

SUMMARIES

BOHEMIA AND MORAVIA IN THE FIRST CENTURIES OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA

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Our view of history is still permeated by many romantic conceptions that distort historical reality. It often happens that individual events are dealt with in terms of modern behavioural patterns, if only in markedly simplified form. Expressions like "metal industry," "mass production," "sales markets," and "economic crisis" simulate a way of life which simply didn't exist in the past. To be sure, such methods are impressive, but they only serve to obscure the clarity of approach to the past. The author therefore begins by examining the extant Greek and Roman historical accounts, assessing them, however, not as the evidence of witnesses but as interpretations — the problem of the namens of the gods offering a good case in point. Other accounts are not consonant with reality at all and hence have to be rejected. The alleged Marcomanni empire of Maroboduus, which was supposed to have extended from the middle reaches of the Danube up to the lower Elbe, was nothing but a grouping of units of followers under King Maroboduus' leadership. When the Langobards and Semnones deserted the King and went over to his enemy Arminius, the latter would have gained the upper hand but for the fact that an uncle of the Cherusci prince, along with his followers, joined forces with Maroboduus. This shows that the alleged people's army of the Langobards and Semnones were none other than the retinue of the Langobard and Semnones chieftains.

When the Marcomanni and Quadi migrated to Bohemia and Moravia, they by no means found a deserted country. They subdued the local population, which henceforth had to provide the newly arrived ruling stratum with food and supplies, as Tacitus has indicated in his *Germania* (cap. 15, 25). This demonstrates that objects of material culture cannot play the role usually ascribed to them in evaluating the overall development of the time and place from which they stem; they are products of the subjugated population and therefore cannot tell us anything about the origin and quality of the upper stratum. It is far more difficult to explain the presence of provincial Roman objects in the Germanic remains of Bohemia and Moravia. But it appears that most of them came to this area as plunder during the so-called Marcomanni war (166—180); tables demonstrate the probability of this hypothesis. These struggles were not wars of conquest but only marauding expeditions into the then inadequately defended Roman Danube provinces.