

## The Language of the Ancient Veneti

# A DESCRIPTION OF VENETIC PRONUNCIATION AND GRAMMAR

*Two papers from chapters in “THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL” (rev 6/2015)*

**Andres P ä ä b o (Ontario, Canada) [www.paabo.ca](http://www.paabo.ca)**

*The following paper covers two subjects how Venetic was written and how it was pronounced, and Venetic grammar and comparison with Estonian and Finnish.*

*Both are from the full document. “THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL” The pronunciation draws from existing academic decisions about how the Venetic writing sounded, but I add my own discovery that the dots are phonetic markers, mostly signaling palatalization.*

*The grammar description is the result of my lengthy analysis of the Venetic inscriptions described in the above document which approached the Venetic inscriptions directly instead the traditional approach of making assumptions and forcing the assumptions into the inscriptions. The proper methodology should not involve any existing language, but conclusions should be reached from the inscriptions themselves, from their context in the archeological information and within sentences themselves. Originally one gets simple results like ‘Man – duck – elder’, but one keeps an eye on the grammatical endings and looks for consistent meanings. Thus the methodology did not project any known language onto the Venetic. However, once it was clear Venetic was Finnic, I began to take notice of parallels in Estonian and Finnish and discovered some major grammatical endings were close to the same. In languages, grammar changes most slowly, and that is why more distant languages will still be similar in grammatical features. And that is also why for any suggestion that Venetic was genetically connected to Estonian or Finnish, we MUST find similarity in grammar.*

# PART ONE: PRONUNCIATION

## HOW VENETIC SOUNDED

### *A New Interpretation of the Dots in Ancient Venetic Inscriptions, and Resulting Phonetics*

Andres P ä ä b o (Apsley, Ontario, Canada)

---

#### ABSTRACT

*In northern Italy we find several hundred short examples of writing by an ancient people the Romans called Veneti and Greeks Eneti. Written mostly in several centuries after 500BC, these inscriptions borrow the Etruscan alphabet, but use it to write continuously, and with dots inserted into the text in a frequent manner that does not represent word boundaries like dots did in Etruscan and Latin. Traditional studies of the inscriptions have regarded the dots as some kind of syllabic punctuation, and the explanation of how they work is not believable because human nature requires that this dot punctuation be as easy or easier to handle than the word boundary marking of Etruscan, of which the Venetic must have been aware. This paper offers a practical alternative - that these dots are actually phonetic markers mainly marking palatalization but also other phonetic behaviour all of which involves a raising of the tongue. This concept is a very good one because the use of dots has to be simple enough for anyone to use. In this case, the scribe simply inserted them wherever there was some kind of tongue-action of any kind. These dots were enough for the reader familiar with Venetic to be able to read it properly. Interestingly the Venetic writing allows us to actually reconstruct how the language sounded. Comparing words in today's highly palatalized Livonian with mildly palatalized Estonian, gives us some insight into how the dots modified sounds. The author also proposes the theory that the Venetic, lying at the bottom of amber trade from the Jutland Peninsula was identical to the ancient Suebic language at the source of the amber, and that the palatalization and stød of modern Danish ultimately comes from it.*

---

## 1 INTRODUCTION

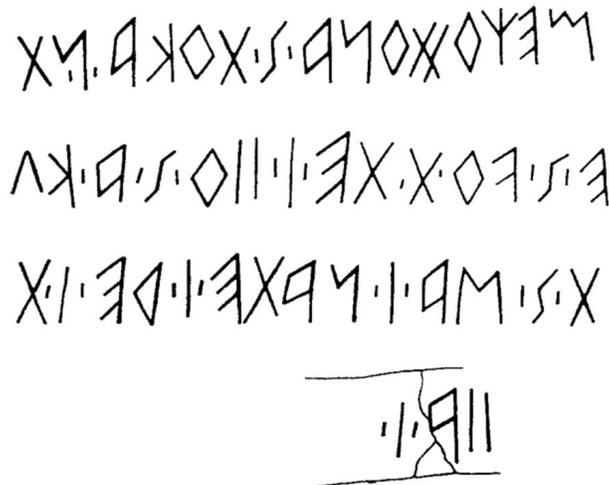
### 1.1 Phonetics Determined from Latin and Etruscan

In northern Italy we find several hundred short examples of writing by an ancient people the Romans called Veneti and Greeks Eneti. Written mostly in several centuries after 500BC, these inscriptions borrow the Etruscan alphabet, but use it to write continuously, and with dots inserted

into the text in a frequent manner that does not represent word boundaries like dots did in Etruscan and Latin.

Figure 1.1 shows a very good example of Venetic writing. In small case Roman text below it we see the text transformed to a form we can read, using Roman alphabet phonetics.

Figure 1.1



[reference at *LLV* Es64] (MLV and LLV references indicate their locations in the cataloguing books – see endnotes )

**megodona.s.toka.n.t|e.s.vo.t.te.i.iio.s.a.ku|t.s.\$a.i.nate.i.re.i.t|iia.i.**

*Venetic text is read in the direction the characters are pointing, in this case right to left. When it gets to the end of the line it goes to the next, starting at the right again. In other inscriptions the letters may simply turn and come back – one follows the direction the letters (such as the E) are pointing. The convention of writing down Venetic text in Roman alphabet is to write them in Roman alphabet small case, in the modern left-to-right, adding the dots in their proper places. New lines, changes in direction, continuation on the other side are shown with a vertical line. In reality these new lines or changes in direction mean nothing. It is done purely from the scribe running out of space. Mostly they are irrelevant to reading the script. Often they do not even respect word boundaries – as if the scribe did not even have a concept of word boundaries but wrote what he heard – which sometimes resulted in variations in spelling and dot-handling. Note in the above example the dots appear almost like short I's and that may be how the practice got started – trying to write palatalizations with short I's*

The Ancient Veneti borrowed the Etruscan alphabet for their writing and then modified it – mostly from introducing dots. From the relationship between Etruscan and Roman Latin in the same area, and other factors, the sounds of the Etruscan alphabet are quite reliably understood, and we can assume that when Veneti adopted the Etruscan alphabet they also adopted its sounds. But in my new view of the matter, they then modified those sounds by adding dots before and after some letters as needed.

We cannot argue too much against how Venetologists in the past have decided on the sounds of the Venetic alphabet. I only found a couple of issues. Therefore other than offering my

summary of the most common Venetic letters in figure 1.1, we need not discuss the phonetics of the Venetic alphabet further.

Figure 1.2

**THE BASIC VENETIC PHONETIC ALPHABET WITH ROMAN EQUIVALENTS  
(with small modifications from current thinking)**

Q, Λ = A	X, ⊙ = T <sup>1</sup>	⊗ = D	λ = S
⊗ = E	J = L <sup>2</sup>	ʃ = V	Q, Q = R
= I	l = J <sup>3</sup>	Ⓜ = ISS <sup>4</sup> \$H	V+H = F
○, ◇ = O	1, ʃ = P	⊕, ⊖ = B	~ = M
V, Λ = U	⋈ = K	Υ = G	γ = N

**NOTES ABOUT SMALL ISSUES**

*(discussed later)*

- 1 - The X-like character is most common, but in the round stones of Padua, the T is represented by a circle with a dot inside.
- 2- The L- character we think sometimes has a form that can be confused with one of the P- characters. Watch for two possibilities in some inscriptions.
- 3 – Traditional Venetic interpretations have assumed that the l with the dots on both sides is an “H”. This is correct only if the H has a high tongue, as it is an ‘over-high’ “l”. It actually sounds either like a “J”(=“Y”) or an “H” depending on surrounding phonetics.
- 4 – I believe that the big M-like character is probably an “ISS” as in English “hiss”, and not really the “SH” (\$) that has been assumed. We show it when transcribed into Roman small caps form with \$

The main purpose of this paper is to solve the mystery of the dots found in the Ancient Venetic inscriptions.

**1.2 The Mystery of the Dots in Ancient Venetic Inscriptions**

Traditional studies of the inscriptions have regarded the dots as some kind of syllabic punctuation, and the explanation of how they work is not believable because human nature requires that this dot punctuation be as easy or easier to handle than the word boundary marking of Etruscan, of which the Venetic must have been aware.

Originally ancient writing by Etruscans and Veneti were written continuously without any punctuation, but that made it difficult to read. You had to sound out the letters and then try to recognize the words. The Etruscans solved the problem by using dots to show the word boundaries. Romans followed the practice, and then the dots disappeared and there were spaces. However, for some mysterious reason, the Veneti did not try to explicitly show word boundaries. They began putting dots on either side of a letter.

Through the years academics attempting to interpret the Venetic inscriptions puzzled over these dots. According to the accepted explanation, the dots were used to separate the final

consonants from preceding phonological units, but was not present between a consonant or a consonant (obstruent+sonorant) group and a following vowel (monophthong or diphthong), giving a syllabic form C(C)V(C) which then underwent changes due to weakening and loss of h (\*ho.s.ti.s. > \*.o..s.ti.s.) and syncope of i preceding a final fricative (\*.o..s.ti.s. > \*.o..s.t.s.). As nice as it may be to present to understand the linguistic shifts in a language, we must not forget that the number of instances of Venetic inscriptions is limited. It is not enough to identify a few ‘proofs’ of a theory, as that can simply be an arrangement of a few instances of coincidences that *seem* to demonstrate a pattern. But let us be realistic. Let us imagine the language being in actual use, and being spoken in many dialects and being interpreted in writing in different ways. For example, how do we know that .o..s.t.s. came from .o..s.ti.s. Maybe it did, but maybe .o..s.t.s. was simply from laziness. Consider your modern language. How often do you see vowels of consonants dropped by different speakers. For example someone says “DIFFRENT” instead of “DIFFERENT”. Venetic suffers from having been written continuously and there being so few examples (less than 100 complete sentences, not fragments)

The overly intellectualized assumptions of linguistic shifts and patterns come from imagining that Venetic writing was highly standardized and formalized so that everyone spoke it in exactly the same way or wrote it in exactly the same way. But is that assumption realistic. We have to allow for the more natural interpretation as suggested from the use of writing in Greece and elsewhere – that it was not exclusive to some priestly class but something that inspired everyone. Even if writing was only available to the educated, even among the educated dialects varied.

Thus if we take the more realistic view, that Venetic writing developed, as it did elsewhere, as a popular fad – something that preserved sentences or made objects speak – then we have to approach the entire subject of the Venetic inscriptions from the point of view of it being something easy to master. You had your basic sounds – the natural vowels and consonants formed by the mouth in the most natural positions – and then you had to modify it here and there with intonations, stresses, pauses, and other effects such as palatalization, trills, etc. One way of identifying the departure from the most natural human sounds, is by adding punctuation. Imagine a modern linguist trying to record a language he does not know. He will write down the sounds in phonetic writing, and add punctuations for stress, length, etc. It seems to me that if this approach of capturing the sound of speech is so obvious today, that it would be obvious in ancient times. Identifying word boundaries like we do today, helps us read because all languages have consistent patterns for word units. For example, stress may always be on the first syllable on a word. There may be length and pause features too. But in order to read writing that only shows word boundaries, you have to already know the language. Phonetic writing simply reproduces the speech, and the writer does not need to know the language at all.

Thus what if the Venetic dots represent phonetic punctuation.

Yes, even if the linguists’ observations about many of the dots locations are correct, their explanations are merely a byproduct of the way the language is spoken. Let’s say that Venetic always palatalized an “S” sound before a “T” as in **don.a.s.to**. Then the dots obviously have a relationship to sounds before and/or after. But it is absurd to imagine that the purpose of the dots are to identify the word boundaries indirectly. It makes more sense that dots were added around an “S” in that environment simply because that was how they spoke it. There is a similar word **lag.s.to** that shows it again. Certainly we can find some examples in which a pattern is repeated. But it is much much more realistic to imagine a word of Venetic speakers whose only aim was to reproduce the sound of sentences they spoke, and they knew nothing about word boundaries,

case endings, syllables etc. They were simply aware that the alphabet represented sounds, and the dots were a phonetic punctuation device.

Note that even today, you can ask a child who has only learned the sounds of Roman letters, to write a sentence he has never written before. He will sound it out and it will be readable, even if it did not follow the conventional spellings that have developed in the modern language. The phonetic writing explanation for the dots is so natural, that already it is convincing even before looking at examples.

If the Veneti were long distance traders – as suggested by their being agents of northern amber and having colonies at the ends of Europe – then here is a practical reason for phonetic writing. They could record important phrases of customers without knowing anything about the words and grammar. Phoenicians are known to have created such phrasebooks, and if Veneti were traders in the north and major rivers, someone may have borrowed Etruscan writing, and then added the dots for phonetic punctuation. It is known that the dot punctuation appeared from about 300BC, but that is about the time the Veneti reached their zenith with the colony at Brittany, and their role in carrying tin from the British Isles.

### 1.3 Raw Phonetic Writing vs. Word-Boundary Writing

Ancient peoples generally wrote down sounds in order to reproduce what was spoken as closely as possible. In the beginning – as seen even in early Etruscan – there was nothing else than a string of letters representing sounds. But, given the variation in any language of stress, emphasis, length, pause, etc that was not enough. For example *howshouldwreadthis?* Obviously if you know the language, you can read the string out loud and recognize the words: *how should we read this?* And that was the case with early Etruscan, and some early Venetic too. A continuous string of letters was not enough. One had to read it out loud over and over before one realized what it was saying.

Thus there was wisdom in adding something to the string of sounds in order to give the reader some guidance.

One way was to mark every sound feature – pauses, intonations, etc. Raw phonetic writing.

The other way, was to use the trick with which we are familiar today, to show word boundaries. Identifying word boundaries exploited the fact that in language words are spoken in consistent ways. For example the language may always emphasize the first syllable. Thus if you knew the word boundaries, when you read it, you would emphasize the first syllable, and the sentence would be read correctly; but you had to already know the language.

Let us look at each approach in more detail.

#### 1.3.1. Raw Phonetic Writing

Phonetic writing, thus began in the raw form that recorded everything, Like the modern electronic recorder does, it doing nothing to simplify the text and the reading of it. The earliest phonetic writing was purely recording what the spoken language sounded like. Phoenician and other trader peoples, recorded common phrases in the language of their customers in a raw phonetic fashion so that when needed they could read it back. They did not have to know anything more about the language. Similarly, a modern linguist who does not know a language will write it down in a raw phonetic fashion too, exactly what he hears, using the modern

standard phonetic alphabet. Not knowing where the word boundaries are, they will add marks to indicate length, pauses, emphasis, etc. This is raw phonetic transcription.

Other than the few inscriptions done in the Roman alphabet following Roman conventions (like the Canevoi bucket inscription), Venetic writing, has the hallmarks of raw phonetic transcription: It is written continuously and filled with dots that seem to function like the markings a linguist makes when transcribing speech phonetically.

Thus Venetic inscriptions can be viewed as transcription of what is actually spoken, using the dots as an all-purpose marker for pauses, emphasis, length, etc. Because the written Venetic language was not standardized, this dot-device must have been a very simple intuitive tool. I believe the rule was that dots were applied where some kind of tongue-related feature (mainly palatalization) was applied in the speech. Such a simple concept – a dot-marker serving many purposes – was something that could easily be applied and understood by anyone.

One may wonder why the Venetic writing was written in this way, when the option of marking word boundaries would have made it easier. I suggest that perhaps Venetic was so highly palatalized that the Veneti wanted to mark those palatalizations even if it was not necessary to do so. But there is another explanation. If the Veneti originated as traders, then it was very important to record the languages of customers. The problem with word boundary writing is that it relies on the reader already knowing how the language was spoken – where the inflections, stresses, lengthenings, palatalizations, etc were applied. For example while Latin was used throughout the Roman Empire we have no idea from Roman texts how it actually sounded when spoken in different places and times in history. Like English today, there could have been many accents/dialects. Word boundary writing does not capture the sound of the actual speech.

Word boundary writing is fine if you already knew the language, but if you needed phrasebooks to use in foreign markets, you needed to record a whole phrase (such as ‘Would you like to buy this beautiful necklace?’) without needing to know how it broke down into words. In that case, the phrase had to be written down completely phonetically – a continuous string of sounds, with marks used to indicate pauses, emphasis, etc.

Perhaps the dots were such phonetic markers, which became guides to how to speak the whole sentence, without having any idea about what were the words and grammatical elements within it.

If writing was used by traders, it did not have to be carved in stone or bronze. Thus, the writings archeology has found on stone, bronze and ceramics in the earth may thus be only the tip of the iceberg. How much more is there that has disappeared because it was written on paper or other soft media? For example Phoenician practices included not just writing on paper, but also on wax tablets that could be melted and reused.



*Remains of Phoenician writing tablets which originally contained wax and was written upon by styluses. Note it has a hinge in the middle, and the user could fold it up and slip it into his pocket. If the Veneti used such wax tablets, a great deal of writing may have been done that has been lost.*

Writing on wax, paper and other perishable media would not have survived for archeologists to find. We do not have here a situation such as existed in ancient Sumeria, where all everyday writing by everyone was done onto flattened pieces of clay, resulting in the survival in the earth of many thousands of cuneiform clay tablets of usually mundane content, such as inventories of goods and shopping lists.

### **1.3.2 Word-Boundary (Rationalized) Phonetic Writing**

While we write texts (like this sentence) with blank spaces between words – and Romans and Etruscans used dots – in speech these spaces do not appear as pauses. They are there mainly to assist the person who knows the language in reading it, without the need for detailed phonetic punctuation. If we know what the word is, then from our familiarity with the systematic characteristics of the language, we place all the stress, emphasis, etc in the right places **automatically**. It simplifies the phonetic writing. Furthermore, with word boundary shown, the readers could also view the word as a graphic symbol. The only drawback of writing using word boundaries, is that the reader has to already know the language to reproduce it properly, whereas raw phonetic writing could be read as it sounded by any reader.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Venetic inscriptions, the Canevoi bucket example given earlier, is a rare instance where Venetic was written in the Roman fashion, with dots serving as word boundaries in the Roman fashion, rather than indicating phonetic features. Note that when the Venetic was written in the Roman fashion, there was no more need for the dots. This helps confirm that the dots were phonetic pronunciation guides when written continuously, and were no longer necessary for those who knew the language, once word boundaries were defined.

---

<sup>1</sup> This makes Venetic writing, using the dots, extremely valuable – it allows us to reproduce the actual sound, once we know more about the use of the dots.

## 2. VENETIC DOT-PUNCTUATION TO IDENTIFY PALATALIZATION?

### 2.1 Some Evidence Venetic was Extremely Palatalized

There is some peripheral evidence that Venetic was highly palatalized. There exists a basic truth that when a people begin speaking a new language, they will speak it in the manner of their original language. We call this an “accent”. In our theory, the Veneti were long distance traders, and the Veneti of Brittany were part of their trade system. With the rise of the Roman Empire, this trade system collapsed and different parts of the system assimilated into their surrounding peoples. At Brittany the Veneti assimilated into Celtic. If their original Venetic language was palatalized, then their Celtic would also be palatalized. Without having another standard to emulate, this accented manner of speaking Celtic would be passed down from generation to generation. Called the Vannetais dialect of Celtic, it stands out from its neighbouring Celtic dialects from being much more extensive palatalization.

Another example would be at the north end of the strong trade route between the Adriatic and the Jutland Peninsula. Today, at the Jutland Peninsula we find Danish. Danish is a highly palatalized German. Was the original language highly palatalized, and was the palatalization transferred when the people assimilated into the Germanic of their military conquerors.

### 2.2 Dot-punctuation – Invented to Indicate Palatalization?

Venetic writing borrowed the Etruscan letters, but did not acquire the Etruscan method (later used by Romans too) of marking word boundaries. Instead, Venetic writing simply began to add dots to the original continuous strings of letters. These dots have puzzled analysts of Venetic for centuries. They realized that it was a scheme to make the continuous text easier to read than continuous writing without any spaces or markings, and proposed it was a “syllabic punctuation” and that the reader determined the word boundaries from it. On the other hand there are also analysts who – failing to figure it out – like Slovenian analysts, claim that the dots are all decorative and meaningless. From the point of view of the probability bell curve, such a claim, although possible is not probable. In our methodology everything has to be very realistic, natural, and acceptable, and bizarre interpretations – according to the bell curve – have to be so rare they are negligible. The most natural answer, the most probable answer, is that the markings were intended to mark something strongly evident in Venetic, but absent in Etruscan.

I realized it had to be something very simple, not requiring special education for either reading it or writing it. But it could not be mere decoration either. That would be utterly silly as decorations are an aesthetic matter and if it were true then every scribe would put the dots in slightly different locations for the same word, and even employ other decorations too. This did not happen. For example **dona.s.to** always had the dots around the **.s.** and the **n** never had dots for this word but it appeared in other words – the dots were clearly purposeful. But they had to be practical and easy to apply. They had to be at least as easy to apply as the word-boundary dots they saw in their neighbouring Etruscan.

It is obvious how in Etruscan and Roman texts the dots were word boundaries which the scribe could easily insert from either small pauses in actual speech, or an understanding of where words began and ended. But what simple feature could the dots in Venetic represent? What could there be that any writer or reader could understand almost intuitively without any major formula

needing to be applied? And why dots? What would dots represent? Maybe they were not dots initially but small “I”s. A good way of indicating palatalization might be to put small “I”s at front and back of a sound. For example N > iNi

I noted that the dots in the inscription reproduced above in Figure 1.1 look like short “I”s. Looking at the real world of languages, I noted the differences between written Estonian and Livonian. Livonian is probably descended from the same east Baltic coast *lingua franca* of a millenium or two ago, but Livonian has been subjected to influence from the Indo-European Latvian language for the last half millenium or more. I noticed that while Livonian had words similar to Estonian, they were more extremely palatalized. The extreme palatalization has prompted the written Livonian to develop a host of letters officially described as palatalized. (In Estonian palatalization is not explicitly marked but is still there – although the palatalization is not strong.

Was that the simple answer? Was Venetic highly palatalized like Livonian was. This palatalization would be caused by considerable contact with Indo-European languages that were spoken with tigher mouths. The action also resulted in vowels sounding higher (which we can roughly express by U>O, O>A, A>E, E>I, I>H or ’ **break**)

The palatalization in Venetic, I proposed, was indicated by dots on both sides of the normal letter, the most important being the “I” where .i. would sound either like “J” (=“Y”) or “H” with palatalized tongue. But then I saw the dot to be more widely applied serving as an all-purpose phonetic marker. It could alter any alphabetical sound in which the tongue played a role. It could indicate sounds like “SH” and a trilled R, and indirectly even mark a pause or an emphasis or length.

This theory made the dots very important to the project. It meant we cannot simply go by the Roman alphabet equivalents. We also have to know how the dots alter the sound.

If the use of dots lasted for centuries and was even used by ordinary people writing graffiti, then it had to be a very simple concept – not some complicated formula.

For an English speaker, our best example of palatalization is the ñ in Spanish, but weak palatalization is not uncommon in all languages. Most sounds made by the human mouth can be found in all languages to some degree, even if the language does not explicitly recognize it. For example, although Estonian, unlike Livonian, does not explicitly define palatalized letters, there is weak palatalization where Livonian has strong palatalization. Estonian does not indicate the palatalizations, and any student of Estonian has to learn these.

Another modern example of a language that is weakly palatalized in one and strongly in another is Swedish versus Danish. Swedish has the rounded mouth (like Estonian) while Danish is strongly palatalized (like Livonian)

When Venetic was next written in the Roman alphabet for a while, with word boundaries shown, all these dots were abandoned.. If the reader knew the word boundaries, they could insert the proper pronunciation – the palatalizations, etc – from their knowledge of the language.

Once I had made the discovery, and knew most of the dots marked palatalization, I began to take notice of the dots around letters which we do not normally palatalize. I discovered that in all instances there was some kind of significance of the tongue. For example .r. was a trilled r.

## 3. CATEGORIZATION OF DOT USE IN VENETIC: RESULTS

### 3.1 Introduction

The secret of the dots cannot be solved independently of the rest, and the following conclusions were arrived at piece by piece throughout the project of deciphering Venetic, as outlined in *THE VENETIC LANGUAGE: An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL*. This paper on the Venetic dots is also described in its Chapter 4. However they only affect how the Venetic sentences were pronounced and we can describe it independently here, to give the reader an idea of pronunciation right off and then not have to deal with them further. As I already said I made a hypothesis that the dots were phonetic markers, and subsequently the hypothesis was proved correct. The most obvious use was to mark palatalization, but it marked more.

The dots, mainly served to indicate the common palatalizations we know well today in languages like Spanish, or more extensively in Livonian and Danish, appeared to have been applied to all circumstances of the tongue and palette being applied. It took me a long time to realize that past analysts have been wrong in claiming the Venetic character that looks like an “M” was a “SH” sound. The “SH” sound obviously has to come from a ‘palatalized’ S. As you will see, I interpret the sound of the character that looks like an “M” as a long hissing S, possibly with an “I” at the start. Thus, once one grasps that the dots mark any intrusion of the tongue in the sound, questions about the correctness of past interpretations are resolved.

### 3.2 The “I” with dots on both sides - .i.

The modern custom in showing Venetic writing is to convert the Venetic letters to small case Roman and then to add the dots as well with periods. We begin by considering dots on both sides of the “I” character. According to the bronze sheets that repeat **oeka** over and over, with each of the Venetic letters attached to the end, the dotted “I” was so common, the Veneti actually recognized it as one of the basic alphabet letters. As I mentioned, traditional scholars of Venetic inscriptions have decided from various evidence, that this new character of the “I” with two short lines on both sides, represented some sound akin to an “H”. A few analysts have proposed a “J” sound. Since some early inscriptions show the dots as short lines, almost like small “I”s there is merit in considering the dots to represent tiny short I’s. (see Figure 1.1) The purpose of that, before and after a sound, in my view is to show palatalization. These short lines then developed into dots. This truth can be realized when comparing the location of some of the palatalized letters in Venetic with locations in other languages. Human speech psychology and physiology is a constant and that means the same phonetic changes can occur in any language independently. Languages do not change arbitrarily.

If we put small faint I’s around an “I” sound we tend to arrive at the “J” which is the same as the sound of “Y” in English usage – short and consonantal. The new character, the Venetic .i., was therefore actually an ‘overhigh’ “I”. Overall increased palatalization in a language can be caused simply by a general shifting, in the manner of speaking, of all vowels “upward” (such as U>A, A>E, E>I, I>Y/J,H)

If we explain the **.i.** in terms of palatalizing the “I” we can see that it can result in a “Y/J” sound in one environment and an “H” sound in another environment. Palatalizing the “I” sound will demonstrate, the resulting sound is a “J”, but following a consonant like “V” it sounds like an “H” too – but an “H” produced at the front of the mouth, not back. Traditional analysis of the Venetic writing has decided (LeJeune) that the **v.i.** is an “F” sound and **v.i.** has been rewritten as **vh** (which occurs elsewhere in that form). While it may be true that **v.i.** sound might sound like **vh**, I disagree with the Venetic **v.i.** always being rewritten **vh** and assumed to sound like “F”. It was certainly similar, but one must not forget the origins of **v.i.r** in the palatalization of “VIR” (as I will propose). I think it is wise to leave the **.i.** alone, write it exactly as written, and not convert in the small case Roman representation into an “H”. Don’t arbitrarily alter what Veneti wrote. If the **v.i.** sometimes was written with a new character assumed an “H” and later as Roman “F” well we may be dealing with slight variations in dialect, or the scribe’s habits. In other words the “F” sound could have developed in the dialect from an earlier “VJ” (“VY”) sound – especially when the people began to adopt Latin which had no “VJ” (“VY”) sound.

The simple idea behind putting dots on both sides of letters that everyone could quickly understand was that wherever short I’s on dots were placed on both sides of a letter, the reader simply pushed up the tongue to the “I” position ahead of the sound, and the sound of the letter was altered accordingly, it becoming “J” (“Y”) or “H” according to its environment.

### 3.3 Dots around the “E” - **.e.**

The word **.e.kupetaris** allows us an opportunity to prove the above theory that the dots recorded palatalization. The effect of dots appears to be explicitly demonstrated in **IAEEQVPETARS** in the following inscription (When we show Roman capitals, it means the original is in the Roman alphabet)

The word appearing as **.e.kupetaris** in inscriptions in the Venetic alphabet is shown here as **IAEEQVPETARS**. It is clear that **.e.ku** sounded like “IAEEQU” as given via Roman alphabet phonetics. Here we see both the palatalization suggested by the “I” and also a lengthening of the vowel. It demonstrates that the all-purpose dot could indirectly mark vowel palatalization but it could mark other modifications in the flow of sound as well such as lengthening or pause.

Note in the illustration the **IAEEQVPETARS** down the right side in smaller letters suggests it is an added tag-line. This has helped us conclude that the word means something like ‘goodbye’ ‘have a good journey’, etc

Figure 3.3



**[-GALLE]NI.M.F.OSTIALAE.GALLEN | IAEEQVPETARS**

[MLV-134, LLV-Pa6]

*See the word IAEEQVPETARS down the right side. Note too how it seems added as a tag, one of the reasons for interpreting it as a 'happy journey', 'bon voyage', etc.*

### 3.4 Dots around Initial Vowels – In General

The above example showed the dots around the initial vowel E proving the palatalization.. Similar effects can be expected on the other vowels. We begin with the basic I with dots also discussed earlier. The phonetic representations use Roman pronunciation (J = English Y).

- .i. = “J”
- .e. = “jE”
- .a. = “jA”
- .o. = “jO”
- .u. = “jU”

Perhaps Venetic put the stress strongly on the first syllable, and this feature may be the result of needing to ‘launch’ the initial vowel strongly. Such a need would produce a consonantal feature at the start – a J/Y or H. This could simply have been a feature arising from the manner of speech, accent, etc, a para-linguistic feature not part of the language itself; but if it was strong, the phonetic writing needed to record it. A good modern example would be that if we found a dialect of English in which all E sounds were pronounced “I”, a writer might want to show it explicitly – especially if writing dialogue – instead of normal writing. For example if there were people who spoke “*Hippy Dey ti yeh*”, a writer transcribing this might want to write it

phonetically as I just did (or in other phonetic writing) instead of writing “Happy Day to you” . Early phonetic writing was not aware how languages only need certain sounds called “phonemes” in order for the text to represent the language, and therefore early phonetic writing tended towards being literally phonetic, capturing even strong paralinguistic sounds even if they were not part of the language.

Furthermore, if ancient scribes used too few characters for the sounds, a reader who knew the language was still able to read the text. Consider the Livonian language. Linguists have identified many palatalized sounds, and determined that many of them are phonemic; but if Livonian were written without the identified palatalized letters, a Livonian would still be able to identify the words. They might however read it more like Estonian where palatalization is weaker and needs not be marked. The reason Livonian has been assigned many additional palatalized letters is largely because of the influence of linguists. In the actual history of written language the written language naturally reduces to a form that is readable, regardless of whether it agrees with linguistic representations. English is a good example – it is filled with letters wherein we cannot tell the sound without looking at the whole word. For example, we can only tell that the word “where” is pronounced with the final e silent, only by recognizing the whole word. Thus the more history there is in a phonetically written language, the more it departs from strict phonetic representation, and the more the reader determines words from experience with the full words: the more the words become their own graphics.

To summarize, early phonetically written language like Venetic, naively tries to record the actual spoken language and captures many features which may not really need to be written down. Conversely there have been many written languages that minimized the alphabet, and the actual sound of the language has been lost. Too much information makes it possible to reproduce the sentences without knowing the language, and too little information requires the reader know the language well enough to identify the intended words even with a lack of information.

In the case of Venetic, therefore, we must recognize that, since the Venetic writing had very little history, for the most part, it is highly phonetic. It is valid to read Venetic phonetically, following the Roman alphabet equivalents, and expect it to quite closely reflect how it was actually spoken. At the height of the Roman Empire it is certain that the way Latin was spoken varied from one region to another while the written language remained unchanged. In other words, the Latin spoken by common folk in Britain would have sounded different from the Latin spoken in Gaul, or Spain. But the Latin would be written the same way. A good example is modern English. English is spoken in many different ways, many different dialects – compare accents in America vs. Britain vs. Australia vs. India etc. All use the same written language. If we were to write English truly phonetically, there would be a hundred or so written forms of English.

If Venetic writing tried to reproduce its language explicitly then we can expect dialectic variations will appear in the writing. But what is most intriguing is that by adding the dots – serving not just mostly palatalization and similar tongue-produced effects but (see later) situations with lengthening (of either sound or silence) – allows us to reproduce Venetic quite accurately. Even if all the dots were not necessary and word boundary writing could have been used, the Veneti thought that it was important to mark the palatalizations explicitly, maybe thinking that if they didn't it would be read like Etruscan.

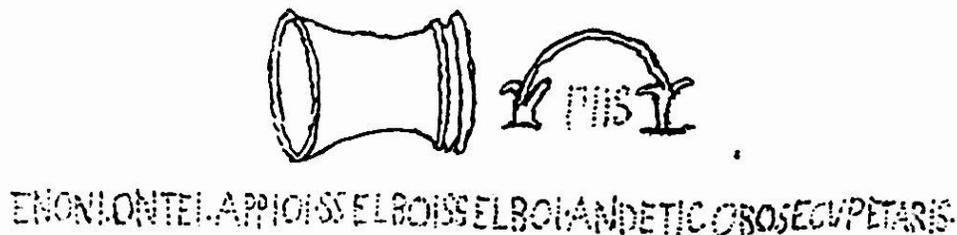
While the dots strictly speaking are not needed for someone who knew the language, and a Venetic reader could do just as well with dots only marking word boundaries, if we initially

know no Venetic at all, the dots certainly give us a vivid idea of how the Venetic sounded. Perhaps it sounded like Danish relative to German, or Livonian relative to Estonian. It is a blessing in disguise!! Furthermore as the dialects changed, the scribes who recorded it, captured significant changes in pronunciation. That is why we will see variations on some words, and especially with the application of the dots.

If we regard the Venetic writing as extremely phonetic because of all the dots, we cannot view the variations as erroneous, but that some words were spoken a little differently between two locations and two periods in time. For example if there is an inscription that shows **.e.petars** instead of **.e.kupetari.s.** that does not mean the scribe made a mistake. It simply means that, just like in English *good-bye* can become *g'bye*, so too a commonly used **.e.cupetari.s.** could reduce to **.e.petars** over time.

When Venetic at the beginning of Roman times was written with Roman alphabet letters, the dots vanished, confirming that the original Venetic written language was more a phonetic recording of actual speech than its Roman alphabet form. We also have to bear in mind the fact that Romans explicitly showed word boundaries, which reduced the need for additional phonetic punctuation.

Figure 3.4



9b-B) **ENONI . ONTEI . APPIOI . SSELBOI SSELBOI . ANDETIC OBOSECUPETARIS** - [container - MLV 236, LLV B-1]

*This is one of the few inscriptions (other than Roman writing inscriptions on urns) where Roman letters are used, and the Roman convention of simply using dots to separate words. The dots around letters are missing. This tends to prove that strictly speaking the dot-punctuation was not necessary to read the text. But without the dots, someone who does not know Venetic will read it like reading Latin, and the palatalizations, etc. that reproduce how it was really spoken is lost.*

Throughout the investigations of the Venetic writing, investigators have wondered why the word “Veneti” does not appear (other than in one instance **Venetkens**, which could simply be a borrowing from Latin.) But we must bear in mind both that ancient Latin spoke the V as a “W” and Greeks called them “Eneti” (or “Henetoi”) both of which suggests the word was introduced with a palatalized initial “E”. In my analysis of the Venetic inscriptions I came to the conclusion that in the inscriptions the word is represented in the stem **.e..n.no-**.

For example it appears as **.e..n.noniiia**. The **iiia** ending suggests the Venetic way of saying the Roman “Venetia”

**moloto.e..n.noniiia**

Instead of showing any V-character (=W-sound), it shows the E surrounded by dots. The actual Venetic pronunciation of **.e..n.nonii**a may have sounded something like (playing on the phonetics of the Roman alphabet) “WHEI-NO-NII-A”

This helps us reproduce the sound of other Venetic words that begins with dotted vowels. For example there is one sentence in which the scribe has added plenty of dots - **.e..i.k**. It must have sounded very unusual, such as WHEIHK, YEIHK, etc.

Note that the above discussion is a good example of determining the meaning of the dots through looking at evidence, starting from our first observation that showed **.e.ku** sounded like “IAEEQU”. It puzzles me how earlier studies of Venetic writing failed to identify the dots as punctuation that modified normal Etruscan letter sounds, and that it has nothing to do with syllables (which someone proposed.) It is nothing more than added information on pronunciation. The fact that it was added is evidence the Venetic language was pronounced with extreme palatalization – maybe like how Danish or southern Swedish speaks its Germanic language today – and the Venetic scribes were motivated to introduce the dots simply because their language was extremely different from the pure round sounds of neighbouring Etruscan or Latin.

We will look at the effect of the dots on consonants in the next sections. But first, for comparison, let us look at something similar with respect to initial vowel treatments in Estonian versus Livonian, where Estonian has weak palatalization and rounder sounds like in Latin, while Livonian is extremely palatalized like Danish.

### *3.4.1 Examples of Palatalization on Initial Vowels in Livonian and Estonian*

To illustrate the above phenomenon of consonantal features appearing with initial vowels in a language in which there is stress on the initial vowel, we can look to some examples in Livonian, a Finnic language that was located on the coast south of the related language of Estonian. Perhaps you know of other languages to observe. One might for example look at highly palatalized Danish versus standard Swedish, for example. I use these examples that compare Livonian and Estonian, since my own greatest familiarity is with Finnic languages.

Since Livonian is highly palatalized and Estonian considerably less, it is possible to compare Livonian words with Estonian equivalents, and then compare what we witness with the above described circumstances visible in Venetic initial vowels with dots.

While Estonian does have palatalization it is mild and not explicitly noted in the written language. However, in Livonian, as I say, palatalization is strong and significant. Livonian explicitly shows the palatalization with diacritical marks. However, this applies only to situations commonly viewed as ‘palatalization’. As I indicate here, the Venetic use of dots seems more broadly applied to all situations in which the tongue modified a sound, and even side effects like length or pause.

Let us see what we can discover from Livonian compared to Estonian. Estonian like Finnish, in putting stress on the first syllable, commonly adds some consonantal feature at the start that helps launch the initial vowel. Note it is impossible not to have something consonantal on an initial vowel, in any language – but usually it is so weak it can be ignored in languages that do not put a stress or emphasis on the first syllable. For example in English, stress is applied later in the word. For example English people will mistakenly pronounce *Helsinki* with “Hel**SINKi**” instead of the Finnish “**HEL**-sinki”. In fact this is a good example of a word in which the initial

H probably appeared as a result of the emphasis on the first syllable in Finnish. There are other words in Estonian and Finnish where an “H” or “J/Y” has been explicitly recognized. But the consonantal sound launching an initial consonant is there, and its strength will vary with the dialect. In the following, we see some examples in which the Livonian is shown with an explicit J at the start, where it is not explicitly noted in written Estonian:

**Table 3.4.1**

initial vowel	Estonian	Livonian
E	<i>ema</i>	<i>jemā</i>
A	<i>ära</i>	<i>jarā</i>
I	<i>iga</i>	<i>jegā</i>

(J follows the convention of pronouncing it like English “Y”)

What can we derive from this? It suggests that in pronouncing Venetic too, we should place the emphasis on the first syllable, and this will help us understand the reasons for the Venetic employment of the dots in various locations. Having observed similarities with Finnic initial vowels, we will continue to make reference to other coincidences with Finnic languages.

The reader is always welcome to advance examples of other languages with emphasis on the first syllable. It is possible that a consonantal launch for initial vowels, is quite common for all languages – not just Finnic – that place the emphasis on initial syllables. The observations in the following sections will probably be found in those as well. The reader is welcome to investigate other languages. Our discussion merely observes phonetic parallels with Finnic purely as examples.

### 3.5 Palatalization of Consonants.

Besides the vowels, the Venetic inscriptions are also liberally sprinkled with dots on both sides of consonants. On sounded consonants, the resulting sounds are our familiar consonant palatalizations such as the Spanish palatalization of the N written as Ñ. In Livonian the palatalization of sounded consonants L and N involve the use of diacritical marks in the form of a cedilla underneath. Livonian palatalizes the D and T and R and shows it in this way as well, with the cedilla underneath. Other written languages that actually show palatalization, may have other markers. If palatalization is weak and not linguistically significant, it will not be shown. For example Estonian has palatalization in places similar to Livonian, but they are weaker, and so not explicitly indicated.

But there is more to the Venetic dots than simply the common palatalizations of consonants we know in modern languages. They appear to have a broader more general application than what is meant by the modern conventional idea of ‘palatalization’

Dots around the Venetic N and L have easy comparison to modern Spanish or Livonian. And dots around Venetic D and T are analogous to those in Livonian. But there are other applications of dots in Venetic. After completing my project, it was very clear that the dots marked all situations in which the forward, upward, tongue modified a letter sound from its normal relaxed-tongue state. And that results in the dots marking consonants in other ways than what we might normally consider palatalization. We already saw how the dots modified vowels – introducing a

J or H sound. That too is not what we normally associate with the term ‘palatalization’. The scheme of dot addition in general makes things very easy. It is also the reason the dots were even used – it was a scheme that any writer could understand: For any tongue action up to to the top of the mouth, add a dot!!! Let us explore additional application on consonants:

From all the evidence so far, if the dots in the Venetic writing surround a consonant like an “S” we should discover its sound very simply by adding our faint “J” (“=”Y”), where the dot appears, and interpret the result. For example **.s.** sounding like “JS” can be considered the sound of the *ss* in English *issue*. In modern languages this sound is represented in many ways, beginning with the “SH”, which is described in other languages with “Š” Currently a Venetic character that looks like an **M** is assumed to be “SH” but this dot scheme suggests the current view about the **M** is wrong and that the “SH” is the dotted S as in **.s.** What then should the **M** be? I will give the argument later, but for now I believe it to be an unpalatalized “**(I)SS**” as in English *hiss*. I therefore represent the character in the transcriptions to Roman alphabet with **\$**.

The following table shows some palatalized consonants, and Venetic examples. In addition, I selected some Estonian words that are similar to the Venetic, where Estonian has palatalization in the same locations. Livonian will have similar examples. A more comprehensive study might also look for parallels in other palatalized languages, like Danish. The reader is invited to investigate if these locations of palatalization are more or less universal, and a function of preceding and following sounds.

Table 3.5  
PALATALIZATION OF CONSONANTS COMPARISON

Consonant	Venetic	Venetic example	Compare with palatalization in Estonian words like this:
<b>N</b>	<b>.n.</b>	<b>ka.n.te.s.</b>	<i>kanti</i> ‘into the region’
<b>S</b>	<b>.s.</b>	<b>dona.s.to</b>	<i>hasti</i> ‘well’
<b>T</b>	<b>.t.</b>	<b>vo.t.te.i</b>	<i>võtteid</i> ‘takings’
<b>R = trilled</b>	<b>.r.</b>	<b>.u.r.kli</b>	<i>uuri</i> ‘investigate’
<b>L</b>	<b>.l.</b>	<b>mo.l.ta</b>	<i>muld</i> ‘soil’

The table shows another consonant that we would not normally consider a palatalized consonant. I propose dots around the Venetic R represent a trilled R. The R with dots does not appear often in Venetic, but there is an inscription in which a trilled and non-trilled R appear together - **.a.tra.e.s. te.r.mon.io.s.** The R in the first word, by our theory, is not trilled and in the second it is trilled. We can find that in languages that have the trilled R, the trilling strength is also dependent on its situation within the word – the letters preceding and following. For example, Estonian uses trilling, and we can find that a word like *adra* produces the R in a weak position that does not have to be trilled, while on the other hand, *tarvis* places the R in a stronger position that promotes strong trilling. Estonian will, like Venetic, similarly strongly trill the loanword *terminus* (is it from Greek?) which is similar to the Venetic **te.r.min.io.s.**

I believe that for a person who already knew the language, the dots as representations of all tongue-effects was enough for the reader to recognize what sound was intended. **The dot was an all-purpose phonetic marker, but mostly marked palatalization and other tongue-modifications of pure sounds**

### 3.6 Dots in Venetic Around Silent Consonants Representing a Stød?

Let us consider now, what happens if we “palatalize” a silent consonant (if dots surround a silent consonant). That would be represented in Livonian explicitly with the D or T with the cedilla mark beneath it. But in Venetic we see it also around other silent consonants, such as G (**.g.**). How can silence be palatalized? The true palatalizing of a silent consonant should result in more silence, and that would be represented by the break in tone called “stød”. Represented by a mark similar to an apostrophe, stød is found today in the highly palatalized languages of Danish and Livonian. Stød can be viewed as palatalization on a high vowel so that the high vowel disappears from being ultra high. For example “I” > “J/Y”. Indeed the Venetic dotted “I” is an overhigh “I” that becomes silent while the tongue positions are the same as with “I”. Normally it appears as the “J/Y” or a frontal “H”. But what if we have “MIN”? Then raising the “I” in this case becomes “MJN” or “M’N”. This is in Danish called “stød”

In Livonian an example of a word with stød would be *jo’g* ‘river’ where ‘ marks the stød. Estonian, without the stød would say it *jõgi*. Based on our view of the Venetic dots, if we used Venetic writing to write the Livonian it would probably look like **jo.g.** except that Venetic “j” would be written **.i.** (palatalized “I”) so it would be **.i.o.g.** or simply **.o.g**

Another example in Livonian would be *le’t* ‘leaf’. If we wrote it in Venetic writing, by our theory, it would be **le.t.** In this case the Estonian equivalent without the stød would be *leht* and the Finnish would be *lehti*.

Another Livonian example would be *tie’da* ‘to do’. The Estonian equivalent would add the H here as well – *teha*. In Finnish *tehdä*

Perhaps one can find similar situations when comparing Danish words and equivalent words in related standard Swedish or Norwegian which are not highly palatalized. It appears that palatalization arises from the general movement of a language upward towards tighter mouth and more involvement of the tongue on the palate.

The addition of the H by Estonian suggests the Livonian stød can be seen as an ‘extreme palatalization’. If a culture in general develops a dialect in which they push all vowels upward (which means pushing vowels forward-upward while relaxing the mouth) then we get a general shift that can roughly be described by **U>O O>A A>E E>I** But what about the **I**? What is higher than the **I**? Obviously it is the “**J/Y**” or frontal “**H**”. But then what happens with the “**H**” or “**J/Y**”? That is when the stød appears. Already silent, where can it go? The only direction it has would be to create a break, a stop. Thus, to continue the shift we would have **I > H**(tongue in “J” position) and then **H,J > stød**. If we start with a word like **SOMAN** it can evolve as the speaker’s tongue grows. Follow the rise in vowels: **SOMAN > SAMEN > SEMIN > SIMHN > SIM’N**

Thus in general palatalization and upward shifts of vowels are related to the same shift in speech. It follows that highly palatalized languages also display upward shifts of lower vowels too. For example Livonian presents the suffix for agency as *-ji* while Estonian and Finnish use *-ja*. It may explain the name Roman historian Tacitus used for the nations along the southeast Baltic coast in the first century – “*Aestii*”. If these people were ancient Estonians, and the reason Estonians have always been called *Eesti*, then maybe if the word was highly palatalized, we could rewrite it (imitating Livonian) as ESTJI, which when lowered becomes OSTJA of low palatalized Estonian and Finnish, which means ‘buyer’, ie ‘merchant’, which is how surrounding peoples would have viewed the managers of the market port near the Vistula mouth. It is never a

uniform shift because many other factors are at play as well. A speaker cannot change a word so much it becomes unintelligible. Some crucial features, such as grammatical endings, may resist being changed. The changes will mostly manifest in the word stems.

In Venetic, in the available Venetic inscriptions, this shifting of vowels upward described above, can explain words in which no vowels are shown between consonants where one would expect it. In the body of inscriptions we see **vda.n.** and **mno.s.** If the above is true of Venetic then we can expect that earlier **vda.n.** may have been **vhda.n.** or **v.i.dan** and before that **vida.n.** Similarly **mno.s.** may have originated from **m.n.os** and before that **mino.s.** In other words the progressions are **v.i.dan > v.d.a.n. > vda.n.** and **mino.s. > m.n.o.s. > mno.s.**

We have possible proof of this in the Venetic inscriptions, where a word written several times as **vo.l.ttiomno.i.** appears in another dialect **.vo.l.ttio.m.minna.i.** thus revealing the original “I” between M and N. (One of the advantages of Venetic writing is that the scribe actually records actual dialect and in this case, a less palatalized one!) The occurrence of two vowels together as in **vda.n.** or **mno.s.** was rare in Venetic as these are the only two occurrences in the body of under 100 complete inscriptions available.

### 3.7 Solitary Dots

Sometimes dots appeared only once, not around a letter. Solitary dots probably are to be interpreted in the following manner: After a silent consonant they could produce a pause. After a vowel they could lengthen the vowel. We have to use common sense and put ourselves into the mind of the scribe. The writing system has no other way of indicating length or pause.

Sometimes scribes treated each palatalized character with a dot on either side, but if there were two palatalized characters in a row, often the dot between them was shared. In our arbitrary division of the continuous Venetic writing with spaces to show word boundaries, a shared dot can become separated from one of the adjacent characters using it. Bear this in mind when I break up a continuous Venetic inscription with word boundaries to make our analysis simpler.

## 4. ANCIENT PHONETIC CONNECTIONS? VENETIC AND DANISH

### 4.1 Venetic at the South End of the Jutland Amber Route Implications on Danish

All in all, from the use of the phonetics of regular words (which we assume were pronounced like Latin) plus the additional effects indicated by the dots, we can sense how the Venetic actually sounded – strongly palatalized.

As already mentioned, two languages with strong palatalization and *stød* is Danish and Livonian. Livonian lies south of Estonia and was dominated by Latvian (an Indo-European language that is a cousin of Slavic languages) and therefore we might propose that Livonian palatalization arose from the influence of Latvian. Another possibility is that Livonian was actually strongly influenced by traders from the west Baltic who spoke in a palatalized way who regularly accessed the trade river known in Livonian as Vaina, but today as Daugava.

But let us look at Danish, because Danish is today spoken by descendants of peoples who lay at the north end of the trade route that reached down to northern Italy where the Venetic inscriptions we are studying have been found. Both ancient historical texts and archeology has demonstrated that the Veneti were agents of amber from the north.

There were two northern sources of amber – the southeast Baltic, and the Jutland Peninsula. Most of the amber to the Venetic regions at the north end of the Adriatic Sea came from the Jutland Peninsula. The amber from the other source, the southeast Baltic, coming down via the Vistula and Oder, went mostly directly to Greece. With the rise of the Romans, there appears to have been a detour of the Vistula trade path westward however, coming down the Piave River Valley. But inscriptions from the Piave Valley and eastward are few, and the body of Venetic inscriptions that archeology has uncovered, mainly represents language of the peoples who received amber from the Jutland Peninsula route. Most of the inscriptions, thus, have the high palatalized dialect, and it is likely it was also found at the Jutland Peninsula source of amber, which we can perhaps identify with the language of independent peoples Roman identified as “*Suebi*” who we will here say spoke “Suebic”

As we have already noted, archeology is clear about the intimate connection between the Adriatic Veneti in the region of most of the inscriptions, and the Jutland Peninsula.

According to Grahame Clark (*World Prehistory*, Cambridge Univ Press) based on the archeological data, the early amber route went up the Elbe, then made its way south by using both the Saale and upper Elbe to start. But then, ... *in the second phase of the central European Bronze Age, a distinctive bronze industry, associated with tumulus burial, arose among descendants of Corded-ware folk [Indo-Europeans ancestral to the Celts or Germans] occupying the highlands of south-west Germany...* These are identifiable in my view with the true Germans - those Tacitus (see his *Germania* of 98AD) calls *Chatti*. They were sedentary farming and pastoral peoples and hence customers for traders.

Thus their growth caused the traders from Jutland to develop in their route an additional westward detour or loop to that area.

Then, after that, another center of industry developed east of the Saale River by people of the same Corded-ware origins (Germanic). The growth of the Germanic culture in central Germany is evident, which in turn promoted traders to create markets for them. The impact of this on the traders is that the trader colonies at the terminuses in northern Italy and the Jutland Peninsula developed as well. As Clarke indicates: *Another distinctive industry developed in Northern Italy adjacent to the south end of the overland route, and at its northern end the Danes ....were importing bronze manufactures both from central and also from western Europe* This information affirms the connection between activity in northern Italy and Jutland Peninsula. The “Danes” were receiving bronze wares in exchange for their supplying amber to the southern civilizations. The “Danes” at this time were not Germanic. In general, ***The amber route formed a veritable hub around which the Early Bronze Age industry of much of Europe revolved***

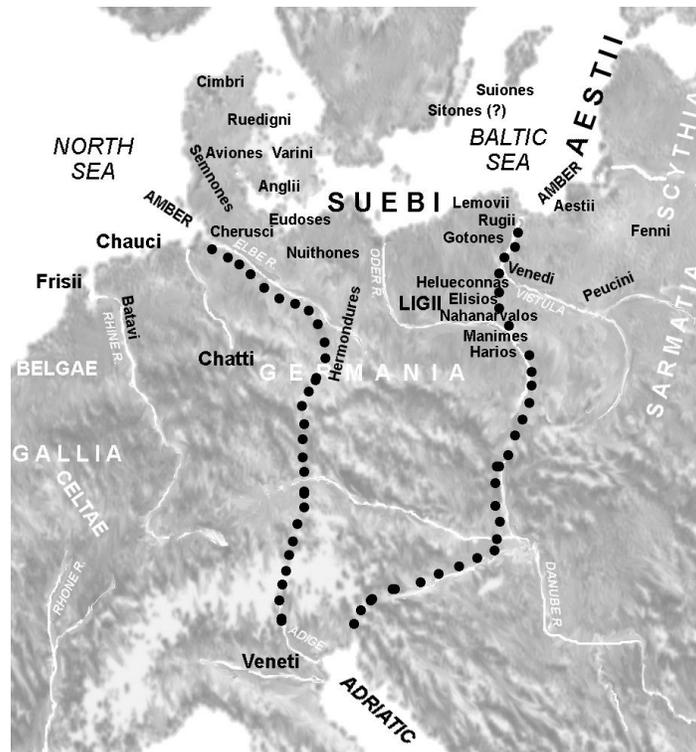
It is thus clear that the Danes of ancient times spoke another language, one that may even have been analogous to Venetic, and there is a distinct possibility that their trader peoples were the initiator of Venetic colonies to serve a newly opened up way around 1000BC of carrying Jutland amber south to Mediterranean civilization. Then when the Jutland tribes were conquered by the German-speaking Goths (*Chatti, Göta*) since Roman times, some centuries later, they adopted the Germanic language of their conquerors, but spoke it in their original highly palatalized fashion. A new language is initially always spoken in the accent of the old. If one does not experience an environment of ‘correct’ speakers, one will continue to speak it with the accent, and transfer the accent to subsequent generations. Danish can be seen that way – as an accent originating from Suebic of the Roman era, carried down through the generations.

Southern Sweden (Skåne) has a highly palatalized dialect as well, and it indicates that the palatalized Suebic language was found also in southern Sweden.

Little is known about the Suebic language other than from what is implied in ancient writings. According to Tacitus' *Germania*, it seems the Suebic language covered vast part of the geographical region of *Germania*, like a trade language. Some have been tempted to see it as some early form of Germanic, but we cannot forget that the region the Romans called "Germania" was purely a geographic region, and could have contained many languages and dialects.

Tacitus wrote in his *Germania* that the *Aestii* were like the *Suebi*, but their language was 'closer to' (not 'different'!!) to that of native Britain, thus tending to point to a possible interpretation that there were Finnic-like trade languages across the northern seas in the Pre-Roman period. The Finnic languages would have been aboriginal in origins, arising ultimately from the dugout-canoe hunter-gatherers the archeologists have identified as the "Maglemose" culture. It is very believable that before the developments and movements of the farming peoples of continental Europe, the unfarmable marshy and cold Scandinavia and south Baltic was the abode of descendants of these aboriginal peoples – except that those towards the south in contact with farmers found a role to play for the static farming settlements in professional long distance traders. These trader tribes could also adopt some innovations from the farming cultures, and even change genetically from intermarriage.

Figure 4.1



*Amber routes to the Adriatic circa early Roman era with tribe names from Tacitus' work "Germania", surperimposed. Note Tacitus' "Chatti" and neighbours would be the true Germanic speakers, the "Goths" and had only begun their military conquests in Tacitus' time, meaning the expansions of Germanic Goths from the interior of Germany occurred only from about 0 AD*

Roman historian Tacitus appeared to have personally approached the south Baltic coast by sea – he also wrote a biography of Agricola, first governor of Roman Britain and could have secured passage on a long distance traders ship. Accordingly in his geography “*Germania*” Tacitus primarily encountered the boat peoples – the *Suebi* tribes who interacted with each other via waterways. Once I discovered that if Suebic tribe names were assumed to have raised vowels and lowered the vowels, the resulting words were meaningful descriptions via Estonian. For example *Suebi* as SUO-ABA meant ‘bay, estuary of the marsh’ which might refer to the region at the mouth of the Oder. There was probably a market there. (See elsewhere for the whole analysis of names.)

Thus, after an analysis of Suebic tribe names, it appeared to me that even if the interior farmable parts of *Germania* had Germanic/Indo-European farmers, the **un**farmable coastal areas, lowlands, marshes, still retained descendants of the original “Maglemose” Finnic culture. Thus in conclusion it appeared to me that Suebic was a Finnic language that seemed to have raised vowels and palatalization, and therefore was consistent with the people speaking the same way when in the subsequent expansion of the *Göta* (*Chatti*, Goths) they began speaking the Germanic language of their military conquerors in the early centuries AD.

In other words, in the early centuries AD, after being conquered by the Germanic Goths, they spoke the introduced Germanic language with their highly palatalized Suebic accent, and if that is not corrected, it is passed down from generation to generation ultimately resulting in the highly palatalized Danish language of today. We can conclude that the original language of the Jutland Peninsula when it was in close trade contact with northern Italy, was highly palatalized, and that highly palatalized language was carried down to northern Italy.

This suggests that the language in the Venetic inscriptions, as it sounds when the dots are interpreted as palatalization markers, was in fact a dialect of Suebic.

The connections between what is now northern Italy, and the Jutland Peninsula are very significant in arguing that the Veneti colonies were initiated by amber trader tribes/families attempting to establish an alternative route to access the Mediterranean markets. We will not only find evidence of similar palatalization and vowel raising, but also a religious connection in terms of the worship of the goddess *Rhea* (The subject of a separate paper.)

We know now where the strong palatalization in Venetic came from – it came from the Jutland Peninsula. Supporting this is archeological determinations that the north Italic area developed gradually from about 1000BC, from northern influences.

#### 4.2 Two Amber Routes, Two Finnic Dialects from the North.

Traditional thinking has been that the traders at the sources of amber were “Balt” (ie like Lithuanians) or Germanic. And yet, both are rooted in agriculture. Finnic peoples arose from the northern aboriginals. Archeology has found their environment filled with adzes for making dugout canoes and harpooning and fishing gear for harvesting lakes, rivers, and seas. If early trade went by water, then the probability that the sea-traders across the northern seas, and river traders travelling up and down the major river, were derived from these aboriginal boat-using cultures, should be greater than the notion farming peoples took to boats.

There are other coincidences that cannot be ignored – such as the peoples along the southeast Baltic amber coast Tacitus called *Aestii*, had a name that has endured among Estonians as *Eesti*, for as long as there has been historical proof of it in Latin texts. It is therefore more probable

that the *Aestii* spoke an ancient Finnic, and that their dialect travelled south with the amber from the southeast Baltic source.

While most of the inscriptions in our project were found at the south end of the amber route from the Jutland Peninsula, during the rise of Rome, Rome became a consumer of amber, and I believe the eastern amber route that came down from the southeast Baltic, which originally continued south along the east coast of the Adriatic, turned westward, and descended the Piave River to more easily access Roman markets.

Not very many inscriptions have been found in the Piave River valley, but those that do have a remarkably strong resonance with Estonian. If the *Aestii* at the southeast Baltic were ancestral to Estonians, this would not be a surprise.

But most of the inscriptions come from the south terminus of the western amber trade route that came from the Jutland Peninsula. The inscriptions at the south terminus from the west Baltic area will have the higher vowels and palatalization, and the few inscriptions at the south terminus of the route from the southeast Baltic region will not have the raised vowel dialect nor the strong palatalization. They represent dialectic difference between east and west Baltic. Yet the two trader peoples – east vs west Baltic – are connected by a common way of life. We will later find them to also be connected via the goddess *Rhea*.

## 5 FURTHER NOTES ABOUT PHONETICS

### 5.1 Venetic Alphabet Sounds vs Roman

The previous sections have focused on the mystery of the dots, and we have in doing so so far implied the sounds of the Venetic characters through the representation of the Venetic with Roman alphabet characters. For more about these investigations into interpreting the original Venetic character sounds see *MLV* and *LLV*. Bear in mind, that these books do not know that the dots marked palatalization, etc. and there may be some misinterpretations. The Roman equivalent to Venetic characters have generally been determined by scholars over the decades, from former interpretations of the sounds of the Etruscan alphabet. The Roman alphabet was born from the Etruscan so that Latin phonetics is close too. Since in Roman times some Venetic words are given in Roman characters, it is possible to compare the Roman characters with the Venetic in the same words from earlier writing. However one has to be cognizant of a general degeneration of Venetic through Roman times. It seems reasonable to believe that Venetic sounds moved closer to Roman in those times, such as losing the original palatalization. It is one of the reason we do not pay too much attention to the Venetic inscriptions written in Roman times in Roman characters..

While sometimes the Venetic dots produced peculiar sounds, as demonstrated in the example given earlier to assess the sound of an initial *.e.*, it appears from the better Roman alphabet inscriptions that the dots lost their role once the sentences were divided in Roman fashion, explicitly showing word boundaries. As I stated earlier, when a speaker of a language knows the word boundaries in their language, they will naturally apply the phonetic features correctly. The palatalizations, etc, may still be there, but no longer need to be explicitly marked when there are word boundary divisions. But of course the reader must already know the language to place the phonetic features correctly. The following, a long inscription, if not the longest, is one example of how Venetic looks when written in Roman fashion where the dots give word boundaries and the Venetic pronunciation dots are absent, and presumably no longer needed to comprehend the text.

Figure 5.1 was shown earlier in figure 3.4 and we will speak more about it here. The drawing was made from the original object which is lost. Note the dots, plus a small space between ANDE TIC and OBOSECUPETARIS where there must have been a dot. It follows the Roman convention of actually showing word boundaries with dots. I separate the SSELBOI's arbitrarily. The result, divided into words, is already given in the Roman style original.

Fig 5.1



ENONI . ONTEI . APPIOI . SSELBOI SSELBOI . ANDE TIC OBOSECUPETARIS

If written in Venetic script with added dots, it would probably look approximately something like this (This is my own guesswork based on other inscriptions and must not be taken as factual, since no Venetic alphabet version actually exists):

**.e.n.oni.o.n.te.i.a.p.pio.i.\$e.l.bo.i.\$e.l.bo.i.a.n.detikobos.e.kupetari.s.**

Because the original Venetic writing showed the actual pronunciation, it picked up the actual accents and dialects that were in use in the environment of the writer. In the past, as we see in *MLV*, when the analysts saw a particular word written in a slightly different way, they presumptuously add a “[sic]” which implies the scribe made an error. **No**, he may not have made an error but phonetically recorded the way people said a particular word in his region. For example **vo.l.tiiomno.i.** in **.e.go vo.l.tiiomno.i. iuva.n.t iio.i** [obelisque- *MLV-59 LLV-Es4*] appears alternatively as **vo.l.tiio.m.minna.i.** in **e.go v.i.u.k.s. siia.i. vo.l.tiio.m.minna.i.** [obelisque- *MLV-57 LLV-Es2*]. The latter sentence shows other differences like **v.i.u.k.s.** and **siia.i.** It is not wrongly written but records another dialect!!

If a language has not developed literature, has not developed standards, then we cannot presume that there is a particularly universal correct way of writing a Venetic word. If it was a trade language then it had many dialectic versions – different in each significant trade route and region. The situation is not unlike where in one part of the English speaking world *Mother* sounds like “mah-thah” and an American “mah-thrr”, and it sounds still different in Australia. Venetic writing is purely phonetic and that will show differences like this explicitly. There could therefore be many written Venetic languages, which are yet the same language spoken with different accents and which are, in actual use, mutually understandable. It would be similar to how an English-speaking person will be able to understand English spoken in an extreme accent (such as Cockney English or Southern drawl of America). Venetic was not like Latin or Greek, which had developed standards of both speaking and writing it. Latin eventually was written more or less the same throughout the Roman Empire because of standardization from widespread and constant use including literature. In practice, there may have been different dialects in different parts of the Roman Empire.

## 5.2 Implications of the Dot –Palatalization Markers on How Venetic is Transcribed to Roman Alphabet.

I follow the form employed in *MLV* with modifications as described in the notes given under Figure 1.1 Because the dots now have a significance, I feel it is important not to tamper with them. For example an **.i.** should not be rewritten as an **h**. Nor should a later **h**, be converted back to **.i.** either. Leave the Venetic way of writing it, as is. These differences could actually reflect, for example a shift from the ‘J’(=’Y’) sound of **.i.** to a frontal ‘H’ that can develop from increased palatalization in the speech.

In the body of Venetic inscriptions we see the introduction of an “H” character. With some words an initial **v.i.** represented with **vh**, and then in Roman alphabet as **F**. But this does not mean **.i. = h**. It may simply be that the dialect shifted from originally a “VJ” sound written **v.i.** to saying “F” sound written **vh**. Leave it as it is written, and don’t arbitrarily change **vh** to **v.i.** or even to **F**. Leave it as written. They could actually reflect small changes in dialect, and they are not necessarily all equivalent.

In addition, I have a disagreement with the assumption that the Venetic character that looks like an **M**, be interpreted as an “SH” (**š**).

This character that looks like an **M**, came with the Etruscan alphabet, so the *Veneti* did not invent it. But, whoever invented it, it raises the question – why is a character whose sound is in the S-family, written in a fashion that resembles their M-character? Shouldn’t the “SH” character be derived from the S-character? The following illustrates the problem:

$$\mathbf{M} = \text{“SH?”} \quad \mathfrak{M} = \text{“M”} \quad \mathfrak{S} = \text{“S”} \quad \mathbf{I} = \text{“I”}$$

But perhaps the SH-character was indeed developed from the S-character. The following shows how a rough M-like character can be formed by combining the I- and S-characters, tilting the S a little. We have presented it right to left because it was common for Etruscan/Venetic writing to flow from right to left.

$$\mathbf{M} < \mathfrak{S}\mathbf{I} < \mathfrak{S} + \mathbf{I}$$

If this theory is correct then the sound represented by the M-like character is not “SH” as has been traditionally assumed but “ISS” (not palatalized).

Estonian provides a good example of an intense emphasis of this kind, that rarely occurs. It is in the word *issand*, an intensification of *isand* ‘fatherly entity’. The emphasized form *issand* is translated in the modern day as ‘lord, master’. This sound is not palatalized, but is like in English *hiss*. (by contrast, the Venetic S with dots – **.s.** – is palatalized as in English *issue*) We note that in the Venetic inscriptions the M-like character is also rare, and the most common location is found in apparently votive texts, in a word in front of a seeming goddess “reitia” or “trumusia” which academics have interpreted as Venetic deities. We saw it for example in the inscription given above. Read left to right we rewrite it in Roman alphabet as **(M)a.i.nate.i. re.i.tiia.i.**

If the M-like character is to be taken as an ISS-sound (as in English *hiss*), it would parallel the Estonian traditions of saying ‘Lord’ or ‘Master’ to a lordly figure, using *issand*. We will discuss this later in interpreting **(M)a.i.nate.i. re.i.tiia.i**.

To conclude, the M-like character is essentially a very strong plain S with a faint I at front. But the faint I at front probably disappeared with the rise in vowel tone, which caused high vowels to disappear into H’s or sound breaks. ISSA- > SSA- The upward shift of tone is discussed next.

**Summary: two forms of “SH” as presented in this study:**

.s. - palatalized as in English *issue* or Estonian *uss* (‘snake’)

\$ (Venetic **M**) - NON-palatalized as in English *hiss* or Estonian *issand*

### 5.3 Systematic Shifts Observed

We have already shown in this chapter on the phonetics of Venetic, some many strange coincidences in terms palatalizations in Venetic also appearing in Estonian words, about the addition of H for the Estonian parallel when dots surround a consonant, about the addition of a J (=Y) in the Estonian and Livonian parallel when dots surround an initial vowel, and more.

In the final results we discovered remarkable parallels between some Venetic words and Estonian, especially in regards to how Estonian words wrote the locations where the Venetic had dots.

The following table illustrates some Estonian words that are quite parallel to Venetic words, with the Estonian showing an H, in locations where the Venetic shows dots.

This repetition of the same pattern is very revealing, and evidence that by the laws of probability these are not likely to be pure coincidences

Earlier I gave some examples of how palatalization could introduce the J sound (=Y) where otherwise it was too weak to palatalize. Such as between highly palatalized Livonian and mildly palatalized Estonian.

I have bolded the H or J on the Estonian side.

Table 5.3

<u>Venetic</u>	<u>Estonian</u>
<b>.e.i.k</b>	<b><i>hakkud</i></b>
<b>a.kut</b>	<b><i>ehk</i></b>
<b>la.g.sto</b>	<b><i>lahkustus</i></b>
<b>.e.go</b>	<b><i>jäägu</i></b>
<b>.e.no</b>	<b><i>jänu</i></b>

These are a few examples. There are others within the inscriptions studied. Estonian does not mark its normal palatalizations. But if Estonian were written out phonetically we would find the more common palatalization parallels too. See examples in Table 5.3 where the Estonian palatalizations are not marked, but we point them out by underlining the letter.

Palatalization can be viewed as pushing sounds upward with the tongue. We have already noted that the ancient northern language called Suebic did it as well. This upward shifting of

sounds would be a dialectic event, much like someone in English saying “HIV EH HIPPY DEY!” for “have a happy day!” These observations of higher vowels relative to Estonian words that appear similar, of course must be done in conjunction with interpreting the sentences, since we also have to ascertain the meanings of our words first, before we look for parallels in known languages, as discussed in the next chapter.

#### 5.4 How Venetic Sounded

In looking at examples of dots in Venetic as indicators of palatalization, stød, and other effects caused by the forward tongue, we must first find word boundaries in order to relate the Venetic text to our familiar modern word-boundary writing. It is important for us to know the word boundaries, otherwise we cannot even discover similar palatalization in known languages like Livonian or Estonian since palatalization is dependent on location in a word.

Once we have identified the words, we can then observe other languages for examples of the sounds occurring at the location of the dots. To use an example, let us assume we have separated an inscription into words as follows **vda.n. vo.l.tii mno.s. dona.s.to ke la.g.s.to** Let us explore how it sounds, when we interpret the sound modifications created by the dots. While the sounds can be found in various languages, we will refer mostly to Estonian for no other reason than that is is familiar to me.

The first word **vda.n.** shows a palatalization of N at the end. Can we find such palatalization of N in the final position in Estonian? Yes, for example in *vann* ‘bath’. By comparison – for demonstration of an example other languages – English does not have such palatalization in a final position. French on the other hand has this, as in *gagne*.

Next, the word **vo.l.tii** shows palatalization at *LT* that exists in Estonian. For example *tuld* ‘fire (Partitive)’. English for example does not have it. Its *LT* is not palatalized.

Next we see **.s.** in **mno.s.** Does Estonian have palatalization situations for a final s? Yes, it occurs. Estonian *uss* ‘snake’. This palatalization of a final S is not very common in languages.

Next we have the **.s.** inside, preceding a T, in **dona.s.to** and **la.g.s.to**. Once again Estonian provides a good sound parallel in *hästi* ‘well’.

Next we see **.g.** in **la.g.s.to**. This presents the dots on a silent consonant, which in actual speech, probably presents itself as stød as described above, and which written in Livonian fashion would appear as LA’GSTO but, - to follow the patterns described here with words like *le’t* vs *leht* – with the Estonian adding the H (or Livonian losing the H for a stød) would if expressed in Estonian, sound like LAHGSTO perhaps somewhat like Estonian says *lahkust* ‘gift’.

These examples and others show that Estonian has phonetics that parallels the phonetics indicated by the dots. Here are my rough suggestions (representing the sounds with Latin and English phonetics)

WITHOUT DOTS	WITH DOTS <i>(The first interpretation if at start of syllable and second if terminating a syllable)</i> <i>*invented English representations to mimic sound not naturally in English</i>
<p> <b>a</b> = "A" as in "f<u>a</u>ther"  <b>e</b> = "E" as in "e<u>ss</u>ence"  <b>i</b> = "I" as in "i<u>ll</u>ness"  <b>o</b> = "O" as in "o<u>ld</u>"  <b>u</b> = "U" as in "mo<u>o</u>n"  <b>l</b> = "L" as in "l<u>a</u>nd"  <b>s</b> = "S" as in "s<u>ee</u>"  <b>ʃ</b> = "ISS" as in "h<u>is</u>ss"  <b>r</b> = "R" as in "a<u>r</u>e"  <b>m</b> = "M" as in "m<u>e</u>"  <b>n</b> = "N" as in "n<u>o</u>"  <b>v</b> = "V" as in "v<u>e</u>ry"  <b>t</b> = "T" as in "t<u>oo</u>"  <b>p</b> = "P" as in "p<u>a</u>t"  <b>k</b> = "K" as in "c<u>u</u>t"  <b>d</b> = "D" as in "d<u>o</u>"  <b>h</b> = "H" as in "h<u>o</u>ld"  <b>b</b> = "B" as in "b<u>a</u>t"  <b>g</b> = "G" as in "g<u>o</u>t" </p> <p><i>These are relatively accurate Venetic existed into the beginning of Roman alphabet use and there exists Venetic written in the Roman alphabet</i></p>	<p> <b>.a.</b> = "JA" "AH" as in "c<u>ough</u>", "a<u>hk</u>"*  <b>.e.</b> = "JE" "EH, as in "k<u>eh</u>"* "e<u>hk</u>"*  <b>.i.</b> = "J"(="Y") as in "y<u>es</u>"  <b>.o.</b> = "JO" "OH" as in "j<u>oh</u>"* "o<u>h</u>"  <b>.u.</b> = "JU" "UH" as in "y<u>ou</u>", "p<u>oo</u>h"  <b>.l.</b> = "LJH", "HL" as in "l<u>y</u>iss"* "a<u>pp</u>le"  <b>.s.</b> = "SJH", "HS", as in "s<u>he</u>", "i<u>ss</u>ue"  <i>Dotted one not found (?)</i>  <b>.r.</b> = "RJH", "HR", as in "r<u>ough</u>"(trilled)  <b>.m.</b> = "MJH", "HM", as in "m<u>y</u>ih"* "i<u>hm</u>"*  <b>.n.</b> = "NJH", "HN", as in "n<u>y</u>ih"* "i<u>hn</u>"*  <b>.v.</b> = "VJH", "HV" as in "v<u>y</u>ih"* "i<u>v</u>"  <b>.t.</b> = "TJH", "HT", as in "t<u>hoo</u>", "a<u>ht</u>"*  <b>.p.</b> = "PJH", "HP" as in "p<u>y</u>ih"* "a<u>hp</u>"*  <b>.k.</b> = "KJH", "HK" as in "k<u>ute</u>", "a<u>hk</u>"*  <b>.d.</b> = "DJH", "HD" as in "d<u>ew</u>", "a<u>id</u>"  <i>No dotted - h is derived from .i.</i>  <b>.b.</b> = "BJH", "HB" as in "b<u>y</u>ih"* "a<u>hb</u>"*  <b>.g.</b> = "GJH", "HG" as in "g<u>y</u>ih"* "a<u>hg</u>"* </p> <p><i>These are rough guesses. It is possible for linguistics to study the final results more carefully and with additional Comparisons with Danish and Livonian discover precise phonetic rules.</i></p>

If we are searching for a known language that is related to Venetic, then a study to find parallels to palatalization, will be very important.

Linguistics also says that grammar changes more slowly than words. This is understandable – grammar is like the structure of a building. While one can change the cladding of a building easily, it is difficult to change the structure itself. But at this stage we have not identified any grammar which we can compare against the grammar of a known language. We will do it later.

The survival of phonetic and grammatical features should be stronger than lexical features. The reality is that words can be easily changed during usage, or borrowed from other languages, and a language can become filled with foreign words. But grammar – the structure of the language – cannot be borrowed.

Phonetics is analogous to accent. It is preserved unconsciously and is unconsciously transferred to another language. Others perceive it as a 'foreign accent'. For example immigrants to North America will speak English with an accent, and if they maintain a community among themselves in which they preserve their original language, they may continue to speak with that accent for several generations. Danish, I believe represents the preservation of an accent from their previous language, that was carried over when the people adopted Germanic language; and from that we can conclude that the original language of the Jutland Peninsula was just as palatalized as Danish.

Amazingly, with the dots as phonetic markers we can reasonably easily reproduce how the language sounded. The reader, with reference to the sounds in Danish or Livonian, can explore how Venetic actually sounded. It is a side project best done in a sound medium rather than in written form

## 5.5 Conclusions: An Efficient Alternative Writing System

Past thinking about the dots has ranged from ignoring them and considering them as decorative, to viewing them as a syllabic punctuation with mysterious rules requiring scribes to be educated to their use. But both these extremes are ridiculous. There are many Venetic inscriptions on ordinary objects obviously not requiring any priestly scribe.

The Venetic scheme of using dots, is an ingenious way of writing a language phonetically while using only one phonetic marker – a dot.

And it was simple. The writer would have become accustomed to simply throw in a dot wherever the speech pushed the tongue up for whatever reason. This gives us our required simplicity that permitted the dots to be understood and used by anyone. It was so simple and intuitive that there is no evidence of any Venetic writing copying the late Etruscan or early Roman use of word boundaries, until Roman times.

While many inscriptions were made formally for memorials and urns, the body of inscriptions offers some evidence of ordinary people writing texts when at a sanctuary to the Goddess, or writing text on round river stones, or in some examples on everyday objects like a stick or hunting horn. Venetic writing was not anything restricted to a priestly class. Anyone could master it quickly, and did. One simply sounded out one's sentence and wrote down the letters, adding dots whenever the tongue pressed up to the palate, for whatever reason.

---

## References

Andres Pääbo, 2002-2014, *THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL\** [www.paabo.ca](http://www.paabo.ca)

S. Berneco, 2003, *A Closer Look at Livonian Stød*, Fenno-Ugristica 25, Tartu.

Grahame Clark, *World Prehistory*, Cambridge Univ Press

LLV = G.B. Pellegrini & A.L. Prosdocimi, 1964 *La Lingua Venetica*, Padova.

MLV = M. Lejeune, 1974. *Manuel de la Langue Vénète*,

## PART TWO: GRAMMAR

# A DESCRIPTION OF VENETIC GRAMMAR

*Expanding the Discussion from “THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL” (rev 6/2015)*

**Andres P ä ä b o (Ontario, Canada)**

---

*The following paper is from the chapter on Venetic Grammar documented in “THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL” in order to present a summary of the Venetic Grammar as discovered in the study – with some improvements and expansions from the original, wherever some further observations could be made. As explained in the above document, this grammar is basically achieved directly from the Venetic inscriptions. The methodology required first the discovery of word stems with the same meaning across all the inscriptions in the study which then produced grammarless sentences of the kind ‘Man – duck – elder’. Along the way, I keep an eye on the grammatical endings and manage to determine meanings as I go, but the final results for grammatical ending functions is only reached when arriving at the end. The methodology of deciphering involved a great deal of attention to the context as determined by archeology, in which the sentences must appear so that whatever meaning is assigned has to resonate with the context; and also context within the sentence. Thus the methodology did not project any known language onto the Venetic. However, once it was clear Venetic was Finnic, I began to take notice of parallels in Estonian and Finnish and discovered some major grammatical endings were close to the same. In languages, grammar changes most slowly, and that is why more distant languages will still be similar in grammatical features. And that is also why for any suggestion that Venetic was genetically connected to Estonian or Finnish, we MUST find similarity in grammar. The similarities were also noted since if Venetic was Finnic, Estonian and Finnish grammar can now be used for further insights. The following is intended for the average educated reader who has used common grammar descriptions. My work contains little linguistic jargon and this paper should be easy to read.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### *1.1 The Most Comprehensive Description of Venetic So Far Created*

Grammar cannot be directly discovered. It is necessary to include its discovery in the general pursuit of word stems, and meaningful sentences that agree with the archeological context. It is only during the discovery of sentences and maintaining a constancy in word stems, that it is

possible to look for the grammatical endings that function in the same way in all the sentences. It is only in the final stage that the gaps in terms of grammatical markets get filled in and we have an organized description. That is the reason I did not create this description of grammar until the very end. See *“THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL”* for the word stems and translations of the existing sentences on the archeological objects.

They say that the only way to prove that you have discovered a real language is if you have identified sufficient word stems (lexicon) and grammar that you can form new sentences that have not existed before. I have achieved this, as will be clear in some examples in this paper.

However, there will be some critics who say that it is possible to invent a language and that I have invented all this. After all it is well known that some fantasy movies have hired linguists to create new languages for the movie (example ‘Klinton’). I agree that it would be easy to invent a language using some of the structures of existing languages. But it would be impossible to invent a language so that if applied to real ancient texts, it consistently produced translations that were suitable for the context in which the sentences appeared, unless this invented language was the real language of the ancient texts.

In the recent traditions of interpreting the Venetic inscriptions via Indo-European Latin or (more recently) Slovenian, the methodology has been to project the known language onto the unknown. Linguists participating do nothing other than try to vaguely ‘hear’ the known language in the unknown and then do some rationalizing to give it legitimacy. Not only is there a projecting of Indo-European word stems onto the Venetic inscriptions, but also desperate attempts to project Indo-European grammar onto the inscriptions. In the Latin approach, there was nothing that actually could be inferred from the inscriptions themselves other than the “dative” suggested by a number of inscriptions associated with giving an offering to a deity. Otherwise there was mostly a projecting of Indo-European features onto the Venetic sentences (see Lejeune). Recent Slovenian attempts to interpret Venetic did not even attempt to identify word stems and grammatical elements to build a lexicon and grammar, but obscured the problem by pretending the Venetic sentences were all very poetic and complex and generally similar to Slovenian.

The following extensive rationalization of grammar from the inscriptions themselves, is completely new. You will not find any rationalization even to a tenth the degree in any previous investigations.

Our inventory of words from the Venetic inscriptions is not presented here, but we will make use of them in the illustrations and explain the words we use. The purpose of this paper is to discuss Venetic grammar and to show how Venetic grammar resonates with common Estonian and Finnish grammar. Anyone who claims Venetic is genetically related to a particular language family must be able to do this. Linguists have established that as languages from the same origins diverge from each other, grammar changes most slowly. Common grammar is in constant use. It is transferred generation to generation with little or no change. For that reason, when linguistics tries to find genetic connection between two languages whose common parent existed very long ago, many thousands of years ago, too distant for conventional comparative linguistics applied to words, then a comparison of grammar is very revealing. For example, it is difficult to determine a genetic connection between Estonian and Basque purely from comparing words, but when one looks at the grammatical structures, the Estonian grammar and Basque grammar look very similar.

## *1.2 Proposed Theory of How Venetic could be a Finnic Language*

Finding in our investigation documented in ***“THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL”*** that the Venetic in the Adriatic Venetic inscriptions was a Finnic language, will inevitably raise questions as to how this can be the case. The following is a brief account of my theory.

Archeological finds in the last century has found that there were strong trade ties between the Jutland Peninsula and the north Italic region. In addition archeology has traced, from dropped amber, an amber route that began at the Elbe River and eventually came down the Adige River to the center of the Venetic colonies at Este (ancient *Ateste*). Another amber trade route came south from the southeast Baltic amber source, went via the Vistula and Oder to the vicinity of Vienna and then south to the Adriatic Sea.

It stands to reason that if there was a Finnic language at the sourced of amber, then if the northern traders with a monopoly on Baltic amber established trade routes and markets towards the Mediterranean, than they would hve established these with their own people, hence would have established their northern Finnic language. Archeology confirms, as I already mentioned, that there was an amber trade route from the Baltic to the Adriatic Sea. Ancient historical texts also confirm that the Adriatic *Veneti* were known for dealing in amber.

This then is the connection between Venetic and the Finnic north.

What was the character of the Finnic language in the north? All evidence suggests that the Finnic language was derived from the first hunter-gatherer peoples across northern Europe, who, because the north was flooded by the meltwater of the Ice Age glaciers as they retreated to the mountains of Norway, were highly developed in living in a watery landscape and using dugout canoes. Archeology identifies this culture as the “maglelmoose” culture. When later in history, the highlands of central Europe became settled with farming peoples, there was a growing demand for trade to connect the settled peoples to one another through trade. The obvious source for traders in a world with not other long distance transportation routes than river, were the aboriginals who were already travelling long distance in their annual rounds of hunting and fishing.

The original Finnic peoples of northern Europe became quite varied. In the remote north, they remained primitive well into historic times, but those who became involved as professional traders with southern Europe became quite advanced. My theory is that it is the advanced groups who took on the role of professional long distance traders for the sedentary civilizations, that produced the peoples ancient historical texts have called “Veneti”. (The word, as VENEDE, is a genitive plural of VENE, meaning ‘boat’)

## *1.3 Limitations of Linguistics in Basic Interpretation of Unknown Language*

Scholars often have a false idea that the deciphering of an unknown language, is a task for linguistics. This is not true. Linguistics is the study of language, and that means it can only study known languages, since if a language is unknown it is nothing but meaningless sounds. Thus it is necessary to at least partially decipher the language before linguistic methodologies can be applied. In the tradition of deciphering the Venetic inscriptions, linguists have been too quick in trying to apply linguistics – making observations and pronouncements before the language has been revealed. Since all languages have various patterns, it is possible for linguistics to identify

patterns and then completely misinterpret those patterns. A good example is a complex theory to explain the location of the dots in the Venetic writing, whereas in my study I found the dots were simply markers for palatalization and similar features that were probably not relevant linguistically (since when written in the Roman alphabet, the dots disappeared, and instead there were the normal Roman dots to separate words.) In addition, when Indo-European was forced on the inscriptions, what I found to be a case ending, was interpreted by linguists as female gender markers. The result was that linguists worked with rather arbitrary determinations, without there ever being any solid results in the basic interpreting of the sentences.

Most people assume that since we are dealing with language, then the matter of deciphering language is a linguistic one. But the fact is that if you give a linguist a recording of an unknown language, he or she will just hear meaningless noise. The most he or she can do is to identify the repeated patterns. But what do those patterns mean. You can only determine the meanings of those patterns by observing it in actual use. In order to determine the meaning of a word like “*Phikbith*” he or she has to watch the word in action and infer its meanings, like any child does. Or use gestural language with a questioning look – for example point to a tree and say “*Phikbith*” with a questioning look and received a nod. While it is true that the linguist can propose that the unknown language is related to a known one and try to project the known one into the unknown, this is a speculative approach that can be wrong and great success is needed to prove it is true. The number of Venetic inscriptions is too limited for this approach to work. The tendency has been to make an assumption and then not let it go even if there is no real success. It is not difficult when the data is limited to use imagination to justify not letting the hypothesis go. For example even though the Venetic language has non-Indo-European Etruscan to the south and Ligurian to the east, nobody actually tested non-Indo-European. The tradition of analysis became obsessed with ancient Latin for no other reason than that most analysts knew Latin and could participate.

We must understand how limited linguistics is if the language is unknown and if there is no ‘informant’ to give translations in a known language. We must also recognize that simple proposing the unknown language is related to a known language is nothing more than a hypothesis to be tested, and that being the case, if there is not significant success, the option of the hypothesis being wrong must be recognized and the analysts must let it go.

On the other hand, when the language is deciphered from direct analysis of it in actual use, then all results will tend towards the truth because they are based on direct observation. For example, if you point to a tree, and the speaker says *Pthigluk*, then the probability is high that *Pthigluk* means ‘tree’. As you saw in my document of my methodology, even though Venetic is no longer spoken and that one cannot ask a speaker, the fact is that the Venetic language appears in short sentences on archeological objects that strongly suggest the nature of the sentences written on them. By cross-references across the body of objects, we can make very good guesses as to meanings of words, and then refine the meanings. See “***THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL***” for a detailed description of the ideal methodology I used, and which eventually revealed the Venetic language was Finnic.

#### *1.4 Basic Characteristics of Finnic Languages*

Because in the end, we found that the Venetic language looked Finnic, I organized my description of Venetic in a form that makes reference to Finnic languages. Since most readers will know very little about Finnic language (the best known are Finnish and Estonian), here is a

basic summary of characteristics of Finnic languages. If Venetic is Finnic we will expect similar characteristics in Venetic and I will identify them. We will also structure our description of the Venetic grammar with similar grammatical terminology as is used with Finnish and Estonian today.

The moment I claim that Venetic looks Finnic, I am obliged to find that its grammar is similar to the grammar of Finnish and Estonian. Linguists say the basic grammar changes very slowly in languages, and therefore if Venetic is Finnic, we MUST find Venetic to have basic similarity. If we fail to find the similarities that will then prove we are wrong, and that similarities in words are probably from borrowings. For example, in my deciphering of the inscriptions I found evidence of some words that seemed of Germanic origins, but since the grammatical structure was Finnic in nature, those Germanic words would have been borrowed. There would also be other borrowings too. It is only the grammar that reveals genetic descent.

The following is an introduction to characteristics of Finnic languages which we will identify in Venetic.

### MANY CASE ENDINGS/SUFFIXES, ADDED AGGLUTINATIVELY.

Venetic as a Finnic language would be agglutinative. That means case endings (or suffixes), can be added to case endings to express complex thoughts. This is actually a degeneration of the most primitive forms of language which have a relatively small number of stems, and an abundance of suffixes, affixes and prefixes. Linguists call a language that is extremely of this nature ‘polysynthetic’. The Inuit language is a good example. There are indications in some Inuit words and grammar that it has the same ancestor as Finnic languages. Finnic languages are best understood if they are seen as having such a ‘polysynthetic’ foundation, and then being influenced towards the form of language seen in Indo-European.

(It is important to note that the modern descriptions of Finnic languages like Estonian and Finnish are somewhat contrived in that they modeled themselves after grammatical description models similar to what had already been done in other European languages. The reality is that Estonian or Finnish case endings are merely selections of the most common endings from a large array of possible suffixes. Thus even though in the following pages we are oriented to specific formalized case endings in Estonian and Finnish, there remains also suffixes that could have been case endings if the linguist who developed the popular grammatical descriptions had chosen to. The difference between ‘derivational suffixes’ and ‘case endings’ is merely in the latter being commonly applied in the opinion of the linguists who described the grammar.

### PREPOSITIONS, PRE-MODIFIERS, CASE ENDINGS & SUFFIX MODIFIERS

It seems as if in the evolution of language, the ‘polysynthetic’ form degenerated in the direction of our familiar modern European languages, where there are less and less case endings, and more and more independent modifiers located in front. Finnic languages are not as ‘primitive’ as Inuit, and have developed through millennia of being influenced from the languages of the farmers and civilizations - some premodifiers, adjectives, prepositions and other features placed in front. Venetic, like modern Finnic, present some instances of prepositions and pre-modifiers, like *va.n.t.-* and *bo-* but in general there are very few modifiers in front. It appears that instead of adjectives, Venetic liked to create compound words, where the first part – a pure stem without case endings – was somewhat adjectival.

## NO GENDER. NO GENDER MARKERS ON NOUNS

There is no gender in Finnic languages. There is no ‘la’ or ‘le’ in front, nor any gender marker at the end. English too lacks gender in nouns, so that will not be a problem for English readers here. But there is only one pronoun in Finnic for ‘he, she, it’. In Venetic we do not mistakenly consider some repeated ending to be a gender marker, but we always look for a case ending or suffix.

## NO ARTICLES. USE PARTITIVE INSTEAD OF INDEFINITE ARTICLE

In English and many European Indo-European languages, there are definite and indefinite articles. For example French has un or une as the indefinite article and le or la as the definite article. Finnic does not have it. Instead the indefinite sense as in ‘a’ or ‘some’ is expressed via the Partitive. The Partitive is a case form that views something as being part of something larger. For example “a” house among many houses. or “some” houses among many houses.

## PLURAL MARKED BY T, D or FOR PLURAL STEMS I, J

Plural in Estonian and Finnish is marked by T, D or I, J added to the stem according to phonetics requirements. Finnish only uses the T in the Nominative and Accusative, and then uses I, or J to form the plural stem. Estonian uses T for plural stem, and then uses I or J if necessary where phonetics calls for it. Venetic appears to have both plural markers too, but perhaps more like Estonian. As we will see, there is more reason to attribute Estonian conventions than Finnish conventions to Venetic. (There is reason to believe that Estonian and Venetic/Suebic have the same ancestral language – see later.)

## CONSONANT AND VOWEL HARMONY, GRADATION

Venetic shows evidence of consonant gradation and vowel and consonant harmony. For example if a suffix/ending is added to a stem with high vowels or soft consonants, the sound of the suffix may be altered to suit - with a lower vowel going higher, or a soft consonant going harder. For example ekupetaris has hard consonants P, T, hence the K in eku instead of G as in .e.g.e.s.t.s. We can find similar situations with vowels, unfortunately the Venetic inscriptions are phonetic and capture dialectic variations, and the number of examples is very small.

## COMPOUND WORDS –FIRST PART IS STEM, SECOND PART TAKES ENDINGS

A compound word occurs when a word stem is added to the front of another word stem. The case endings then are added to the combined word. We can detect them in Venetic when we see a naked word stem in front of another word stem but the latter taking the case endings.

## WORD DEVELOPMENT

Generally all words develop in the following way, but this is less noticeable in the major languages today. Words began with very short stems with broad, fluid, meanings. As humans

evolved, they needed to name things more specifically, and did so by combining them with additional elements – suffixes, infixes and prefixes. As the new word came into common use, the new word would become a stem in itself, taking its own grammatical endings. Because of abbreviation and other changes in the stem, the fact that the stem arose from a simpler stem, becomes obscured. For example in Estonian we might create the word *puu-la-ne* ‘tree-place-pertainingto’ as a poetic word for an animal who lives in trees. If this word were to come into common use, such as describing a squirrel, we might have *puulane* = ‘squirrel’ which then over time might degenerate to *pulan*. *Puulane*>*pulan* then is a stem for endings, such as *pulanest* ‘from the squirrel’. This is invented for illustration, but a real example might be how the word *vee* might have developed into the word for ‘boat’ as follows: *vee* (‘water’) > *vee-ne* (‘pertaining to water’) > *vee-ne-s* (‘object pertaining to water’) > reducing to *vene* (‘boat’).

(In our analysis of Venetic, we looked into the internal construction of words for additional insights into meaning.)

### 1.5 If Venetic is Finnic, it must be looked at in a different way

Finnic languages are NON-Indo-European language, and therefore most readers of this will be entering foreign territory. Most scholars know absolutely nothing about Finnic languages, and that is and has been an obstacle to proper investigation of the Venetic inscriptions. When Venetic is regarded as Latin-like, or generally Indo-European, then a million scholars can try to relate to it. But when Venetic is viewed as NON-Indo-European, the number of scholars both educated and interested in the subject drops to merely handfuls. That is the reason why it will be far easier for some scholars to reject this work outright, so as not to have to enter the foreign world of Finnic languages.

Basically Finnic languages are strong in case endings, and case endings can be added to case endings. This is a very old manner of constructing sentences. The only more primitive language forms can be seen in either ancient Sumerian, or today’s Inuit of arctic North America – where ideas are formed by combining small syllabic elements. In the course of the evolution of languages case endings became incorporated into word stems, and the freedom to play with case endings decreased. Also modifiers became separate words placed at the front.

There has been a steady conversion of humankind’s language from short syllabic words freely combined, to today’s large number of independent words. It can be compared to making soup from raw vegetables compared to buying ready-made soup in a can. Modern words are the consequence of the ‘canning and cooking of basic elements’. In Estonian and Finnish it is possible to see the constituent elements in words. For example the word *Eestlane*, ‘Estonian’ or in Finnish *Eestilainen*, is regarded as a word, but already adds two elements onto the stem *Eesti*. We have *-la* meaning ‘place of’ (*Eesitla* = ‘Estonian place’) and then *-ane* or *-ainen* meaning ‘pertaining to, of the character of’ These are not recognized as case endings because they are not freely added in actual usage, but poetic authors could do so. For example I already pointed out that using *puu* ‘tree’, one can say *puulane* and could use it to mean ‘animal of the tree’ such as a squirrel or monkey or even a human who lives in a treehouse. Today a large number of endings are not regarded as adding case endings but as ‘derivational suffixes’ I think part of the problem was that past Finnic linguists did not want to stray too far from the grammar descriptions of Indo-European languages.

Thus, using the above examples, *Eestlane* or *puulane* are words in themselves and to this we can add more case endings. We can thus have *Eestlastele* from *Eestlane* – *t* – *ele* ‘to the

Estonians'. But from a more polysynthetic view, we have *Eesti – la – ne – t – ele* A great deal of the Estonian and Finnish words already contain many of the abovementioned 'derivational suffixes' which to a great extent can be case endings too if an author wants to play with them.

It shows the progression – that as structures with case endings become used so often they seem like words in themselves, the constituent case endings become frozen into them. It is how all the words in all languages evolved. All that has happened is that some languages progressed slowly on this path, which other progressed slowly.

From a Finnic perspective, some Venetic words produce revealing results when broken down into their elements. For example the goddess is addressed with **\$a.i.na te.i. re.i.tiia.i.**<sup>2</sup> I interpreted **\$a** as the basic stem meaning 'lord, god' **-i.-** is a pluralizer, and **-na** is a case ending meaning 'in the form, nature, of' The resulting meaning is to describe the goddess having 'the character of gods'. It resonates a bit with Etruscan *eisna* 'divine' and with Estonian *issa-* 'lord' and we can form a parallel *issa-i-na* The intent was to address the goddess in the praiseful way so that the whole **\$a.i.na te.i. re.i.tiia.i.** means 'joining with You, *Rhea*, of the nature of the gods' ('of the nature of the gods' can be stated simply with 'divine'.)

Words that were difficult to decipher from context, became easy when broken apart into Finnic-type elements, but often resulted in abstract ideas whose precise meaning needed some imagining of what went on in the actual context. For example **V.i.rema.i.stna.i.** (**v.i.rema = v.i.re-ma** and then **v.i.rema - .i. - .s.t - na - .i.**) which is very abstract but because it was used in place of **\$a.i.na** it has to be praiseful, and so I decided it meant something like 'uniting with *Rhea* in the nature of arising from the land of life energy'. Similar sentences in the same context plus the context of the sentence, helped move towards the more precise meaning. Note that ancient language was always spoken in context, so that the context would help in making the meaning clearer.

Thus in this section of describing the results of my determinations of case endings, you have to think in a different way than when thinking of Indo-European languages.

### *1.6 Some Notes on reading Venetic Writing (For More Detail See Part A)*

Venetic writing was peculiar in that dots were added between characters, whereas Etruscan and Latin used dots only to mark word boundaries.

Analysts puzzled over these dots for a long time, and finally there was a complex theory. But to me, the dot use had to be very simple. If it had not been simple, then scribes would have followed the Etruscan convention of marking word boundaries.

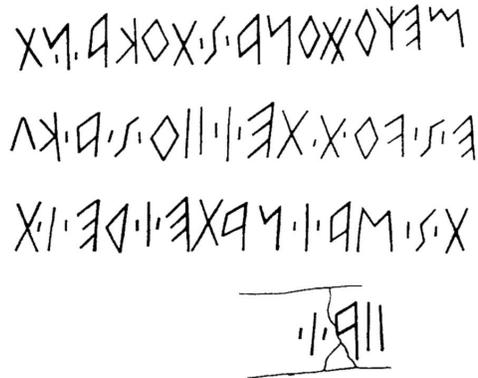
I hit on the idea that the dots were like phonetic markers added when speech is transcribed phonetically – marks for pauses, length, etc. – except that I found the dot was an all-purpose mark. If the writer sensed that his mouth was palatalizing or something similar, he threw in a dot on both sides of the alphabet character. Most often it was a plain palatalization, but it could also signify "S" being "SH" by writing the character for **.s.** Or "R" could become trilled with **.r.**

The convention is to write the Venetic text in small case Roman, introducing the dots in the correct places.

---

<sup>2</sup> The \$ represents in my approach a long S as in 'hiss'. The small case Roman letters represent the Venetic characters. The dots are as found in the original sentences, and in my results mostly are phonetic in intent and mostly represent palatalizations. For details about the Venetic writing see the appropriate section in *THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL*

THE NATURE OF THE VENETIC WRITING.  
CONTINUOUS TEXT AND DOTS (FOR MORE DETAIL SEE PART A):



In our modern languages, and going back to ancient Latin and even Etruscan the boundaries between words are/were marked by spaces. In ancient time Latin and Etruscan would have added dots to separate words. The Venetic inscriptions do not mark word boundaries. Instead the sentences are written continuously, and dots are added before and after letters. In this paper I use the convention used in MLV of converting the Venetic alphabet characters to small case Roman characters while leaving the dots in their positions. This practice has puzzled traditional analysts and had come to be regarded as a 'syllabic punctuation', but I discovered this is incorrect. Venetic writing is pure phonetic writing with the dots used to mark situations in which the pure sound of the character is altered by actions of the tongue – mostly palatalization. If a dot appears before and after a character, the sound of that character is palatalized. The dots can be thought of as tiny "l"s. These are phonetic and easy to understand. Writers simply threw the dots into the script where there was palatalization or some other effect from the tongue, such as trilling an R, and single dots could also be used to signal pauses or added length. (A consonant becomes a pause while a vowel gets added length)

The phonetic marking helps us understand how Venetic was spoken (One can use highly palatalized Livonian – a Finnic language – as a model for how to speak Venetic, but also the palatalization survives in Danish, even though the original Suebic was replaced by Germanic.)

But as far as grammar is concerned, I think the palatalization was just a paralinguistic feature, and did not really have to be marked. If Venetic had been written with dots or spaces separating words, it would have been fine – except that our ability to understand how it sounded would be lost. Therefore, the reader of this description of grammar need not be concerned about the dots. I show the dots anyway in order to remain true to the original Venetic writing.

For a detailed discussion of the dots, see the main document, or my separate paper on the dots. (See references for title)

## 2. VENETIC CASE ENDINGS

### 2.1 CASE ENDINGS IN GENERAL

#### 2.1.1. *Static vs Dynamic Interpretations of Some Case Endings*

When one first looks at Venetic the first thing one notices are endings of the form **-a.i.** or **-o.i.** or **-e.i.** Sometimes there is a double Ii in front, as in **-iia.i.** A good example is **re.i.tia.i.** The context of the sentence, even when it was viewed from a Latin perspective from imagining **dona.s.to** was like Latin *donato*, is that it was like a Dative – an offering was being given ‘to’ the Goddess. This remains true when viewed in our new Finnic perspective - something is brought ‘to’ *Rhea*. But is it a Dative? I was fully prepared to grant that ending, *(vowel).i.* a Dative label, but the more I studied it wherever it occurred it seemed to most of the time have a meaning analogous to how in modern religious sermons, the priest might say ‘to join God’ or ‘to unite with the holy’ and so on. I eventually found this idea of uniting with has to be correct because in the prayers written to the goddess *Rhea* at sanctuaries, written in conjunction with burnt offerings, one is not giving the offering to *Rhea*, but rather releasing the spirit which then joins or unites with *Rhea* up in the clouds.

But what was this case ending if it was not Dative? What case ending would mean ‘uniting with’? But then I saw the ending from time to time in a context where it seemed to be like a regular Partitive. If a regular Partitive has a meaning ‘a thing’ or ‘some things’ and can be described as something ‘being part of’ a larger whole, then if it were viewed in a dynamic way, would that not mean ‘becoming part of, to unite with’? If this is the case, then we would have to discover Venetic having a static vs dynamic interpretation in other case endings. But let us assume the Partitive has two forms – the normal static form and a dynamic form (‘becoming part of, uniting with, joining’)

Overlooking similar endings for the Terminative **-na.i.** or used for the infinitive use of *(vowel).i.*, we can find the example.

**lemeto.i. .u.r.kleio.i.** - [*funerary urn - MLV-82, LLV-Es81*]  
*‘Warm-feelings. To join the oracle’s eternity’*

In this describing of Venetic grammar we will not explain the entire laborious process of establishing the word stems. That information is extensively discussed in the main document - **“THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL”**.

Here the first word, a plural of **leme** can only be a static Partitive – ‘Some warm-feelings’, while the second expresses a dynamic Partitive conveying the sense of ‘towards’ in the sense of ‘joining’ (‘becoming part of’) an infinite destination, the infinite future with which the oracle deals with. One may wonder if the double I (**-ii-**) is an infix that makes it dynamic. (See later discussion of the **-ii-**)

If it is possible for a language to allow a case ending to be interpreted in both a dynamic and a static way, what more can we say about it? What I mean by dynamic vs static meanings of a case form?

An example of dynamic vs static can be seen in how English uses 'in'. One can say "He went in the house" and it would be clear the meaning is he went 'into' the house. And then I don't know that Venetic appears to have both dynamic and static ways of interpreting 'in' as well. The Venetic Inessive ('in') is marked by .s. – often the meaning, as a result of context, 'into' not 'in' as Inessive requires. The only difference between the concept 'in' and the concept 'into' is whether there is movement. Thus one case can be used for both static and dynamic interpretations. The correct interpretation is determined from the context.

Modern Finnic languages have developed explicit static vs dynamic interpretations – perhaps from the development of literature which promoted more precision. For example modern Finnish will have an explicit 'in' case in the Inessive and an explicit 'into' case in the Illative. But perhaps originally it was not that way. One indication of it is the fact that, for example, the Estonian and Finnish Inessive ('in') case endings are similar (Finn. -ssa versus Est. -s) and yet the Estonian and Finnish Illative ('into') case endings are different. This suggests that the Illative case is a more recent development and they do not have a common parent. The common parent would have had an Inessive case that could have a dynamic meaning if the context required it. Then I think the use of the language – probably about a thousand years ago – put pressure on being more explicit and that led to Finnish and Estonian developing an Illative each in their own separate way. Finnish has an Illative case ('into') that looks like it was developed out of the Genitive ('of') for example Finnish *talo* - Genitive *talon*, Illative *taloon*. Meanwhile Estonian has an Illative that looks like it was an enhancement from the original Inessive in that –s becomes –sse. Estonian (using *tal*) the Inessive ('in') *talus*, Illative ('into') *talusse*.

In summary, it appears that the ancestral language of Estonian and Finnish only had the Inessive, and that the Illative developed when Estonian and Finnish had branched away from each other, and perhaps only less than the last two millennia. In short, the Illatives being very different, are not related, while Inessives are similar, hence are related and must have been in the common ancestral language. If Venetic only has the Inessive for both usages, then Venetic precedes any development of an explicit Illative.

The development of the Illative described, indicates that they developed from a lengthening of a static case. This lengthening is a natural development when we wish to indicate movement. For example, Estonian Illative –sse can easily arise from the speaker of an original –s simply lengthening it to emphasize movement, as in *talus* > *talusse*. What is peculiar is that the Finnish Illative was developed by adding length to the Genitive! It is possible when you consider that you can start with a Genitive (*talon* 'of the house) and exaggerate it to get the concept of 'becoming of' (*taloon* 'becoming of the house' = 'into the house') Thus, technically the Estonian Illative and Finnish Illative have different underlining meanings!

This shows that if originally Finnic had static case endings that would assume dynamic meanings (from movement) from context, the dynamic forms could be spontaneously implied by the speaker simply lengthening it. We take any static case and add into the meaning 'becoming' as for example 'into' = 'becoming in'.

**Thus if we accept that Venetic cases could be interpreted in both static and dynamic ways, we have to allow all the static case endings the possibility of having dynamic meanings.**

Returning to the Venetic Partitive. Depending on the context, the listener would interpret the Partitive ending either in a static way *'part of a'* or a dynamic way *'become part of a'* ideally interpreted in English as *'unite with, join with'*. That is the reason, I interpret **re.i.tiia.i.** with 'join with *Rhea*' instead of simply 'to *Rhea*'. I believe the intended meaning was that the item brought to the sanctuary and sent skyward as a burnt offering was intended to join *Rhea*, become part of *Rhea* – the Partitive case assuming a dynamic meaning here that had a more complex implication to it – that of the offering travelling into the sky and joining, uniting with, becoming part of *Rhea*. As I said above, the idea is reflected in modern religious ideas of 'uniting with God'.

We have above now identified two Venetic case endings that can be interpreted either statically or dynamically. (**v** means 'vowel')

**-v.s.** can mean either 'in' or 'becoming in'='into'

**-v.i.** can mean either 'a (part of)' or 'becoming part of' = 'join, unite with' and an added **-ii-** may emphasize the latter.

I notice that often the seeming dynamic interpretation of the Partitive in Venetic is preceded with the double **ii** as in the example **re.i.tiia.i.** This insertion of the long **ii** sound may be an explicit development, analogous in the psychological effect of lengthening, to how Finnish achieves the Illative meaning by lengthening the last vowel (example *taloon*). It can therefore be interpreted with its psychological quality. The possibility exists that the double **ii** can serve as an explicit way of making the following ending dynamic. That is to say perhaps **-iia.i.** instead of just **-a.i** emphasizes the fact there is movement. We will consider the **-ii-** infix further later.

The following sections describe case endings, in the order of presence in the Venetic. The case endings names are inspired by Estonian case ending names. We will reveal examples in the Venetic inscriptions and note them. However, case endings are really frequently used suffixes, and Venetic may have some additional suffixes which could be considered additional case endings for Venetic. A summary of our investigation of case endings and comparisons with Estonian and Finnish case endings will follow this section in the table at the end of section 2

### ***2.1.2. Introduction to Est./Finn. Case Endings and the Presence of these Case Endings in Venetic.***

Since we will structure our description of Venetic case endings in the standard descriptions used for Estonian and Finnihs, and since we will make comparisons between Venetic and Estonian and Finnish case endings, we should first summarize the common case endings in Estonian and Finnish.

The list is oriented to Estonian and the modern order in listing them. This is by way of summary of the ones we have looked at, showing which ones do and do not have resonances with Venetic. See also the chart given in Table 2.

The following is an introductory overview of the possible case endings based on Estonian and Finnish. This will be followed by more detailed study of each, and how it is represented in Venetic.

**Nominative --** identified by a finalizing element that has to be softened when made into a stem. Even if the last letter may be hardened over the stem, there is no formal suffix or case ending.

**Genitive** 'of' (Estonian) [**stem**], (Finnish) **-n** identified by a softened ending able to take case endings Venetic seems to have gone the direction of Estonian – ie Genitive given by stem

**Partitive** ‘part of’ (Estonian) **-t** (Finnish) **-a** Venetic appears to have evolved to convert the **-t** in the parental language of Estonian and Venetic/Suebic into **-j** (.i.)

**Inessive** ‘in’ (Est.) **-s** (Finn.) **-ssa** Appears in Veneti as **-s**. but Venetic uses it in both a static way to describe something and a dynamic way with meaning of Illative ‘into’

**Illative** ‘into’ (Est.) **-sse** (Finn) **-vvn** NOT in Venetic, meaning the explicit Illative may be a development since Venetic times, as I described above. Venetic allows **-s**. to assume this dynamic meaning according to context needs.

**Elativ** ‘out of’ (Est.) **-st**, (Finn) **-sta** strong in Finnic languages including Venetic but appearing mainly as a nominalizer and therefore must be very old

**Adessive** ‘at (location)’ (Est.) **-l** (Finn.) **-lla** Due to similarities between Est. and Finn. versions is another very old ending, hence expected within Venetic (and is as **-l**)

**Allative** ‘to (location)’ (Est. and Finn.) **-lle** Because it is found in both Est. and Finn. also very old, and we found it in Venetic as **-le.i.**

**Ablative** ‘from (location) (Est.) **-lt** (Finn.) **-lta** Probably also in Venetic at least embedded in words like **vo.l.tiio**

**Translative** ‘transform into’ (Est.) **-ks** (Finn.) **-ksi** Not identified yet in Venetic, but if it exists in both Estonian and Finnish one might expect it does exist in Venetic too. One watches for evidence.

**Essive** ‘as’ (same in all three languages) **-na** This is one of the endings that must be very old to appear in all three.

**Terminative** ‘up to, until’ (Est.) **-ni** (not acknowledged in Finnish grammar) This seems it may exist in Venetic as Essive plus dynamic Partitive **-na.i.** **-ne.i.**

**Abessive** ‘without’ (Est.) **-ta** Not noticed in the Venetic, but could be there somewhere.

**Comitative** ‘with, along with’ (Est) **-ga** Venetic definitely presented **k’** or **ke** in the meaning ‘and, also’ as in Estonian *ka*, *-ga*. Unclear if it occurs as a suffix in Venetic.

The following go through the above in more detail:

### 2.1.3. *Nominative Case*

In Estonian the nominative has a hard ending as it lacks case ending or suffix. If there is a case ending, there is a stem with a softened ending since more will be added to it. Common in Estonian is the softening of a consonant too. For example Nom. *kond*, and stem becomes *konna*. Since we find in Venetic **-gonta** as well as **-gonta.i.** etc this character may not exist in Venetic. I expected in Venetic too the Nominative may show a harder or more final terminal sound than when it becomes a stem for endings. It may depend on the nature of the stem. But in the Venetic inscriptions I simply looked for the stem without endings and that would then be the nominative.

It may seem strange, but the appearance of the Nominative in the Venetic inscriptions is very rare – almost always there was some kind of ending – because most of the sentences have the following as the subject (The nominative occurs only as the subject)

**dona.s.to** ‘the brought-thing’

**dona.s.to** however contains endings, as the primitive stem is *do-* See discussion in section 1.2

Some other Nominatives (underlined)...(*Spaces added to show word boundaries*)

5.K) .a.tta - ‘the end’ [urn- MLV-99, LLV-Es2]

7.A) **ada.n** **dona.s.to** **re.i.tiia.i** **v.i.etiana** **.o.tnia** - [MLV-32 LLV-Es51]

Above we see the ending –ia Such an ending is indicative of the Nominative. It resembles the –ia ending used in Latin, but did not come from Latin since Venetic is older than Latin.

7.B) **v.i.o.u.go.n.ta** **lemeto.r.na** [**.e.]b[.]** - “The collection of conveyances, as ingratiating producers, remains” [MLV-38bis, LLV-ES-58]

Above we see **v.i.o.u.go.n.ta** which is unusual since this word usually occurs with an ending and hence is not nominative – and ending like **v.i.o.u.go.n.ta.i**

In general, once you determine the word stem from scanning all words for the common first portion, you can assume when that word stem occurs without any such ending, it is Nominative. Later we will see something similar when studying verbs. When a verb appears not to have any endings, then we regard it as the common imperative. (See later section on verbs) For verbs we determine the verb stem by removing the endings (The present indicative, past participle, infinite, imperative...)

#### *2.1.4. Partitive Case -v.i. ‘part of; becoming part of’*

This is the case ending that earlier analysis from Latin or Indo-European was thought to be “Dative” because by coincidence the mistaken idea that **dona.s.to** was related to Latin *donato*, the prayers to the goddess seemed to speak of an offering being given to the goddess. (In reality nothing was being given directly to the goddess, but something was being burnt and its spirit was being sent up to join with the goddess in the clouds, and that needed a different kind of case ending than simply giving.)

Practically any static case ending could become a dynamic one which can be interpreted broadly with ‘to’. A good example a Genitive ending meaning ‘of, possessing’ in a dynamic sentence with movement can become ‘becoming possessed by’ as in ‘coming to be of, coming to possess’ which in a general way can be interpreted as ‘to’ in the sense that when something is given ‘to’ someone, it is becoming possessed by them. Similarly giving something ‘to’ someone can also mean ‘becoming part of’ (from Partitive) or ‘becoming inside’ (from Inessive, turning into an Illative meaning) or ‘coming to the location of’ (from Adessive, becoming Allative in meaning). As I said in 2.1.1, I believe that in actual real world use, the dynamic interpretation was dictated by context. But with the arrival of literature much context was lost and it was necessary to be more explicit in terms of whether a meaning was static or dynamic. And sometimes a meaning could shift. I believe that Finnish Illative ‘into’ developed from its

Genitive – that the dynamic Genitive meaning ‘becoming of, becoming possessed by’ came to be used in the sense of ‘becoming inside’.

Similarly a dynamic Partitive ‘becoming part of, uniting with’ could shift its meaning towards the Dative idea of giving something ‘to’ someone.

The main reason for my regarding this case ending as a Partitive rather than another case that will also reduce to a Dative-like ‘to’, is that in some contexts in the inscriptions it appears in a regular Partitive fashion much like in Estonian or Finnish. That means that the dynamic meaning of the ‘to’-concept actually means ‘becoming part of’, or ‘uniting with’, etc.

**Comparing with Estonian Partitive.** Here is more evidence that this case ending in Venetic of the form *-v.i.* was intrinsically Partitive: we can demonstrate that the Venetic Partitive can be achieved if an Estonianlike Partitive (which may have existed a couple millenia ago in the common language) was spoken in an intensely palatalized manner. I explain it as follows:

The Partitive in general can be viewed as a plural treated in a singular way (one item being part of many), and so the plural markers come into play. The plural markers in Finnic are *-T,-D-*, and *-I,-J-*; hence the replacement of T, D with J,I is already intrinsic to Finnic languages. When speakers of the ancestor to Venetic – Suebic – began to palatalize a great deal, they found the *-J* ending more comfortable than *-T*.

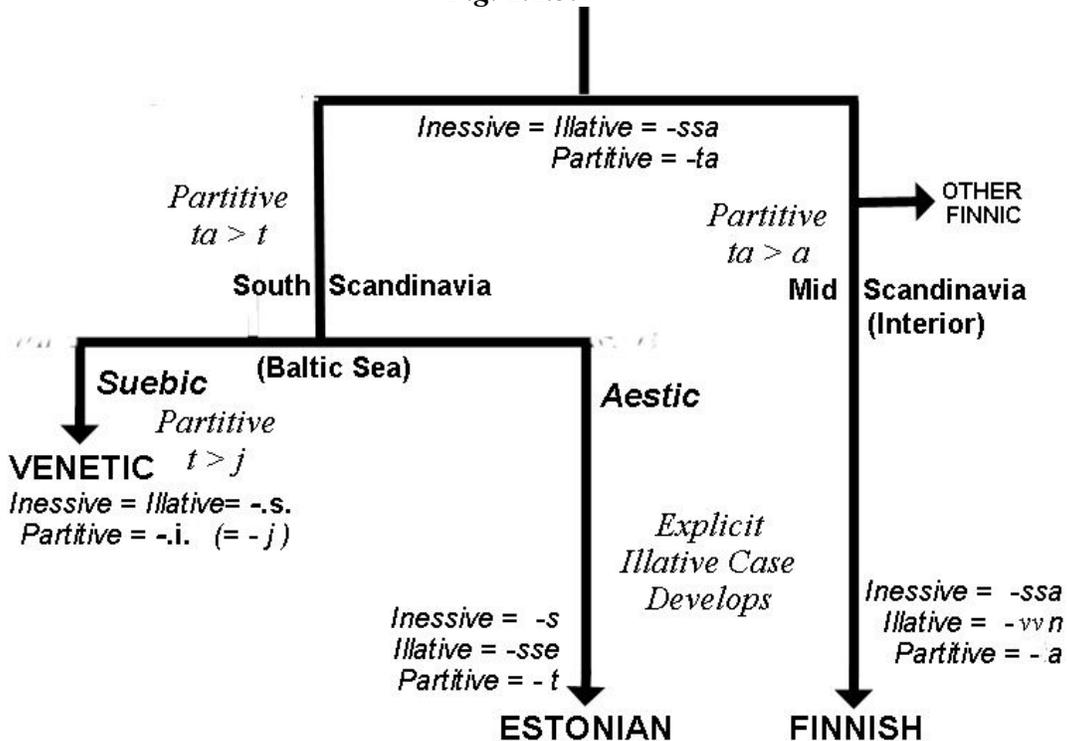
Estonian marks the Partitive with a *-T,-D-* and therefore it isn’t surprising that you can get a Venetic Partitive by replacing the *-T,-D-* ending with *-J-*, as in *talut > taluj* (= “**talu.i.**”).

While it is possible in this way to arrive at the Venetic Partitive ending from the Estonian one, one cannot do so from the Finnish Partitive. This suggests that both the Estonian and Venetic/Suebic languages had a common parent. Perhaps the Estonian Partitive came first. Then, with strong palatalization, the Venetic/ Suebic Partitive, converted the *-T,-D-*, to *-J (.i.)*

This and observations of the Inessive as well, give us a family tree of Finnic language descent which agrees with both archeological knowledge and common sense. I have shown it on the next page in a tree diagram. In it I show how we can arrive at the Estonian Partitive and modern Finnish Partitive from an ancient one, and then arrive at the Suebic/Venetic Partitive from highly palatalized speaking of the Estonian-like Finnic that was presumably the first language used among the sea-traders across the northern seas.

Follow the Partitive in the chart. We begin with *-TA* which then loses the T in the descendants going towards Finnish, and loses the A in the descendants going towards Aestic and Suebic (as I call the two ancient dialects of the east and west Baltic Sea). The common Baltic-Finnic language then on the west side interacts with “Corded-ware” Indo-European speaking farmers, and becomes a little degenerated and spoken with a tight mouth that results in intensified palatalization, rising vowels, and that the *-T* Partitive is softened to a frontal H or J sound, which is what the Venetic Partitive ending *-v.i.* means.

Fig. 2.1.3.



This chart also describes how the Estonian and Finnish Illatives must be developments in historic times, as Venetic shows no presence of an explicit Illative ('into') but uses the Inessive ('in') in a dynamic context to express the Illative idea. I show above how the Estonian Illative developed out of emphasis on the Inessive, while Finnish derived it from emphasis on the vowel in the Genitive. See later discussions of the Inessive case in Venetic.

Thus the Venetic Partitive could be interpreted in a static or dynamic way as follows:

**Static interpretation ('part of')**: This is the normal use of the Partitive - where something is part of something larger. It is indefinite and is equivalent to using the indefinite article "a" in English. The static Partitive appears a number of times in the body of Venetic sentences, such as rako.i. in pupone.i. e.go rako.i. e.kupetaris but because so many of the inscriptions are sending offerings to *Rhea* or a deceased person to eternity, the following dynamic interpretation tends to dominate. Maybe this is just an illusion created from the fact that most of the inscriptions involve conveying something to the goddess.

**Dynamic interpretation ('becoming part of, joining with')**: Perhaps dynamic interpretation was less in everyday use of Venetic, but very few inscriptions show everyday sentences. If we gave the Partitive a dynamic meaning, it would be 'becoming part of many'. The best concept is 'to join with' or 'unite with'. For example giving an offering to the Goddess in re.i.tiia.i does not mean giving in a give-reeve way, but rather for that offering is to unite with her, become part of her. It resonates with modern Church expressions of 'uniting with God'.

### Further Discussion:

From an Estonian point of view, one can understand how there can be a dynamic interpretation because of the alternative Partitive and Illative in Estonian<sup>3</sup>, where, using the stem *tal*, both the alternative Illative (a dynamic case meaning ‘into’) and alternative Partitive have the same form *tal’lu* based on lengthening. This suggests that the language from which this alternative form came must have had a dynamic Partitive interpretation like we see in Venetic, and its usage was so much like a newly created Illative that it was linked to the Illative. In that case the so-called Estonian alternative Illative is not an Illative at all, but a dynamic interpretation of the Partitive. Sometimes the only indication of the alternative Partitive in Estonian is emphasis or length. But this only underscores the fact that explicit dynamic case endings can easily shift their meaning.

One of the sentences discussed in *THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL* was..

(a) **.e..i.k. go.l.tan o.s.dot olo.u. dera.i. kane.i** - [container - MLV- 242, LLV- Ca4]

Here we see **dera.i. kane.i** ‘a whole container’ in the static Partitive interpretation. In Estonian the normal Partitive is to use -T,-D- instead of the J (.i.) as in Est. *tervet kannut* but it is also common to say in Estonian *terv’e kann’u* adding length. Considering that Estonian was converged from various east Baltic dialects, in my opinion this alternative Partitive form in Estonian comes from ancient Suebic (the parent of Venetic) from the significant immigration from the west Baltic to the east during the first centuries AD when there were major refugee movements caused by the Gothic military campaigns up into the Jutland Peninsula and southern Sweden. The Suebic grammatical forms needed to converge with the indigenous Aestic grammatical forms, and so an original *tervej kannuj* (for example) evolved among these speakers into *terv’e kann’u* instead of reverting to the indigenous *tervet kannut* (which would sound unusual to people used to *tervej kannuj*)

The following sentence below shows the general form used in regards to an offering being made to *Rhea*. It shows the most frequent context in which the dynamic interpretation is desired.

(b) **me go.dona.s.to vo.l.tiomno.s. iuva.n.t.s .a.riun.s. \$a.i.nate.i. re.i.tia.i.** - [bronze sheet MLV- 10 LLV- Es25]

*Our brought-item (ie offering), skyward-going, in the infinite direction, into the airy-realm[?], to (=unite with) you of the Gods, to (=unite with) Rhea*

When you think about it, the idea of uniting with or joining with a deity, or eternity, is more involving than merely moving to that location or giving something to it – which is the reason in religion today, it is more satisfying to ‘unite with God’. In the case of the Venetic context it is the spirit, rising to the clouds via the smoke of burning, that unites with the deity.

---

<sup>3</sup> Estonian has preserved alternative Illatives and Partitives that look similar or the same. Lengthening the next to last syllable as in *tal* > *tal’lu* is a grammatical form that can be used either as a Partitive (normally *talut*) and as an Illative (normally *talusse*). Since this phenomenon does not exist in Finnish, it may have come from the south and west Baltic dialect spoken by the “Suebi” of Roman times, carried to the east Baltic by refugees from the Gothic military expansions of the early centuries AD. Suebic in turn can be linked via the amber trade to Venetic.

### 2.1.5. “*Iiative*” Infix *-ii-* ‘*extremely (fast or far or large)*’

As we saw in the example above (b) one of the Partitive endings, the one inside **re.i.tiia.i.** is preceded by **-ii-**. It is possible to regard the **-ii-** as a separate infix giving motion, or the entire thing **ii.a.i.** as an explicit expression of the dynamic Partitive. It could represent a way by which the speaker emphasized the dynamism. However, the double **-ii-** appears elsewhere too and the example shows it twice as well. Note the double “I” under the underlined parts:

**mego dona.s.to vo.l.tijomno.s. iiuva.n.t.s .a.riiun.s. \$a.i.nate.i.re.i.tia.i.**

While there may have developed some degree of an explicit dynamic Partitive in **-iiv.i.** the appearance of the double **ii** in non-Partitive situations, made me decide that this was a more widely applicable infix that added a sense of extremeness and or motion. See our discussions about the infinite as well in the lexicon (ie the meaning of **.i.io.s.**). In the above **.a.riiun.s.** the stem is probably **.a.riu-** and three elements are added: **-ii-**, **-n** and, **-s**. We note that the **-ii-** occurs also in a similar way **vo.l.tiio** which describes movement to the heavens overhead, where we see no other ending. Here it seems that the **-ii-** is intended to exaggerate the size of the realm above. As funny as it may seem, it could have the same psychological basis as when an Estonian says ‘*hiiiiigla suur*’ emphasizing the I’s in the word meaning ‘gigaaaaaantic’. Humans do this extension naturally, and it is certainly possible that such inclinations could be formalized in a language (ie systematically used, rather than purely on whim)

Note that in our determination that the dots were phonetic markers, we determined that Venetic writing was highly phonetic – which means this kind of doubling of the “I” could simply reflect the actual speech, even if the sound in reality had no grammatical significance.

### 2.1.6. *Inessive Case -v.s. ‘in; into’ (In dynamic meaning equivalent to Illative)*

**Static interpretation (‘in’):** In today’s Finnic, the Inessive and Illative cases are considered different, but as we described in 2.1.1 above, it seems originally, in the parent language of Finnish, Estonian, ancient Suebic (from which the inscriptions Venetic came) there was only the Inessive, interpreted in both a static and dynamic way. And then in recent millenia, it became necessary to explicitly distinguish between the two. But Venetic, remaining an ancient language does not show this distinguishing, and for Venetic we determine whether it is the static ‘in’ or dynamic ‘into’ from the context. Was the action simply happening, or was the action being done towards something else? Was something merely ‘being’, or ‘acting on something’? An object that simply was, and did nothing onto anything else, would take the static meaning. I already mentioned how in modern English, we can use *in* and the context could suggest it means ‘into’. For example “He went in the water” is technically incorrect, but from the context the listener knows the intent is “He went into the water”. This shows how easily the correct idea is understood from context, and why in early language it wasn’t necessary to have two different case endings. Also, in early language, all speaking was done in the context of things going on around the speakers and listeners. If language became separated from being used in real contexts – such as when it was used in storytelling or song even before written literature – it became more important to explicitly indicate the required meaning.

There was another usage for the static form – as a namer. Many Estonian names of objects end in *-s* seeming to be a nominalizer. For example we could begin with *vee* ‘water’ form *veene*

‘in the nature of water’ and then add the *-s* to get *veenes* ‘an object associated with water’. This could very well be the origin of *vene* ‘boat’ (same smaller boat which acquired the name *rus* as well in Scandianvia)

Venetic too appears to have such naming purposes for the static Inessive. Because here, the *-s* creates a new word, the whole word is now a stem, a nominative form. For example, the word **.i.io.s.** (see full sentence below) appears to be a word for ‘infinity’ formed from adding the *-s*. and therefore we do not interpret it as ‘in the eternal’ but simply ‘eternity’

If an additional Genitive is added, we arrive at a place name. Modern maps of Estonia and Finland show a historic practice of creating place names by adding either *-se* which is like the Inessive and Genitive, or *-ste* which is like Elative plus Genitive, as for example from *silla* ‘bridge’, giving town names *Sillase* or *Sillaste*. I like to view these respectively as a name based on the sense ‘in the bridge’ versus ‘arising from the bridge’. In other words, the choice depended on what suited the situation. We could take the *veenes* example above, and adding a Genitive sense with *veenese*, it becomes a name of a place ‘(place) associated with the boat’

This can be found in some Venetic place names too. In Venetic, the Adige River was called on Roman references *Atesis* and the market was called *Ateste*. Our lexicon indicated that AT- meant ‘terminus’ and therefore we can interpret *Atesis* as ‘(The river) in the terminus (of the trade route)’, and *Ateste* as ‘(The market that) arises at the terminus’. Another Venetic town was *Tergeste*, at today’s Triest. This information comes from Roman texts, so we do not know exactly how it was said in Venetic. How did the Roman form change the ending?

**Dynamic Interpretation (‘into’ = Illative)** But if that object was either entering or leaving that state, it would take the dynamic meaning. We discussed the absence of an explicit Illative in Venetic in 2.1.1 This interpretation is common in the inscriptions, once again perhaps because the abundant cemetery and sanctuary inscriptions speak of the deceased or smoke travelling into the sky. Note that the difference between ‘to’ in an Inessive situation, in the sense of physical movement ‘into’, whereas ‘to’ in a Partitive situation has a sense of uniting with, which is quite abstract. Thus while English has the all-purpose ‘to’, in Venetic, that ‘to’ has different meanings depending on the case ending. It makes the English translation a little challenging. The Inessive case is underlined in the following. Note I interpret it both with ‘in’ and ‘into’ as required:

**mego dona.s.to vo.l.tiomno.s. iiuva.n.t.s .a.riiun.s. \$a.i.nate.i. re.i.tia.i**

*Our brought-item ((ie offering), skyward-going, in the infinite direction, into the airy-realm [?], to (=unite with) you of the Gods, to (=unite with) Rhea*

The following is a good example showing the Inessive in a prominent role, and in this case it is borderline whether the interpretation should be ‘in’ or ‘into’ (hence I translate with *in(to)*):



**.o..s.t..s.katus.ia.i.io.s.dona.s.to.a.tra.e..s.te.r.mon.io.s.de.i.vo.s**

[MLV- 125, LLV- Vi2; image after LLV]

*expanded: .o.s.t.s. katus.ia .i.io.s. dona.s.to .a.tra.e.s. te.r.mon.io.s. de.i.vo.s.*  
'Hoping (alt. Out of being) the offering, would be disappeared, in(to) the eternity end, in(to) the sky-heaven terminus'

There seem to be two parallel word pairs (Finnic requires the same case ending on connected words) **.i.io.s. a.tra.e.s.** and **te.r.mon.io.s. de.i.vo.s.** The two versions seem to be Venetic in the first pair and loanwords from Indo-European in the second. This example shows how the interpretation as 'in' or 'into' is not particularly crucial.

### 2.1.7. *Elative Case - v.s.t* 'arising from; out of'

I include this next because we have already above discussed how **-ste** can be used to name something. It is actually not so common in the body of inscriptions.

**Static Interpretation ('arising from')** This is similar to the Inessive, in that the static form seems to have most often served the role of naming. Today Estonian and Finnish tend to view the Elative case in a dynamic way – something is physically coming out of after being in something. Thus as the table of case endings (Table 2 at the end of these case ending discussions) shows, it is the static form that is less known and less used today, which logically comes from the idea of something being derived from or arising from something else. This static form is the one that names things. As mentioned under the Inessive, where the static form also names things, a town with a bridge *silla-* could acquire a name two ways – with the static Inessive as a description *Sillase*, and with the static Elative with *Sillaste*. Just as we referred to *Atesis* for our example with the Inessive, there was also the town, *Ateste* at the end of the amber route. In this case the meaning is 'derived from, arising from, the terminus (of the trade route)'. Another major Venetic city was **Tergeste**, which suggests 'arising from the market (**terg**)' Interestingly the market at the top of the amber route, in historic times called *Truso* was probably in Roman times called *Turuse* (or *Turgese* or *Tergese*) in that case using the static Inessive manner of naming.) Of course, as mentioned under the Inessive, it was not just used for place names, but to derive a name for something related to something else. I gave the example earlier of *vee* > *veene* > *veenes* which could refer to a boat and eventually reduce to *vene*. We could also have *veenest* but it would name something arising from water (like maybe a fishing net?) The difference between naming with **-s(e)** and naming with **-st(e)** is whether the item named is integrated with the stem item, or arising out of the stem item and separate from it.

In the Venetic sentences, there are nouns that were originally developed from this static Elative ending. For example **.e.g.e.s.t-** is one. **.e.g.e.s.t-** could be interpreted as 'something arising from the continuing' = 'forever'. The common **dona.s.to** could be interpreted as 'something arising from bringing (**do-** or Est./Finn *too/tuo*)' Another is **la.g.s.to** which I interpreted as 'gift' but internally means 'something arising from kindness'. (The reader should review my interpretations of the **-ST** words in the lexicon from this perspective – the stem word plus the concept of 'arising from'.)

**Dynamic Interpretation ('out of')** This is the common modern usage in Estonian and Finnish and this is the meaning we will find in their grammar describing case endings. The dynamic interpretation of the Elative in the body of Venetic inscriptions depends on our determining there is movement involved. The static meaning 'arising from' is abstract and there is no movement but the dynamic meaning '(moving) out of' involves movement. Perhaps the

**.o.s.t..s.** in the recent example sentence in the last section is one, as movement occurs in that sentence.

In general the Elative is less common in the known inscriptions because the concept of something travelling ‘out of’ or even ‘arising from’ something else was not particularly applicable to offerings towards the heavens or the Goddess when things are going ‘into’ not ‘out of’.

Most often, whenever the **-s.t** appears in Venetic, it appears to be the static kind where there is no movement, and it produces a new noun stem from the more basic stem.

### 2.1.8. *Genitive Case –n OR [naked stem] ‘of, possessed by’*

#### **Static Interpretation (‘of’) vs Dynamic Interpretation (‘coming into possession of’)**

Estonian today lacks the **–n** Genitive which is standard in Finnish. Estonian simply uses the naked stem. For that reason (considering also the tree chart of Fig 2.1.3) we must investigate the inscriptions to determine if Venetic had an **–n** Genitive, a naked stem, or both.

What I found in the Venetic sentences was that the idea of possession seems often to be expressed by what seems to be the compound word form. In a compound word, the first part is the stem and takes no endings, while the second part takes the endings. But given that in modern Estonian the Genitive is purely the naked stem, these first parts of compound words are indistinguishable from Genitives. For example Venetic **kluta-viko-s.** is a compound word, the first part interpreted from context as ‘clutch’ (of flowers) and the second as ‘the bringing’. But the first element, **kluta**, could very well be seen to be in the Genitive. It may be exactly such overuse of compounding, that developed the use of the naked stem as Genitive in Estonian, with the consequential abandoning of the **–n** at the end, while it endured in Finnish which derives from the earlier ancestor language.

Nonetheless, the **–n** does appear a number of times in a way that makes it seem to be joining concepts. For example in **iiuvant v.i.ve.s.tin iio.i.** - [MLV-138, LLV-Pa8] we see the **–n** appearing in a way that makes it seem Genitive (**v.i.ve.s.tin iio.i.** seems like ‘the conveyance’s infinity’). The same occurs in **pilpote.i. k up. rikon .io.i.** - [MLV-139, LLV-Pa9:] in which **rikon .io.i.** seems like ‘nation’s infinity’.

We also see the **–n** appearing in the example **meگو dona.s.to vo.l.tiiomno.s. iiuva.n.t.s .a.riiun.s. \$a.i.nate.i. re.i.tiia.i.** Other examples include **kara.n.mnio.i** and **voltiio.n.mnio.i.**

To summarize it seems more common to find in Venetic the bare stem in a situation that looked like a compound word. It is possible that while the n-Genitive was still in use in the inscriptions; however, the use of the bare stem in a fashion almost like a Genitive was also in use. The disappearance of the n-Genitive in Estonian may have occurred in this way, that is to say, from the latter becoming more and more common. My conclusion is that Venetic had the **–n** Genitive, but lazy speakers dropped it. (Linguistic change often arises from lazy speech where endings are dropped.)

### 2.1.9. *Essive -na ‘as, in the form of’; ‘becoming as.’*

This ending is almost as common in the body of inscriptions as the Partitive and Inessive. We will assume for the sake of argument that this case ending too had both a static interpretation and a dynamic one, depending on context. I propose this was the case for all the Venetic case endings; but some case endings were more dramatic in the difference between the static

interpretation versus dynamic - for example case endings about location. Here we are speaking of form, appearance and the differentiation between static and dynamic meanings is not significant in this case as it is a more abstract concept, and abstract concepts are quite static by nature compared to concepts involving actual physical movement or lack of movement.

**Static Essive:** In the static interpretation this ending has the meaning ‘as, in the form of, in the guise of’ For example it appears in **\$a.i.nate.i.** where **\$a.i.na** is seen as ‘in the form of the gods’ It appears more commonly in the inscriptions with an additional Partitive attached, giving **-na.i** This added Partitive usually results in a very dynamic meaning, which appears to be like Estonian Terminative ‘till...’

**Dynamic Essive:** I do not know if there is a clear example of this in our body of inscriptions, except for the situation in which an additional **.i.** is attached as mentioned above – as in **-na.i.** The dynamic interpretation would mean ‘assuming the form of’ It would need to have a verb behind it, such as ‘he changed into...’ It is purely a question of whether there is a motion towards. In any event, I believe the speaker or listener understood what was intended from the context

#### 2.1.10. *Terminative -na.i. -ne.i. ‘up to, until, as far as’*

This ending appears often. It looks like a Partitive ending added to an Essive ending and originally my interpretations tried to combine the Essive meaning with Partitive and got confusing complex results like ‘in the form of joining with’ and then one day I hit on the simpler idea of the Terminative – ‘up to, until, as far as’ – which exists in Estonian but not Finnish. Already we have evidence that Estonian and Venetic/Suebic were related through a common parental language, and so something found in Estonian could be represented in Venetic, even if not represented in Finnish. (We have already seen for example, that we cannot transform a Finnish Partitive to Venetic, while we can transform an Estonian Partitive to Venetic by changing the – T,D ending to –J (.i.))

Without much rational justification I applied the Terminative meaning everywhere it occurred and it fit better than my complicated combining of Essive and Partitive concepts.

This case ending might also have static and dynamic interpretations. If so, I would say that the **static interpretation** is as in **pupone.i.** – something (the duck **rako**) is physically **given to**, in the example **pupone.i .e.go rako.i. e.kupetaris** *To(‘til) the elder remain a duck, Bon Voyage.* This static interpretation seems very much like a Dative.

Meanwhile the **dynamic interpretation** would be to physically travel until somewhere which is how Estonian uses the Terminative. The Estonian Terminative can be seen in *Ta läks taluni* ‘he went as far as the farm’

In Venetic, for example in a funerary urn inscription **v.i.ugia.i. mu.s.ki a.l.na.i.** ‘to convey my dear (?) **until down below**’ the word **a.l.na.i.** appears to be in a context with physical movement. (Hmm. Perhaps the static form is **-ne.i.** and the dynamic form is **na.i.** ?? There remains a question as to the significance of using **e** instead of **a.** )

#### 2.1.11. *Adessive -l ‘at (location of)’ & Allative -le.i. ‘towards (location of)’*

The Adessive in the meaning ‘at (location of)’ represents the static interpretation. In this case it seems Venetic does have an explicit dynamic form which parallels what is in relation to Estonian and Finnish called the Allative ‘towards (location of)’.

One may ask, why does Venetic have the explicit Allative, when it did not have the explicit Illative? To understand what Venetic is expected to have and what not, we can look at what is common in Estonian and Finnish. If a case ending exists in both Estonian and Finnish in a similar way then it is very old, and must exist in Venetic. Our tree chart of Fig 2.1.3 showed the descent of Inessive, Partitive and Illative. If we were to add Adessive and Allative, we would show both existing at the common ancestor of all three languages – Estonian, Venetic/Suebic, and Finnish. These two separate forms could have developed in an early stage of Finnic perhaps because in the lives of early hunters of northern Europe, it was important to distinguish with being at a location versus going towards a location. Too important to clarify via context.

In Estonian Adessive is represented by *-l*, Finnish by *-lla* which is essentially the same (Est. has lost terminal a's on case endings). And the Allative, which is equivalent to a dynamic interpretation of the Adessive, is found both in Estonian and Finnish as *-le* and *-lle* respectively.

Unfortunately in the body of inscriptions available to study, the Venetic Adessive and Allative occur only a couple of times, so we do not have many examples. The most significant sentence is the following. It is written on one of the Padova round stones left at the bottom of tombs, and on which most of them are telling the deceased spirit to fly up out of the tomb. The first underlined ending I think is the Allative and the second is Adessive.

(a) tivale.i. be.l. lene.i. - [round stones- LLV Pa 26]

*'towards wing, on(at) top of, to fly!* (Est. *tiivale peal lendama!*)(=*tiiva peale lendama!*)

I propose that the ending **-le.i.** on **tivale.i.** is an Allative ('to location of') while the **-l.** on **be.l.** is the Adessive ('at'). Note that the stem of **tivale.i.** is **tiva**, and its meaning is confirmed by the handle-with-hook that has **kalo-tiba** on it (=Est. '*kallu tiib*' 'wing for pouring') The latter is in the Lagole dialect.

Here is another example with **tiva** in the inscription and here it appears with the Adessive ending (**-l**) to which is added an **iio.i.** which seems to mean 'to infinity')

(b) **vhug-iio.i.** **tival-iio.i.** **a.n.tet-iio.i.** **eku .e.kupetari.s .e.go** - [figure 8 design with text - image of Pa26]

*'Carry infinitely, upon wing to infinity, the givings to infinity, so-be-it happy journey, let it remain'*

We can interpret **tivaliio.i.** as **tiva + l + iio.i.**

### 2.1.12. Ablative **-l.t** 'out of (location of)'

The Ablative also exists in both Estonian and Finnish in a similar way and therefore must exist in Venetic from its origins in the northern Suebic.

The Ablative (**-l.t**) to Adessive (**-l**) and Allative (**-le.i.**), is similar to the Elative (**-s.t**) in relation to the Inessive/Illative (**-s.**). The difference is that one deals with physical location, while the other (**-s.t**) deals with interiors.

**Static Interpretation of the Ablative ('derived from location of')** Similarly to the Elative (**s.t**) the Ablative (**-l.t**) probably was mostly used to create nouns, to name things, but in this case related to a location - on top of it, not inside it.

An example in Venetic is the word **vo.l.tiio** Could it have originated with AVA 'open space'? AVALT would then mean 'derived from the location of the open space' This seems to

accord with the apparent meaning of **vo.l.tiio** as ‘sky, heavens’. But like **-s.t** in **dona.s.to**, it is not a free case ending, but now incorporated in the word.

**Dynamic Interpretation of the Ablative (‘from the location of’)** This is the common usage in modern Estonian and Finnish – to physically move away from a location. *Ta läks talult eemale* ‘he went away from the farm’ Do any of the inscriptions indicate movement from one location to another? We can presume Venetic/Suebic had it, but we have not yet identified common use in the dynamic meaning in the body of inscriptions, as opposed to the form being integrated into a word stem, discussed above.

But then the body of usable Venetic sentences is very small and examples of less common case endings will be few if any. It is obvious that if the number of sentences we can study is limited, we will tend to see the most commonly used case endings.

### ***2.1.13. Other Possible Case Endings, Suffixes Suggested from Estonian Derivational Suffixes***

The above listing of Venetic case endings has compared Venetic case endings to Estonian/Finnish as summarized in 2.1.2. This comparison is absolutely necessary because linguistics has found that grammar changes very slowly and that if Venetic is really Finnic, then what we found in the interpreting of Venetic from first principle, **MUST** show significant similarities to modern Finnic languages that were at the top of the amber routes to the Adriatic Veneti. Even though Estonian and Finnish is over 2000 years in the future or Venetic, the similarities must be demonstrable. But this idea of grammar having longevity is really part of the basic idea that commonly used language tends to endure. The common everyday language tends to endure because it is in constant use. That means not only is basic grammar preserved from generation to generation, but also everyday words. Linguists have always known that some words – words relating to family relationships, for example – have great longevity. I have pointed out how the Venetic word **.e.go** and stem **.e.** is practically identical to Estonian *jäägu* and stem *jää-* and how this is understandable considering that even today the *jää-* stem is used all day. On the other hand, the Venetic word **rako** for ‘duck’ has no survival in Estonian or Finnish ‘duck’ is *part* and *anka* respectively. But how often is the word ‘duck’ used. Unless you keep a flock of ducks, only a few times a year. When a concept is rarely mentioned, alternative words can be used, at the whim of the speakers.. For example ‘duck’ could be expressed by a word meaning ‘water-bird’ or ‘wide-bill’. (Venetic **rako** sounds like it came from the quacking sound, and Finnish *anka*, sounds like it actually originated with geese that go “honk!” The origin of the Estonian *part* is a mystery) So unless one word is used often the word lacks stability. But the same applies to grammar. The most common grammar – the grammar taught to babies – has greatest longevity. Thus we will find similarities to the most common grammatical features, and less so in rarely used grammatical features.

The point is that longevity is proportional to usage, and therefore if someone compares a modern language with an ancient genetically related one, the correctness is more probable if the comparison is with very common words or grammar, and it helps if you learned the modern language as a child, as then you will have an intuition about the core language. Such wisdom is not available for those analysts who simply look up words in a dictionary, because in a dictionary a very rarely used word can be beside a commonly used one. There is no filter.

Although in this description of Venetic grammar follows the modern model for describing Estonian and Finnish, there can be other ways of constructing the descriptive model. As I have

already mentioned, in reality in Finnic, the concept of case endings is artificial – selecting the most common of a large spectrum of endings. The original primitive language might have been very much like modern Inuit of arctic North America. Linguists have not handled Inuktitut according to common ways of describing grammar, and they called it ‘polysynthetic’ (a system where the speaker simply combines short stems with many suffixes, infixes, and prefixes).

The modern manner of describing Estonian and Finnish, is really a selection by linguists developing a description, of the most common, most universally used, suffixes. But there are more. What they chose was to a large degree influenced by how grammar had been described in the most common Indo-European languages. This means that there are other suffixes that could have been included with the stated “case endings”. But these further suffixes are in modern Estonian and Finnish, generally not identified in the grammar but rather incorporated into the common word stems in which they appear and so the suffix portions are not identified.

There are many such suffixes that are common enough that a creative speaker could combine them and in effect revive some amount of the original polysynthetic approach of speaking.

Many words with the suffixes built into them, are so common and so old, that speakers of Estonian or Finnish no longer think of how they were derived. For example the word *kond*, ‘community’ is one an Estonian would not even think about in terms of its internal components. But when you think of it, it is in fact a combination of KO plus the suffix –ND, and the intrinsic meaning is ‘together’ + ‘something defined from’. Thus what we have is not only recognizable suffixes including “case endings”, but suffixes that have frozen onto the stem and assumed a quite particular meaning. In Venetic there some we have mentioned where the endings are incorporated into a new word stem (**.e.ge.s.t, vo.l.tiio**, etc, etc ) With Venetic too, there is a constant issue as to whether an apparent case ending is stuck onto a stem, or whether a new word has been established, which of course can add case endings itself.

I believe that in the evolution of language, the polysynthetic constructions that were constantly used, became solidified from constant use. And then with people using it often, from laziness, it becomes contracted. Once contracted, the original construction is no longer apparent. Starting with mere tens of basic syllabic elements, eventually we end up with thousands of new stems that cannot be taken apart.

The longer the language has followed this experience, the more new word stems arise, and the grammatical elements become fewer and fewer.

If we wish to use modern Estonian or Finnish to detect further case endings in Venetic, we can reverse the evolution of Estonian or Finnish by noting still-detectable suffixes within words, and then see if Venetic has repeated use of one of them.

So what kinds of suffixes are still apparent in modern Estonian or Finnish that are still identifiable as suffixes and not disappeared into new words stems? Today these suffixes are called ‘Derivational Suffixes’. Poets are free to create new words with them, but they are not recognized as case endings as they are not in regular use. But as we go back in time, it is likely some of them were more commonly applied and if linguists had described Estonian or Finnish a few thousand years ago, they would have claimed more case ending. (The Finno-Ugric language of Hungarian is an example of a language in an older state, and so linguists have claimed many more case endings.)

. There are about 50 suffixes enumerated in *A Grammatical Survey of the Estonian Language* by Johannes Aavik, most readily found within *Estonian-English Dictionary* compiled by Paul F. Saagpakk, 1982. It was and is important for us to be aware of these suffixes when looking at Venetic, to find resonances, since the ‘case endings’ definitions arbitrarily selected by linguists,

may have excluded important suffixes that appear in Venetic. For example, the ending *-nd* seems to be common enough in Venetic that maybe we ought to put it into the case endings list.

However, what we have done here, is to use the well-established descriptions of Estonian and Finnish as our template. Those who are familiar with Estonian or Finnish can then process the Venetic grammar more easily. Still it is possible that since Venetic is over 2000 years old, it may contain more of the free-combinations of suffixes, infixes, and prefixes. That is the reason in our analysis of the Venetic inscriptions documented in *THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL\**, we were keen to look inside word structure to help determine meanings. For example **v.i.ougonta** seems like ‘carry’ + ‘community, grouping’, and we have to determine what it really meant from the context in which it was used. But if there was no *kond* in Estonian, we could still break **gonta** down further with ‘grouping’ from KO ‘together’ and ND ‘entity connected to’.

For our purposes in deciphering Venetic, there was nothing to be gained by looking at more than a few Estonian derivational suffixes in the list given by Aavik – those that we found worthy of consideration in our analysis of the Venetic. They also allow us to look at the internal makeup of a word, to determine in a general or abstract sense how the word originated, to assist in narrowing down its meaning.

The following is a limited list of the Estonian derivational suffixes that I considered in analyzing the Venetic. Some were very significant.

**-ma** (= Venetic **-ma** ?) Estonian 1st infinitive, is believed to have originated in Estonian as a verbal noun in the Illative. Something of this nature seems to be found in Venetic such as in **v.i.rema**. I believe it meant something like ‘*in the state of v.i.re*’

**-m** (=Venetic **-m**?) where this appears in Estonian words it appears to have a reflective sense. It is psychological. It is a nominalizer too that may also produce the idea of ‘state of’ as in *-ma* above. Possibly it appears in the **donom** of Lagole inscriptions which obviously from how it is used means ‘something brought’, and a synonym for **dona.s.to**

**-ja** suffix of agency, equivalent to English ending *-er* as in *buyer*. I did not find anything solid in Venetic in this regard, perhaps because Venetic is likely to write it **-i.i** and how would one distinguish it from all the other uses of “I” within Venetic! I believe that Venetic turned in another direction to express the idea of agency – **o.r.** see next. Estonian has it in the derivational suffix *-ur* so it is not entirely foreign. The way languages from the same origins evolve is that there may be two words or endings that mean the same, and one branch popularizes one and the other branch popularizes the other. Thus we can conclude that *-ja* might have been found in Venetic, but that **-o.r.** was preferred. Nonetheless, the ending *-ur* is still recognized within Estonian.

**-ur** (= Venetic **-o.r.** ) indicating a person or thing which has a permanent activity or profession, equivalent to English *-or* as in *surveyor*. Would appear in Venetic as **-or** . I found this one very useful as it perfectly explained a word like **lemetorna** associated with a stylus left as an offering ‘*as a producer of warm-feelings*’ – ie the object continues to be an expression from the giver after it is left behind. An example:

**v.i.o.u.go.n.ta lemeto.r.na .e.b.-** [stylus- MLV-38bis, LLV-ES-58]  
‘*The collection-of-bringsings, as ingratiating-producers, remains*’

Note how **lemeto.r.na** is composed of plural plus two suffixes **leme - t - o.r. - na**

Another simple example is a fibula (used to pin togas together) with the word **augar** on the back. This was appropriate if **aug-** was ‘hole’ (as in Est. *auk*) thus giving the Venetic word for a fibula as literally ‘hole-producer’ (= ‘pin’) This word survive elsewhere too as we can even find it surviving in English *auger*.

**-nd** (=Venetic **-nd,-nt**) attached to nouns, verbs, and participles to form derived nouns with meanings related to the stems of words. In my view the best interpretation for this is ‘entity made from’ or ‘entity, something, defined from’ and similar. The use of –ND, NT is apparent in Venetic and seems widely used in ancient pre-Indo-European substratum of Europe (as the *Atlantis* example suggests<sup>4</sup>) For example it appears in **va.n.t.s.** in the sentence **meگو va.n.t.s .e.ge.s.t.s dona.s.to re.i.tia.i** ‘Our bringing, in the direction of the everlasting, to Rhea But as mentioned above, this ending was now incorporated into the word. But let us take **va.n.t.s.** apart. Then we get (A)VA (‘open up’) NT (‘entity of’) S (‘in, into’) giving us ‘entity in the direction of the opening’ But this is very abstract, and obviously its final meaning developed from usage. As I say above with **gonta**, the suffixes, from contant use, disappear into the the brand new meaning.

**-kond (konna-)** (=Venetic **-go.n.ta**) ‘a group of things or persons related to a certain place or area’. This is an important component in the Venetic inscriptions. It appears in Venetic often as **v.i.ougo.n.ta**, but also elsewhere too.

**-us** (Venetic **-o.s.** (?) **k.o.s.** (??)) a suffix that may have ancient Roman influence behind it. This probably would not appear until Roman times. It may be represented inside the **-ko.s.** in Lagole inscriptions which already have Latin elements mixed in. Estonian certainly acquired it as a result of the Roman influences.

**-ik** (Venetic - ?) is a suffix that has Partitive properties in that the K sound suggests breaking off something from a whole. I did not identify an example in the inscriptions other than the fact that the conjunction **ke** employs the psychology of breaking off. Possibly it occurs and I failed to see it.

**-la** – (Venetic **-LA**) place or residence. I saw it in one place, the ending on ‘Crete’ in the Roman period urn inscription –

**CRETEILA - M - ENNIO - GRAICI - F** - [urn- MLV-120-02, LLV-Es II]

**-la** would have served the same function as the Roman use of *-ia* at the ends of place names, as in “*Venetia*” Perhaps it is rare in Venetic because Venetic had replaced it with *-ia*.

As I said, Aavik presents about 50 ‘derivational suffixes’ in Estonian, bound into words and not used as frequently as the formally set aside ‘case endings’. Since Venetic is 2000 years old and closer to the common ancestor of Estonian and Venetic, it is more likely that Estonian has LOST some forms that Venetic had . For example, we noted earlier how an original wider use of endings on (A)VA had Venetic creating **va.n.t** which has vanished if it was in the common ancestor, and somehow Estonian has only preserved *va-stu*. We can also propose that Estonian lost the use of **bo-** in a wider fashion and it only survives today as *poo-l* ‘half, to the side of’ (in effect POO in the Adessive case).

In Venetic we find **bo-**, along with **va.n.t-** used as a preposition, but Venetic also appears to use **-bo-** as an ending (example in **SSELBOI, SSELBOI**) and I have included it in Table 2

<sup>4</sup> ATA-‘end’ –LA ‘place, location’ –ND ‘entity, thing’ –S (namer element) - ‘Entity (ie sea) at the end-place’

Table 2 – Venetic Case Endings Compared to Est. and Finn.

VENETIC CASE ENDING	STATIC MEANING		DYNAMIC MEANING	
		EST/FINN... PARALLEL..		EST/FINN... PARALLEL..
Nominative	<i>Same or close to stem. (see section 2.1.3)</i>			
-v.i. Partitive	'part of'	-t / -a	'becoming part of' 'uniting with'	-t / -a (dynamic meaning rare)
-iiv.i. Explicit Dynamic Partitive?	---	---	'becoming part of' 'uniting with'	---
-s. Inessive	'in' -as used to describe or name	-s / -ssa	'becoming in = into'	"Illative" case -sse / -v v n
-s.t Elative	'derived out of' - used to describe or name	-st / -sta (static meaning 'derived from'))	'out of, exit from'	-st / -sta
--n or [stem] Genitive	'of'	-[stem] / -n	' becoming in possession of"	Finnish Illative -v v n (?)
-na Essive	'like,as'	-na / -na	'becoming of, like,as'	-na / -na (dynamic meaning rare)
-na.i Essive + Partitive	'like, as" in Partitive sense	suffix -ne (?)	'till, up to' (or similar)	Est. "Terminative" -ni
-ne.i Terminative	Like a Dative?	---	'till, up to'	Estonian "Terminative" -ni
-l Adessive	'at location of'	-l / -lla	'to location of' use Allative	'to location of' = use Allative
-le.i Allative	Use Adessive	Use Adessive	'to location of'	Est/Finn "Allative" -le / -lle
-l.t Ablative	'arising from location of'	-lt / -lta (as a nominalizer)	'from location of'	Est/Finn "Ablative" -lt / -lta
-ii- "liative"	'extremely large, infinite'	---	'extremely fast'	---
-bo- "Bolative"	'on side of'	remnant in Est. word <i>pool</i> 'at side of' but not used as a suffix any longer	'to side of'	remnant in Est. word <i>poole</i> 'at side of' but not used as a suffix any longer

## 2.2 POSTPOSITIONS, PREPOSITIONS, ADJECTIVAL MODIFIERS

### 2.2.1. Postpositions and Prepositions

#### GENERAL: EXAMPLES FROM ESTONIAN AND FINNISH

Postpositions in Estonian and Finnish can be viewed as the true attached-element in the ancient tradition. Technically there is nothing to distinguish between a postposition and a case ending or a suffix other than that a space is placed between them and stem in the modern convention, and that they are generally more than one syllable.

Thus, postpositions are in fact descendants of the ancestral manner of attaching descriptive elements to the stem. For example in Estonian *tee kaudu* ‘by way of the road’, *kaudu*, considered a postposition. But this postposition could be easily viewed as a case ending if used often enough. Frequent use would also cause its abbreviation. For example *tee kaudu* could become for example “*teekau*” which would mean ‘by way of the road’ This is an artificial example. A real example would be the Estonian postposition *kaasa* which is a suffix/postposition that developed in Estonian into the Comitative case *-ga*. In Finnish no such Comitative case has developed, and one can only use the postposition (in this case the Finnish version is *kanssa*) as in *talon kanssa* ‘with the house’ (Genitive plus postposition). The Estonian equivalent using the Comitative case would be *taluga* ‘with the farm’ (Note Estonian *tal* actually means ‘farm’ but it is from the same origins as the Finnish *talo* ‘house’) Estonian nonetheless also preserves *kaasa* for emphasis only - *taluga kaasa*. There are other words in Estonian that seem like ancestors of case endings, which are still preserved for emphasis. For example *talus* (Inessive) = *talus sees*.

There are many many postpositions in both Estonian and Finnish, demonstrating that the ancient tradition of attached modifiers in a polysynthetic system is still active. A few of the modern Estonian postpositions plus Finnish equivalents are given below (giving the Estonian first and Finnish second). Some function as prepositions too. Whether it comes before or after is a subtle matter. If before, the word modified takes the Partitive, if after, the word modified is in the Genitive. In the following examples, the first version before slash (/) is Estonian, the second Finnish.

*alla/alla* - below  
*edasi/edessä* - forward  
*järeel/jälkeen* - following  
*kaasa/kanssa* - with  
*kauda/kautta* - by way of  
*keskel/keskellä* -in the middle of  
*lähel/lähellä* - close to  
*läbi/läpi* - through  
*pääle/päälä*- on top of  
*taga/takana* - behind  
*ümber/ympärillä* – around  
*vastu/vasten* - against  
*pitki/pitkin* – along

### and more

In addition modern Estonian has many more that modern Finnish does not have, and vice versa.

## POSTPOSITIONS AND PREPOSITIONS IN VENETIC:

**bo-** The grammatical element **-bo-** appears in Venetic in several ways. We have already noted several instances in which it is a suffix or second part of a compound word. For example **.o.p iorobo.s.** ; **vise iobo**; **SSELBOI SSELBOI**; .... But in the following it looks like a preposition or an independent word.

**meگو lemetore.i. v.i.ratere.i. dona.s.to bo.i. iio.s. vo.l.tiio.m.mno.i**

It suggests it is a stand-alone word too, acting as a preposition or postposition to another word. This usage is similar to that of **va.n.t-** (below) Possibly the case endings on it should be the same as the word it introduces. Estonian has an analogous word in *poole*, as in *talu poole* ‘in the direction of the farm’ which makes it a postposition. It resembles Venetic **bo-** if it were in the Allative. Earlier we saw Venetic Allative marked with **-le.i.**; so the Allative of **bo-** would be “**bole.i.**”.

**va.n.t-** This word does not have a suffix version, and seems to behave like a typical postposition/preposition. It looks analogous to Estonian *vastu* ‘against’, except the *-st* ending, gives it a negative meaning, while **va.n.t-** conveys a positive concept. There are several examples of its use as a postposition or preposition. For example in

**va.n.te.i v.i.o.u.go.n.tio.i. .e.go** [*urn – MLV-80, LLV-Es79*]  
*Let remain, towards the collection of ( cremation -urns?)*

Here **va.n.te.i.** in Partitive, appears to modify **v.i.o.u.go.n.tio.i.** also in the Partitive.

Another example of many is **meگو dona.s.to va.n.t.s. mo.l.don ke .o. kara.n.mn.s. re.i.tiia.i.**  
*'Our (my) bringing (=offering), into the direction of ash/earth, also is Carnic-mountains-going, to (=unite with) Rhea*

**iiuva.n.t-** This word simply adds a prefix **iiu-** meaning ‘eternally’ to **va.n.t**

**.o.p** is obviously a preposition as it appears in **.o.p vo.l.tiio leno** ‘*up skyward fly*’ in several inscriptions in this form and in one of the round stone inscriptions written **up**.

There are no doubt other prepositions or postpositions which I have not detected as such, due to limited numbers of examples. I recall something of the form **\$a.i.** which might be similar to Est *sisse* ‘into’. Thus it is possible with more analysis we might be able to add a few more prepositions or postpositions into our list above.

## ADJECTIVES

When most of the descriptive modifiers of a word are expressed in case endings or suffixes, an independent adjective out front, like in English, is expectedly rare in Finnic, and in early

Finnic like Venetic perhaps non-existent. The separate adjective, placed in front, I believe is a new development in modern Finnic languages as a result of influences from I-E languages. Putting an adjective to the front is actually cumbersome in today's Finnic in that it requires the speaker repeat the case ending of the noun on the adjective in order to connect the two. In analyzing Venetic, I very carefully looked for parallelism in case endings, because that could mean that the first one modified the second. The prepositions of **va.n.t-** and **bo-** take case endings as they precede another word they seem to modify. Thus the ancient preposition could therefore be the predecessor of the adjective. Otherwise what we see mostly are compounded words - where stem word without an ending assuming the first part of a compound word where the second part took the case ending. For example **v.i.ou-gonta** except that the second part can be viewed as an extended case ending. This is true of **-gonta**, and also the **-iio.s.** frequently added to stems.

When both words have the same case ending, does that represent the beginnings of adjectives? All that would be necessary is for the lesser of two connected ideas to lose its case endings.

A sentence that presented such problems is the following:

**.o..s.t.s. katus.ia .i.io.s. dona.s.to .a.tra.e..s. te.r.mon.io.s. de.i.vo.s** - [MLV- 125, LLV- Vi2]

Discussed earlier in section 2.1.4, it offers two pairs of words in the Inessive case - **.i.io.s. .a.tra.e..s.** and **te.r.mon.io.s. de.i.vo.s** It isn't necessary to assume there are any adjectives here. It can simply be the same grammatical structure repeated. In other words, these words could mean 'into infinity, into the end, into the terminus, into the sky'. The same is true of the frequent address **\$a.i.nate.i. re.i.tia.i** where **\$a.i.nate.i.** can be regarded as its own word, in parallel with **re.i.tia.i.** and not an adjective.

I am inclined to think that Venetic, frozen over 2000 years ago, might not really have any true independent adjectives, and the closest form to look like an independent adjective would be the prepositions described in the last section. That is to say, instead of *in the large farm* one says *in the large-farm*, or in Estonian *suures talus* versus *suur-talus* where creating the compound word excuses one from putting the case ending -s on both. Venetic, in other words is strong in the latter, and made even more complicated because as we saw above, Venetic Genitive too was like Estonian using a bare stem (without endings). Thus the first part of a compound word might be a Genitive expressing possession of the second.

In conclusion – for Venetic we do not need to identify 'adjectives'. The purpose of adjectives is achieved via compound words, repeated words, and an array of case endings and suffixes.

## COMPARISON?

Insofar as the Estonian and Finnish comparative forms are similar, we can expect Venetic would have them. But are any detectable in the small body of Venetic inscriptions?

Generally in Estonian and Finnish, the comparative is shown by adding *-em* to the adjective, and superlative by adding *-im* to the adjective. The comparison levels clearly seem to be marked by vowel level - the higher the vowel level before the *m*, the more extreme. I don't recall any Venetic ending in an **-m** to indicate a comparison of state, except there is **v.i.rema** Then its meaning could be 'the more vital, energetic' But if we consider there to be a suffix **ma** analogous to the Estonian **-ma** suffix (see earlier in section 2.1.12) we interpret it in a slightly other way. The matter of whether there is a comparative anywhere remains unresolved. There just aren't enough Venetic examples to clarify this matter.

Note: All discoveries made have been according to direct interpretation of inscriptions from context analysis and internal comparisons. Linguistic methodologies are impossible where a language is unknown and the amount of language is limited. Therefore these ideas are not deduced by any rigorous rationalization method, but inferred from accumulated evidence.

## 2.3 PRONOUNS

### 2.3.1. Personal Pronouns

The limited number of Venetic sentences presents us with only two examples of pronouns **me<sup>go</sup>** and **te.i.** which we interpret as first and second person plural, possibly used in a formal singular way. The pronoun **me<sup>go</sup>** we assumed was in the Genitive and **te.i.** in the (dynamic) Partitive. Accordingly, without having direct evidence we can at least infer that the Partitive of the first person plural was **me.i.** while the Genitive of the other was **tego**. It is possible to further guess other case forms, but only the underlined actually appear in the body of inscriptions.

	1 <sup>st</sup> pers pl ('we')	2 <sup>nd</sup> pers pl ('you')
<b>Nominative</b>	<b>me<sup>go</sup>(?)</b>	<b>tego(?)</b>
<b>Genitive</b>	<u><b>me<sup>go</sup></b></u>	<b>tego(?)</b>
<b>Partitive</b>	<b>me.i.(?)</b>	<u><b>te.i.</b></u>

By comparison the Estonian Nominative, Genitive and Partitive 1st and 2nd person plurals are *meie, meie, meid* and *teie, teie, teid*. However, Livonian, to the south of Estonian, and related to it, but also highly palatalized like Venetic the 1st and 2nd person plural nominatives are *meg* and *teg* – which shows that a linguistic shift to **me<sup>go</sup>** and **tego** is possible under strong palatalization.

### 2.3.2. Possessive Pronoun Suffixes

Finnish adds pronoun suffixes to stems, to indicate possession. This is very ancient as the adding of suffixes was quite standard at the origins of Finnic languages.

<u>Finnish Pronoun Suffixes</u>	
'my'	-ni
'your'	-si
'his,hers,its'	-nsa
'our'	-mme
'your'	-nne
'their'	-nsa

Finnish today will add pronouns to the front as well sometimes, thus creating some redundancy (for example *minun taloni*) This relates to the concept of emphasis - modifiers migrated to the front I believe for emphasis. But note that once there was this redundancy, it was possible to drop one of the two. And that is what happened with Estonian and Venetic, already occurring at the parental language.

I feel I did detect some possessive pronoun suffixes in Venetic. An example of a regular pronoun is **meگو** 'our' in **meگو dona.s.to** which I interpreted as 'our brought-thing' The possessive pronoun approach seems to appear in

**ENONI . ONTEI . APPIOI . SSELBOI SSELBOI . ANDETIC OBOSECUPETARIS** - [MLV 236, LLV B-1

**ENONI**, which no matter how I analysed the sentence, seems to be 'my thirst' affirmed by resonance with Est, *jäänu* 'thirst' So far, I have only noticed the personal pronoun suffix for 'my' **-ni**, which I assumed is equivalent to the Finnish suffix *-ni* We also see it I believe in the Roman alphabet urn inscriptions in the term of endearment **TITINI**, which from the context very likely means 'my Titi'. I believe, therefore, Venetic still employed pronoun suffixes and that Estonian has lost them in the last 2000 years. Unfortunately, owing to the limited number of inscriptions, we didn't identify further examples. (Perhaps there may be some TI endings and I misinterpreted them. The reader is invited to look for this possibility in the interpretations.)

## 2.4 VERBS

### 2.4.1. General

Verbs are hard to distinguish from nouns. Sometimes endings on verbs mimic those on nouns. I suspect that early language did not distinguish between nouns and verbs, and, like the matter of static or dynamic case endings, the nominal vs verbal quality was determined from the context in which it was used . We have to bear in mind that original language was always spoken, so that whether a concept was verbal or nominal could simply depend on how forcefully it was spoken, and where the length and stress was placed. It seems to me that people developed the knowledge of what was normally to be taken as a verbal stem and what was to be taken as a nominal stem simply from experience with the language. But that is how it is today in English, for example. We learn from use, what stems are verb stems and what are noun stems from context and usage. Furthermore some words can be taken either way, such as the English word *run*. Determining whether a Venetic word was to be interpreted as a verb or noun was sometimes easy, sometimes difficult. I wondered if the word **dona.s.to** was verbal, and to prove it was not, I had to find a verb in the same sentence. You cannot have two verbs. Since I always found a verb idea in the sentences with **dona.s.to** I concluded it was a noun in the meaning of 'brought-thing' (English has no better word, and the closest is 'offering') However **doto** was verbal.

Finnic languages today have many supposed verb forms, that can take case endings and instantly they become nominal. Here are some examples taken from the stem *jooks* – 'run'

*jookse* - 'run' (verb - imperative)

*jooksma* - 'to run' (infinitive)

(infinitive takes endings for example:)

*jooksmas*- ‘in run’ (infinitive plus Inessive case ending)  
*jooksmal* - ‘at running’ (infinitive plus Adessive case ending)  
*jooksmāna* - ‘in the form of running’ (infinitive plus Essive case ending)  
*jooksmast* - ‘arising from running’ (infinitive plus Elative case ending)  
*etc*

And then there are other verbal forms too that take case endings and suffixes. For example the t-infinitive - but

*jooksda* - ‘to run’  
*jooksdes* - ‘running’ (But wait, that forms the active present gerund!)  
*jooksdest* - ‘out of running’ ( That now looks like an Elative attached to the gerund)  
*etc etc etc*

And then there are ways of making a complex noun back into a verb, or a complex verb back into a noun.

My opinion is that originally word stems were neither nouns nor verbs, but the way they were used made them verbal or nominal. It would be analogous to usage for example of the English word *run*. The same word is both a noun (‘the run’), and an imperative (run!) which only goes to show that nouns can be made verbal and vice versa depending on context, and we do not really need to attach verb or noun markers since in actual use, the verbal or nominal character is revealed from context. A good example today is the word *text* used on cellphones. There is now a verb form as in *text me a message* I think this transforming of nouns into verbs is very natural to humans and that the same stem served both nouns and verbs. And depending on whether we view a grammatical ending on a verb or a noun, produces different interpretations. For example from the noun point of view, the bare stem is Genitive. If a verb, the base stem is the basic 2nd person imperative. Furthermore, when an ending with **v.i.** is viewed as a noun we have Venetic dynamic Partitive and an infinitive when viewed as a verb. What is common to both is the idea of ‘to’. Another example - a stem with **.s.** on the end is the Inessive when viewed as a noun, but becomes the active present gerund when viewed as a verb. This suggests the concept of ‘in’ was closely related to the concept of ‘now’ (in the present moment?).

Without being able to identify verbs vs nouns from context and grammatical structure, I would have had difficulty identifying verbs. For example almost until the end, I thought what was a Partitive ending on a noun was actually a marker for the infinitive on a verb. Once I discovered this in a sentence that had no other candidate for a verb, I found that there were about five words whose sentences were greatly improved by translating them as infinitives.

The basic verb form is the imperative. It is easy to see why – the first words in human languages were commands. “Come here!” “Run!” “Catch it!” etc.

Note how in English we can only identify the basic imperative by adding the exclamation mark!!

#### 2.4.2 *Imperative*

We will only deal with imperatives that we found within the Venetic inscriptions:

##### 2<sup>nd</sup> PERSON IMPERATIVE

An example of that is **voto** ‘water!’ as in **voto klutiari.s. vha.g.s.to** ‘*water the clutch (of flowers) well*’

The most recognizable example in the body of inscriptions is the word **leno** in **o.p. voltio leno** ‘*up skyward fly!*’

We also saw it in **peuia!** ‘catch (him)!’

### 3<sup>rd</sup> PERSON IMPERATIVE

A very noticeable verb form in the body of inscriptions is the 3<sup>rd</sup> person imperative in the word **.e.go**, which means ‘let remain, let endure, let continue’. It just happens that in the funerary inscriptions it is most needed, as it is something similar to the common modern idea of ‘rest in peace’. Another 3<sup>rd</sup> person Imperative found in the body of inscriptions is **v.i.ugo** ‘let carry’. It indicates that **-go** is the marker, and it is analogous to Estonian marker *-gu* as in *jäägu* or *viigu*

In general the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person Imperative is the most basic verb form, and one can imagine it to be the first verb form in humanity, where a chief uses it to command someone to action. That is why the 2<sup>nd</sup> Person Imperative is a good indicator of the verb stem. For example if **.e.go** is a 3<sup>rd</sup> Person Imperative, then its 2<sup>nd</sup> Person Imperative would be simply **.e.**, and that would also be its verb stem in general (It would be analogous to Estonian *jää!*)

### *2.4.3 Infinitive*

Estonian has two forms of infinitive, the *ta*-infinitive (also called the 2<sup>nd</sup> infinitive – example *jooksda*) and the *ma*-infinitive (also called the 1<sup>st</sup> infinitive – example *jooksma*). The *ma*-infinitive is a new development probably intended to turn infinitives into nominal forms. As Aavik writes – “*the 1<sup>st</sup> infinitive was originally a verbal noun in the Illative*” Since it is new, it would not be found in ancient Finnic, and if there is a use of *-MA* in Venetic, it would be as a verbal noun in the Illative. I have interpreted it with meaning ‘in state of..’ as it works. There are a couple of instances in which maybe this was happening such as perhaps in **v.i.rema**. But in general, if we compare Estonian and Venetic on the matter of the infinitive, we have to focus on the *ta*-infinitive which has to be the original infinitive (even though grammars call it the “2<sup>nd</sup>” infinitive).

Finnish, on the other hand treats the naked verb stem/root as the infinitive. Neither the *-ta* nor *-ma* ending had developed.

What turned out to be infinitives in Venetic, I originally thought were nouns with Partitive endings and the resulting interpretations didn’t work too well. Then in one instance I thought “it should be an infinitive” and went back through everything and found indeed that if “to” + noun were changed to “to” + verb, the problematic interpretations (about 5 of them) became straightforward and elegant as infinitives. The conclusion was that infinitives in Venetic are defined by the verb stem plus what resembles the Partitive ending **-v.i.** This is not peculiar if Venetic already uses the Partitive in a dynamic sense translatable with ‘to (join with)’. Insofar as English derived from a Germanic language with Suebic/Venetic substratum, it explains why in English the infinitive is expressed by “to” + verb. This is one of the remarkable coincidences that further supports the correctness of the entire thesis of Venetic origins in Suebic (at the top of the amber route before the Roman era), and Suebic in turn underlying later developments of Germanic languages in the north.

But is there resonance with Estonian too? If as we propose, Venetic and Estonian shared a parent language, then how would that parent language lead to both Estonian 2<sup>nd</sup> Infinitive, which is marked by *-ta* or *-da*, and also to Venetic marked by a Partitive-like ending? Answer: We already saw how the Venetic Partitive can be derived by changing the T in the Estonian Partitive to J (*.i.*) This desire to use J is no doubt, as I already said, a consequence of the strong

palatalization. If we assume the parent language was closer to Estonian, and convert the T in an Estonian *ta*-infinitive to a J then for example (to use a clean example that illustrates well) *põdrata* 'to turn towards' becomes *põdraja*. If we now drop the final *a* then we have the Venetic infinitive! And in fact for this example it appears in an inscription as infinitive **pora.i**

**mego dona.s.to .e.b .v.i.aba.i.\$a pora.i. .o.p iorobo.s.** [bronze sheet MLV-8, LLV-Es23]  
 'Our brought-thing (ie the offering) remains, into the free, **to turn** up into the infinite-way'

Thus the relationship between Estonian and Venetic is described by the following using the stem *põdra-* as the example: *põdrata* > *põdrat* > *põdraj* = **pora.i**.

This presents us with the way to form more infinitives, from verb stems. For example perhaps the infinitive of **.e.** 'remain' would have been **.e.i**. This is a guess since I did not identify it in the inscriptions. (In Estonian *jää* > *jääda* which according to the transformation would become *jääj* = **.e.i**.) But it may be there somewhere, and I have misinterpreted it.

Examples of infinitives appearing in the body of inscriptions follow. Note how perfect it is to interpret them as verbs in the infinitive form. To identify an infinitive we first have to generally translate the sentence and identify the verbal idea and determine that the infinitive meaning actually fits better and seems more natural than to interpret it as a Partitive.

**pora.i** 'to turn towards'

**mego dona.s.to .e.b .v.i.aba.i.\$a pora.i. .o.p iorobo.s.** [bronze sheet MLV-8, LLV-Es23] 'Our brought-thing (ie the offering) remains, into the free, **to turn** up into the infinite-way'

**vo.t.te.i** 'to take'

**mego dona.s.to ka.n.te.s. vo.t.te.i. iio.s. a.kut.s. \$a.i.nate.i. re.i.tiia.i.** - [LLV-Es64] 'Our brought-thing (ie the offering) in carrying, **to take**, into eternity, into the beginning.

**ka.n.ta.i** 'to bear'

**.e.go ka.n.ta.i. ta.i.vo.n.tna.i.** [obelisque- MLV-67, LLV-Es12] 'Let remain, **to carry** (=to bear) till sky's-place' Note how there is no other verb possible, since **-na.i.** on the last word is a case ending. In this case, **ka.n.ta.i.** must be verbal and the infinitive meaning is obvious.<sup>5</sup>

**mno.i** 'to go'

**.e.go vo.l.tiio-mno.i. iuva.n.t-iio.i** [obelisque- MLV-59 LLV-Es4] 'Let remain, **to skyward-go**, in the infinite direction to join infinity

Here the absence of a case endings on **vo.l.tiio** and **iuva.n.t** suggests they are the first part of compound words. The first one **vo.l.tiio-mno.i.** seems like verb 'go' in an infinitive (Estonian *minna*) and the second **iuva.n.t-iio.i** nominal with a dynamic Partitive

**kata.i** 'to vanish'

**.e.go kata.i. ege.s.tna.i.** [obelisque- MLV-66, LLV-Es11]  
 'Let remain, **to vanish**, till the everlasting'

<sup>5</sup> Further notes: **v** in **ta.i.vo.n.-** was originally assumed in the source material (*MLV*) an **n**, but I changed it to **v** as it produced the word for 'sky'. Properly the original should be studied to see if a worn Venetic **v** can be misinterpreted as an **n**)

**reniio.i.** ‘to climb’

**.e.nogene.i. .e.netiio.i. .e.p.petari.s. a.l.ba-reniio.i.** - [MLV-133 Additional external context: image of a warrior on horseback

(?---?) *Eneti (Shipper) to Alps-climb, Bon Voyage!* (The first word is too uncertain to even guess. It appears nowhere else.)

There may be others in the body of known inscriptions.

#### 2.4.4 Present Indicative

Due to the limited number of inscriptions there are few instances of verbs in the Present Indicative. Fortunately there were enough to at least identify endings for the singular first second and third person. The following table summarizes these endings for the Present Indicative, as revealed by Venetic sentences. We compare them to Estonian. It is expected to be similar to Estonian, based on the accumulated evidence that Venetic, derived from Suebic, is closest to Estonian because ancient Estonian was a brother language to Suebic while Finnish has roots in a more ancient ancestral Finnic.

	Estonian	Venetic
Sing.	1. <i>-n</i> (ie <i>vedan</i> ) 2. <i>-d</i> (ie <i>ostad</i> ) 3. <i>-b</i> (ie <i>jääb</i> )	<i>-n</i> (ie <i>vdan</i> ) <i>-d,-t</i> (ie <i>o.s.dot</i> ) <i>-b</i> (ie <i>.e.b</i> )
Pl.	1. <i>-me</i> (ie <i>vedame</i> ) 2. <i>-te</i> 3. <i>-vad</i>	<i>-m</i> (ie <i>vdam</i> ) <i>-t</i> (?- not enough data) <i>-</i> (?)

#### 2.4.5 Active and Passive Past Participle *-na, -to*

The Active Past Participle seemed to be marked by a **-na** on the verb stem. This resonates with Est *-nud*.

The Passive Past Participle seemed to be marked by a **-to** on the verb stem. This resonates with Est *-tud*.

Note that conversion between Estonian and Venetic mainly involves the way Venetic palatalizes everything and the secondary effects of it. Thus the conversion between *tud* <> **to** is also the consequence of Venetic speakers (and their Suebic source) softening endings to the extreme, in this case dropping the D.

Examples of Passive Past Participles among the inscriptions include **doto** 'brought' **moloto** 'buried'.

**moloto .e..n.noniiia** [urn- MLV 91, LLV-Pa90]

**‘buried (or made to ash) to unite with Venetia**’ (I believe **.e..n.noniiia** meant ‘Venetia’ I accept that it might be something slightly different, but based on the word for ‘Veneti’ or ‘Shipper’)

The **-na** Active Past Participle form could also be the Essive case ending (see earlier) The following example the Passive Past Participle **doto** but also shows **mo.l.dna** which makes sense whether you treat it as an Active Past Participle or Essive.

**mego doto v.i.ogo.n.ta mo.l.dna .e.b.** - [stylus - MLV-24B, LLV-Es43] *Our brought group-of-carryings as ash remains (A burnt offering made to Rhea)* OR  
*Our brought group-of-carryings **ashed** (become ashes) remains*

This is a good example of how the same stem and endings have similar meanings, except one has a static sense and the other a dynamic sense. It indicates that originally languages did not separate words into nouns and verbs or adjectives and adverbs, but simply shifted meanings according to whether the context required a verbal/dynamic interpretation or a nominal/static interpretation.

### 2.4.6 Present Participle(?)

The Present Participle is marked in Estonian and Finnish by **--v(a)** and since it is in both we might therefore expect to find it in Venetic. However it is hard to identify. Perhaps one example is the stem **v.i.v-** found within

**iiuvant v.i.ve.s.tin iio.i.** - [round stone- MLV-138, LLV-Pa8]  
*In the direction of infinity, would be(??) **carrying** to infinity.*

It is obvious that **v.i.ve.s.tin** is a verb is obvious because it cannot be the other two words, but the meaning of the **-e.s.tin** is hard to decipher. From context alone, it seemed it might be some complex passive verb form.

Needless to say, we need to find more examples to confirm the Present Participle.  
 There are more examples for the Active Present Gerund.

### 2.4.7 Active Present Gerund

There are enough examples for this. This is marked by an **.s.** on a verb stem. Examples: **mno.s.** ‘in going’ ; **ka.n.te.s.** ‘in bearing, carrying’ This has been determined from how it fits very well in the context of the sentences, as well as resonance with Estonian/Finnish. (For example Estonian *minnes, kandes*) Note that this form can also be viewed as Inessive where the verb stem is taken as a noun stem.

Examples:

**mego dona.s.to vo.l.tiiomno.s. iiuva.n.t.s .a.riiun.s. \$a.i.nate.i. re.i.tiia.i** [bronze sheet MLV- 10 LLV- Es25]  
*Our brought-item ((ie offering), **skyward-going**, in the infinite direction, into the airy-realm[?], to (=unite with) you of the Gods, to (=unite with) Rhea*

**vda.n. vo.l.tiio.n.mno.s. dona.s.to ke la.g.s.to \$a.i.nate.i. re.i.tiia.i. o.p vo.l.tiio leno** - [bronze sheet- MLV-12A, LLV-Es27] *I convey, **skyward-going**, the bringing(=offering) and gift to (=unite with) you of the Gods, to (=unite with) Rhea; up skyward fly!*

**mego dona.s.to ka.n.te.s. vo.t.te.i. iio.s. a.kut.s. \$a.i.nate.i. re.i.tiia.i.** - [LLV Es64] *Our brought-thing (ie the offering) **in carrying**, to take, into eternity, into the beginning.*

### 2.4.8 Other Complex Verb Forms

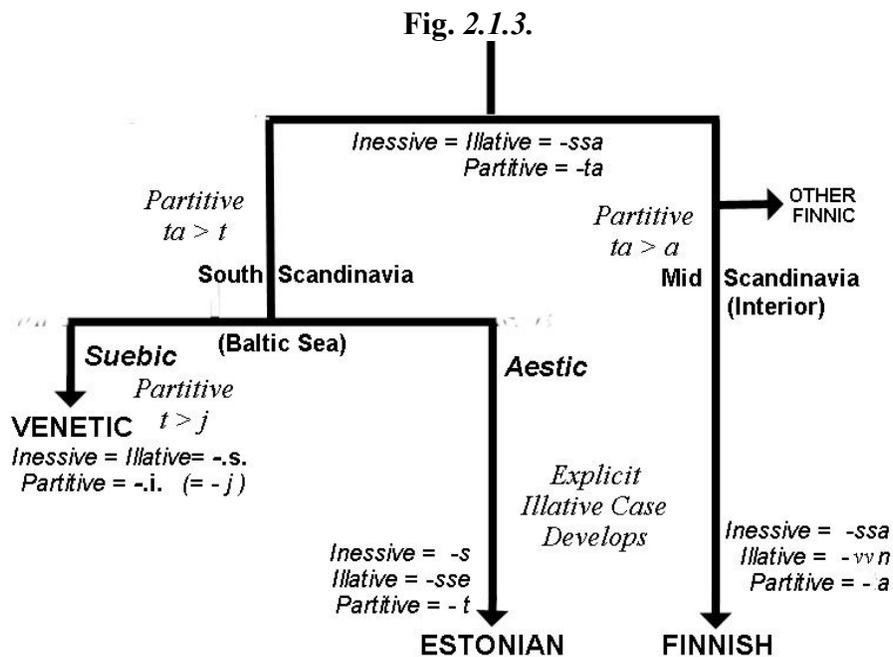
Other complex verb forms occur in Venetic, since I came across some that were difficult to figure out, even when consulting Estonian or Finnish for ideas. I had to make intuitive guesses or leave it as a (???). The problem is that Venetic was highly palatalized and it is difficult to understand from one example what effect that would have in reshaping the grammatical endings from the original common ancestor of Venetic(=Suebic) and Estonian(=Aestic).

There are only a few, and there is no value in discussing them here as any conclusions would be highly tentative. For example in **.o.s.t.s. katus.ia .i.io.s. dona.s.to .a.tra.e.s. te.r.mon.io.s. de.i.vo.s** - [MLV- 125, LLV- Vi2] the context would suggest something like ‘would disappear’ but we simply don’t know. The form does not appear anywhere else for comparing.

## 2.5 CONCLUSIONS

### 2.5.1 Observations Regarding Finnic Evolution

In the first section on the Partitive, I presented a tree chart that demonstrated that the Partitive and several other case endings suggested that Finnish is descended from the original Finnic language across northern language (which originated from the original archeologically defined “Maglemose” boat-oriented hunter-gatherers.), and that the ancestor of Estonian and Venetic, ie ancient Aestic and ancient Suebic, was a daughter language of it probably developed among professional traders in the Baltic and North Seas following the arrival of farmers.



The above chart shows how the Inessive, Illative, and Partitive cases developed first from ancient Finnish to a general Baltic-Finnic among seagoing peoples, and then that language separating in two which I have called Suebic and Aestic, using terms from the Roman era when they still existed.

(This chart also suggests that Estonian does not belong to the current Baltic Finnic languages which include Finnish but rather to a different Aestic-Finnic of the east Baltic oriented to the Aestii market at the southeast Baltic. It also suggests yet another subdivision of Finno-Ugric was the Suebic-Finnic family, which existed in the early Roman Age, but disappeared as it was displaced by Germanic after the Goth advances into the Jutland Peninsula during and after the Roman Age.)

We are here mainly interested in the dialectic separation of Aestic and Suebic, insofar as Estonian developed to a great extent for Aestic and Venetic developed from Suebic being taken south to northern Italy via the amber trade.

In the course of the preceding description of grammar, we saw some further examples confirming that Suebic/Venetic deviated from Aestic/Estonian mainly in ways that arose from the highly palatalized manner of speaking. For example we can now also add that the Venetic infinitive arose from an earlier T-infinitive that survived in Estonian but – like the Partitive – became a .i.-infinitive in Venetic (ie T,D > .i. (“J”))

Other than that, we can see the evidence of vowel raising (such as Est. U appearing as O in Venetic). For example Est. *-tud*, is **-to** in Venetic. I believe that linguists who analyze what has been discovered in this project, will find a great deal that proves that

a)The north Italic ancient Venetic came from the west Baltic dialect of a Baltic Sea Finnic which we have decided to call “Suebic”.

b)This Baltic Sea Finnic (of about 100 generations ago) developed out of the earlier hunter-gatherer Finnic, the latter evolving into Finnish and Saamic.

c)The west Baltic, Suebic/Venetic dialect became very palatalized and tight mouthed around 2000-3000 years ago, probably from original farming peoples who migrated northward into the Jutland Peninsula and southern Sweden assimilating into the prevailing indigenous Finnic and speaking it with the accent of their original Indo-European language (of probably the “Corded-ware” culture)

### ***2.5.2 Enough Grammar and Lexicon to Create Original Sentences***

Past interpreting of the Venetic inscriptions has only arrived at skeletal descriptions of grammar, which mostly comes from being projected from an assumed related language, and finding proof in the Venetic inscriptions themselves becomes difficult or impossible. In my methodology, I focussed primarily on what I could determine directly from the inscriptions, and did not bring Finnic references into play until I had independently determined that Venetic appeared to be Finnic. When done in that way, the results are true, and not forced. If true, then everything falls into place without being forced.

In my methodology I used only complete sentences since grammar can only be determined if we have complete sentences and then we can look for the subject, object, modifiers etc. That cannot be done from fragments of sentences. The unknowns get filled up from the imagination.

But there were less than 100 usable inscriptions. It follows that the amount of words and grammar that can be discovered is limited.

Still, the final proof of having discovered the true Venetic lies in the extent to which a lexicon and grammar can be discovered, especially enough that it is possible to generate new sentences.

At the end of *THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL\** I showed some easy examples of how new sentences could be created from the existing lexicon and grammar. Here are some examples branching out from the actual sentence:

*pupone.i .e.go rako.i .e.kupetaris*  
'to the father/elder let remain a duck'

do 'bring!'

We can add a noun in the Partitive. Thus 'Bring a duck!' is  
do *rako.i*. 'Bring a duck!'

or using the **pueia** of the real example,  
*pueia rako.i*. 'catch a duck!'

*dogo rako.i*. 'Let him/them bring a duck!' 'Let a duck be brought!'

*do.i rako.i*. 'To bring a duck'

*rakone.i dogo voto.i*  
'to the duck let bring some water'

*votone.i viougo rako.i*  
'to the water let carry a duck'

*pupotane.i .e.go rakota.i*  
'to the fathers/elders let remain some ducks'

*pupoine.i .e.go rakoi.i*  
'to the fathers/elders let remain some ducks'

*pupone.i dob rako.i*  
'(he) brings a duck to the father/elder'

. The Active Past Participle appears with our earlier examples as  
*pupone.i dono rako.i*  
'a duck (being) brought to the father/elder'

The Passive Past Participle appears with our earlier examples as  
*pupone.i doto rako.i*  
'a duck (having been) brought to the father/elder'

voto ob dono rako.i. pupone.i.  
'the water has brought a duck to the father/elder'

rakoto.i. .e.go pupo.i. 'Some ducks , let remain, joining with the Father'

pupone.i. .e.go rako.i. 'Let remain the duck till the Father'

pupol .e.go rako.i. 'Let remain the duck with (at) the Father'

Using the verb a.n.a for 'give'  
a.n.an rako.i. pupole.i. 'I give the duck to the Father'

Using the verb vo.t.te for 'take'  
vo.t.ten rako.i. pupo./t 'I take the duck away from the Father'

tivale.i. be.l. rako lenego! 'On wing, let the duck fly!'

rako mneb voto.s. 'The duck goes into the water'

As the duck emerges from the water we use the Elative 'out of' as follows:  
pupo vo.t.teb rako voto.s.t 'The Father takes the duck out of the water'

AND SO ON... Sadly, because most of the inscriptions appeared in the context of prayers to the goddess or funerary situations, we lack some of the common everyday words in order to construct some common everyday sentences - unless we find word stems from outside the realm of the inscriptions on archeological objects. We might for example obtain some words from Roman texts, such as using the place name *Tergeste* (now Trieste) to propose that there was a word **te.r.g** meaning 'market'.

These sentences are only examples to show how the existing Venetic inscriptions can be used to expand the sentences into other forms, and how words from other sentences can be introduced. A thousand new sentences could be generated from the ones I deciphered. For more detailed discussions of creating such sentences, see section 15.3 of *THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL\**,

Critics may point to how today movies will hire a linguist to create a language for a movie. That is easy. But what is the probability of anyone being able to create an imaginary language that also happens to produce sentences that mirror actual sentences in the Venetic inscriptions, and the meanings of those sentences correspond well with the contexts in which those sentences appear. For that to happen by chance, and not be real, it would be easier to be hit by a comet.

---

## References

**Andres Pääbo, 2002-2014**, *THE VENETIC LANGUAGE An Ancient Language from a New Perspective: FINAL\**, [www.paabo.ca](http://www.paabo.ca)

**Andres Pääbo, 2014**, *HOW VENETIC SOUNDED A New Interpretation of the Dots in Ancient Venetic Inscriptions, and Resulting Phonetics*, [www.paabo.ca](http://www.paabo.ca)

**LLV = G.B. Pellegrini & A.L. Prosdocimi, 1964** *La Lingua Venetica*, Padova.

**MLV = M. Lejeune, 1974.** *Manuel de la Langue Vénète*,