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## The importance of hydronymy in the study of Slavic ethnogenesis

### Summary

The study draws attention to the significance of hydronymic research in solving certain elements of Slavic, then also Croatian original homeland and ethnogenesis. In considering the earliest history of the Slavs, the relationship between Baltic and Slavic languages as well as postulating the existence of a Baltic-Slavic ethnogenesis continuously represents a major problem. This study presents various views on the problem that can be inferred from hydronymic data.

Though onomastics play an ever more important role in recent studies, it cannot by itself, nor can linguistics as a whole, give definitive answers to the complex problems of Slavic ethnogenesis. It may be possible to gain new insights into Slavic prehistory, namely to locate more precisely the original habitat of the Slavs, and thus of the Croats as well, only through all inclusive understanding and comparison of the findings of various disciplines, foremost of archeology and ethnology, with those of comparative linguistics which are to a large extent based on hydronymic materials.

*Keywords:* Slavic ethnogenesis, Croatian ethnogenesis, hydronymy, toponymy, prehistory of Slavs

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