between the Romans and the Germans must be based on a collection – a catalogue of finds from the entire area of the Danube region. This is missing, and E. M. Vrba has relied only on E. Krekovič's results from 1987, which were published 21 years ago. The complexity of this subject matter is underlined by the fact that such a catalogue has been in the process of being compiled for several years by a team of scholars within the project 'Corpus der römischen Funde im

Barbarikum' (CRFB). The author's effort would be more fruitful if he had omitted more than 60 per cent of this text (e. g. in chapters about prospection he includes a large amount of general facts, which belong to a research report rather than a synthetic work) and had focused more on all finds from this site – from the earliest to the latest, which he could have published in a comprehensive monograph.

From his position E. M. Vrba had the possibility to give a portrayal of contacts between the Romans and the Germans in southwestern Slovakia in the Early Roman Period without being influenced by any European school of archaeology. However, that cannot be achieved without detailed knowledge of archaeological writing and without drawing on a particular assemblage of finds. As the author did not succeed in achieving his articulated aims, his work and his conclusions have a limited testimonial value.

SK-918 43 Trnava
Hornopotočná 23
e-mail: erik.hrnčiarik@truni.sk

Erik Hrnčiarik
Katedra klasickej archeológie
FF Trnavskej Univerzity v Trnave

RALPH HÄUSSLER (Hrsg.), Romanisation et épigraphie. Etudes interdisciplinaires sur l'acculturation et l'identité dans l'Empire romain. Archéologie et histoire romaine volume 17. Éditions Monique Mergoil, Montagnac 2008. € 59,-. ISBN 978-2-35518-007-1. 374 Seiten mit zahlreichen Abbildungen.

Die Begegnung Roms mit zahlreichen Völkerschaften und die in den unterworfenen Regionen einsetzenden komplexen Akkulturations- und Integrationsprozesse ziehen seit Langem das Interesse der Altertumswissenschaften auf sich. Einen interdisziplinären Zugang zum Phänomen Romanisierung wählten die Organisatoren eines table ronde zu „Romanisation et épigraphie en Méditerranée occidentale“, der im Jahre 2001 stattfand. Standen bei diesem Kolloquium Gallien und Italien im Mittelpunkt, so wurde für die Edition der geographische Rahmen deutlich erweitert: Beiträge zum Westen der Iberischen Halbinsel, Britannien, den beiden germanischen Provinzen und Phrygien fanden Eingang in den Sammelband. Insgesamt nähern sich neben dem Herausgeber 16 Autoren dem Phänomen Romanisierung.

Bereits im Vorwort formuliert der Herausgeber den Anspruch, dass nicht nur auf eine interdisziplinäre Herangehensweise und den daraus resultierenden methodischen Fragen zu den Aussagemöglichkeiten, sondern in den konkreten Studien auch auf die Überprüfung unterschiedlicher Theoriemodelle und Konzeptionen zu dem Phänomen Romanisierung Wert gelegt werden sollte.

Im einführenden Kapitel (S. 9–30) spricht Ralph Häussler u. a. Interpretationsmöglichkeiten und methodologische Probleme wie etwa die Frage nach der Repräsentativität der besprochenen Inschriften an und wendet sich auch dem Terminus Romanisation zu: Romanisierung bzw. Romanisation definiert er aus der Perspektive des nicht-römischen Individuums als den Wunsch, der römischen Gesellschaft anzugehören, ihre Werte und Wertvorstellungen zu übernehmen, römische Lebensart zu zeigen und öffentlich eine römische Identität aufzuweisen (S. 11). Kräfte, die diese überaus komplexen und regional unterschiedlich verlaufenden Prozesse mit bestimmten, werden benannt und in den folgenden Beiträgen immer wieder thematisiert; zugleich macht der Herausgeber darauf aufmerksam, dass Romanisierung eben nur einen Teil größerer und vielschichtiger soziokultureller Veränderungen beschreibt.

In den ersten beiden Fallstudien stehen Grabinschriften aus dem Norden Italiens im Mittelpunkt der Untersuchungen. Weniger onomastische Beobachtungen an den Grabstelen zweier Gemeinden der keltisch geprägten *Transpadana*, aus Canavese und vom Gebiet der Bagienni aus der Region