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RELATIONS BETWEEN ROME AND THE GERMAN 'KINGS' ON THE MIDDLE DANUBE IN THE FIRST TO FOURTH CENTURIES A.D.*

By LYNN F. PITTS

I

In recent years the 'rex sociusque et amicus' of the Roman Empire—frequently, if mistakenly, called a 'client king'—has been the subject of much study, notably by D. Braund.¹ Although ostensibly Braund and others are discussing the position and role of these kings on all the Roman frontiers, they concentrate in the main on those in the east. This is perhaps inevitable, since literary and epigraphic evidence abounds for the east, while it is scarce and often ambiguous for the west. Unfortunately direct comparison between east and west is meaningless: conditions which can be seen to apply to Rome's relations with her neighbours in the east cannot always be transferred to the west. In Greece and Asia Minor Rome was dealing with developed societies who could be integrated into a Roman administrative system; in the west, on the other hand, the peoples living beyond the frontiers, and indeed within them, were culturally less well-developed; here Rome had, on the whole, to negotiate with constantly changing tribal chiefs rather than with established monarchies.

Rome's relations with the tribes living on her NW frontiers do, however, need to be examined in more detail if we are to understand Roman frontier policy fully; diplomatic relations with her neighbours were an integral part of this policy. The linear defences, forts, towers, etc. of the Roman frontier cannot be studied in isolation. Roman control, or rather influence, extended well beyond the demarcation line, and it is increasingly necessary to study those areas 'outside the empire' to obtain a full picture. In the last few years the study of relations between Rome and native has been undertaken for different sections of the frontier, most recently for the Lower Rhineland.² Although at the moment such studies are essentially local, it will eventually be possible to collate the material from different regions and thus build up an overall view of Rome's relations with the 'friendly' kings in the west to complement the picture of her relations in the east so well-presented by Braund and others.

The area considered in this paper is that covered by present-day Czechoslovakia and Lower Austria north of the Danube; this region was occupied in Roman times by two large German (or Suebian) tribes, the Marcomanni and the Quadi, together with several small Germanic and Celtic tribes under their hegemony, including the Osi and the Cotini. The area is relatively small but was always considered to be an important stretch of the Danubian frontier; by the late first century A.D. no fewer than three legionary fortresses faced the lands of the Marcomanni and Quadi at Vindobonna, Carnuntum and Brigetio.

Literary sources on relations between Rome and the tribes of the Middle Danube are, as elsewhere in the west, scanty, but some information is available, notably with reference to the early first century A.D. and to the period of the Marcomannic Wars. The aim of this paper is to gather this information together with the intention of drawing attention both to consistent aspects of the relationship and to developments over time. For this purpose the study will not be confined to the early empire, as is so often the case, but will cover all four centuries of the Roman period on the Middle Danube; this wider timespan is possible since there was ethnic stability in this area; unlike the Rhine or Lower Danube the same tribes were Rome's neighbours throughout.

At all periods Rome needed to have some kind of relationship, friendly or

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¹ D. Braund, *Rome and the Friendly King, the Character of the Client Kingship* (1984).

² W. Will, 'Römische "Klientel-Randstaaten" am Rhein? Eine Bestandsaufnahme', *Bonner Jahrbücher* 187 (1987), 1-62.

otherwise, with her neighbours, as indeed does any state at any time. In spite of the meagre sources, it is apparent that, apart from short periods of hostilities, relations between Rome and the Marcomanni and Quadi were friendly. Rome was perhaps concerned to cultivate these German tribes in order to counterbalance the dangerous Iazyges, their neighbours.³ Diplomacy rather than military strength kept the peace along the Suebian frontier.

Nowhere in the ancient literary sources are the words *cliens* or *clientela* used of the relationship between Rome and the Marcomanni and Quadi. As Braund has pointed out, 'client king' is a modern term, a term which is misleading as regards the complex diplomatic relations along the frontiers, and one which is heavily over-used in the secondary literature on the history of the Danubian frontier. Nor does the word *foedus* (formal treaty) appear in the sources except in the anti-Maroboduus propaganda of Arminius.⁴ Words which do occur are *amicitia*, *fides* and *obsequium*; they each imply an extra-legal relationship not controlled by a formal treaty of any kind. It is, however, significant that agreements of some kind did exist between Rome and the German chieftains—presumably to their mutual advantage. Naturally the terms and conditions were not constant; over four centuries they would vary with changing circumstances. Moreover, due to the nature of German leadership, it is likely that any agreement in existence would need to be reviewed every time a new chief, or 'king', came to power. For the most part our sources are silent about the details of the relationship. It is always dangerous to generalize from a few isolated references, but a review of the evidence may perhaps point to some common features.

In c. 400 years the sources provide us with the names of only eighteen *reges* of the Marcomanni and Quadi; apart from their names very little is known about the majority of these. The ancient writers, on the whole, only mention relations between Rome and these German tribes at times of change or unrest when they had some significance for the history of Rome in general. 'Normal' or peaceful relations are seldom recorded; however, some idea of the extent of Roman contact with and influence on the Germans is now being provided by archaeology (see below, p. 54 ff.).

Maroboduus⁵ (first quarter of the first century A.D.), the first and probably the best-known king of the Marcomanni, was a powerful ruler in his own right. From his Bohemian stronghold he controlled an empire which extended to the borders of Noricum; in addition to the Marcomanni, numerous smaller tribes were subject to him. Maroboduus was considered by Tiberius and other Roman senators to be one of the most dangerous of Rome's neighbours.⁶ In the secondary literature he is commonly referred to as a client king, but in spite of his generally friendly diplomatic relations with Rome and the reproaches of Arminius recorded by Tacitus,⁷ Maroboduus was in no way a client of Rome. He maintained his independence to the full, sending envoys to Rome as the emperor's equal;⁸ even when forced into exile and appealing to Tiberius for help, he spoke only of his previous choice of *amicitia* towards Rome.⁹

Maroboduus may have spent his youth in Rome under the protection of Augustus¹⁰ or, like other German chiefs, have served in the Roman army; in any case he utilized what he had learnt of Roman ways. Unlike other German tribes, the Marcomanni had a large standing army (70,000 infantry and 4,000 horse¹¹). There does not seem, however, to have been any obligation for Maroboduus to place these forces at Rome's disposal. During the war between Rome and the Cherusci Maroboduus merely remained neutral. In a true client relationship such a commitment would have been implicit and was a normal feature of Rome's relations with

³ J. J. Wilkes, 'Romans, Dacians and Sarmatians in the First and Early Second Centuries' in B. Hartley and J. Wacher (eds), *Rome and her Northern Provinces* (1983), 255–89.

⁴ Tacitus, *Ann.* II, 45.

⁵ Tacitus, *Ann.* II, 44–6; 62–3; *Germania* 42; Velleius Paterculus II, 108–9; Strabo, *Geographia* VII, I, 3.

⁶ Tacitus, *Ann.* II, 63.

⁷ Tacitus, *Ann.* II, 45.: 'Maroboduus ... ac mox per

dona et legationes petivisse foedus, proditorem patriae, satellitem Caesaris'.

⁸ Velleius Paterculus II, 109.

⁹ Tacitus, *Ann.* II, 63: 'Romanam amicitiam prae-tulisse'.

¹⁰ Strabo, *Geographia* VII, I, 3; Suetonius, *Augustus* 48; *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* 32.

¹¹ loc. cit. (n. 9).

friendly kings.¹² On the other hand, Rome was under no obligation to come to Maroboduus' aid against foreign attack or internal conspiracy (indeed, even if Maroboduus had been under the official protection of Rome, military support would have been provided only if it were in Rome's interest, and Maroboduus was too powerful for Rome's peace of mind). Maroboduus was simply granted refuge by Tiberius and ended his years in exile at Ravenna. One of the conditions of *amicitia* with this powerful neighbour was apparently neutrality rather than mutual support.

Another important feature of the relationship seems to have been an economic/trade agreement. Tacitus notes that large numbers of Roman traders were resident in Maroboduus' capital and enjoyed *ius commercii*;¹³ the precise meaning of this phrase is not clear, but Roman traders were presumably granted safe-conduct in the area under his control and were perhaps also exempt from any taxes on their goods. Roman traders ranged far beyond the frontiers in search of new markets and new sources of raw materials and may well have put pressure on the government to protect their trading interests. Trade with Bohemia was clearly highly profitable; Tacitus speaks of 'cupido augendi pecuniam'; this is borne out by the archaeological material, Bohemia being particularly rich in Roman imports in the early first century A.D.¹⁴ The *ius commercii* may even have been a two-way agreement. Hermunduri traders are recorded as being active in Raetia¹⁵ and, although there is no positive evidence, the Marcomanni may have had similar rights; Pliny refers to amber being brought into Pannonia by the Germans.¹⁶

Despite Maroboduus' friendly relations with Rome, Rome encouraged discord amongst the tribes under his control to lessen his power. When in c. A.D. 20 Catvalda,¹⁷ with the support of the Gotones, expelled Maroboduus and took over as ruler of the Marcomanni, he was given tacit support by Rome. Rome took no part in the internal affairs of the Marcomanni but was very much involved diplomatically. Our sources provide no details of the relationship between Rome and Catvalda, but it is likely that a friendly understanding was reached as in the time of Maroboduus. In any case Catvalda's reign was shortlived. When he in turn was expelled, he too was granted a safe refuge by Rome, this time in Forum Julii.

Vannius (c. A.D. 20–50) is the best-known king of the Quadi;¹⁸ the centre of the Regnum Vannianum almost certainly lay in SW Slovakia but his rule probably extended westwards into Moravia.¹⁹ Vannius is frequently called 'the first client king of the Quadi' in the secondary literature; he certainly enjoyed friendly diplomatic relations with Rome, but there is no evidence for the existence of any formal treaty. In c. A.D. 20 the followers of both the exiled Marcomannic kings were settled by Rome north of the Danube under the rule of Vannius. It is not entirely clear whether Vannius was already an established leader of the Quadi with friendly relations with Rome or whether he owed his very position to Roman interference in the internal affairs of the Quadi at this time; the words of Tacitus 'dato rege Vannio gentis Quadorum' might suggest the latter.²⁰ In either case, Rome's involvement and influence beyond the frontier were increasing; Vannius' relationship with Rome resembled the position of the friendly kings discussed by Braund and others more closely than did Maroboduus'.

When, however, Vannius appealed to Claudius for help, under threat from

¹² D. Braund, op. cit. (n. 1).

¹³ Tacitus, *Ann.* II, 62; '... nostris e provinciis lixae et negotiatores reperti, quos ius commercii, dein cupido augendi pecuniam, postremum oblivio patriae suis quemque ab sedibus hostilem in agrum transtulerant'.

¹⁴ V. Sakař, *Roman Imports in Bohemia* (Fontes Archaeologici Pragenses 14, 1970); K. Motyková-Šneidrová, *Die Anfänge der römischen Kaiserzeit in Böhmen* (Fontes Archaeologici Pragenses 6, 1963); ead., *Weiterentwicklung und Ausklang der älteren römischen Kaiserzeit in Böhmen* (1967).

¹⁵ Tacitus, *Germania* 41; cf. F. Schlette, *Formen des römisch-germanischen Handels* (1975).

¹⁶ Pliny, *NH* XXVII, 43: '(amber) affertur a Germanis in Pannoniam'.

¹⁷ Tacitus, *Ann.* II, 62–3.

¹⁸ Tacitus, *Ann.* II, 63; XII, 29–30; Pliny, *NH* IV, 80.

¹⁹ T. Kolník, 'Anfänge der germanischen Besiedlung in der Sudwestslowakei und das Regnum Vannianum' in *Symposium: Ausklang der La Tène Zivilisation und Anfänge der germanischen Besiedlung im mittleren Donaugebiet* (1977), 143–71; id., *Römerzeitliche Gräberfelder in der Slowakei I* (1980); J. Teyral, 'Počátky doby římské na Moravě z hlediska hrobavých nálezů', *Střední Zvesti Arch. Ústav Slovenskej Akadémie vied* (1970), 107–92; id., 'Zur Chronologie der älteren römischen Kaiserzeit im Lichte Mährischer und Westslowakischer Bodenfunde', *Zbornik Filozofickej fakulty Univerzity Komenského* XX (1969), 27–60.

²⁰ *Ann.* II, 63.

internal conspiracy, it was not forthcoming; Roman troops were moved up to the Danube bank perhaps as a token of support but also, no doubt, to ensure that trouble did not spread into Pannonia. Whether or not Vannius had the right to expect Rome's protection under the terms of a treaty is uncertain, but other friendly kings also discovered that promised help failed to materialize.²¹ Vannius was granted a refuge within the empire; he and his followers were allowed to settle in N. Pannonia where they could provide Rome with a useful diplomatic weapon in any future negotiations with the Quadi.

There is no specific reference in the literary sources to any trade agreement with Vannius, but archaeology attests intense Roman trading activity in Slovakia at this time; there are large numbers of Roman imports of all kinds²² and the tombstone of a Roman *negotiator* is built into the church at Boldog:²³

Quintus Atilius Spurii filius Voturia tribu Primus interpres legionis XV idem centurio negotiator annorum LXXX hic situs est. Quintus Atilius Cogitatus Atilia Quinti liberta Fausta Privatus et Martialis heredes libentes posuerunt.

It is reasonable to assume that Roman merchants were guaranteed some protection in Vannius' kingdom. Slovakia too was a natural intermediary for trade between Rome and more distant barbarian tribes; the 'amber route' ran north from Carnuntum up the river Morava. Tacitus, in describing the wealth of Vannius, mentions *vectigalia*; these perhaps represent duty imposed on goods in transit through his kingdom. A trade agreement of some kind must have existed between Rome and Vannius.

The successors of Vannius, Vangio and Sido,²⁴ divided his kingdom between them (perhaps separating SW Slovakia and Moravia). Peaceful relations with Rome, however, continued; the new leaders must have renewed any existing arrangements with Rome, or perhaps even altered the conditions in Rome's favour, since Tacitus remarks on their 'egregia fides' towards Rome.

In A.D. 69, two Suebian kings, Sido and Italicus, together with their followers joined the army of Vespasian and fought at Cremona;²⁵ Latin writers frequently used the word Suebi in place of Marcomanni and Quadi. This Sido may be identical with the successor of Vannius; the name Italicus is interesting since it suggests closer ties with Rome; he may have served in the Roman army. Rome's relations with the German tribes on the Middle Danube were clearly still peaceful. The German kings were, moreover, sufficiently affiliated to Rome to become involved in internal Roman politics; they were, no doubt, amply rewarded by Vespasian and perhaps even received Roman citizenship. Tacitus mentions the 'vetus obsequium' and 'fides' of these kings to Rome. The word *obsequium* can be variously translated as 'allegiance, compliance, obedience'; it implies greater Roman control over these German tribes than had been the case earlier in the first century.

In A.D. 89 Domitian waged war against the Marcomanni and Quadi in retaliation for their failure to support him in his campaigns against the Dacians.²⁶ Domitian clearly thought that they were under an obligation to do so. If this were so, the relationship had clearly changed since the early first century; but was Domitian's interpretation of the situation correct? Maroboduus' failure to join Rome's campaign against Arminius had equally aroused Tiberius' anger, apparently without real cause. During the reigns of Domitian and Nerva there were several minor outbreaks of hostilities.²⁷

Tacitus, *Germania* 42 f. refers to the contemporary situation, i.e. the reign of Trajan:

²¹ Braund, *op. cit.* (n. 1).

²² L. Kraskovská, *Roman Bronze Vessels from Slovakia*, BAR Int. Ser. XLIV (1978); *ead.*, 'Roman Glass Vessels from Slovakia', *Journal Glass Studies* xxiii (1981), 11–17; E. Krekovič, 'Římska Importovaná Keramika na Slovensku', *Slovenská Archeológia* xxix, 2 (1981), 341–78; *id.*, 'Římské importy na Slovensku', *Památky Archeologické* lxxviii, 1 (1987), 231–82.

²³ T. Kolník, 'Q. Atilius Primus—Interpres Centurio und Negotiator', *Acta Archaeologica Academiae*

Scientiarum Hungaricae xxx (1978), 61–75; R. Hošek, *Tituli Latini Pannoniae Superioris Annis 1967–82 in Slovakia Reperti* (1984), 145 ff.

²⁴ Tacitus, *Ann.* xii, 29–30.

²⁵ Tacitus, *Hist.* iii, 5; 21.

²⁶ Cassius Dio lxxvii, 6–7; Tacitus, *Hist.* i, 2; Statius, *Silvae* iii, 3, 168–70; *ILS* 9200.

²⁷ Rufus Festus, *Brev.* 8; *CIL* x, 135; xi, 5992; *ILS* 9200.

Marcomannis Quadisque usque ad nostram memoriam reges manserunt ex gente ipsorum, nobile Marobodui et Tudri genus (iam et externos patiuntur), sed vis et potentia regibus ex auctoritate Romana. raro armis nostris saepius pecunia iuvantur, nec minus valent.

This passage suggests a much more subservient role for the kings of the Marcomanni and Quadi. Rome now seems to exercise increased control over the German choice of king, even to the extent of nominating outsiders if it were in her own interest. The kings are said to hold their position 'because of Rome's influence'; thus now they better fit the pattern of Rome's 'client' or friendly kings. The German kings, however, unlike the friendly kings in the east, enjoyed economic rather than military support; this is not a reference to the large, regular subsidies to barbarians familiar from the third century and later; the money can be interpreted rather as specific payments in times of need.

A change is, then, apparent in the relations between Rome and the tribes beyond the Danube during the first century A.D. This may in part be due to the changing character of Rome's presence on the Middle Danube in the first century; large numbers of troops were moved up to bases on the right bank of the Danube in the Flavian period. The German kings gradually took on a more subservient role, becoming increasingly dependent on Rome for their own position; internal affairs were still in general their own concern but Rome increasingly interfered in these too. In return for Rome's support, greater demands were made on these kings, for example active involvement in Roman campaigns. Although there is very little mention of trade in our literary sources, it is clear from the archaeological remains that Roman trade beyond the Danube was thriving; the need to protect this trade must always have influenced Rome's dealings with the German kings. It is even possible, although as yet there is no indisputable evidence, that official trading-stations had been established in Barbaricum by the early second century.²⁸

Interference in the internal affairs of the Germans continued in the second century. A coin of Antoninus Pius with the reverse legend 'rex Quadis datus' celebrates the appointment of a new Quadan king by Rome.²⁹ The background to the appointment is not known, but it probably occurred after a minor Suebian war recorded during the reign of Antoninus Pius.³⁰ The scene depicted on the reverse of the coin is of some interest; the Quadan king takes the Emperor by the hand, the two being shown on the same scale, that is as equals. In contrast, a contemporary coin of Antoninus Pius and coins of Trajan celebrating the appointment by Rome of kings in the east show the kings as inferior to the Emperor. This may reflect a difference in Rome's attitude to the friendly kings of the west and the east in the second century.

Early in the reign of Marcus Aurelius the Quadi sought the approval of the Emperor for their choice of king, Furtius.³¹ This suggests acceptance by the Germans of Rome's right to interfere in their internal affairs. Later, during the Marcomannic Wars, Furtius, who enjoyed the support of Marcus Aurelius and friendly relations with Rome, was expelled by the Quadi, and Ariogaesis was appointed in his place.³² The new king did not trouble to seek Marcus Aurelius' approval nor to come to a friendly understanding with Rome; consequently a price was placed on the head of Ariogaesis and when eventually taken captive he was condemned to exile in Alexandria. By the mid-second century, then, Rome's right to choose the leaders of the tribes beyond the Danube was apparently firmly established; like other friendly kingdoms the area was looked upon as an extension of the Empire. In this context the intention credited to Marcus Aurelius of establishing a new province of Marcomannia becomes more plausible.³³

²⁸ O. Pelikan, 'Das Vorland des pannonischen Limes in der Tschechoslowakei', *Zborník Filozofickej Fakulty Univerzity Komenského. v. Graecolatina et Orientalia* (1973), 147-64; id., 'Římské Imperium a Území ČSSR v světle nových výzkumů', *Sborník Prací Filozofické Fakulty Brněnské Univerzity* (1983), 220-8.

²⁹ E. Swoboda, 'Rex Quadis Datus', *Carnuntum Jahrbuch* II (1956), 5-12. Appian, *praef.*, 7, 25-8 refers

to Antoninus Pius appointing kings in order to protect the empire.

³⁰ SHA, *Antoninus Pius*, 5, 4.

³¹ SHA, *Marcus Aurelius*, 14, 3.

³² Cassius Dio LXXI, 13-14.

³³ SHA, *Marcus Aurelius* 24, 5; 27, 9-12; Cassius Dio LXXI, 33, 4.

Cassius Dio records at least some of the peace terms issued by Marcus Aurelius and Commodus to the Marcomanni and Quadi at various stages of the Marcomannic Wars:³⁴

Others, like the Quadi, asked for peace, which was granted them, both in the hope that they might be detached from the Marcomanni, and also because they gave him [i.e. Marcus Aurelius] many horses and cattle and promised to surrender all the deserters and the captives, besides,—thirteen thousand at first, and later all the others as well. The right to attend the markets, however, was not granted to them, for fear that the Iazyges and the Marcomanni, whom they had sworn not to receive nor to allow to pass through their country, should mingle with them, and passing themselves off for Quadi, should reconnoitre the Roman positions and purchase provisions.

When the Marcomanni sent envoys to him, Marcus, in view of the fact that they had fulfilled all the conditions imposed upon them, albeit grudgingly and reluctantly, restored to them one-half of the neutral zone along their frontier, so that they might now settle to within a distance of five miles from the Ister; and he established the places and the days for their trading together (for these had not been previously fixed) and exchanged hostages with them.

Marcus Aurelius released them from many of the restrictions that had been imposed upon them—in fact, from all save those affecting their assembling and trading together and the requirements that they should not use boats of their own and should keep away from the islands in the Ister.

In addition to the conditions that his father had imposed upon them he [Commodus] also demanded that they restore to him the deserters and the captives that they had taken in the meantime, and that they furnish annually a stipulated amount of grain—a demand from which he subsequently released them. Moreover, he obtained some arms from them and soldiers as well, thirteen thousand from the Quadi and a smaller number from the Marcomanni; and in return for these he relieved them of the requirement of an annual levy. However, he further commanded that they should not assemble often nor in many parts of the country, but only once each month and in one place, and in the presence of a Roman centurion; and, furthermore, that they should not make war upon the Iazyges, the Buri, or the Vandili. On these terms, then, he made peace and abandoned all the outposts in their country beyond the strip along the frontier that had been neutralized.

He thus provides us with more explicit information on the relations between the Romans and the Germans on the Danube frontier than any other source. These peace terms, it must be remembered, were applicable to a specific situation on the frontier. It is, therefore, dangerous to transfer them backwards or forwards in time; yet, because of the general lack of evidence, much of the secondary literature on the area uses these terms in a wider historical context than is valid.

Some of the terms are to be expected in any peace treaty following upon military campaigns; the surrender of deserters and captives, the handing over of hostages by the defeated tribes, the surrender of horses and cattle and the levy of fighting men into the Roman army. In fact an inscription refers to Valerius Maximianus taking Marcomannic and Quadan *equites* to the east in A.D. 175.³⁵ Equally the control of the use of boats on the Danube by the Germans and Sarmatians was a natural precaution against future raiding. The other conditions recorded by Cassius Dio are more interesting with regard to the relations between Rome and the Quadi and Marcomanni.

A neutral zone (or rather a strip of land to which the Germans were denied access) was established by Marcus Aurelius on the left bank of the Danube. The width of this zone was later reduced, and it is uncertain how long it was maintained after Commodus' reign. It is also uncertain how this zone was controlled by Rome; were regular patrols sent across the river from Pannonia or did permanent stations exist on the left bank of the Danube? A fort founded in the time of Marcus Aurelius

³⁴ Cassius Dio LXXI, 11; 15–16; 18–19; LXXII, 2.

³⁵ *AE* 1956, 124.

has been excavated at Iža-Leanyvár opposite Brigetio,³⁶ but although others may have existed, none has yet been located. Cassius Dio states that all φρούρια beyond this neutral zone were abandoned by Commodus; were these φρούρια intended as permanent bases or merely temporary camps used during the campaigns? Cassius Dio refers to 20,000 soldiers stationed in the lands of the Marcomanni and Quadi ἐν τεύχεσιν, which were even equipped with bath-houses; the Roman site excavated at Mušov in S. Moravia may have housed soldiers during the campaigns of Marcus Aurelius, and the temporary camp of Laugaricio, capable of housing 855 men of Legion II Adiutrix, awaits discovery in the vicinity of Trenčín in Slovakia, where an inscription carved on the castle rock attests its existence in A.D. 179/80.³⁷ There is as yet, however, no archaeological evidence for the permanent presence of Roman soldiers beyond the Danube at any time; this area was never 'occupied territory'; even the 'neutral zone' was probably only short-lived.

Following the Marcomannic Wars, Rome's interference in the affairs of the Marcomanni and Quadi increased. Their choice of ruler needed Rome's approval as before, and restrictions were imposed on political life. Assemblies were forbidden except under strict Roman control. Under Commodus assemblies were allowed at specific locations once a month provided that a Roman official, a centurion, was present.³⁸ These measures were no doubt intended to prevent further trouble; it is unknown how long such interference continued.

There is no evidence that the Quadi and Marcomanni paid tribute or taxes to Rome at any time. The annual grain levy imposed by Commodus was soon rescinded; it was an indemnity for the wars rather than tribute. The annual troop levy imposed by Marcus Aurelius was also abolished by Commodus following a single, extra large levy.

The denial of access to the markets of the Roman provinces throws further light on Roman-German relations on the Middle Danube.³⁹ It suggests that before the Marcomannic Wars Germans had been free to enter Pannonia at will and had been frequent attenders at the markets at Carnuntum and elsewhere. It has already been demonstrated that Roman traders were active beyond the frontiers and were operating under the protection of the friendly kings. Any trade agreements were, it seems, two-way, German traders being equally free to buy and sell in Roman markets. It is unlikely that access was denied indefinitely; there is certainly no archaeological evidence for a decline in Roman-German trade in the late second/third century A.D.; if anything it increased.⁴⁰

Evidence for Rome's diplomatic relations on the Middle Danube in the third century is minimal. On the whole, relations seem to have been peaceful until the later third century when raids and larger-scale barbarian incursions became more frequent; trade contacts continued to thrive. During the Civil Wars of A.D. 193 Septimius Severus derived much of his support from the Danubian provinces; it is possible that, as in A.D. 70, the rulers of the German tribes beyond the Danube were again involved in the struggle for power within the Roman empire.⁴¹ The epitaph of a German prince found at Carnuntum is often linked with the events of A.D. 193.⁴² The prince, a Roman citizen, bore the name Septimius Aistomodius. It has, therefore, been suggested that he was granted citizenship by Septimius Severus in return for his support in the Civil Wars. Alternatively, Aistomodius may have been one of the many Germans who served in the Roman army; such recruits are known as early as the first century A.D.⁴³ On

³⁶ K. Kuzmová and J. Rajtár, 'Bisherige Erkenntnisse zur Befestigung des Römerkastells in Iža', *Slovenská Archeológia* xxiv, 1 (1986), 185–224; id., 'Anfänge des Römerlagers in Iža', *Archeologické Rozhledy* xxxviii (1986), 358–77, 459–62.

³⁷ Cassius Dio LXXI, 20; J. Teyral, 'Neue Erkenntnisse zum römischen Stützpunkt am Burgstall bei Mošov in Südmähren', *Archeologické Rozhledy* xxxviii (1986), 395–410, 463–6; R. Hošek, *Inscriptiones Pannoniae Superioris in Slovakia Transdanubiana Asservatae* (1967), no. 2.

³⁸ Cassius Dio LXXII, 2.

³⁹ Cassius Dio LXXI, 11; 15.

⁴⁰ J. Teyral, 'Mähren und die Markomannenkriege',

Slovenská Archeológia xxxi (1983), 85–120; *Tabula Imperii Romani* M33 (Prague, 1986), 99 ff.

⁴¹ Herodian II, 9, 12: διέπεμπε καὶ ἐς τὰ γειτνιούντα ἔθνη καὶ πρὸς πάντας τοὺς ἀρχοντας τῶν ὑπὲρ ἄρκτου Ῥωμαίοις δουλευόντων ἔθνων.

⁴² *CIL* III, 4453; *ILS* 856.

⁴³ Arminius and his brother Flavius both served in the Roman army (Tacitus, *Ann.* I, 54–68; II, 7–20); for references to Germans from beyond the Rhine in the Roman army see Will, op. cit. (n. 2). The discovery of Roman weapons in graves in Barbaricum suggests that some of these soldiers returned to their homelands after discharge.

completing their service they received Roman citizenship. A German discharged in the early third century would reasonably have taken the name Septimius.

Peaceful diplomatic relations with the Marcomanni and Quadi seem to have been maintained throughout the third century. Rome continued to interfere in the internal affairs of the tribes and to encourage dissension amongst them in order to ensure her own security. On one occasion, following an inter-tribal quarrel, Caracalla executed Gaiobomarus, king of the Quadi;⁴⁴ thus the German kings could be treated as Roman subjects in the third century. There is also a brief reference in SHA to a proposed campaign by Elagabalus against the Marcomanni; his aim is said to have been to make them 'semper devoti atque amici' to Rome.⁴⁵ The idea of securing the friendship of the neighbouring tribes in order to maintain frontier security was as important in the third century as in the first.

The situation on the Danube was changing in the fourth century; Rome was coming into contact with new peoples; there was increasing pressure on the frontier with frequent incursions. Diplomatic relations and trade contacts with the Marcomanni and Quadi were, however, still maintained. Two main periods of conflict with the Quadi appear in the literary sources.

The first occurred in A.D. 358;⁴⁶ the Quadi joined with the Sarmatians in raids into Pannonia. Constantius led a counter-attack across the Danube, putting the barbarians to flight, and pursued them into their own lands, 'ad Quadorum regna'. Araharius, one of the Quadan princes, sued for peace, handing over prisoners-of-war and hostages, but hostilities continued. More of the Roman army was moved up to Brigetio, the obvious springboard for an attack on the lands of the Quadi in SW Slovakia. This time King Vitrodorus of the Quadi, together with his *subregulus* Agilimundus, *optimates* and *iudices*, sued for peace. The Quadi handed over children as hostages and swore oaths of loyalty to Rome (cf. the *fides* of Quadan leaders towards Rome in the first century, p. 48). Friendly relations were thus restored until the reign of Valentinian. The information from Ammianus shows that the Quadi were organized in a hierarchical structure at this time which had perhaps developed under Roman influence.

In the 370s trouble again broke out, this time triggered by Roman action.⁴⁷ Marcellianus, on Valentinian's instructions, began to build Roman strongholds beyond the Danube on Quadan territory—'trans flumen Histrum in ipsis Quadorum terris quasi Romano iuri iam vindicatis aedificari praesidiaria castra mandavit'. The reason for the construction of these *castra* is not given by Ammianus but they were presumably for the protection of Pannonia from the barbarian hoards now pressing into the lands of the Quadi and Marcomanni rather than for exercising control over the local population.⁴⁸ The Quadi objected to these strongholds; clearly any diplomatic arrangements in existence at this time did not give Rome the right to trespass on Quadan territory or use it as an extension of the empire for military purposes. But the Quadan embassies protested to no avail, and a second protest by Gabinius, king of the Quadi, ended in his murder at a banquet given by Marcellianus. In response the Quadi, joined by the Sarmatians, invaded Pannonia, burning farms, seizing animals and carrying off the rural population into slavery.

Valentinian and his forces crossed the Danube at Aquincum from where he advanced towards the Quadan lands. He forced the Quadi to retreat into the hills whilst he laid waste the fertile plains and then withdrew to Carnuntum. Envoys of the Quadi presented themselves here treating for peace, promising among other things to provide recruits for the Roman army. During the audience Valentinian flew into a rage, collapsed and died. Nevertheless, friendly relations with the Quadi seem to have been restored.

The reference in Ammianus Marcellinus to *praesidiaria castra* is frequently used to support the view that permanent Roman bases existed beyond the Danube in the fourth century. There is as yet no archaeological evidence of such bases, apart from

⁴⁴ Cassius Dio LXXVII, 20, 3.

⁴⁵ SHA, *Elagabalus* 9.

⁴⁶ Ammianus Marcellinus XVII, 12, 1 ff.

⁴⁷ Ammianus Marcellinus XXIX, 6, 1 ff.; XXX, 5, 11 ff.;

6, 1 ff.

⁴⁸ Ammianus Marcellinus XXXI, 4, 2.

the continued occupancy of the bridgehead fort at Iža-Leanyvár,⁴⁹ and there is no reason to assume that any such bases will indeed be found in the future; work had scarcely begun when war broke out and there is no mention of it continuing after peace was made. More significant is the fact that the attempt to erect *castra* was an entirely new and upsetting phenomenon to the Quadi. Their relationship with Rome in the fourth century was one of friendly independence as, apart from the brief period of hostilities in the second century, it had been since the first century.

II

The total literary evidence is thus very small over four centuries; even so, there is sufficient information available to show the relationship between Rome and the Marcomanni and Quadi developing with time as Roman influence over, and interference in, the area increased, although never to the point of exercising direct control over these tribes.

Any power, Rome being no exception, has, of necessity, to have some kind of relationship with its immediate neighbours;⁵⁰ peaceful relations were obviously highly desirable and to the mutual advantage of both parties. Treaties or informal agreements, renewed and changed as and when necessary, would ensure peaceful relations. Whenever possible Rome employed diplomacy rather than military force to protect her frontiers; the result was a series of friendly kingdoms outside the empire who in effect formed the frontier. The precise arrangements naturally varied according to local circumstances; hence the more detailed information on relations on the eastern frontiers cannot be used to supplement the scanty information for the Danube. Care must also be exercised in using information for one period of time to support an overall view of relations on the Danube; literary evidence is frequently used out of context in the secondary literature.

A study of Rome's relations with the kings on the Middle Danube is best approached as a series of questions:

(1) What were the responsibilities of Rome and the friendly king? A change is apparent from the neutrality of Maroboduus to active military support of Rome by the kings in the later first century; the role of these kings was to keep the peace on the frontier and to protect against outside threats. In return Rome may have offered support to the king, but military support was seldom forthcoming.

(2) What were the advantages to the two parties? Peace on the frontier was an obvious advantage; it allowed both Rome and the friendly king to concern themselves with other matters, releasing troops for use elsewhere. There was also an obvious economic advantage to both sides.

(3) What were the financial obligations of the two parties? There is no evidence of a regular tax or tribute paid by the German tribes; payments in kind mentioned in the sources are one-off or short-term payments imposed after a period of hostilities. Nor is there clear evidence of a regular subsidy paid by Rome; Tacitus' reference to *pecunia* does not necessarily imply a regular sum or indeed a large one.⁵¹ Subsidies to barbarian tribes were generally a feature of the later Roman Empire though the kings on the Bosphorus received a regular subsidy as early as the second century. By analogy, subsidies are to be expected on the Middle Danube in the later third/fourth century.

(4) Were Roman troops and/or officials permanently posted in these kingdoms? There is no literary evidence for troops stationed beyond the Danube to give the German kings military support; references to the presence of Roman troops occur during wars or in their immediate aftermath. Indeed, the presence of Roman troops and the construction of permanent posts caused unease among the Quadi in both the second and the fourth centuries;⁵² this suggests that there was no diplomatic provision

⁴⁹ Kuzmová and Rajtár, op. cit. (n. 36); T. Kolník, 'Neue Ergebnisse der Limesforschung in der ČSSR' in *Studien zu den Militärgrenzen Roms III. 13 internationaler Limeskongress, Aalen 1983* (1986), 355–61; id., 'Römische Stationen im slowakischen Abschnitt des nordpannonischen Limesvorlandes', *Archeologické Ro-*

zhledy xxxviii (1986), 411–34.

⁵⁰ Braund, op. cit. (n. 1).

⁵¹ Tacitus, *Germania* 42 f.

⁵² Cassius Dio LXXI, 20; Ammianus Marcellinus xxix, 6, 1 ff.; xxx, 5, 11 ff.

for such a presence. The posting of troops beyond the frontier would increase demands on Roman manpower and seems unlikely. Archaeology has so far produced little trace of permanent Roman bases beyond the Danube with the exception of Iža-Leanyvár⁵³ and perhaps Mušov,⁵⁴ other Roman buildings are of a civilian nature. The situation with regard to the presence of Roman officials is so far unclear.

(5) How important were the economic aspects of the relationship? In spite of minimal references in the literary sources, the economic aspects were almost certainly as important as the military (economic aspect here is a reference to trade rather than tribute or subsidy). The extent of Roman trade beyond the frontier is apparent in the archaeology, but it has only recently been given the consideration it deserves in the secondary literature.

(6) To what extent were the Quadi and Marcomanni 'Romanized'? The literary sources are again of little assistance, although they mention the receipt of Roman citizenship by the Germans, service in the Roman army and settlement in the Roman provinces, even in Italy.⁵⁵ Archaeology, however, reveals extensive use of Roman artefacts of all kinds, use of Roman coins and use of Roman-style buildings by the aristocracy. The assimilation of these trans-Danubian tribes to Roman ways no doubt helped to foster peaceful relations on the frontier; it also led to a desire for *receptio* within the empire in times of trouble.⁵⁶

At no time does a written treaty or *foedus* seem to have existed to regulate relations between Rome and the Marcomanni and Quadi; there is no reference to or hint of such a treaty in the literary sources. The relationship between Rome and the German kings seems rather to have been one of *amicitia*; indeed the word *amicitia* was used by Maroboduus to describe his relations with Rome. *Amicitia* was an informal, extra-legal relationship with no specific obligations on either side.⁵⁷ The lack of any written treaty helps to explain some of the confusion that arose at times over what rights and obligations each party had, *amicitia* being a much more ambiguous relationship than one defined by treaty.

The general picture of relations on the Middle Danube is similar to that presented by Braund for the eastern empire,⁵⁸ although Rome was dealing with very different societies. In both areas the friendly kings played an extensive role in the defence of the empire at a minimal cost to Roman military or administrative manpower. The kings enjoyed day-to-day independence but needed Rome's recognition of their position, and Rome increasingly interfered in internal affairs. Roman citizenship was, however, less frequently granted to the kings on the NW frontier than to the established kings of the east and, unlike the east, Roman garrisons were seldom posted in their kingdoms. Moreover, an important aspect of the friendly relations on the Danube, which receives little attention in discussions on friendly kings of the east, is that of trade.

III

In recent years there have been dramatic increases in our knowledge of the area beyond the Middle Danube through archaeology. The importance of Bohemia and its close contacts with Rome in the late first century B.C./early first century A.D. have been confirmed;⁵⁹ archaeology has also identified the probable centre of the kingdom of Vannius as the Trnava area of Slovakia⁶⁰ and shown that S. Moravia increased in importance in the mid-first century A.D.,⁶¹ perhaps reflecting the division of the

⁵³ op. cit. (n. 36).

⁵⁴ Teyral, op. cit. (n. 37); L. Pitts, 'Roman Style Buildings in Barbaricum (Moravia and SW Slovakia)', *Oxford Journal of Archaeology* VI, 2 (1987), 219-36.

⁵⁵ Tacitus, *Ann.* XII, 30; Cassius Dio LXXI, 11; 20; SHA, *Marcus Aurelius* 22.

⁵⁶ SHA, *Marcus Aurelius*, 14, 2; cf. German *foederati* in the fourth century.

⁵⁷ E. S. Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome* I (1984), ch. 2, 54-95, 'Φιλία-Amicitia: The Informal Connection'.

⁵⁸ op. cit. (n. 1).

⁵⁹ *Tabula Imperii Romana* M33; Sakař, op. cit. (n. 14); K. Motyková, 'Die ältere römische Kaiserzeit in Böhmen im Lichte der neueren historisch-archäologischen Forschung' in *Aufstieg und Niedergang* II, 5, 1 (1976), 143-99.

⁶⁰ T. Kolník, 'Prehľad a stav Bádania o Dobe rímskej a šťahovaní Národov', *Slovenská Archeológia* XIX, 2 (1971), 499-558; id. op. cit. (n. 19).

⁶¹ Teyral, op. cit. (n. 40).

Quadan kingdom between Sido and Vangio; even the settlement of Vannius and his followers in Pannonia is apparently confirmed by the presence of German graves around the Neusiedler See in Austria.

But archaeology can also provide information on matters where the literary sources are silent. Already it is apparent that the area adjacent to the frontier was very different from the rest of Barbaricum. It is possible to speak of a 'third zone',⁶² an area under strong Roman influence as a result of its proximity to the Roman empire. This 'third zone' clearly corresponds to the friendly kingdoms of the literary sources where friendly diplomatic relations resulted in close contact between Rome and barbarians.

The 'third zone' on the Middle Danube consists of SW Slovakia, S. Moravia and Lower Austria north of the Danube. This is the area occupied by the Quadi and Marcomanni from the mid-first century A.D. onwards. Bohemia is not part of the 'third zone'; it seems that after the fall of Maroboduus Roman influence in Bohemia decreased. The number of Roman imports to Bohemia fell dramatically after c. A.D. 20, whilst it increased in Slovakia at this time and in Moravia somewhat later. The archaeological evidence in fact suggests a movement of people, presumably the Marcomanni, from Bohemia to Slovakia and Moravia in the first century A.D.,⁶³ certainly both Tacitus and Cassius Dio located the Marcomanni on the Danube,⁶⁴ which Bohemia is not. Was this movement of Germans one of the reasons for the concentration of Roman forces along the banks of the Danube in the Flavian period?

In the 'third zone' strong Roman influence is demonstrated by the presence in all native cemeteries and settlements of Roman imports of all kinds; not just luxury goods but everyday artefacts abound.⁶⁵ It is significant that Roman imports are found in the huts of ordinary people on settlement sites in this area (some 400 have been excavated), whereas elsewhere in Barbaricum only luxury items such as bronze vessels are found and these in the graves of the aristocracy (see Fig. 1). Moravia and SW Slovakia also have a significantly greater number of imports than neighbouring Sarmatia, perhaps a reflection of the latter's less friendly relationship with Rome.

Roman pottery, apart from terra sigillata (and even that in very small quantities and treated as a luxury) is very rare further from the frontier in Bohemia, N. Moravia and E. Slovakia (see Fig. 2).⁶⁶ A similar picture is painted by Tacitus, who says that on the whole Germans did not use Roman tableware except in the areas close to the frontiers where wine-services were in use.⁶⁷

In addition to terra sigillata, beakers, mortaria, barbotine ware, Raetian ware, marbled ware, stamped and painted Pannonian wares, as well as simple red and grey cooking-pots and jars made in Pannonia, are all found in Moravia and Slovakia;⁶⁸ indeed some of the Pannonian wares may have been produced specifically for the German market as some of the forms are rare in the province itself. The widespread distribution of Roman pottery in this region shows that Roman influence extended to all levels of society; it was not confined to the upper classes, although their social position was no doubt reinforced by diplomatic gifts, as indicated by the luxury items found in rich graves.⁶⁹ Moreover, the use of wine ladles and strainers and mortaria indicates a change in the eating and drinking patterns of the natives.

⁶² J. Bouzek and I. Ondřejová, "Třetí Zóna" mezi Římem a Barbarikem při Noricko-Pannonském Limitu' to be published in *Archeologické Rozhledy*.

⁶³ Teyral, op. cit. (n. 40).

⁶⁴ Tacitus, *Germania* 42; Cassius Dio LXXI, 15; LXXII, 2.

⁶⁵ Kraskovská, op. cit. (n. 22); Křekovič, op. cit. (n. 22); J. Teyral, 'Kotázce importu bronzových nádob na Moravu ve starší době římské', *Památky Archeologické* LVIII (1967), 81-134; J. Lomenová, *Římské bronzové nádoby na Slovensku* (Diplomová Práce, Karlovy Univerzity, Prague, 1981); J. Hečková, 'Podial výrobných centier římských provincií na spoločenskoekonomickom vyvoji naddunajského barbarika vo svetle římskych importov', *Slovenská Archeológia* xxx (1982), 5-77.

⁶⁶ Sakař, op. cit. (n. 14); J. Teyral, 'K Otázce postavení Moravy v době kolem přelomu letopočtu', *Památky Archeologické* LIX (1968), 488-516; M. Lamiová-

Schmiedlová, 'Römische Importe in der Ostslowakei' in *Concilium Eirene* XVI (1983), II 201-6.

⁶⁷ Tacitus, *Germania*, 5; 7, 1.

⁶⁸ R. M. Pernička, *Die Keramik der älteren römischen Kaiserzeit in Mähren* (1966); E. Droberjar, *K problematice výskytu a významu římského keramického importu v moravských nálezech* (Diplomová Práce, Brno, 1986); D. Palatová, *Terra sigillata v moravském nálezovém prostředí* (Diplomová Práce, Brno, 1980); P. Roth, *Terra sigillata na Slovensku a jej význam v barbarskej spoločnosti* (Diplomová Práce, Prague, 1981); Křekovič (1981), op. cit. (n. 22). K. Kuzmová and P. Roth, *Terra Sigillata v Barbariku, Nálezy z Germánských Sídliak a Pohrebisk na Území Slovenska* (Materialia Archaeologica Slovaca IX, 1988).

⁶⁹ V. Ondrouh, *Bohaté Hroby z doby římskej na Slovensku* (1957); T. Kolník, *Římské a Germánské Umenie na Slovensku* (1984).

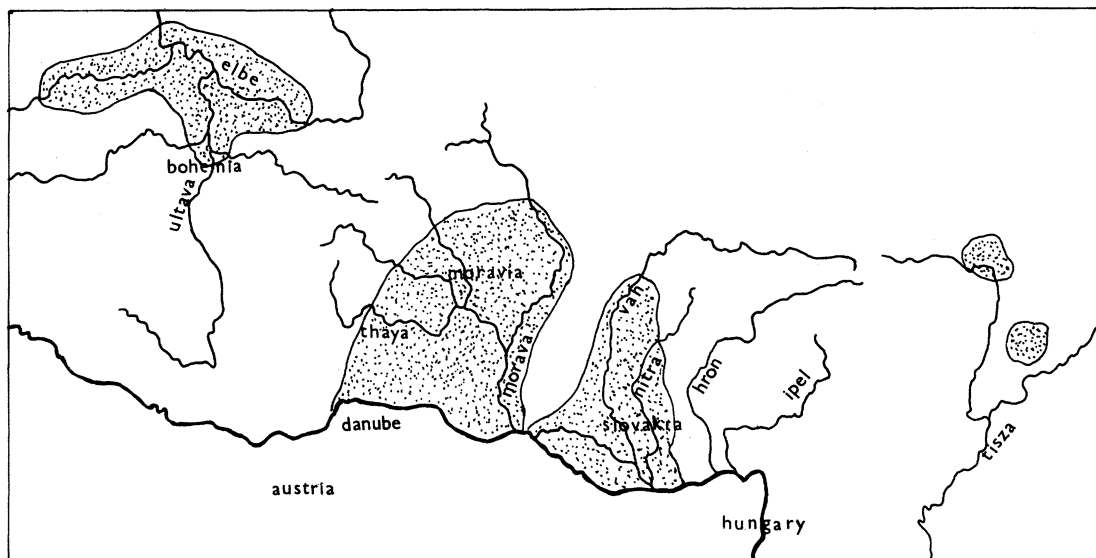


FIG. 1. MAP SHOWING AREA OF DISTRIBUTION OF LUXURY IMPORTS, BRONZE VESSELS, GLASS, ETC.

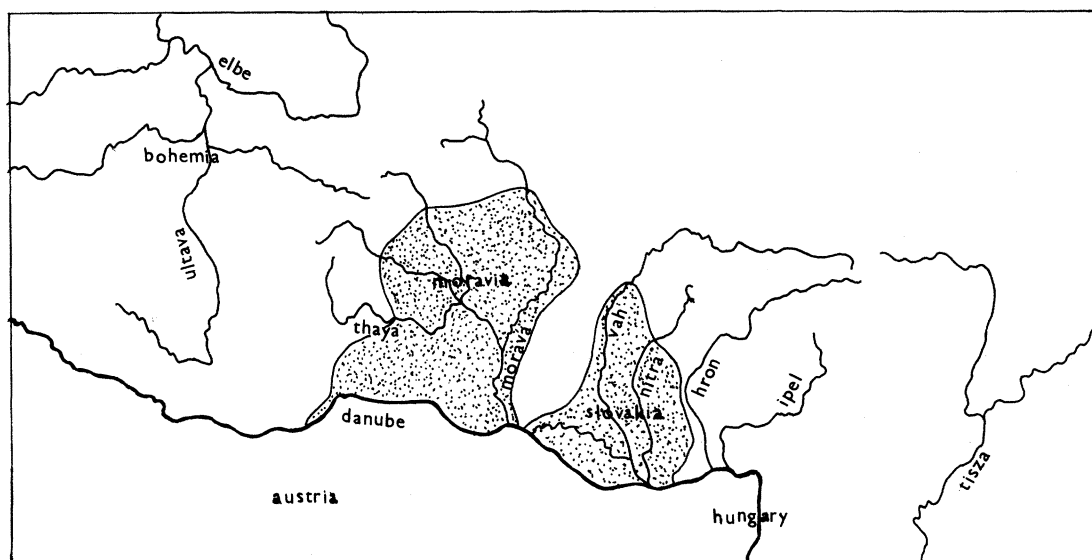


FIG. 2. MAP SHOWING AREA OF DISTRIBUTION OF ROMAN POTTERY

The aristocrats also benefited from Roman technical aid. Several buildings built in the Roman manner with Roman building materials but apparently occupied by Germans have been discovered in Slovakia (see Fig. 3).⁷⁰ These buildings again indicate the adoption of Roman ways; they are provided with hypocaust-heating and, in at least one case, with a bath-house. A few Roman lamps have also been found on native sites.⁷¹

The economic effect of the close contact with Rome was enormous. The number of Roman imports in this area indicates the scale of trans-Danubian trade, and it is very likely that the Marcomanni and Quadi acted as middlemen in the long-distance trade with peoples further from the frontier; taxes on goods passing through his lands

⁷⁰ Pitts, art. cit. (n. 54).

⁷¹ E. Krekovič, 'Römische Lampenfunde im Slowak-

ischen Barbaricum', *Archeologické Rozhledy* xxxv (1983), 510-16.

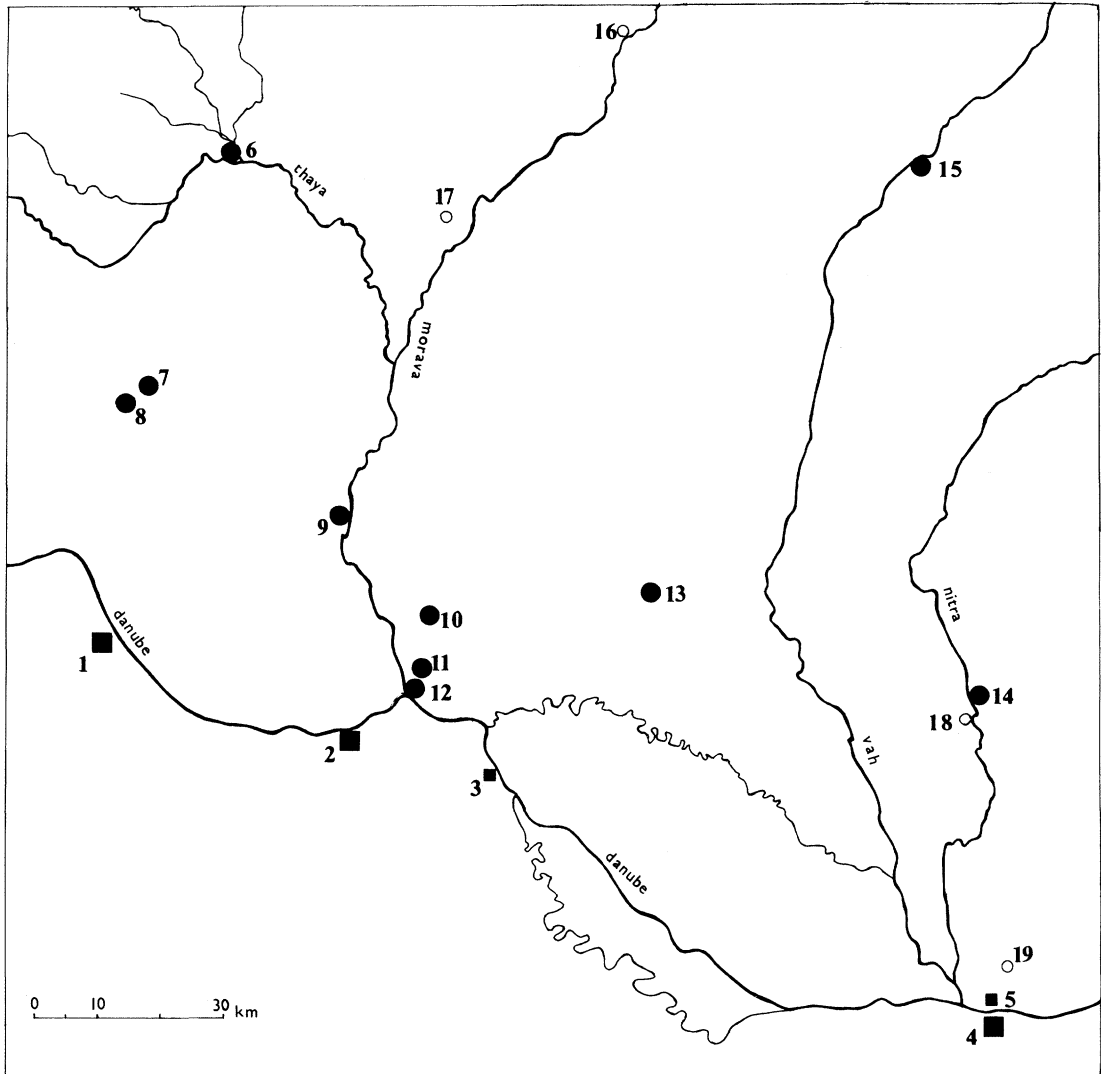


FIG. 3. MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF SITES WITH ROMAN-STYLE BUILDINGS.

- Roman military base: 1, Vindobonna/Vienna; 2, Carnuntum; 3, Gerulata/Rusovče; 4, Brigetio; 5, Celebantia/Iža-Leányvár. ● Site with Roman-style buildings: 6, Mušov; 7, Oberleiserberg; 8, Niederleis; 9, Stillsfried; 10, Stupava; 11, Dúbravka; 12, Devín; 13, Cífer Pác; 14, Milanovce; 15, Laugaricio/Trenčín (inscription)
○ Possible site: 16, Staré Město; 17, Mikulčice; 18, Komajtice; 19, Chotín.

were the source of Vannius' wealth.⁷² In addition, trade contacts with Rome would have provided the impetus to produce more goods for exchange, thus stimulating agricultural and industrial developments among the Germans.

Roman traders reintroduced the use of coinage in this area; it seems that in the 'third zone' Roman coins were not confined to transactions with Romans but were used in exchanges between Germans as well, whereas in regions more distant from the frontier Roman coins were regarded as bullion rather than currency. Tacitus states that Germans only understood the use of coins on the frontiers, not in the interior.⁷³ In SW Slovakia and Moravia the Roman coins found display the same high proportion of bronze to gold and silver as in Pannonia, whilst elsewhere the precious metals predominate; this suggests everyday use in small transactions. Moreover, in

⁷² Tacitus, *Ann.* XII, 30.

⁷³ Tacitus, *Germania* 5; 26.

this region large numbers of the coins found represent casual loss rather than hoarding.⁷⁴

CONCLUSION

There is then enough literary evidence, albeit limited, to piece together a continuous picture of the diplomatic relations between Rome and the Marcomanni and Quadi. Furthermore, archaeology is gradually telling us more about these Germanic peoples and how extensively their lives were affected by their proximity to the Roman empire. Roman influence extended not just to the tribal leaders, who received luxury goods as diplomatic presents and through trade and, it seems, technical aid, but also to the lower classes. Roman artefacts were in everyday use at all levels of society and some of these suggest the adoption of Roman ways. This social and economic relationship is the real background against which the diplomatic and military relations on the middle Danube must eventually be judged.

Didcot, Oxon.

⁷⁴ *Tabula Imperii Romani* M33; J. Wielowiejski, 'Die Kontakte Noricum und Pannoniens mit den nördlichen Völkern im Lichte der römische Importe' in

H.-J. Dolle (ed.), *Römer und Germanen in Mitteleuropa* (1975), 69–86.