FACULTY OF ARTS
Charles University

LANGUAGE CONTACT

AND

THE EARLY SLAVS

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the MIndME research group

Humanities Research Centers

THE WORKSHOP

The workshop addresses one of the most controversial issues in contemporary medieval studies, which is the extremely fast expansion of the Slavic language(s) across great parts of Europe in the Early Middle Ages. While traditional scenarios assume unity of language, ethnicity, and material culture, leading alternative models emphasize the active role of material culture, through which ethnic identity was constructed to mobilize linguistically extremely heterogeneous population. The traditionalists explain the spread of the Proto-Slavic language by migrations in the 6th-7th century and associate that with specific material culture and with early mentions of ethnic Slavs in written sources. The alternative hypotheses attribute the same material culture and written references to linguistically and genetically very varied communities and associate the subsequent spread of the Proto-Slavic with its status as an 'official' language or 'koiné'. In other words, early ethnic Slavs did not speak Proto-Slavic, no Slavic 'Urheimat' did exist, and Slavic speakers may not have common roots.

MINDME RESEARCH GROUP

FACULTY OF ARTS, CHARLES UNIVERSITY

In the last decades, there have been radical shifts in our understanding of ethnicity, religion, and their dialogic relationship. Ethnicity, similar to religion, is not viewed as a biologically or culturally stable identity, but as a behavior – as a cultural construct created, transmitted, and maintained by discourse and practice and in effect expressed both by language or/and non-verbal semiotic means, such as material culture. However, there is a lack of knowledge of interaction and substitutability of language and material culture in this process under various social, economic, and demographical circumstances. The *MIndMe research group* aims to advance the research in how ethnicity was constructed in the specific situation of migration or cultural and language contact in Early Medieval Europe. In addition, the research will focus on links between ethnicity and other kinds of identities, especially religion.

In order to achieve these objectives, the project (1) includes various disciplines, territories, and contact situations, (2) advances comparative approaches and new methods, and (3) organizes several international conferences and workshops. The first one is '*Language contact and the early Slavs*'.

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ABSTRACTS

HENNING ANDERSEN
On the formation of the Common Slavic *koiné*

The study of the origins and expansion of the Slavic peoples is necessarily an interdisciplinary matter. But since their language is a defining feature of the Slavs, the available linguistic evidence is a *sine qua non* (Greenberg 2002/2003, 2016). This presentation will review some of the relevant data that shed light on Slavic speech in the migration period. There are two main categories of evidence.

First, the phonological differences that developed towards the end of the Common Slavic period. They reflect a very gradual differentiation of areal lects that had been phonetically uniform, and whose developments had been conditioned by uniform systemic features. Among the examples are the lenitions, the developments of liquid diphthongs, the metrical changes (Andersen 1969; 1999; Bethin 1998; Greenberg 1999; Timberlake 1983; 1993).

Secondly, the morphological and lexical innovations that occurred before or during the expansion. Among these are the geographical distribution of inflectional allomorphy, the LCS *-ny-*||*-nǫ-* variants (Andersen 1999), the Perfect and Future tenses (Andersen 2006; 2009), the West Slavic Iranianisms (Trubačev 1967) and other geographically distinctive appellatives and toponym types (Andersen 2017).

The linguistic evidence, I will suggest, supports the interpretation that the Common Slavic *koiné* (Boček 2014) was not a creation of the Avar period, as some have thought, but was a developing interethnic means of communication well before the 500s.

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HARALD BICHLMEIER

New methods in etymologizing the oldest layers of river names in Central Europe – and some thoughts on the celticity of the place-name Chech *Kadaň* / German *Kaaden*

The talk will be divided into two parts:

The first part will offer an overview over new ways of etymologizing (presumably) Old European (ancient European) river-names. It will be shown that the traditional etymologies do not live up to today's standards of Indo-European linguistics. A new analysis shows that in some cases the formerly one and only etymology is only one among several possible etymologies, in other cases some of the formerly offered etymologies can now be excluded and in other cases the conclusion must be that the river names came into being in another language or on another language-layer than formely thought. The examples discussed will include the river-names *Elbe*, *Laaber*, *Lohr*, *Naab*, *Sinn/Shannon/San/Sjan* and the place-names *Jena* and *Merseburg*.

In the second part of the talk the etymology of the place-name *Kaaden/Kadaň* will be discussed. It will be shown that a Celtic etymology of the name, offered a decade ago, is simply impossible. The 'traditional' etymology as a derivative of the personal name *Kadan* seems to be the only sensible possibility.

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VÍT BOČEK

The rise and expansion of Slavic in the light of Zimmer's model of Indo-Europeanization

The role of language contact in the formation and spread of the original Slavic language and peoples is a topic that can hardly ever reach a consensus among scholars. In examining it, we need a general or "umbrella" model through which this question could be inspected and measured. In my view, one specific model is the good candidate for this inquiry. It is the model of the emergence of Indo-European languages and their subsequent diffusion, introduced in several papers by the eminent German Indo-Europeanist and Celticist, Professor Stefan Zimmer (cf. Zimmer 1990a, 324–328; 1990b; 1990c; 1994; 2002). Importantly, language contact plays a significant role in his theory. The model does not attempt at a unified framework that would be valid for all branches of Indo-European languages. Quite to the contrary, it takes into account different scenarios for individual Indo-European subgroupings. The author constructed a net of possibilities of how the emergence and spread of languages can take place, and assigned selected Indo-European languages to them. However, he did not voice his opinion on Slavic, and so it is tempting to try to enrich his model in this respect. In the paper, the model will be presented in more detail and the

rise and expansion of Slavic will be discussed in the light of this model. It will be shown that various extant hypotheses of the origin and spread of Slavic – the traditional as well as some alternative one – can be attributed to different types of Indo-Europeanization delimited by Zimmer.

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ANDRIY DANYLENKO

The Church "Roofing" and Finno-Ugric Supremacy: on the Grammaticalization of the Periphrastic Perfect in Slavic

In her recent book, Drinka (2017) explored the periphrastic perfect in the historical and areal perspectives and reiterated its contact-induced scenario for Slavic, based on the alleged historical influence of the Catholic/Orthodox divide. The first attestations of IE perfect in Europe are to be found in the 5th c. BC Greek, this early innovation may have influenced Latin. The diffusion of the *have* perfect was enhanced by the success of the Roman Catholic Church and by the political clout of Latin. The East/West split, then, along with the ensuing "leakage" eastward of the *have* perfect, appears to replicate fairly precisely the confessional distribution of Orthodoxy vs. Catholicism in Europe.

For Slavic, a multilayered continuum is commonly posited (Drinka, Dickey, Panzer u.a.). The southern archaizing, roofing pressure of Old Church Slavonic and Byzantine Greek, fostering the preservation of the *be* auxiliary in contexts connected with the formal register; the northern and eastern influences of contact with Finno-Ugric languages, promoting the loss of the *be* auxiliary in East Slavic; and the western European influences on West Slavic, supporting the maintenance of the old perfect-aorist contrast by means of *be*-retention and loss in replication of a similar contrast in German.

The aforementioned scenario equates language with culture or other non-linguistic aspects of contacts between speech communities. In fact, the alleged Church "roof" in the formal register and the Finno-Ugric pressure on the East Slavic vernacular do not explain the developmental vagaries of the IE perfect in Slavic. Also, the grammaticalization of a possessive resultative in East Slavic has nothing to do with the influence of North Germanic (Hanseatic Low German) (e.g., Panzur). The development of the periphrastic perfect and possessive resultative should be viewed as part of the historical adaptation of the verbal system in Slavic influenced by a particular configuration of societal factors like the relative

size of speech community, the relative density of social networks and others (Trudgill, Me'nikov, Danylenko). Determined by the respective valuables of such factors, (East) Slavic reduced the number of aspectual distinctions down to the perfective vs. imperfective category, accompanied by a substantial simplification of tense forms and procedurals (R *stepeni dlitel'nosti*). To conclude, language contact should not be viewed mechanically, thereby substituting for linguistic analysis proper.

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JIŘÍ DYNDA

Religion with no voice: Literary construction of Slavic Paganism

In my talk I will focus on the most peculiar aspect of most of the written sources on Slavic pre-Christian religion: the lack of indigenous reports on the topic. Since the Slavic paganism had been described only by Christian and mostly non-Slavic clerics, the depiction of its gods, rituals, divination systems and other features is fundamentally blurred behind the ideological filters of so called interpraetatio Christiana. The talk will therefore present some of the issues connected with this problem. On a few case studies – e.g. terms for Slavic ritual specialists, or term for "religion" itself ("religion" here denoting a complex symbolic system, an inseparable cluster of poli¬tics, poetry, economy, warfare, ritual and other aspects of culture) – it will show the general difficulties of studying the Slavic paganism and its medieval literary construction. In the background of these efforts, there is also an attempt to set a solid ground for historical reconstruction of the system of pre-Christian Slavic religion that in the sources has no voice of its own.

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JADRANKA GVOZDANOVIĆ

Slavic ethnogenesis: continuity and contact

While reconstructing the cultural past and what we call ethnogenesis, language has always been a central element of identity and for us, much later researchers, the main source of evidence. There is no reason not to assume that prehistoric peoples, among then the early Slavs, indeed performed construction of sociocultural identity by the same *general* principles as their historic successors; the different effects were caused by the different specific circumstances of life and communication.

Contact situations are especially complex because they depend on the social and *functional* circumstances in which contacts take place. What was which language used for by whom and with which effect in the past? The answers are as a rule enscripted in the language itself: the systematic set-up on the one hand and the distribution of variants leading to change processes on the other.

Alleged contact producing a language shift can *post quem* be reconstructed only by applying a stringent methodology in order to distinguish between inherent and contact-induced change. Although any change fits, extends or reduces the system, some changes are more drastic – they produce a change of type. In order to demonstrate this, we must first define what a linguistic type is and what it means to modify it. In addition, we must strive to

recover systemic and communicative aspects of modification and spread of language variants. This is elaborated in this paper with respect to Celtic and Slavic parallels and possibilities of contact.

The special point in focus are Celtic and Slavic lexical parallels and the decision about their reconstruction and classification. Implications of this, purely linguistic reconstruction for the reconstruction of the Slavic ethnogenesis will be discussed at the end.

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JADRANKA GVOZDANOVIĆ & VÁCLAV BLAŽEK
Celto-Slavic Lexical parallels

Besides the studies of Zubatý (1893), identifying Slavic *sluga* as a Celtic loan, and Stokes (1894), interpreting the Celto-Slavic comparisons in frame of the inherited Indo-European family, the first special contribution proposing the Celtic influence on Slavic (and Baltic) was published by Schachmatov (1911). Unfortunately, his will was stronger than arguments and finally he discredited this direction of research for an half century. Seriously discussed is this idea again by Bernštejn (1961, 94-95) and Martynov (1983, 35-46). Kalygin (1997, 2006) and Falileyev (1997, 1999, 2001) usually saw in the Celto-Slavic parallels a common heritage. Stalmaszczyk & Witczak (1995) identified several promising Celtic loans in Slavic. Stalmaszczyk (2010) discussed the words of Celtic origin in Polish, both old and modern borrowings, including mediation by other languages. Similarly, Blažek (2016b) for Czech. After her study about *centum* elements in Slavic (Gvozdanović 2008), one of the authors of the present contribution comes with a manysided approach to the Celto-Slavic relations – in the level of phonology and prosody, lexicon and hydronymy, all in both the typological and areal perspectives, finally correlated with archaeological data (Gvozdanović 2009). The second contributor has studied the hypothetical Celto-Slavic relations in the mythological and sacral lexicon (Blažek 2006), zoological lexicon (Blažek 2012), distribution of the Celtic toponyms mediated by Ptolemy and other ancient authors in Central Europe (Blažek 2010c), Northeast Europe (Blažek 2014), and Southeast Europe (Blažek 2015). These results indicate that the eastern border of the Central European and Balkan Celts were the Carpathian Mountains and in south probably the river South Bug, i.e. the Celts could be the western neighbors of the Slavs. Now we discuss 20 especially chosen Celto-Slavic lexical parallels, which can illustrate the Celtic influence on the Slavic lexicon.

	Celtic	Slavic
1.	Co. *artaios* 'Mercurius cultor'?	Sl. *ortajь*; Balt. *artājas* "ploughman"
2.	Co. *bargā* "hut"	W+ESl. *borgъ* "roof on four columns"
3.	Co. *kammanios* "riding"	Sl. *komonjь* "riding horse"
4.	Co.+Go. *kladiu̯os* "sword"	Sl. *kladivo* "hammer"
5.	Co.+In. *klētā* , Go. *klēti̯om* "wattle; roof"	Sl. *klěta & *klětь* "dwelling, hut, hutch"
6.	Co.+In. *krā̆(φ)os* "shed"	Sl. *krovъ* "roof"
7.	Co.+In. *kr̥d-su-* or *kr̥d-tu-* "belt"	Sl. *kerd-su-* "belt"
8.	Br. *kuk-un-(ko-)* "joint, knuckle"	OCS. *kъkъnja* "shin, shank, lower leg"
9.	Co.+In. *kurmi* "barley´s beer"	Sl. *kъrma* "food or fodder (from barley)"

10.	Co. *mekiā̯, Go. *meki "bee"	S+ESl. *mečьka "bear" < *meki-kā-
11.	Go. *mraki-, Br.+Co. *braki- "barley (beer)"	S+WSl. *brača? / *bračьka? / *brěča / *brěčьka "juice, young beer, malt"
12.	Co.+Br. *rat-, Go. *rāt- "guarantee"	Sl. *rota "oath"
13.	Br. *sati- / Go. *satio̯- "swarm (of bees)"	S+ESl. *sъtъ & *sъtь "honeycomb"
14.	Co.+In. *sīnā "(bad) weather"	Sl. *pro-sin-ьcь "December" or "January"
15.	Co.+In. *slougos "army, troop; groom"	Sl. *sluga "servant; soldier"
16.	Br. *su̯ekrū- "mother-in-law"	Sl. *svekry "mother-in-law"
17.	In. *taisto- "dough"	Sl. *těsto "dough"
18.	?Co.+Go. *tāti- "thief"	Sl. *tatь "thief"
19.	?Co. *trokmo-, In. *trummo- "heavy"	SSl. *tromъ "heavy"
20.	Co.+Br. *u̯ereto- "soil", Go. *u̯ertiā̯ "mound"	ESl. *veret[ě]ja "land of the arable soil"

Abbreviations: Balt. Baltic; Br. Brittonic, Co. Continental (= Gaulish in a broader sense), Go. Goidelic, In. Insular (= Brittonic+Goidelic); Sl. Slavic: E = East, S = South, W = West.

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Mirela Ivanova

From Byzantine Philosopher to Apostle of the Slavs: St Constantine Cyril in the 9-12th centuries Balkans

The paper will trace the early medieval Slavicisation of Constantine-Cyril, accredited together with Methodius, his brother, with the creation of the Slavonic alphabet. First it will focus on the representation of Cyril in his Vita, and then turn to the disparities between the Vita and two 10-12th century South Slavic texts. It will argue, with Ihor Sevcenko amonst others, that the main source for the creation of the Slavonic alphabet, the Life of St Constantine Cyril, is an inherently Byzantine document, which perpetuates Byzantine imperial ideology and a 'Roman' universalism. Nonetheless, in the monk Hrabur's treatise On Letters, dated most probably to the Bulgarian lands in the early tenth century, key aspects of the identity of Constantine, as constructed by the author of the Vita, are transformed in telling ways. The paper will trace two key tenets of the creation of an apostle of the 'Slavs', and in turn of the creation of the 'Slavs' as an identity category for the users of his alphabet. The first is the process of explicitly accrediting Cyril with the act of creation in the two texts – something rather inconclusive in his Vita. The second, is the process of de-hellinising the saint, and distancing him from the classical education his Vita is largely preoccupied with. This process, I argue, is already complete by the composition of the Thessalonian Legend, twelfth century document which exposes a significant loss of information about Constantine-Cyril. But more importantly, the paper will argue that this of Slavicising Constantine-Cyril, in turn, produced an identity category of 'Slavs', equated with those who received his work and adopted the alphabet of the Apostle. Thus, the Slavicisation of Cyril assisted in the Slavicisation of 'the Slavs' themselves.

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TOMÁŠ KLÍR

Language, Ethnicity and Material Culture: North-Eastern Bavaria in the Early Middle Ages

The spatial distribution of Slavic hydronyms and toponyms in north-eastern Bavaria varies considerably. While hydronyms of the Slavic origin are only confirmed on a small proportion of the region, Slavic toponyms are widespread, though in some areas in a mosaic-like pattern. This was due to extremely diverse social processes that were behind the language contact between the 8th/9th century and the 12th century. Owing to a different hierarchy of hydronyms, it is also possible to determine where, when and by which social strata the German or Slavic language was spoken, or both. In some areas the language contact was the consequence of the penetration of the socially minor Slavic language, in other areas it resulted from the spreading of the socially dominant German language. A similar picture is provided by the spatial distribution of various categories and types of German names.

The rise of the so-called "Slavic ceramics" (600-750) preceded the expansion of the Slavic language in northeast Bavaria (after 750/800). In this case, the so-called "Slavic ceramics" and language did not correlate with one another. On the contrary, the spatial and chronological distribution of the „Early Slavic ceramics" coincided with Early German language.

The paper presents its methods and preliminary results for further discussion and comparison.

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JOUKO LINDSTEDT

How the early Slavs existed: A short essay on ontology and methodology

Despite Florin Curta (2015) declaring the prehistoric Slavs as a "fairy tale", they certainly existed at least in a linguistic sense: the Slavic language family is unexplainable without an earlier protolanguage, this Proto-Slavic must have had speakers, and "Slav" is the name that mediaeval sources mainly propose as the designation of those. This does not mean that all speakers of Proto-Slavic were called Slavs at that time, or that everyone called a Slav in historical sources necessary spoke Slavic, but this is how languages of wider distribution usually behave.

Linguistics, history, archaeology, and human population genetics each approach the question of the early Slavs and the rapid spread of Slavic with their own methods. The "Slavs" reached by these different sets of methods are not necessarily co-extensive, but there is also no reason to argue that they are totally unrelated groups of people. Linguistics shows the spread of the Slavic language in Eastern Europe in the second half of the first millennium CE; history and archaeology tell us about at least some major migrations in this same period of worsening living conditions (due to the Late Antique Little Ice Age and Justinian's Plague); population genetics shows the relatively recent common ancestry of most of the population in this area. These are distinct stories, but not unrelated stories, and the challenge is to construct an integrated view of the early speakers of Slavic on their basis, not to bury the Slavs under ontological doubts and methodological scruples.

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ĽUBOMÍR NOVÁK
Relative Chronology of Slavic Language Contact

Prehistoric development of the Slavic languages prior to its first attestation in Old Church Slavonic texts is virtually invisible – the oldest appearance of Proto-Slavic is only a question of linguistic reconstruction. The question of inter-Slavic development may be observed in means of language contact during various stages of inner development of Slavic vernaculars – study of Slavic loans in neighbouring languages, borrowings in Slavic and glosses in non-Slavic languages shows different strata of development of Slavic vernaculars since split of the Indo-European Proto-Language. The main issue of development of Slavic focused especially on development of Slavic in Early Middle Ages, e.g. development of yers (ь, ъ) or nasalised vowels (ę, ǫ), emergence of individual Slavic languages and/or dialects etc. For the Proto-Slavic period there are few data that inform us about the older development of the Slavic branch - such data come mainly via language contact as there are some Slavic loans in other languages that show older stage of the language (e.g. Finnish *akkuna* 'window' or *värttinä* 'spindle' < Proto-Slavic **akunò*, **vertenò*, cf. Old Church Slavonic *okъno*, *vrěteno*) or borrowings such as Iranian (Scythian?) **baga-* 'god' > Proto-Slavic **bôgъ* (< Indo-European **bʰeh₂gos*) and many other. Precise study of Slavic loans and borrowings shows deep linguistic history of Slavic languages – and not only the linguistic development itself, but also shows insight into the world of Proto-Slavic speakers. Individual data concerning development of Proto-Slavic and Slavic vernaculars also show different stages of evolution of Slavic as an independent branch of Indo-European.

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JIŘÍ REJZEK
Linguistic comments to Curta's making of the Slavs

The controversial and provocative Curta's view of the Slavic ethnogenesis has been challenged by several historians and archeologists. As far as I know, linguistic arguments have not been used in the discussion too much, even though the new theory gave rise to several linguistic issues. If the Slavs "were made" by the Byzantines from different ethnic groups on the border of the empire, how to explain the affinity of Slavic and Baltic languages? Why should the Proto-Slavic serve as lingua franca in the Avar khaganate? Is it possible that the speakers of Proto-Slavic came from "nowhere"? How to explain the early presence of the Slavs and Slavic in Poland, Ukraine and Russia, far from the Byzantine Empire and out of range of the Avar khaganate? This contribution should discuss all these questions (and definitely also some other ones) resulting from Curta's conception as well as its pros and cons from the point of view of the Slavic historical linguistics.

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SORIN PALIGA
Albanians, Romanians, Slavs – ethnicity, change and politics in the 2nd half of the first millennium C.E.

It has become a cliché to speak about 'ethnogenesis' during the period of the great migrations, approx. from the 4th to the 10th c. C.E. Many facts or data are 'controversial' (of course, science is, by definition, full of controversies), 'enigmatic' (this cliché is currently applied to the Albanian and Romanian ethnogenesis). The list of such epithets–clichés may be longer. The common denominator of these historical aspects—analysed from various perspectives: historical, linguistic, archaeological, cultural — is that they refer to complex phenomena in a period of decay, with fewer historical documents, with long periods with scarce data or no data.

There are several attempts to define ethnicity, often ignoring that ethnicity is, in fact, unique: even (closely) related ethnic groups are unique if they consider themselves different from others, usually another neighbouring group. If we refer to the 2nd half of the 1st millennium C.E., and specifically to Central-East and Southeast Europe, it seems clear that Slavic ethnicity cannot be understood and analysed separately from similar phenomena of 'ethnicisation', which has been continuous in history, e.g. see the (quite) recent 'ethnicisations' in former Yugoslavia or in Ukraine, to just refer to Europe.

The paper attempts to sum up the current state-of-the-art, mainly in the light of author's analyses dedicated to various aspects of ethnicity, and also to offer topics for debate and for further developments.

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ALEXANDRA VUKOVICH
Language, Elites, and Identity in Early Rus

This paper examines the formation of a knowledge set about early Rus, and area that functioned more of as a merchant co-operative than an ethno-linguistic entity in the Middle Ages. However, historiography has treated this region as both a precursor to and as the authentic basis for Slavic identity. This paper will begin by discussing the extant source material on early Rus and the articulation of historiography, at its earliest stages, within a framework that favoured certain outcomes and the promotion of elites. The second section of this paper will explore a set of historicizing assumptions about ethnicity and Slavic cultural supremacy in early Rus that formed in the 18th century, represented by the Normanist/Anti-Normanist theories and the Müller/Lomonosov charged debate about the provenance of an assumed homogenous group that prefigured "the Russians". The final section will provide some conclusions about the ideological positioning of ideas about early Rus and what this has meant in a modern (19th-21st century) context. Conclusions will be drawn about how medieval sources are incommensurate with the ideas that have been drawn out of and about them, and the purpose of the shaping of information about early Rus for creating an ideological system that informs notions of cohesion and identity.