The Expansion of the Indo-European Languages:
An Indo-Europeanist’s Evolving View

by
Eric P. Hamp
with annotation and comments by Douglas Q. Adams
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The Expansion of the Indo-European Languages: 
An Indo-Europeanist’s Evolving View

by Eric P. Hamp, University of Chicago
with Annotation and Comments by Douglas Q. Adams, University of Idaho

Introduction

In 1989 and again in the period 2009–2012 Eric Hamp produced several hand-drawn Stammbäume to represent his understanding of the interrelationships of the various branches of Indo-European. Reproduced here are the 1989 tree and a composite of the 2009–2012 trees (which do not present any differences in branching, but do occasionally have somewhat different notes attached).

These trees are interesting from at least two perspectives. First and foremost, they represent the mature views of an eminent Indo-Europeanist, one who was equally at home at the micro-level and the macro-level, of the complicated picture of these interrelationships. Secondly, comparing the first and second trees, created almost a quarter of a century apart, gives insight into how he assessed the new data and the new arguments that appeared in this period.

His sub-grouping of Indo-European is at times quite conservative (e.g., the primary distinction within non-Anatolian Indo-European between Asiatic [= Indo-Iranian] and European Indo-European) and, at others, quite innovative (e.g., the acceptance of Burushaski as a definite sibling of “Indo-Hittite” [though possibly a creolized one], the placement of Tocharian so deeply within European Indo-European).

Finally, Hamp gave attention to how the geographical spread of these subgroups came about.
Some technical notes:

1. Hamp’s original trees were drawn freehand, in a “fan-shape.” For typographical reasons they are presented here in a more “genealogical” format.

2. Hamp’s original comments are enclosed within parentheses; the material within square brackets represents my own attempts at amplification/clarification.

3. In places where Hamp supplied no node name, I have done so and put the non-Hampean name in small caps and within double quotation marks.

4. In his 1989 tree Hamp combined the purely genealogical information of the *Stammbaum* with persistent areal influence, using the following linguistic areas:
   - N = North European area
   - S = South European area
   - W = West European area
   - NC = North-central European area

   This information was not given with the 2009–2012 trees. The fact that it is missing from the latter trees should not be taken as an indication that Hamp no longer believed in any ongoing areal influences.

5. Amendments in brackets are mine, as are the numbered lists of commentaries following each of Hamp’s trees.

— DQA
Hamp’s 1989 Tree
Eric Hamp, “The Expansion of the Indo-European Languages”
*Sino-Platonic Papers*, 239 (August 2013)

“Indo-Hittite” [Hamp’s quotation marks]

Anatolian (interrelationships among the following are uncertain)

- Hittite
- Palaic
- Lydian
- Luvian

- Cuneiform
- Hieroglyphic

Indo-European

- Asiatic Indo-European
  - Iranian
    - “INDO-NURISTANIC”
      - Indic
      - Nuristani
  - Cuneiform
  - Hieroglyphic
- Indo-European

- Pontic—South Indo-European
  - “Helleno-Macedonian”
    - Greek
    - Macedonian (?)
- Residual Indo-European
- Northwest Indo-European

“EASTERN NODE” (in order of splitting from “Residual Eastern Node”)

- Prehellenic [in the original diagram there is a dashed line indicating subsequent influence from Germanic]
  - Cimmerian
  - Albanian S, N
    - Geg
    - N(E) Geg
    - South Geg
  - Tosk
    - Southern Tosk
    - Arvanitika
    - Arbëresh
    - [Northern Tosk (not present on list but implied)]
- Thracian [exact relationship with the rest of the “Eastern Node” uncertain]
- Balto-Slavic
  - Baltic N, NC
    - East (Lithuanian, Latvian, etc.)
    - West (Old Prussian)
  - Slavic (the residue of the “Eastern Node”) N, NC
- Germanic N, W, NC [in the original diagram there is a dashed line indicating subsequent influence on Prehellenic]
  - “Illyrian” [relationship to rest of mode uncertain]; (relationship to Messapic perhaps a “myth”)
  - Messapic [relationship to rest of mode uncertain]; (relationship to “Illyrian” perhaps a “myth”)
- Phrygian
- Tocharian
- Italo-Celtic

Italic S, W

- Osco-Umbrian
- Latin (now with Satricum) (Latin Faliscan: a spectrum of dialects)
- Venetic
- Sicel

Celtic N, W

- Old Irish
- Middle/Breton/Cornish (p-Celtic)
- Cumbric (p-Celtic)
- Welsh (p-Celtic)
- Gaulish (p-Celtic)
- Lepontic
- Celtiberian

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1 Hamp’s notes indicate that “Northern Tosk” might be better labeled as “Residual Tosk,” as it is not defined by any special isoglosses as are Arbëresh in Italy and Arvanitika in Greece.
Notable characteristics of Hamp’s 1989 tree:

1. As do the great majority of Indo-Europeanists, Hamp separates out Anatolian as the first group to sever itself from the remaining Indo-European community. For the language that includes both pre-Anatolian and the rest of the Indo-European branches, he retains Sturtevant’s name, “Indo-Hittite,” at least provisionally.

2. Unlike most contemporary Indo-Europeanists, he takes the next major divide to be between Asiatic Indo-European (= Indo-Iranian and Nuristani), with Nuristani more closely related to Indic than to Iranian). Such a division would be consonant with Renfrew’s notion of the break-up of the Proto-Indo-European speech community, but Hamp is explicit that the homeland was in north-central or east-central Europe (and not Anatolia as Renfrew supposes).

3. Also unlike most contemporary Indo-Europeanists, he doesn’t claim that the pre-Tocharian were “early-leavers” from the rest of the Proto-Indo-European speakers. Rather the pre-Tocharian are one group, along with the Germanic and Italo-Celtic groups who separated themselves from Northwest Indo-European, leaving behind the group I’ve labeled the “Eastern Node” (but see also comments concerning “Indo-European Migrations” below). (See also Hamp’s “Whose Were the Tocharians?: Linguistic Subgroupings and Diagnostic Idiosyncrasy,” in *The Bronze Age and Early Iron Age Peoples of East Central Asia*, ed. Victor H. Mair [Washington, DC, and Philadelphia: The Institute for the Study of Man and The University of Pennsylvania Museum Publications, 1998], pp. 307–346. In this article Hamp discusses the position of Tocharian vis-à-vis other Indo-European groups and touches on the reasons he constructs the overall tree as he does.)

4. Italic and Celtic are, without comment, put together in an Italo-Celtic group.

5. Both Venetic and Sicel are included within the Italic family, full sisters of Osco-Umbrian and Latin.

6. The “Eastern Node” of Northwestern Indo-European is probably neither a good name nor a good concept. Those of the “Eastern Node” were simply the residue of Northwestern Indo-European after the pre-Germanics, pre-Tocharian, pre-Italoceltics, and probably the
pre-Illyrians and pre-Messapics had more or less simultaneously separated themselves from the remaining speakers of Northwest Indo-European. The “Eastern Node” much more gradually dissolved, one group leaving at a time, and leaving then pre-Slavs more or less in situ.

7. Hamp is most hesitant to claim a special relationship of Messapic and “Illyrian,” saying that such a relationship may be a “myth.”

8. On the other hand, he explicitly posits an Italo-Celtic grouping.

9. He brackets Welsh-Cumbric, Breton-Cornish, and Gaulish (“a trailer in Europe”) together as “p-Celtic.” It is not clear if this is a strict “genealogical” division or whether it is an areal diffusion that happened not to include the otherwise co-equal Lepontic and Celtiberian. He points out that the classification of the two latter groups is made difficult by the lack of evidence; he thinks it is possible that Celtiberian is a separate Celtic branch.

10. In an area of current controversy, Hamp holds firmly to the concept of an Indo-European Prehellenic (perhaps to be clustered with other largely unknown languages such as Tartessian). Still more firmly, he considers Pictish to be non-Indo-European.
HAMP’S 2012 TREE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burushaski (creolistic?)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indo-Hittite [no quotation marks this time]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anatolian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hittite, Palaic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuneiform and Hieroglyphic Luvian, Lydian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lycian, Carian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indo-European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asiatic Indo-European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iranian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Indo-Nuristanic”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuristani</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>European Indo-European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pontic Indo-European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“HELLENO-MACEDONIAN”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macedonian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Armenian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple [sic] Indo-European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Indo-European</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phrygian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italo-Celtic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Osco-Umbrian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Latin-Satricium-Faliscan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venetic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sicel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Celtic</td>
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<tr>
<td>Old Irish</td>
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<td>Middle/Breton/Cornish “p-Celtic”</td>
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<td>Cumbric</td>
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<tr>
<td>“p-Celtic”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welsh</td>
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<tr>
<td>“p-Celtic”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gaulish, Lepontic</td>
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<tr>
<td>“p-Celtic”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celtiberian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tartessian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Indo-European (“mixture with non-Indo-European”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“GERMANO-PREHELLENIC”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prehellenic (substrate geography)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thracian, Dacian [relationship with other branches of this group not certain] (glosses, homonyms)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cimmerian (substrate geography)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tocharian (suppletive verbs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“BALTO-SLAVO-ADRIATIC”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“BALTO-SLAVIC”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“ADRIATIC Indo-European”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Albanian</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geg</td>
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<tr>
<td>N(E) Geg</td>
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<td>South Geg</td>
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<td>Tosk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southern Tosk</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arvanitika</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arbëresh</td>
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<tr>
<td>[Northern Tosk; implied; see above]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“MESSAPO-ILLYRIAN”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illyrian (two words in Latin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messapic (1 +/- 3] word(s) epigraphically)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notable characteristics of Hamp’s 2012 tree:

1. See note 1 of “Notable characteristics of Hamp’s 1989 tree,” above.
2. See note 2 of “Notable characteristics of Hamp’s 1989 tree,” above.
3. Noteworthy is Hamp’s addition of Burushaski as an assured sibling of Indo-Hittite (the evidence for shared laryngeals between Burushaski and I-H being particularly significant), though he provides no hyperonym for the siblings.
4. Tocharian is nestled even more deeply in “residual Indo-European.”
5. Italic and Celtic remain as members of Italo-Celtic
6. Venetic and Sicel are full members of Italic.
7. Lepontic is moved to “p-Celtic.”
8. A noteworthy change from the earlier list is that Messapic and Illyrian are ranked as closely related; they share the Winter’s Law lengthening of Balto-Slavic.
9. Macedonian is no longer marked by a question mark in its relationship to Greek.
10. The branching of the Northern Indo-European group shown in the diagram is a bit misleading. In this group Hamp does not assume that all the sub-branches separated at once (as the shape of the diagram would imply), but rather the sub-branches are arranged in the order in which they separated, Germano-Prehellenic first, Thracian/Dacian next, etc. Balto-Slavic forms a proper subgroup with Albanian, Illyrian, and Messapic.
11. In an area of current controversy, Hamp holds firmly to the concept of an Indo-European Prehellenic, explicitly most closely allied to Germanic. Even more firmly, Pictish is regarded as not Indo-European.
Hamp’s Notes on Indo-European Migrations:\(^2\)

After the invention of wheels, pottery, spinning/thread, [and] metal smelting, and after (?) the Anatolian push, we find the following movements of the various Indo-European subgroups. [In Hamp’s view it is not clear whether the “Anatolian push” comes after all of these inventions, before, or somewhere in the middle. It presumably precedes the movements of the other subgroups.]

**Indo-Iranian:** North and east of Kurgan [lower Volga and extreme northeastern Kazakhstan and adjacent portions of Russia]

**Helleno-Armenians (= Pontic Indo-Europeans):** south and east of Kurgan [northeast coast of the Black Sea and its hinterlands]

1. Via Batoumi and the southern Black Sea coast (Armenians left behind after Batoumi).
2. Greeks enter Aegean and Peloponnesus from Asia Minor, Cyprus via Pamphylia. Troy is a barrier to further migration directly west or to the northwest. So first the pre-Cypriots and then other groups of pre-Hellenics are turned south at this point. The pre-Cypriots continue south to Pamphyllia and ultimately Cyprus, the other groups cross the Aegean (Myceneans first).
3. Mycenean Greeks were in Thebes and Thessaly before the Aeolians; Myceneans were the first Greeks on Crete [see Map 1].

From the “residual Indo-European” (aka “Apple Indo-European”)

1. **Pre-Tocharians** leave first, going east [NB this is a different scenario than is presented by either the 1989 or the 2012 tree].
2. **Apple Indo-Europeans** divide, presumably on an east/west basis into **Northwest Indo-Europeans** (pre Italics, Celts, and Phrygians) and **Northern Indo-Europeans** (Germanics, Balto-Slavs/Albanians/Illyrians/Messapics).
3. **Northwest Indo-Europeans** are likely to have been the first inhabitants of Hallstatt.
4. **Pre-Phrygians** move east and south in the same manner as later do the Galatians.

\(^2\) As grouped and summarized by Adams.
5. **Pre-Germanics** are the first to separate from the (rest of the) **Northern-Indo-Europeans**; the remainder is marked as a proper linguistic sub-group ("**Balto-Slav-Adriatic Indo-Europeans**") by the presence of some form of Winter’s Law.

6. Leaving behind the Balto-Slavs, the **Adriatic Indo-Europeans** all [together or apart? ("not enough evidence")]) eventually move south of the Carpathians, presumably along the middle Danube; the Messapics eventually cross the Adriatic.
Non-Indo-European Substrates: ³

Hamp identifies the following non-Indo-European substrates that various Indo-European groups came into contact with as they moved towards and into their historic seats (see Map 2).

1. Picts at least in northern Britain and perhaps originally throughout Britain. (It is perhaps from a Pictish source that the Celts borrowed vigesimal counting and counting the passage of time by nights rather than days.)
2. Western Europeans in what is now the Netherlands and northwestern Germany.
3. Northeast Europeans in what are now the Baltic republics and northeastern Russia (“a stable area”).
4. Minoans on Crete.
5. Iberians in southern and eastern Iberia.
6. Western Europeans in northwestern Iberia and southwestern France (including probably, but not absolutely certainly, the pre-Basques).

³ Again as grouped and summarized by Adams following Hamp’s map.
Map 1. Migration routes of Greeks from northeast of the Black Sea to Greece and Cyprus, after Eric Hamp

[a = (pre-)Cypriots, b = Myceneans (and Arcadians), c = other Greeks (Attic-Ionic, Aeolian, Dorian)]
Map 2. Pre-Indo-European substrates as identified by Eric Hamp

Base map from WorldAtlasBook.com
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