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Glavne besede

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## Pričevanja imen o alpskih Slovankah

The article Information provided by the names of Alpine Slav women uses Alpine Slavic personal names as a source on the valuation of and social attitude to the early medieval female inhabitants of the Eastern Alps.

### Summary

The term Alpine Slav women refers to the female population which settled the sub-Alpine and Eastern Alpine geographic regions from the mid 6th century to the early 9th century and which spoke a Proto-Slavic language; it is from this language that Slovene developed around the 12th century.

Alpine Slavic personal names contain meanings which can be described and sometimes even translated into contemporary language; they reflect the social values of the past and the attitudes to women and men.

Place names, which derived from early medieval personal names, indicate that settlements were named exclusively after men. Among the early medieval Alpine Slavic personal names, from which surnames were derived from the end of the Middle Ages onwards, no female names are found. Most of the female Alpine Slavic names, some of which belong to ancient common Slavic traditions, are recorded in written sources dating from the 9th-12th centuries: in lists of farms mentioning the serfs belonging to them; in lists of pilgrims; in necrologies and, rarely, in property contracts in which women holding property rights appear. Female names account for only one fourth of male names. Sources of these types are indicative of the early feudal society in which women appeared only rarely as property owners in legal matters; written sources referring to older periods do not mention women at all.

The meanings of Alpine Slavic female names witness to the valuation of certain emotional relationships, desired skills and character traits. Women`s names reveal which attributes were most appreciated in women: she should have a pleasant nature, be a close relative and loyal to her home; or she should be strong, have a fine figure, be skilful and industrious; and she could also be fond of living and merry, or modest, humble and unassuming. A comparison of male and female names, derived from words with the same basic meanings - or which are distinguished only by gender indicating endings - shows that as far as the mentioned values are concerned a same attitude existed toward men and women. The circumstances indicate that such relationships have to be considered within the everyday family environment, not in the public one, and also indicate that the feudalisation of society weakened such gender-related views. The personal names of the higher classes of society are often derived from semantemes that are related to ruling positions; but even from this environment no female names have been preserved which would stem from words referring to fighting and warfare as is the case with men`s names.

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