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Summary

Language Contact and the Toponymy of Anglo-Saxon England: Early Latin Loan-Words

The study aims at a reassessment of the Latin influence on Old English place-names containing elements which were borrowed up to c.700. It brings three questions into focus. Firstly: Does the toponymy of Anglo-Saxon England comprise continental loan-words? Secondly: Were Romano-British place-names adopted in Latin or latinized forms? Thirdly: Are there early insular loan-words taken from Latin at or immediately after the *adventus Saxonum*? After a summary of the state of the art and its problems each question is answered with the help of selected typical examples. Their detailed discussion results in findings as follows. Firstly: Quite a number of Latin loan-words, which Angles and Saxons brought from the continent to Britain were used as place-names or place-name elements later on. Secondly: Romano-British place-names were not adopted from Latin speakers. Place-names such as *Firle*, *Speen*, and early ME *Tric* cannot be derived from a Latin etymon. Others, e. g. *Catterick*, *Lincoln*, and *Lindsey*, are based on Celtic forms. Thirdly: The place-name elements *camp* 'field' and *port* 'harbour; market-place' turn out to be continental loans. OE **cort(e)* 'enclosed yard' (cf. *Dovercourt*) was borrowed in the sixth century at the earliest, and OE *croh* 'crocus' is a monastic loan adopted in the course of conversion. The theory that several place-name elements were borrowed either by *Germani* in Roman service as early as the fourth or fifth centuries or from Latin speakers of Germanic or Celtic origin in the course of the Anglo-Saxon settlement should be abandoned. The lexicological findings include proof of the non-existence of OE *camp* 'battlefield' whereas OE *rocza* 'rye' did exist. *Port* 'gate' ranks among late OE loans and ModE, Sc. *tod* 'fox' originates from OE **toda*, *-e* 'scrub'.