

SUMMARY

Olší, Nusperg, Růžodol **Names of some woody plants in the chosen Czech place names**

The main aim of this book is to gather the Czech, Moravian and Silesian oikonyms, the etymons of which are tree, shrub and sub-shrub names. The occurrence of woody plants in the landscape can serve as a relatively stable orientation element. Trees and shrubs have always attracted attention, especially those growing solitarily. This is possibly because they have been used to locate a required position quite precisely by determining the location, direction or land orientation.

However, the connection between the names of individual municipalities labeled by vegetation names and the occurrence of this vegetation has been misinterpreted from time to time and has simultaneously affected consideration of prehistoric forest expansion. Taking into account such an idea, the Czech lands would be full of birch, linden, beech, alder and oak forests. People rather tend to orient themselves according to some significant elements that differ either from the surrounding elements or from the rest of the surroundings, simply because this provides an opportunity to specify the location. Proper place names motivated by the names of plants and animals do not directly refer to the localities of those plants and animals. Oikonyms cannot be considered as clear indicators of the past incidence of certain species.

Nevertheless, some changes can be observed in the natural environment, based on the location of municipalities bearing local plant or animal names. For example, Czech Professor Šmilauer noticed a fairly high proportion of yew-motivated names in the Czech oikonyms (he listed 24 examples). Yew is currently rare in the Czech lands and is one of the endangered species.

Summary

The excerpted material in the book has been unified thematically. The selection criteria were purposely chosen broadly. Included, for example, are prepositional oikonyms, oikonyms formed from anoikonyms and other oikonyms motivated by tree names (e.g. if the name originated from a hydronym or an oronym, or if the village was divided and a diminutive form of the name was created), and finally oikonyms arising from inhabitants' names. The work also presents the German names of municipalities (or the original German names of municipalities) which may have been motivated by woody plants.

The names of the following tree species have been included in this book:

Abies (fir), *Acer* (maple), *Alnus* (alder), *Betula* (birch), *Calluna* (heather), *Carpinus* (hornbeam), *Cornus* (dogwood), *Corylus* (hazel), *Crataegus* (hawthorn, quick thorn, thornapple, May-tree, whitethorn, hawberry), *Fagus* (beech), *Fragula* (buckthorn), *Fraxinus* (ash), *Genista* (broom), *Juglans* (walnut tree), *Juniperus* (juniper), *Malus* (apple), *Picea* (spruce), *Pinus* (pine), *Populus* (poplar, aspen, cottonwood), *Prunus* (plum, cherry, peach, nectarine, apricot, almond), *Pyrus* (pear), *Quercus* (oak), *Rosa* (rose), *Rubus* (raspberry, blackberry, dewberry), *Salix* (willow, sallow, osier), *Sambucus* (elder or elderberry), *Staphylea* (bladdernut), *Taxus* (yew), *Tilia* (linden, lime tree), *Ulmus* (elm), *Vitis* (grapevine).

The places were located and recorded on the maps with regard to the phylogenetic relationship among the individual tree species, the names of which appear here as etymons. In some cases, it seemed more beneficial to compare the localities of the municipalities with the area of the occurrence of the woody plants. For example, it was therefore possible to point out the possible earlier area of occurrence of the highly endangered yew. Thereafter, the motivation of the local name "Klečaty" could be explained. In other cases, it proved to be essential to assess the obtained data with regard to the Czech language continuum. The map shows the localities of municipalities, the names of which differ from the expected phonetic form (Svíbice vs. Svídnice, Habrová vs. Hrabová, Jasenice vs. Jesenice, Líšná vs. Lešná), and the distribution of lípí vs. lipina (Lipí vs. Lipina).

In several chapters, I venture to claim that some local names are not, or almost never, motivated by the proposed names of woody plants (Kručinka, Réva vinná and loza, Růže, and probably Ořešák, too). By comparing the average altitude of the positions of municipalities with the tree habitats, nothing specific was proved; the altitude of municipalities corresponds to the altitude of the habitats of individual species and / or genera of woody plants.

By listing these local names, breaking them down into individual entries, and locating their bearers, I would like to assist researchers by providing such data. I also created the maps which are publicly available online. Map data (names, dates of first mentions, positions and additional information) can be downloaded in the .kml format and can be used in future.

I have depicted only a minute portion of the topic, which deserves more thorough and in-depth research, e.g. comparison of the collected material to the material of the complete Slavic language continuum.

Proper nouns can be used as a material basis to support the interpretation of the development of languages and dialects and to monitor non-linguistic factors, as well as to research what the names indicate about the real world, and how we see ourselves and “others”. We call these “proper” nouns because, in some ways, they deviate from the system and that is why they are very special, unusual and unique.

In a broader perspective, we notice in addition to the peculiarities of the terrain, mountains, forests and rivers, also human settlements and dwellings. Perhaps we will understand that we do not merely see the landscape that man has created and continues to create. We also perceive the human capacity for abstraction and categorisation and gain an awareness of the identity of place and of ourselves. And of our past.