

NAMES OF PLACES IN BOHEMIA, MORAVIA, AND SILESIA AND THEIR HISTORICAL INFORMATION

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Place names are very important for research on early settlement in the Bohemian lands, an area of crucial significance within Europe. From the strata of names left behind by differing ethnic groups can be derived reliable information as to who settled where and when, and also about the motivation for applying certain names to certain places. The earliest ethnic group in the Bohemian lands which we know by name are the Celts. Next came Germanic and, after A.D. 600, western Slavic tribes, whose amalgamation led to the emergence of the Czech people in the 9th and 10th centuries. Periods of colonization in the core regions of Czech settlement are evident from the types of place names used. In the extreme north of Bohemia it was the Sorbs who settled. The 13th century brought the German colonization which can be traced when one looks for certain types of place names which acquired regional significance. Later economic as well as political developments also left their traces in the naming of settlements.