

THE END OF THE MIGRATION OF NATIONS IN
BOHEMIA AND THE ORIGIN OF THE BAVARIANS — A
CRITICAL SURVEY OF THE PRESENT STATE OF
RESEARCH

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The establishing of connections between Germanic archaeological remains of the 6th century in Bohemia and those of the corresponding period in Bavaria is nothing new. Archeological literature has already dealt with this question in recent years.

While excavations on Lombardic sites have made it possible to trace the course of the expansion of Lombard settlements from southern Moravia to Pannonia and finally to Italy in 568, it has not proved possible — or at least only to a very limited extent — to establish similar links between the Germanic sites in Bohemia and Bavaria during this period. Whereas Werner is justified in his claim that the migration of Germanic tribes still living at that time in Bohemia to Rhaetia and Noricum can be established on the basis of the political situation existing during the years 531—535, Svoboda is of the opinion that Germanic tribes continued to reside in Bohemia up to at least the middle of the 6th century, and that they then united with the Lombardi. Werner demonstrates that the custom of burial in gallery-graves had established itself as an „east Merovingian area of gallery-graves“ in Thuringia, Bohemia and Moravia after the Huns had been forced to evacuate Hungary in 454. The area of gallery-graves was extended by the migration of the Germanic tribes from Bohemia and Pannonia to other regions. Both Werner and Svoboda warn against seeking Marcomanni in the Bohemian Germanic tribes of the 6th century.

The efforts of Eberl, Kaufmann, Beninger and Kloiber to clarify the situation are unsatisfactory. It emerges with increasing clarity that the Bavarians were a new tribal formation made up of the remnants of the Germanic tribes (Naristi, Juthungs and Alemanni) living in Noricum and Rhaetia as well as in the Upper Palatinate, romanized Celts, and additions from other groups, which, all together, formed the traditional nucleus of the Bavarians.

In Bohemia, at Priesen near Louny, a village has been excavated in which for the first time two different types of hut were found, one Germanic and the other Slavonic, the latter containing pottery of the 6th century Prague type. Whether this denotes that the two ethnic groups lived together over a longer period is still not clear.