

## VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION BETWEEN GERMANS AND WENDS IN THE SECOND HALF OF THE TENTH CENTURY\*

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This study has provided a brief analysis of the linguistic interactions and verbal communication between Germans and Wends. What we noticed is that there is no Slavic language which has been unaffected by political and social influences from other dominant cultures. In the second half of the tenth century, cultural identity was linked more with political alliances than with language. Learning of German was a political reality which varied according to time and context. In order to maintain good relations with the Saxon nobility, the Wendish elites needed to know German. This would have ensured a direct, unambiguous communication. Translators could interfere with the messages and generate conflicts. Some of the Wendish elites could have known Latin as well. As tributaries of Saxon margraves and dukes, they could have signed documents regarding their obligations. Therefore, a sort of ethnic consciousness was more developed among the Wendish upper classes than lower class.

*Key words:* linguistic interactions, cultural borders, Wends, Duchy of Saxony, Thietmar of Merseburg, Adam of Bremen, Helmold of Bosau.

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The concept of communication is extremely broad and it might include almost every human activity in the course of history. Communication is an essential feature of all forms of social and political life. Thus social and political communication refers to various forms of communication dealing with cultural identity and public matters often under unequal power relations. After the Second World War, communication sciences became a popular discipline among scholars, and since the 1970s it has also influenced medieval studies.

In a modern sense, cultural identity could be explained by a person's sense of belonging to a particular culture or group. As a logical result a collective identity could be seen as a shared notion of self-identification and which is constantly constructed. In this process, the individual's internalization of his group of belonging involves aspects related to language, religion, traditions, heritage, gender, ancestry, as well as other social structures of a culture. Medieval peoples and their ethnicity may not correspond to modern states, but that is precisely because the political and social context in which they operated is different. For the medieval society, the solidarity between the members of a group is a natural consequence of shared identity. In this way, language became an emblem of cultural identity as well as ethnicity. This is why we should attempt to understand the medieval societies on their own terms and through the language and concepts they deployed.

Medieval writers produced a vast literature related to different political and social matters, but they did not write books on linguistic theory. Such kind of modern theories related to linguistics have been reconstructed from a large number of medieval primary sources. It was emphasized that speaker, listener as well as the context must be taken into account in order to explain how words can communicate something different from their primary sense. Therefore in this paper we propose a research methodology relying on critical enquiry as well as historical criticism of primary sources. Our research will cover mostly the second half of the tenth century, and will focus on the chroniclers' discourse regarding the Wendish society and culture in general, and the language and verbal communication, in particular. The importance of this research within the wider research regarding the cultural interactions between

Germans and Wends will be highlighted by the multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches. These approaches involve disciplines such as History, Linguistics, and Theology, which will be placed in the general context of Cultural History.

From the seventh century onwards, the exonym *Wendi* (Latin) and *Wenden* (German) had been used by the Germanic peoples to refer to speakers of Western Slavic languages, from Holstein in the north to Carinthia in the south. The Wends were a people that settled mainly on the eastern cultural and political border of the Empire of Charlemagne. The eastern and the southern Slavs were influenced by the Byzantine Empire. However, the Wends kept different cultural characteristics from the eastern and southern Slavs which will not be discussed in this paper.<sup>1</sup>

We know that most of the Latin authors who wrote about the Wendish Crusade of 1147 (Helmold of Bosau, Vincent of Prague, Arnold of Lübeck, Vincent of Cracow, Otto of Freising, Saxo Grammaticus or the author of the *Annales Palidenses*) use the terms *Slavi* or *Sclavi*.<sup>2</sup> Beside its importance within the crusading history, the Wendish Crusade is also a significant event which helps us to understand the political status and cultural identity of the Wends.

The late eleventh-century German chronicler Adam of Bremen mentioned the following Wendish tribes: Wilzi or Luticii (between Warnow and Oder, up to Peene), Abodrites or Reregi (between the Bay of Wismar and Lake Schwer; Mecklenburg), Sorbs or Sorabi (Upper Saxony, in Lusatia; between Elbe and Saale), Wagri (Wagria, Holstein), Warnabi or Warnavi (on Warnow), Polabians (between Trave and Elbe; Ratzeburg), Circipani or Zerezepani (between Recknitz and Peene), Kicini or Kissini (on Peene), Redari (right bank of Peene; Demmin; Mecklenburg), Rani or Rugians (Rugia island), Hevelli or Stodorans (on Havel), Leubuzzi (on Oder) and Pomeranians (in Pomerania, between Oder and Vistula).<sup>3</sup>

The thirteenth-century German chronicler Henry of Livonia uses the exonym *Wendi* five times. The Wends of Henry, who lived in northwestern area of Latvia, have been considered a small tribe of uncertain ethnic origins, either Slavic, Baltic or Finno-Ugric. Thus, Henry uses the name which probably is taken from the local pronunciation, without connecting it to the ancient *Veneti* and also not to the Slavs.<sup>4</sup>

During the time of the Ottonians, 'State' and 'Church' formed a single entity. The Ottonian military conquest of the Wendish territory across the Elbe during the tenth century was followed by a Christian mission. There, Otto I (d. 973) founded five dioceses as suffragans of Magdeburg<sup>5</sup> and one suffragan of Hamburg-Bremen.<sup>6</sup> The Wends became subjects of the Saxon nobles, to whom they had to pay a tribute. Due to a heavy tribute, the Wends from north-eastern Germany organised successive revolts against the newly-established ecclesiastical organisation, followed by massacres of clerics and the destruction of churches.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, the Wends were the enemies as both the ecclesiastical and secular Saxon powers.<sup>8</sup>

Within the Ottonian state, the bishops governed the conquered territory with the conscience that they were serving God as well as their emperor and his vassals, the dukes. They were both missionaries and government officials. One of the most active clerics which was involved in the conversion of the Sorbs<sup>9</sup> at the end of the tenth century was a cleric known as Boso of Merseburg (d. 970). Boso was invested as bishop of Merseburg (968–970) by the archbishop Adalbert of Magdeburg. Boso started his career as a Benedictine monk at the abbey of St. Emmeram in Regensburg. There, Boso received his missionary education under the guidance of bishop Michael (d. 972). As a reward for the effort made in the conversion of the Sorbs, Otto I offered him the choice of one of the two suffragan dioceses of Magdeburg: Zeitz or Merseburg. The chronicler Thietmar, bishop of Merseburg, between 1009–1018, tells us that Boso chose the "peaceful" diocese of Merseburg, "he ruled zealously" for as long as he lived.<sup>10</sup> There were other cases when a cleric was rewarded for his missionary effort among a population or conversion of a pagan leader. A cleric called Poppo, known for his efforts to baptize the Danish King Harald 'Bluetooth', received the diocese of Würzburg. His faith in Christ was proven in the manner of a judicial ordeal by carrying a heavy hot iron without being burned.<sup>11</sup>

In terms of the present article, the *Chronicon* of Thietmar of Merseberg (mentioned above), is one of the most relevant sources for studying the intercultural exchanges between Germans and Wends during the Ottonian era. For Thietmar, the Slavic language was an essential element of cultural identity for the Wends. His

work contain valuable information, not to be found elsewhere regarding the contemporary history and civilization of the Wendish tribes, as well as valuable information for studying the Poles and Hungarians at this time. Thietmar must have known the Wends well enough, since he was the ruler of a border diocese that also covered part of their territory. This explains the rise of Thietmar in the Ottonian sphere of influence.<sup>12</sup> Thietmar's status in the Ottonian court would therefore have an influence on his portrayal of the Wends and Germans, and thus their intercultural exchanges.

Thietmar gives us clues about the cultural dialogues in his diocese. Some of the most relevant testimonies are the indications on language skills of the German clergy. Two primary language groups were used in the eastern border regions along the Duchy of Saxony – German and Slavic. The constant interaction between these two language groups stimulated the sensibility of contemporaries for linguistic differences. It is very likely that the linguistic interferences are the result of political relations between the Saxons and the Germans and, therefore, provide value in studying cultural exchange and the power of language in this region. The effects were seen within the Wendish societies among both the upper and lower classes. Historical scholarship concerning the relationship between Germans and the Wends in the tenth century has not yet focussed on the modes of communication between the Wendish social classes and the German-speaking population within Saxony. The reason is the lack of explicit primary sources, which can help scholars to investigate the linguistic interferences between the two language groups. As we know, the source material regarding the linguistic evidences is generally laconic. Therefore, what we deduce in this study is mainly based on the analysis of the political relations between the Wendish elites and the Saxon nobility. It argues, further, that these political relationships have influenced heavily the Wendish lower class.

We believe that the Wendish elites were usually cosmopolitan and integrated into interregional aristocratic networks. These networks existed mainly within Saxony, but also across the Baltic Sea, in Scandinavia.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, most of the Wendish elites (including Sorbs) must have known German. The most important alliance between the Wendish elites and Saxon nobility was the relationship

of Otto I with a Hevelli princess from Brandenburg. From this relationship came the bastard son William, who became Archbishop of Mainz (954–968).<sup>14</sup> Another interesting case worth mentioning is the intention of the Abodrite prince, Billug (*princeps Winulorum*), who married the sister of bishop Wago of Oldenburg (974–983). The twelfth-century chronicler, Helmold of Bosau (d. after 1177) mentioned that the bishop's friends advised him not to marry his sister with the Abodrite prince, because "it is not right that a most beautiful virgin should be united with an uncultured and boorish man".<sup>15</sup> Indeed, Helmold's statement illustrates the 'laconic' nature of the sources with respect to language. The chronicler does not use the word *interpres* / *interpretes* when he reproduces some dialogues between the Wends and Germans. However, his chronicle contains relevant information regarding the customs of the groups from the tenth century onward.

Helmold never indicated what language the two were using, or if an interpreter was mediating the dialogue. It is very likely that Wago, who had lived among the Abodrites, knew elements of the Slavic language. What Helmold tells is that the bishop feared about a possible hostile reaction upon his diocese and gave his sister in marriage. The event not only confirms that Billug was a Christian, but also that he knew German. His pagan name was Mstivoj which, after baptism became Billug. The prince was baptised after his probable godfather Hermann Billung, the Margrave of the Billung March in the northeastern Duchy of Saxony. Helmold tells us that from this marriage resulted a daughter known as Hodica. She was placed by Wago in a convent of nuns, trained in 'Sacred Scriptures' and sent to be an abbess over the nuns who lived among the Abodrites. In this case, Hodica was taught German and Latin as well. The second child of the marriage between Billug and the bishop's sister was Mistislav, an apostate and fierce enemy of Christians.<sup>16</sup>

When Wago visited Billug and his chiefs in Mecklenburg, the Abodrite prince "addressed publicly" (*palam alloquitur*) the bishop with a long speech. Billug offered to collect the tribute regarded as a tithe and to allot it to his daughter and the bishop's niece, Hodica. In exchange, Billug would give to Wago some possessions and revenues within the Abodrite state. The bishop easily accepted the

proposal. Later, he decided to allot the properties he had just received to some settlers (*coloni*).<sup>17</sup> However, there are no mentions about the origin of these *coloni*. They could be Germans, as well as Wends. If they were Wends, they would be part of the lower class and then they would need to know German. Another possibility is that the bishop could have appointed German governors who knew Slavic, or some Abodrite elites (perhaps from the entourage of Billug) who knew German. Even if Helmold does not mention what language Billug spoke with Wago, we can assume that the Abodrite prince knew German. His marriage to a Saxon woman who knew German and a close relationship with many Saxon nobles and clerics, reinforces this assumption. The communication between the Saxon nobility and the Abodrite elites, without an interpreter, was not a hard task. Close to the eve of the 983 Wendish uprising, Dietrich, the Margrave of Nordmark, opposed marriage between the prince Mstivoj and a niece of the Saxon duke, Bernard I. The margrave claimed that “it is only right that the high-born niece of a great prince should be married to a man of exalted rank and not, indeed, be given to a dog”.<sup>18</sup> It is more likely that this statement refers not to the religious status of the Abodrite prince, but to the power ratio between the Saxon nobility and the Wendish elites. For the Saxon margraves and dukes, the Abodrite princes were tributaries outside the Duchy. This meant that they could not benefit from the same social status and respect as other Saxon nobles.

It should be emphasized that Helmold did not describe these scenes as it seemed reasonable to him in his own time.<sup>19</sup> His testimonies confirm that the linguistic interactions between the two groups are based on political interests, rather than mere observation of culture. This phenomenon occurred in the tenth century and continued at least until the second half of the twelfth century. Neither Thietmar nor Adam of Bremen mentioned the existence of any interpreters, which would have facilitated the communication between the Wendish elites and the Saxon ecclesiastical and secular leaders. Adam of Bremen, from which Helmold copied entire passages about certain historical events from previous centuries, does not give us clues about the difficulty of communication between the two language groups. During the Ottonian period, the Saxon

dukes or margraves had the right to impose their own policy on their vassals and tributaries.<sup>20</sup> The beneficiaries of these political alliances were usually the prince, his family and some close elites. By following the Ottonian model, the Wendish elites not only had an interest in learning German, but also the opportunity. Therefore, knowledge of German should be seen less as a marker of a cultural identity, and more as a means of communication according to the political interests. Prejudices of the Saxon nobility towards the Wendish elites could be linked to ethnicity, but not necessarily to the language.<sup>21</sup> In order to maintain a close relationship with their Saxon allies, which would have ensured peace, the spread of Christianity and prosperous incomes, the Wendish elites needed to know German. First of all, it would have been a sign of obedience and respect for the Saxon nobles. Most of the Wendish uprisings were organized by the lower class and part of the elite, who disagreed with the tribute and tithes paid to the Saxons. In most of the cases, the Wendish prince and his family were forced to follow the will of their subjects, in order to prevent a reaction against them. When the prince and his family did not follow the will of the subjects, they were banished or even killed.<sup>22</sup>

It is very likely that the early missionaries preached more to the Wendish upper class who knew German. This was a common practice in the missions who took place across the Elbe during the next centuries. The prince and other chieftains could have taught their subjects at least some basic Christian teachings. Due to the revolts of the lower class, this custom continued until the twelfth century, when there was a short period of peace. For the twelfth-century missionaries Vicelin (1149–1154) and Gerold (1154–1160), preaching in Slavic was not a central priority. An exception was bishop Otto of Bamberg (c. 1060–1131) of whom we know he was familiar with the Polish language. After he conquered almost the whole Western Pomerania, the Polish duke Bolesław III (1107–1138) invited Otto to come as a missionary to this region. The bishop had previously been chaplain at the Polish court, and so he had knowledge of both Polish language and customs.<sup>23</sup>

Some scholars consider that the language spoken in medieval Pomerania is a dialect of Polish. Others consider it a separate language.<sup>24</sup> The only surviving trace of the medieval Pomeranian lan-



guage is Kashubian, spoken in the western and south-western areas of Gdańsk.<sup>25</sup> Similar to Kashubian and Pomeranian was Slovincian, which became extinct in the early twentieth century. Another extinct language is the so-called Polabian, spoken mainly by the Abodrites and known from a very few writings in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Together with Polish and Pomeranian, Polabian is often grouped as Lechitic label within the West Slavic languages.<sup>26</sup> Related to the Lechitic group is the language spoken by the Sorbs, the last remnant of the Wends. Their language has two varieties, Upper and Lower Sorbian. The first literary text written in Lower Sorbian is a New Testament from 1548. Today, the combined total of speakers is only about 50 000. Most of them are in Upper and Lower Lusatia (Bautzen and Cottbus) and are bilingual. Only a few remain who are monolingual.<sup>27</sup>

The cultural and linguistic differences between the Wends and Poles have been known by contemporaries. For instance, the linguistic differences between Pomeranian and Polish are confirmed by Bolesław III, who offered to send to the Bishop Otto of Bamberg some language interpreters as well as some military companions.<sup>28</sup> However, during the next centuries, the Polish perception about the Pomeranian identity changed according to political context. In the fifteenth century, chroniclers such as Jan Długosz (1415–1480), mentioned consanguinity and linguistic similarities of Poles, Pomeranians and Rani from Rugia.<sup>29</sup>

During the twelfth century, not only the German clerics spoke the Slavic language. Helmold of Bosau mentioned the bilingualism of the Saxon nobility.<sup>30</sup> One example is Count Adolf II of Holstein (c. 1128–1164), who learned the Slavic language in order to be able to communicate with the Abodrite elites who did not know German. Another example is the missionary priest Bruno, brought by Vicelin in Liubice (Lübeck) in 1136 for the purpose of convert them.<sup>31</sup> Helmold does not mention how well Bruno knew the Slavic language, but points out that that he only “wrote sermons composed in Slavic” (*Habens sermons conscriptos Slavicis verbis*).<sup>32</sup> It was emphasized that some of the Abodrite elites to have translated certain texts so that the readers could read the transcripts.<sup>33</sup> Later, Bruno arrived in Oldenburg, where he offered “holy” assistance to Bishop Gerold.<sup>34</sup>

In the late tenth century, for the missionary bishop Bruno of Querfurt (974–1009), preaching in Slavic was indeed a priority. The bishop's activity is an example of connection between mission and 'rational martyrdom' (*rationale martyrium*). As far as we know, the quantitative aspect was very important for Bruno and his companions. In order to win for Christ as many souls as possible, a true missionary and prudent martyr had to learn Slavic and integrate within the pagan society. This happened through some physical changes such as hair growth and the wearing of secular clothing. For Bruno and his companions, these changes were necessary in order to open more efficiently the way to baptism for the pagans.<sup>35</sup>

In other situations, missionaries were native speakers of Slavic. This is the case of Adalbert (956–997), missionary bishop of Prague and martyr at the hands of the Prussians. Adalbert was born as Vojtěch (Wojciech, Voitecus) in Libice in a minor princely family of Bohemia. He was educated in Magdeburg by the archbishop Adalbert (c. 968–981), from which he took his name. After he was invested as bishop of Prague in 982, he was forced into exile by the Bohemian duke Boleslaus II (972–999). Later he became a zealous monk at the Benedictine monastery of SS Boniface and Alexius in Rome. There, Adalbert asked the pope's permission to preach the Gospel to the pagans. From sources we know that Adalbert preached in Hungary, as well as in the half-converted Bohemia.<sup>36</sup> Due to his close friendship with the Emperor Otto III, he became the adviser of Adalbert of Magdeburg on converting the Wends.<sup>37</sup> In 997, Adalbert of Prague arrived at the court of the Polish duke Bolesław I. Despite the fact that he knew Slavic, Adalbert was advised by the Polish duke to preach not in Pomerania, but among the Prussians. The duke supported his new mission from Prussia, because he wanted to ensure his supremacy along the south-eastern Baltic coast. During his Prussian mission, Adalbert had an interpreter called Benedykt-Bogusz.<sup>38</sup> This mission was short-lived, and he was martyred shortly after his arrival by the pagan Prussians, who had beheaded him.<sup>39</sup> He was buried in Gniezno, but in 1039 his relics were brought to Prague by the Bohemian duke Břetislav I.<sup>40</sup>

In all the cases discussed earlier, Saxon missionaries and Wendish elites appear to have been able to communicate easily with

one another. Yet, such straight communication did not necessarily always take place when it came to those of the lower class, and perhaps some of the Wendish chieftains. As far as the lower class is concerned, peasants were mostly connected with other members of their local community. Chroniclers such as Adam of Bremen or Helmold of Bosau believed that the Wends and the Norsemen were culturally influenced by the societies to which they belonged. In an attempt to convert them, the missionaries were forced to take them out of pagan societies; a process that usually can be long lasting.<sup>41</sup> Thus, the linguistic interferences were influenced by this social climate. From Helmold's writings we can deduce that the lack of knowledge of the German language by the Wendish peasants was due to their stubborn desire to remain pagan. The learning of German was enforced by the conversion process, usually supported by the Wendish Christian elite.<sup>42</sup> Even so, during the mid-twelfth century, the Saxons of Holstein and the Wends still lived in separate settlements. Over time, however, ethnic intermixture became much more common in the rural area.<sup>43</sup>

How reliable is the information present in the text of authors such as Thietmar, Adam of Bremen or Helmold of Bosau? We know that in most of the cases, when they describe some events, the medieval authors' objectives were primarily of a moral and theological nature. Thietmar reported on the missionary activity in the Wendish territory, conducted by the German clerics.<sup>44</sup> The author seems to have been familiar with the concept of the northern "barbarian" from the Carolingian period. Scandinavians and Wends are called "barbarians" only a few times, compared to other pagan populations. His attitude towards the Wends follows moral landmarks of the civilization and culture of the Christian world. The evaluation criteria are similar to those of the Scandinavians. Thus, the Wends "are always united in doing harm".<sup>45</sup> In attempting to describe the individual actions of them, Thietmar did not use the same pejorative terms. Individuals are described more positively, because each of them can be converted. Wendish statehood is always dangerous for Christianity, because the Wendish apostasy can be both religious and political.

Thietmar knew the Sorbs well enough, since he lived in Meriburg (a border diocese), where the Sorbs were the majority.<sup>46</sup> His

accounts about the Wendish upper class would be, therefore, primarily first-hand. His narratives are based on his own hands-on experiences regarding the missionary activity and the clerics who took part in this conversion process, some of whom he knew personally. However, his knowledge about the lower class must have been second-hand. In fact, Thietmar's *Chronicon* is one of the few sources in which, along with anthroponyms and toponyms, we can also find some imperfect phrases in Slavic.<sup>47</sup>

The most important cleric directly involved in missionary activity among the Sorbs was Bishop Boso of Merseburg, mentioned above. Testimonies regarding the conversion mission of Boso also contain some information about the way he and the Sorbs communicated. The bishop wanted the Sorbs who accepted baptism to have the most accessible way to understand and practice the new religion. To do this, he first translated the catechetical texts into Slavic language (*slavonica scripserat verba*). It is very likely that the translation would be made with the assistance of someone who knew Slavic better than the bishop. This could be one of the Sorbian elites or other clerics from his diocese. However, his intention was to familiarise the Sorbs with the usefulness of religious terms. Thus, the Sorbs were able to participate in certain religious services by praying in their own language. As long as they practiced Christian rituals, the Christianity could be maintained among the subjects for a long time. According to Thietmar, perhaps during the celebration of a Liturgy, the bishop would have asked the Sorbs to sing the *kyrie eleison* prayer, after explaining what it meant. Not knowing the meaning of the two terms, the Sorbs would have turned them into a combination of Slavic words with similar resonance – *ukrivolsa* – which, translated in English means “the alder stands in the bush”. All of the bishop's attempts to correct the pronunciation have resulted in the “fools” amusement and the same answer: “so has Boso spoken”.<sup>48</sup> However, the edition of Holtzmann publishes two parallel texts; there were corrections in the text (in addition to *ukrivolsa* there is also *kriolosso*) and the Latin translation was added later (and also in several variants).

This story confirms that Boso had at least some little knowledge of Slavic language. The bishop, as well as Thietmar, knew what the word *ukrivolsa* meant. Boso's attempts to correct the pro-

nunciation show us how much he wanted to teach the Sorbs to pray like Germans. The level of his knowledge of Slavic is confirmed by the explanations offered to interlocutors about the meaning and importance of this prayer. Even though the bishop explained the meaning of prayer, the Sorbs were not able to understand this because they did not know German or Latin. Boso was not so familiar with the Old Church Slavonic which had been used in neighbouring states such as Bohemia. Indeed, his “Slavic” was not an eloquent language.<sup>49</sup>

A common Slavic language, used for communication, cannot be the result of a massive migration. This language, often referred to as Old Church Slavonic, developed later than the tenth century.<sup>50</sup> It is universally recognized by the scholars as the first literary language of the Slavs. However, it is often evaluated from a narrow historical-comparative perspective, and this is why it cannot be considered as a true literary language. It was emphasized that at the beginning of the Old Church Slavonic language we find also a certain presence of Latin and of Old High German influence.<sup>51</sup> Cyril (c. 826–869) and Methodius (815–885) originated from Macedonia (Thessaloniki) but they never worked as missionaries there. Instead they were active in Great Moravia. Within the Byzantine theme of Macedonia, some disciples of Cyril and Methodius created a largely artificial liturgical language and began their missionary work by using translations of the Gospels from Byzantine Greek. The first missionaries who spread the Old Church Slavonic language among the southern and eastern Slavs first used the Glagolitic script, and later what we now know as the Cyrillic alphabet. For instance, in Macedonia there were bilingual communities of the Greek and South Slavic variety. Among the Western Slavs, missionaries used the Latin script. This proved to be an imperfect tool to handle Slavic sounds. It was emphasized that the oldest datable Slovene manuscripts written in Latin script are the so-called *Freising Fragments*, compiled about 1000 AD. The oldest Slovene book is the *Ostromir Gospel* (ca. 1056–57).<sup>52</sup>

The lexical blending of Old Church Slavonic could be justified by the opposition of the German clergy who, in defence of their political interests, took advantage of the early Church doctrine that God’s message may be preached in one of the three old languages:

Hebrew, Greek and Latin. This so-called trilingual heresy or theory of the three holy languages was attacked by Cyril in a dispute in Venice. For Cyril and Methodius, the 'trilingualists' were the Frankish Catholic clergy, who opposed the use of Old Church Slavonic. In Cyrillo-Methodian tradition, the 'trilingualists' are considered heretics. However, even if the Cyril and Methodius rejected the trilingual heresy, the Greek language had a major impact on the structure of Old Church Slavonic. Missionaries such as Cyril and Methodius were charged with heresy for not using one of the three sacred languages. Later they were cleared and Pope Hadrian II (867–872) ratified the Slavic translations of the Gospel and ordered Slavic priests to be ordained.<sup>53</sup>

Since the seventh century, the Wends started to borrow a few toponyms from German speakers. They also appeared to have borrowed some other terms connected with religious matters.<sup>54</sup> Scholars suggest that the process was reversed in the tenth century when the Germans, who lived on the border with the Wends, adopted both the new Slavic toponyms and the German names borrowed three centuries ago. The process has led to the emergence of hybrid words, such as Thietmar's *ukrivolsa*, which is discussed above. These hybrids came into the use of German authorities and clerics from the tenth century onward. In the twelfth century, German chroniclers used Slavic names for deities, such as the Pomeranian Triglav, or hybrid terms like the God Svantevit from Arkona.<sup>55</sup> The German authorities and clergy sought to apply the acquired knowledge of the Slavic language in order to maintain stability and spread the Christianity among the Wends. Geographical names or deities fixed in the charters and chronicles prove, for one, the competence of the authors in linguistic interactions. In the twelfth century, German authors used even more Slavic words than in the previous centuries.<sup>56</sup> From the so-called Polabian dialect spoken by the Wends from the north-eastern part of Germany, only 2800 lexical items survived. Approximately 20% of this extant lexicon consists of German borrowings which were phonologically assimilated and morphologically adapted to Polabian.<sup>57</sup> However, since the Wendish society had been described only by Christian and mostly non-Slavic clerics, the depiction of its deities, divination systems, rituals, economy, warfare and even geography is fundamentally blurred

behind the ideological filters of *interpretaatio Christiana*. This meant that non-Christian cultural and social elements or historical facts were adapted to Christianity by means of appropriate interpretation.

Indeed, the Wends did not ever use the Old Church Slavonic as liturgical language. In the second half of the tenth century, the written language was Latin. We can assume that Slavic and German dialects were spoken in the large towns such as Szczecin or Wolin, whereas the villages tended to be monolingually Slavic.<sup>58</sup> Therefore, at the end of the tenth century, some German and Czech words were added to the original *kyrie eleison*. In the eleventh century, the prayer started to be known as *Christ uns genade* (“Christ have Mercy upon us!”). Perhaps the Sorbs would understand some words from the prayer if the bishop would have sung *Hospodine, pomiluj ny* (“God have Mercy upon us”).<sup>59</sup> The text dates from the third quarter of the tenth century and is considered the oldest known Czech hymn. It is preserved in several copies, all in Latin script (the earliest dating from the 1380s), comprising elements of Old Church Slavonic which are mixed with Czech words. The earliest extant texts from the Czech language area were translated from Latin in the mid-tenth century or perhaps at the end of the ninth century, known as the *Kiev folia*. These were written in Old Church Slavonic with Glagolitic alphabet, with a few generally North Slavic (including Sorbian) and characteristically Czech features, such as the reflexes *c*, *z*, for Common Slavic \**tj*, \**dj*.<sup>60</sup>

Despite his impressive linguistic abilities, Boso’s zeal was stopped by the scepticism and impertinence of the Sorbs. Although they accepted Christianity and participated in religious ceremonies in churches, the Sorbs did not cease to attend the pagan sanctuaries. They continued to use sacred spaces, like groves or waters, to perform rituals associated with their primary religion. This case was not a singular one. At the end of the tenth century, this religious syncretism was practiced by most of the Wends, including the Abodrites. Thietmar is sorrowful when he tells us that a Wendish tribe from Bautzen, called in German *deleminci*, and in Slavic *glomaci*, had a sacred eponymous space (*Glomač*), which was attended more than Christian churches.<sup>61</sup>

By his methods, Boso failed to persuade the Sorbs to abandon their pagan beliefs. Neither was Bishop Wigbert of Merseburg (1004–1009) more successful after destroying more pagan sanctuaries than his predecessors. According to Thietmar, the zeal with which Wigbert preached was due to the destruction of the sacred groves (*Zutibure*) and the construction of churches in their place.<sup>62</sup> But even though the Sorbs appeared to be formally Christianized and went to church, they did not abandon pagan sanctuaries that used elements of nature such as groves and waters to define sacred spaces. The Sorbs practiced a sort of religious syncretism, and this is why they rarely attended Christian churches and refused visits to the priests. For Thietmar, the Sorbs were false Christians because they lived outside of the Christian society. The chronicler believes that the Sorbs, which he calls *rustici*, refused contacts with the priests because of their faith in certain household deities (*domestic dei*). Among these deities, Thietmar mentioned an idol named Hennil, represented in the form of a ring-bearing hand.<sup>63</sup>

The Sorbs' refusal to accept Christian eschatology was primarily due to communication difficulties. Thietmar interpreted this refusal as a proof of stupidity. According to him, the Sorbs were not able to understand the Christian doctrine, because they were *inlitterati*.<sup>64</sup> This explains the urge of Boso to teach the Sorbs in their language, the basic ideas of Christian catechetics. Thietmar was aware that the literacy of the Sorbs would have made it possible to understand the Christian doctrine and would have led to the full integration of the new converts into *Christianitas*. It was not enough for some of the catechesis to be translated into Slavic. It was important for the converts to learn Latin, or at least religious terminology. Therefore, the differences between the two language groups were not due to contradictions between paganism and Christianity, but rather to a linguistic misunderstanding. Despite of his *interpretatio Christiana*, Thietmar appears to be sufficiently informed about the Sorbian society. This is not only due to the fact that he lived among them. During the time he was in Henry II's court, Thietmar had the opportunity to study directly another Wendish tribe, the Lutici, which were allies of the Ottonian king against Poland. His information does not differ from that of contemporary authors such as Bruno of Querfurt.<sup>65</sup>



In many cases, a medieval interpreter did not go beyond purely linguistic ability. However, his linguistic ability was often supplemented or supported by symbolic action. Gestures and symbols could sometimes bridge linguistic problems or, on the contrary, have a provocative effect to the audience.<sup>66</sup> On the eastern border of Saxony, the existence of different cultural communities led to many tensions. The dividing line was marked by the linguistic differences. This is confirmed by the most important law book and collection of customs of the Duchy of Saxony, known as *Sachsenspiegel* (The Saxon Mirror), which would have been compiled and translated from Latin in the first half of the thirteenth century as a record of existing customary law. From this book we find that language was a significant problem when the Wends were judged by the margrave court. Everyone accused could refuse to answer unless he is accused in his native language. This meant that a charge against a Wend who did not know German had to be put forward in Slavic language before the court. Since the court was normally conducted in German, the spokesmen functioned as interpreters for Wends. Because they wanted to avoid some ethnic conflicts, margraves refused to ask a Saxon to hand down a judgment on a Wend and vice-versa. In the case of the local court, which was under king's juridical authority, any German could hand down a judgment on Wends.<sup>67</sup> Perhaps a similar law was used for the Poles in Silesia as well as in Pomerania.<sup>68</sup> The existence of a German law among other Slavs was highlighted by scholars. It is assumed that Polish church officials and nobles sometimes recruited Slavic speaking colonists with German law or granted German law to existing Wendish (Pomeranian?) or Polish settlements. This is explained by the fact that the German law was more consistent and gave to the Polish lords the advantage of unifying various services and providing one form of jurisdiction for collecting revenues (tribute, tithes).<sup>69</sup>

Ethnic conflicts could have taken place both within the Wendish society, as well as between the Wends and the Saxons. By the twelfth century, these conflicts could be generated, for instance, when German settlers received better lands than Wends.<sup>70</sup> Even if these conflicts were occasional, they caused a sort of permanent enmity between the two language groups. However, the conflicts

could be solved at the margrave court. Thus, the spokesmen must have known both German and Slavic. The Wends who have been judged were part of the both upper and lower classes. If a Wend was accused by a German, the first needed to defend his cause before the court. Even if the interpreter knew the Slavic language, there was no guarantee he would have supported the cause of the accused.

Of course, in the second half of the tenth century, we do not have any records about a massive German colonization east of the Elbe, but similar ethnic conflicts could have taken place especially along the Saxon border. The conflicts could be generated because the Saxon nobility possessed several properties on the right side of the Elbe. Some information not to be neglected about the Saxon possessions across the Elbe came from the foundation charters of some dioceses such as Brandenburg and Havelberg.<sup>71</sup> In these charters, it is mentioned that Otto I transferred certain privileges to the new churches under the jurisdiction of the two dioceses east of the Elbe. However, most privileges would have been offered to the archdiocese of Magdeburg. According to Thietmar, Archbishop Giselher of Magdeburg (981–1004) received from King Henry II his countship (*comitatus*) along with his benefice (*beneficium*) on the Mulde River.<sup>72</sup> This confirms that Otto possessed a whole range of privileges, which he granted according to his royal interests.<sup>73</sup> The possession of the Magdeburg archdiocese has increased significantly in 965, when Otto granted one-tenth of all silver paid in the form of a tribute by five of the Wendish tribes (Ukrani, Riacani, Redari, Tholenzi and Zerezepani) to *ad publicum nostrae maiestatis fiscum*. This heavy tribute generated a conflict which led to a massive rebellion of these five tribes in 983.<sup>74</sup>

## CONCLUSIONS

This study has provided a brief analysis of the linguistic interactions between Germans and Wends in the tenth century. What we noticed is that there is no Slavic language which has been unaffected by the political and social influences from other dominant cultures, in this case the German influence and religious influences brought about by attempts at Christianisation. In the second half of

the tenth century, cultural identity was linked more with political alliances than with language. Learning of German was a political reality which varied according to context. In order to maintain good relations with the Saxon nobility, the Wendish elites needed to know German. This would have ensured a direct, unambiguous communication. Translators could interfere with the messages and generate conflicts. Some of the Wendish elites could have known Latin as well. As tributaries of the Saxon dukes, they could have signed documents regarding their obligations. Therefore, a sort of collective identity was more developed among the Wendish upper classes than lower class.

The integration of the Wends into the German *imperium christianum* was a complex process and comprised both the upper and lower classes. In the tenth century, the lower class had little reason to know German. As we have shown, the linguistic interferences occurred especially due to Christianisation. The Germanisation of the Wends reached its peak in the twelfth century, when the land was settled by Germans and re-organised (*Ostsiedlung*). This human colonisation paved the way to a monastic and, therefore, spiritual colonisation. The Cistercians and Premonstratensians who settled in the region during the second half of the twelfth century shared not only the Christian faith, but also the German language of the conquerors. Due to the process of assimilation following German settlement, most of the Wends from the lower class adopted the German language. Only some rural communities, such as the Sorbs, who did not have a strong degree of integration with German settlers and continued to use Slavic languages (Upper and Lower Sorbian) were still called Wends. With the gradual decline of the use of these languages, the exonym *Wends* slowly disappeared, too. Surprisingly, in other regions such as eastern Pomerania (Pomerelia), it was German speakers who adopted Slavic. This was possible mainly due to the local clergy and perhaps some influential Wendish chieftains.



Fig. 1. Linguistic borders, Wendish fortifications and German bishoprics across the Elbe (10th century). Source: Matthias Puhle (ed.) (2001). *Otto der Große, Magdeburg und Europa*. Mainz, p. 66.

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- <sup>1</sup> Archaeological research confirms the existence of distinct cultures on the southern shore of the Baltic Sea, which dates back to the beginning of the seventh century. In northeastern Germany no dwellings built after the Slavic models across Europe were found. Also, the existence of ritual funerals specific to the Slavic community cannot be confirmed. A significant recent work on the problem of the archaeology of the early Middle Ages in the Baltic region is Mirosław Rudnicki (2018). *The Olsztyn Group in the Early Medieval Archaeology of the Baltic Region: The Cemetery at Leleszki*. Leiden: Brill.
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- <sup>3</sup> J. M. Lappenberg (ed.) (1876). *Adami gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*, MGH SRG. Hannover: Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, I. 1; II. 18–19; III. 19, 21; IV. 13, 18.
- <sup>4</sup> Laur Wolfgang (1961). Die sogenannten Wenden im Baltikum. *Jahrbuch für fränkische Landesforschung*, 21, pp. 431–438. Some historians argued that the Wends of Livonia were most probably of Slavic ethnicity. Other historians stated the Wends of Livonia are clearly linked with archaeological material of Finno-Ugrians (as it was established already in the 1970s). However, by the end of the thirteenth century, they were largely assimilated with the Lettgallians and disappeared. For more details regarding the ethnicity of the Livonian Wends, see Alan V. Murray (2013). Henry of Livonia and the Wends of the Eastern Baltic: Ethnography and Biography in the Thirteenth-Century Livonian Mission. *Studi Medievali*, 54, pp. 807–833; Nils Blomkvist (2005). *The Discovery of the Baltic: The Reception of a Catholic World-System in the European North (AD 1075–1225)*. Leiden: Brill, pp. 320–321; Zigrīda Apala, Jānis Apals (2014). The Vendic hill fort on Riekstu kalns in Cēsis. In: Heiki Valk (ed.). *Strongholds and power centres east of the Baltic Sea in the 11th–13th centuries*. Tartu: University of Tartu, pp. 115–138. For an extensive discussion of this terminology in Byzantine and Western world in the Early Middle Ages, see Florin Curta (2001). *The Making of the Slavs: History and Archaeology of the Lower Danube Region, c. 500–700*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 36–73.
- <sup>5</sup> In 948, Otto I founded the dioceses of Brandenburg (east of Elbe) and Havelberg (confluence between Elbe and Havel). These two dioceses were responsible for the missionary activity in the territory of the Wilzi/Lutici. In the same year were founded another three dioceses, Merseburg (on Saale), Zeitz (later Naumburg, on White Elster) and Meissen (on Elba), responsible for the conversion of the Sorbs. Richard Fletcher (1999). *The Barbarian Conversion: from Paganism to Christianity*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 419.
- <sup>6</sup> Diocese of Oldenburg in Holstein was responsible for the conversion of the Wagri. *Adami gesta Hammaburgensis*, II. 14

- <sup>7</sup> Thietmar of Merseburg tells us that even the dead prelates were not spared; the body of deceased bishop Dodilo of Brandenburg was desecrated by the Abodrites. R. Holtzmann (ed.) (1935). Thietmar, *Chronicon*, MGH SRG. Berlin, II. 17–18.
- <sup>8</sup> Mihai Dragnea (2016). Divine Vengeance and Human Justice in the Wendish Crusade of 1147. *Collegium Medievale*, 29, pp. 57–58.
- <sup>9</sup> The earliest known mention of Sorbs in Central Europe was in 631. Thus, the Frankish *Chronicle of Fredegar* refers to a certain Dervanus, *dux gente Surbiorum que ex genere Sclavinorum*, who wanted to declare his independence from the Franks. The Sorbs are called by Fredegar *surbi*. The Sorbs of Fredegar were located on the borders of Bavaria and Thuringia respectively, farther south than the tribal-groups encountered on the banks of the Elbe. The later version *sorabi* was used for the tribes who lived between the Saale and the Elbe, described by chroniclers like Adam of Bremen. Etymologically and historically, *surbi* or *sorabi* were linked to Balkan Serbs. However, the Sorbs were not united by a single speech form. Gerald Stone (2015). *The Smallest Slavonic Nation: The Sorbs of Lusatia*. London: Bloomsbury, p. 9; Curta. *The Making of the Slavs*, p. 109; W. Oschlies (1991). *Die Sorben. Slawisches Volk im Osten Deutschlands*. Bonn-Bad Godesberg: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, p. 11; Jan Brankač and Frido Mětsk (1977). *Geschichte der Sorben*. Vol. 1: *Von den Anfängen bis 1789*. Bautzen: VEB Domowina-Verlag.
- <sup>10</sup> Thietmar, *Chronicon*, II. 36.
- <sup>11</sup> Fletcher. *The Barbarian Conversion*, p. 419.
- <sup>12</sup> For more details about the military history of the Ottonians, see David Bachrach (2007). Memory, Epistemology, and the Writing of Early Medieval Military History: The Example of Bishop Thietmar of Merseburg (1009–1018). *Viator*, 38 (1), pp. 63–90.
- <sup>13</sup> For more details regarding the intercultural interactions between Wendish and Scandinavian societies, see the work of Mats Roslund (2007). *Guests in the House: Cultural Transmission between Slavs and Scandinavians 900 to 1300 AD*. Leiden: Brill.
- <sup>14</sup> Christian Lübke (2008). Christianity and Paganism as Elements of Gentile Identities to the East of the Elbe and Saale Rivers. In: Ildar H. Garipzanov et al. (eds.). *Franks, Northmen, and Slavs: Identities and State Formation in Early Medieval Europe*. Turnhout: Brepols, p. 198.
- <sup>15</sup> *Cumque allegacionibus crebris pontificem super hoc negocio convenisset, quidam familiarium episcopi petitionem incauta verborum iniuria repulerunt, dicentes iniustum esse pulcherrimam virginem agresti et inculto viro copulare*. Bernhard Schmeidler (ed.) (1937). *Helmoldi presbyteri Bozoviensis Cronica Slavorum*, MGH SRG. Hannover: Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, I. 13.
- <sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, I. 13.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ipse quidem villas amplissimae possessionis accepit, tributum vero, quod supra memoravi, genero suo ad manus filiae ipsius colligendum resignavit; aliquandiu etiam apud Obotritos commoratus predia colonis exercenda distribuit ordinatisque omnibus in terram Wagirorum reversus est*. *Ibid.*, I. 14.

- <sup>18</sup> Ibid., I. 16. Thietmar of Merseburg called his parishioners “dogs”. H. W. Hazard (ed.) (1975). *A History of the Crusades: The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, p. 548.
- <sup>19</sup> Sébastien Rossignol (2014). Bilingualism in Medieval Europe: Germans and Slavs in Helmold of Bosau’s Chronicle. *Central European History*, 47 (3), p. 531.
- <sup>20</sup> For more details regarding the models of the Ottonian kingship and imperial agenda, see the work of Gerd Althoff (2003). *Otto III*, trans. by Phyllis G. Jestice. University Park in Pennsylvania: Penn State University Press; Mihai Dragnea (2019). The Saxon expeditions against the Wends and the foundation of Magdeburg during Otto I’s reign. *The Romanian Journal for Baltic and Nordic Studies*, 11(2), pp. 7–34.
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- <sup>22</sup> The eleventh-century Abodrite prince Gottschalk (*princeps Godescalcus*), who spent his youth in Lüneburg, knew both German and Slavic and was able to mediate the dialogue between the two communities. *Helmoldi presbyteri Bozoviensis*, I. 20.
- <sup>23</sup> A short description of the bishop’s life and activity according to three hagiographers (Wolfer, Ebo and Herbord) was made by Przemysław Wiszewski (2010). *Domus Bolezlai: Values and Social Identity in Dynastic Traditions of Medieval Poland (c. 966–1138)*. Leiden: Brill, pp. 343–357; C. Stephen Jaeger (2010). *The Origins of Courtliness: Civilizing Trends and the Formation of Courtly Ideals, 939–1210*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 49–53.
- <sup>24</sup> Benjamin W. Fortson (2010). *Indo-European Language and Culture: An Introduction*. Chichester: John Wiley and Sons, p. 430.
- <sup>25</sup> For more details about the Kashubian language and its history and contacts with German and Polish, see Jadwiga Zieniukowa (2015). The Kashubian language — a minority language spoken in borderlands as it was and as it is today. *Český lid* 102 (1), pp. 43–54.
- <sup>26</sup> Fortson. *Indo-European Language*, p. 430.
- <sup>27</sup> Sorin Paliga, Eugen S. Teodor (2009). *Lingvistica și arheologia slavilor timpurii. O altă vedere de la Dunărea de Jos*. Targoviste: Cetatea de Scaun, p. 58; Fortson. *Indo-European*, p. 430; Lübke. Christianity, p. 190.
- <sup>28</sup> The bishop’s involvement in the political, and ecclesiastical affairs as well as his missionary activity were described by the three hagiographers according to the theological doctrine of that time. For more details, see Mihai Dragnea (2015). Otto din Bamberg: Reformă Monastică și Misiune Apostolică. In: Ileana Căzan and Bogdan Mateescu (eds.). *Timp, societate și identitate culturală. “Miniaturi” istorice*. Cluj-Napoca: Academia Română – Centrul de Studii Transilvane, pp. 25–48.

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- <sup>30</sup> For more details about the communication between the two language groups in the twelfth century, see Rossignol. Bilingualism, pp. 523–543.
- <sup>31</sup> *Helmoldi presbyteri Bozoviensis*, I. 94.
- <sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, I. 84.
- <sup>33</sup> Friedrich Lotter (1974). Bemerkungen zur Christianisierung der Abodriten. In: Helmut Beumann (ed.). *Festschrift für Walter Schlesinger*, 2. Cologne-Wien: Böhlau, p. 421; Volker Scior (2002), *Das Eigene und das Fremde. Identität und Fremdheit in den Chroniken Adams von Bremen, Helmolds von Bosau und Arnolds von Lübeck*. Berlin: De Gruyter, p. 210.
- <sup>34</sup> *Helmoldi presbyteri Bozoviensis*, I. 54.
- <sup>35</sup> After he preached among the Wends and within the Prussian lands, Bruno (“Apostle of the Prussians”) was killed by pagan Prussians in 1009. His martyrdom changed the perception about the Christian mission. For more details regarding the missionary activity of Bruno and his martyrdom, see Darius Baronas (2009). St Bruno of Querfurt: The Missionary Vocation. *Lithuanian Historical Studies*, 14, pp. 41–52; Idem (2008). The year 1009: St. Bruno of Querfurt between Poland and Rus’. *Journal of Medieval History*, 34, pp. 1–22.
- <sup>36</sup> Francis Dvornik (1956). *The Slavs: Their Early History and Civilization*. Boston: American Academy of Arts and Sciences, p. 260.
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- <sup>46</sup> David Fraesdorff (2002). The Power of Imagination: The Christianitas and the Pagan North during Conversion to Christianity (800–1200). *The Medieval History Journal*, 5 (2), p. 317.
- <sup>47</sup> Gerard Stone (2015). *Slav Outposts in Central European History: The Wends, Sorbs and Kashubs*. London: Bloomsbury, pp. 43–44.
- <sup>48</sup> *Hic ut sibi commissos eo facilius instrueret, Sclavonica scripserat verba et eos kirieleison cantare rogavit exponens eis huius utilitatem. Qui vecordes hoc in malum irrisorie mutabant ukrivolsa, quod nostra lingua dicitur: aeleri stat in fructum, dicentes: 'Sic locutus est Boso', cum ille aliter dixerit.* Thietmar, *Chronicon*, II. 37.
- <sup>49</sup> The Proto-Slavic language used by the Wends and German missionaries was called *Slavica missionarica* by scholars. Karlheinz Hengst (2014). *Lingua Slavica missionarica in terra inter Salam et Albiam*. In: Karlheinz Hengst (ed.). *Sprachkontakte, Sprachstudien und Entlehnungen im östlichen Mitteldeutschland seit einem Jahrtausend: ausgewählte Studien zur Sprach- und Namenforschung*. Wien: Praesens, pp. 21–38.
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- <sup>54</sup> The Proto-Slavic languages borrowed a significant amount of words not only from Old High German, but also from Thracian, Iranian (especially Scythian), Finno-Ugric and Altaic. For more details regarding the last three linguistic groups, see Lenore A. Grenoble (2010). Contact and the Development of the Slavic Languages. In: Raymond Hickey (ed.). *The Handbook of Language Contact*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 581–597. The presence of the West-Iranian, Baltic and Thracian/Proto-Romanian elements in Proto-Slavic languages was discussed by Sorin Paliga (2012). The ‘trichotomical’ character of Proto-Slavic and the long-debated issue of the oldest Slavic borrowings in Romanian. Ilona Janyšková, Helena Karlíková (eds.). *Theory and Empiricism in Slavonic Diachronic Linguistics*. Prague: Nakladatelství, pp. 347–363; Idem (2012). *Najmanj utemeljeno je Paligovo mnenje...* Once again on Slavic *сѣто*. *Romanoslavica*, 48 (4), pp. 129–139; Idem (2012). *Introducere în studiul comparativ al limbilor slave*. Bucharest: Editura Universitatii din Bucuresti, pp. 368–371; Idem (2011). O privire asupra romanității orientale în raport cu Sclaveni și cu alte grupuri etnice ale primului mileniu p. Chr. In: Lia Maria, Bogdan Ciupercă (eds.). *Arheologia Mileniului I P. Chr. Interferențe culturale la Dunărea de Jos*. Bucharest: Oscar Print, pp. 211–226; Paliga, Teodor. *Lingvistica*, pp. 185–212; Sorin Paliga (2005). 100 Slavic Basic Roots: once again on Slavic *сѣто* and the Slavic ethnogenesis. *Romanoslavica*, 40, pp. 67–86.
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- <sup>56</sup> Karlheinz Hengst (2015). Germano-slavjanskije gibridnye obrazovanija v toponimii Vostočnoj Germanii. *Voprosy Onomastiki*, 2 (19), pp. 115–116; Idem (1998). Siedlung – Herrschaft – Sprachkontakt. In: Christian Lübke (ed.). *Struktur und Wandel im Früh- und Hochmittelalter*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, pp. 81–89; Idem (1973). Zur Typologie der Lehnnamen im Deutschen. Dargestellt am Beispiel der altsorbischen Toponymie. In: H. Walther (ed.). *Der Name in Sprache und Gesellschaft. Beiträge zur Theorie der Onomastik*. Berlin: Akademie, pp. 80–88.
- <sup>57</sup> The last fluent speaker of Polabian died in 1756. Grenoble. Contact and the Development, p. 589.
- <sup>58</sup> Before the Ottonian conquest, many Wendish settlements grew into manufacturing, administrative and trade centres. Several fortifications like Liubice (Lübeck), Ratzeburg, Demmin, Rethra (Radegost), Brandenburg, Bautzen developed into early medieval towns. This change was a result of local socio-political developments and various contacts with Germany.
- <sup>59</sup> Tarsycjusz Sinka (1983). ‘Polska pieśń w liturgii’. *Nasza Przyszłość. Studia z dziejów Kościoła i kultury katolickiej w Polsce* 60. Krakow, p. 238.
- <sup>60</sup> An analysis about the evolution of the Slavic vernacular languages in central Europe during the High Middle Ages was made by Henrik Birnbaum (1999). The vernacular languages of East Central Europe in the medieval period. In: Balázs Nagy and Marcell Sebök (eds.). *The Man of many devices*

- who wandered full many ways. *Festschrift in honor of János M. Bak*. Budapest: CEU Press, pp. 386–391.
- <sup>61</sup> *Isqe a patre suo provintiam, quam nos teutonice Deleminci vocamus, Sclavi autem Glomaci aappellant, cum magno exercitu missus, devastata eadem multum atque incensa, victor rediit*. Thietmar, *Chronicon*, I. 3.
- <sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, VI. 37.
- <sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, VII. 69.
- <sup>64</sup> *Etsi ego fungar vice cotis, ferrum et non se exacuentis, tamen, ne muti canis opprobrio noter, inlitteratis ex maxime sclavis, cui cum morte temporali omnia putant finiri, haec loquor, certitudinem resurrectionis et pro qualitate meriti futurae remunerationis firmiter indicens cunctis fidelibus*. *Ibid.*, I. 14.
- <sup>65</sup> Nora Berend (ed.) (2007). *Christianization and the Rise of Christian Monarchy: Scandinavia, Central Europe and Rus' c.900–1200*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 303.
- <sup>66</sup> For medieval interpreters, see Reinhard Schneider (2012). *Vom Dolmetschen im Mittelalter. Sprachliche Vermittlung in weltlichen und kirchlichen Zusammenhängen*. Wien, Köln and Weimar: De Gruyter.
- <sup>67</sup> For more details about the juridical authority over the Wends in High Middle Ages, see Dietmar Willoweit (1986). *Gericht und Urteil über den Wenden*. In: Karl A. Kroeschell (ed.). *Festschrift für Hans Thieme zu seinem 80. Geburtstag*. Sigmaringen: Thorbecke, pp. 83–95.
- <sup>68</sup> Bernhard Bischoff (1961). *The Study of Foreign Languages in the Middle Ages*. *Speculum*, 36 (2), p. 221.
- <sup>69</sup> Higounet. *Les Allemands*, pp. 219–220.
- <sup>70</sup> Starting with the German colonisation from the twelfth century onward, there were numerous conflicts between the two groups, mainly because the new settlers have received Wendish land. For more details, see Felix Biermann (2008). *Konfrontation zwischen Einheimischen und Zuwanderern bei der deutschen Ostsiedlung des Mittelalters*. In: Oliver Auge et al. (eds.). *Bereit zum Konflikt. Strategien und Medien der Konflikterzeugung*. Ostfildern: Thorbecke, pp. 131–172. Benedykt Zientara investigated the ethnic conflicts between Germans and Wends between thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Benedykt Zientara (2012). *Nationality Conflicts in the German-Slavic Borderland in the 13th–14th Centuries and their Social Scope*. In: Nora Berend (ed.). *The expansion of Central Europe in the Middle Ages*. Farnham: Ashgate, pp. 407–426.
- <sup>71</sup> The context in which the diocese of Havelberg was founded by Otto I was discussed by Fred Ruchhöft (2003). *Eine Analyse der Stiftungsurkunde des Bistums Havelberg aufgrund archäologischer und territorialgeschichtlicher Quellen*. *Zeitschrift für Ostmitteleuropa-Forschung*, 52 (2), pp. 159–190.
- <sup>72</sup> Thietmar, *Chronicon*, IV. 69.
- <sup>73</sup> Gerd Althoff (1999). *Saxony and the Elbe Slavs in the tenth century*. In: Timothy Reuter (ed.). *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. III c. 900–c. 1024. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 278.

- <sup>74</sup> Friedrich Lotter (1989). The Crusading Idea and the Conquest of the Region East of the Elbe. In: Robert Bartlett, Angus MacKay (eds.). *Medieval Frontier Societies*. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 271.

## VĀCIEŠU UN VENDU SAVSTARPĒJĀ VERBĀLĀ UN NEVERBĀLĀ SAZIŅĀ 10. GADSIMTA OTRAJĀ PUSĒ

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Zinātniskās intereses: attiecības starp vāciešiem un vendiem viduslaikos, sevišķi pievēršoties krusta kariem un konversijām.

Pētījums sniedz īsu analīzi par lingvistisko mijiedarbību un verbālo komunikāciju starp vāciešiem un vendiem. Konstatēts, ka neviena slāvu valoda nav palikusi bez politiskās un sociālās ietekmes, ko atstājušas citas dominējošās kultūras. 10. gadsimta otrajā pusē kultūras identitāte vairāk bija saistīta ar politiskajām aliansēm nekā ar valodu. Vācu valodas mācīšanās bija politiskā realitāte, kas variējās atkarībā no laika un konteksta. Lai saglabātu labas attiecības ar sakšu aristokrātiju, vendu elites pārstāvjiem bija jāzina vācu valoda. Tam vajadzēja nodrošināt tiešu un viennozīmīgu komunikāciju. Tulki varēja izmainīt ziņojumus un izraisīt konfliktus. Daži no vendu elites pārstāvjiem, iespējams, zināja arī latīņu valodu. Būdami sakšu markgrāfu un hercogu nodēvut maksātāji, viņi varēja parakstīt ar saviem pienākumiem saistītus dokumentus. Tādēļ savveida etniskā apziņa bija vairāk attīstīta vendu augstāko slāņu nekā zemāko slāņu pārstāvjiem.

*Atslēgas vārdi:* lingvistiskā mijiedarbība, kultūras robežas, vendi, Saksijas hercogiste, Merzeburgas Titmārs, Ādams no Brēmenes, Helmolds no Bosavas.

### Kopsavilkums

Šī pētījuma metodoloģija balstās vēstures avotu kritiskā analizē un interpretācijā. Pētījums lielākoties aptver 10. gadsimta otro pusi, galveno uzmanību pievēršot hronikām, kurās atrodamas ziņas par vendu sabiedrību un kultūru, it īpaši valodu. Šī darba nozīmi citu pētījumu vidū izceļ multidisciplinārā un starpdisciplinārā pieeja, kas balstīta tādās zinātņu nozarēs kā vēsture, valodniecība un teoloģija, ietverot tās vispārējā kultūrvēstures kontekstā. Tā kā pētījumā aplūkotas arī varas attiecības starp laicīgo un garīgo varu, to var pieskaitīt arī viduslaiku politiskās teoloģijas nozarei.

Raksta mērķis bija analizēt verbālo un neverbālo saziņu starp vāciešiem un vendiem 10. gadsimtā. Pētījuma rezultātā tika gūts apstiprinā-

jums tam, ka ikviena slāvu valoda ir pieredzējusi dominējošas kultūras politisko vai sociālo ietekmi – šajā gadījumā runa ir par vācu valodas un kristianizācijas ietekmi. 10. gadsimta otrajā pusē konkrētās sabiedrības grupas kultūras identitāti vairāk noteica politiskās alianses nekā valoda. Vācu valodas apguve bija politiska realitāte, kas mainījās atkarībā no laika meta un konteksta.

Lai uzturētu labas attiecības ar sakšu muižniecību, vendu sabiedrības elitei bija jāprot vācu valoda. Tas nodrošinātu tiešu un nepārprotamu saziņu, jo tulki varētu iejaukties ziņu saturā un tādējādi izraisīt konfliktus. Daži vendu elites pārstāvji, iespējams, prata arī latīņu valodu. Kā sakšu muižnieku vasaļi viņi droši vien parakstīja dokumentus, kas noteica viņu pienākumus. Tādēļ sava veida etniskā pašapzināšanās varēja būt izteiktāka vendu sabiedrības augstākajos slāņos (aristokrātija, garīdznieki, pil-sētnieki), nevis vienkāršajā tautā.

Vendu iekļaušana vācu *imperium christianum* vidē bija sarežģīts process, kas skāra gan augstākos, gan zemākos sabiedrības slāņus. 10. gadsimtā zemākajam slānim nebija īpašas vajadzības prast vācu valodu. Kā jau iepriekš norādīts, lingvistiskās ietekmes cēlonis bija kristianizācija. Vendu pārvācošana visintensīvāk norisa 12. gadsimtā, kad teritoriju pārņēma vācieši un notika t.s. *Ostsiedlung* jeb austrumu zemju kolonizācija.

Iedzīvotāju kolonizācijai sekoja garīgā kolonizācija. Galvenie kolonizācijas instrumenti bija kristīgās misijas un klosteri. Cisterciešu un premonstriešu mūkiem, kas šai reģionā apmetās 12. gadsimta otrajā pusē, ar tā iekarotājiem bija kopīga ne tikai kristīgā ticība, bet arī vācu valoda. Vācu ienākšanai reģionā sekojošā asimilācijas procesa gaitā arī vendu sabiedrības zemākā slāņa lielākā daļa apguva vācu valodu.

Tikai dažas lauku apvidos dzīvojošas etniskās grupas – tādas kā sorbi, kas vācu ieceļotāju kopienā integrējās minimāli un turpināja runāt slāvu valodās (augšsorbu un lejassorbu), – joprojām tika sauktas par vendiem. Kad šo valodu lietojums samazinājās, arī eksonīms “vendi” pamazām izzuda. Būtiski atzīmēt, ka citos apvidos, piemēram, Austrumpomerānijā (Pomerēlijā), vācieši savukārt pārgāja uz slāvu valodām. Iespējams, to veicināja vietējā garīdzniecība vai arī vendu sabiedrības ietekmīgākie un turīgākie pārstāvji.

#### ATTĒLA PARAKSTS

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