

Re: Venedi

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On Jan 26, 1:50 am, Trond Engen <trond...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

Peter T. Daniels skreiv:

On Jan 25, 7:54 am, Trond Engen <trond...@xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

I've come across suggestions that demonyms like Venedi, Veneti, Wends etc. originally denoted the speakers of a separate, long extinct, IE branch in what is now the Western Slavic countries and Eastern Germany. There are some passages in the works of the early geographers that might be interpreted that way, and the "urheimats" I've seen assigned to Germanic, Slavic, and Baltic seem to leave this area void. Is there any research into toponyms, phonology, or whatever, indicating a common substratum in these areas?

Can you get to the 1994 Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics, ed. Asher & Simpson?

Thanks. Perhaps I can, but not immediately.

(There are just a handful of copies in Norway and I'll probably have to belong to an academic institution to get one. I'll check if my occasional guest-starring as an external examiner on our local wannabee-university will earn me a library ticket. Would be quite handy, actually. This plan could turn traumatic for my kids, though. Eventually the library would have to send armed police to my house to get its

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property back.)

Eric Hamp's article on Indo-European mentions some posited substrates, and gives a reference to an article where he discusses them in slightly more detail.

Volume 3, then?

The English Wikipedia article (replace that with a beep, Peter) on Wends mentions this view, referring to Schenker's *The Dawn of Slavic; An Introduction to Slavic Philology* (Yale U.P. 1996). The first parts of the first chapter are available at

<http://www.amazon.com/gp/reader/0300058462/ref=sib_dp_pt/104-6504346-....>

(does the url work? Probably not) and, in a less readable format, at

<http://www.ecampus.com/bk_detail.asp?isbn=9780300058468&referrer=frgl>.

I claim the fact that it's been made public as an approval to bring some of the relevant paragraphs:

1.4. Were the Veneti Slavic? From various ancient sources we know of three different tribes bearing the name of the Veneti or Venedi. A large tribe of the Veneti, first mentioned by Herodotus, lived along the northern shores of the Adriatic Sea. [...]

There was also a Celtic tribe of the Veneti living in the Morbihan district of Brittany. [...]

Finally, a tribe of the Veneti was mentioned by Pliny the Elder (A.D. 23–79) who located it along the Vistula. [...]

[... I]n most investigations dealing with Slavic prehistory, the Baltic Veneti are not considered Germanic, as Tacitus would have it, or Illyrian, like their namesakes on the Adriatic, or Celtic, like the Morbihan Veneti. Rather, they are generally regarded as Slavic. To justify such an identification, which if correct would directly confirm the autochthonous theory, three circumstances are mentioned. It is noted, in the first place, that the Veneti of the first and second centuries A.D. and the historic Slavs of the sixth century inhabited the same area. Second, the name of the Veneti has survived in German as Wenden or Winden, where it designates the Slavs who live in the closest proximity of Germany. And, last, the sixth-century Gothic historian Jordanes (1.10) applied the terms Veneti and Slavs to the same ethnic community (Niederle 1923:32–33).

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These arguments, however, are not decisive. There is no reason to doubt that by the sixth century the Slavs were on the Vistula (though it is quite unlikely that they had by then reached the Baltic). This does not mean, however, that they had to be there in the time of Tacitus. During the intervening four hundred years Europe underwent its most momentous transformations [...]

Nor can the German practice of designating their Slavic neighbors by the names Wenden or Winden help us in solving the question of the ethnic character of the Veneti. Transfers of names from one ethnic group to another have frequently occurred in history [...]

There is also no compelling evidence to justify the claim that Jordanes' identification of the Veneti with the Slavs reflects an ancient situation. The Slavicization of the Veneti is possible in the sixth century but most improbable in the first. [...]

Quite aside from these considerations, the very fact that the ancient sources locate the Veneti on the Baltic provides the most persuasive argument against their identification with the Slavs. The point is that Slavic vocabulary does not contain any indication that the early Slavs were exposed to the sea. [...] Especially striking is the absence of a Proto-Slavic word for amber, the most important item of export from the shores of the Baltic to the Mediterranean. In view of this, the very fact that Ptolemy refers to the Baltic as the Venedic Bay appears to rule out a possible identification of the Veneti of his times with the Slavs.

[...]

Another piece of evidence countering the claim that the Veneti of the times preceding the Great Migrations were Slavic is furnished by Henry of Livonia (Henricus de Lettis), who in his Latin chronicle, dating from the very beginning of the thirteenth century, described a clearly non-Slavic tribe of the Vindi (German Winden, English Wends) which lived in Courland and Livonia (on the territory of today's Latvia). The tribe's memory lives on in the name of the river Windau (Latvian Venta), with the town of Windau (Latvian Ventspils) at its mouth, and in Wenden, the old name of the town of Cesis (East Slavic Kesb) in Livonia. The location of this tribe coupled with recently discovered archaeological evidence (Ochmanski 1982) suggest that the

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Vindi of Courland and Livonia may well be the descendants of the Baltic Veneti.

1.5. Evidence of place and river names. The autochthonists assume that the names of several Central European rivers and of the town of Kalisz in Poland (Ptolemy's Kalisa) have demonstrably Slavic etymologies. The highly conjectural nature of these etymologies, however, seriously undermines their value as underpinnings of any attempt to establish the habitat of the early Slavs. While an etymology of a common noun can be tested on the semantic level, most proper names do not lend themselves to such verification. This is the case of the Vistula (Polish Wisla), the only river of the area known by the same name or its variants (Vistla, Visculus, Viscla, Visula) to both the ancients and the moderns. Neither the Vistula nor Kalisz, however, has a transparent Slavic or Indo-European etymology. These names could be Slavic, Germanic, Celtic, or even pre-Indo-European (Schenker 1987).

Reading this, it appears as if he wants to see the Wends as the ancestors of (at least some subset of) the Baltic peoples. Geographically it makes sense, but I can't see it agreeing with the cluster of Baltic hydronyms in Russia.

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Trond Engen

– wound up by Wends– Hide quoted text –

– Show quoted text –

Schenker wrongly claimed that the Slavic languages "lacked a native term for beech".

What arguments he could present to prove that Slavic buk/bukva is a borrowing from Germanic/Gothic bok? On the other hand, is there any proof that could corroborate that the word bok/book/beece is of an undisputed Germanic origin?

What are we going to do with Latin sambucus (elder-tree), Russian 1078=0, Serbian ~bun (bush), smokva (fig-tree).

Namely, all the Slavic words mentioned above are related to the following Slavic words: beleg (mark, landmark, nick, scotch), bele~iti (note, mark, notice), pisati (write; from Bel-Gon beleg => bele~iti => blisati => pisati), bele~nica (notebook). If we know that beech tablets were used as writing surfaces in the ancient times we must come to a conclusion that the Slavic word buk/bukva (beech) cannot be the Germanic loanword; i.e. bukva (beech) is a clear-cut Slavic word.

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For instance, Serbian pisar (scribe) is equal to English booker and it means that both words were independently developed from the same basis.

A similar relation could be found among words as English block, plunk, log and Serbian oblog (lining, sheath), oblica (wooden cylinder), panj (log), pladanj (a sheet of wood, plate, tray).

It seems that German Wald (wood, forest) is clearly related to English wood, is it not? In addition, there are the words as English wild and German Gewalt (force, violence). What is the relation between English wood and German Wut (wroth, rage, ire).

DV

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