



Image from: [Wends in Cassell's Peoples, Nations and Cultures](#)

Summary Article: **Wends**  
From *The Columbia Encyclopedia*

or Sorbs, Slavic people (numbering about 60,000) of Brandenburg and Saxony, E Germany, in Lusatia. They speak Lusatian (also known as Sorbic or Wendish), a West Slavic language with two main dialects: Upper Lusatian, nearer to Czech, and Lower Lusatian, nearer to Polish. The towns of Bautzen (Upper Lusatia) and Cottbus (Lower Lusatia in modern Silesia) are their chief cultural centers.

In the Middle Ages the term *Wends* was applied by the Germans to all the Slavs inhabiting the area between the Oder River in the east and the Elbe River and the Saale River in the west. German conquest of their land began in the 6th cent. and was completed under Charlemagne (8th cent.). A coalition of Wendish tribes in the 10th cent. and again in the early 12th cent. temporarily halted German expansion. A crusade against the pagan Wends was launched in 1147 under the leadership of Henry the Lion of Saxony and Albert the Bear of Brandenburg. The crusade itself was, on the whole, a failure, but in subsequent years Henry the Lion, aided by Waldemar I of Denmark, Albert the Bear, and other princes, carried out a systematic campaign of conquest. By the end of the 12th cent. nearly all Germany except East Prussia had been subjected to German rule and was Christianized. However, a group of Slavic-speaking Wends has maintained itself to the present day in Lusatia. They call themselves *Srbi* and hence are known also in English as Lusatian Sorbs or Serbs.

See Stone, G. , *The Smallest Slavonic Nation: The Sorbs of Lusatia* (1972).

**APA**

Chicago

Harvard

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Wends. (2018). In P. Lagasse, & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia* (8th ed.). New York, NY: Columbia University Press. Retrieved from <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/wends>

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## APA

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## Chicago

"Wends." In *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, by Paul Lagasse, and Columbia University. 8th ed. Columbia University Press, 2018. <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/wends>

## Harvard

Wends. (2018). In P. Lagasse & Columbia University, *The Columbia encyclopedia*. (8th ed.). [Online]. New York: Columbia University Press. Available from: <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/wends> [Accessed 13 November 2019].

## MLA

"Wends." *The Columbia Encyclopedia*, Paul Lagasse, and Columbia University, Columbia University Press, 8th edition, 2018. *Credo Reference*, <https://search.credoreference.com/content/topic/wends>. Accessed 13 Nov. 2019.