

Genealogical Classification of Languages

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The Indo European Family of Languages

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Researches in the field of language have proved that some of the languages have some sort of relationship to one another and that they have been derived from a common root. Classification of languages into families on the basis of ancestral decadence is known as Genealogical classification. English for example, belongs to the Indo European family of languages, formally called Indo Germanic and still earlier Aryan. Indo European is the name given to the set of linguistic forms from which nearly all European languages as well as those of Persia & a very large of India can be shown to have descended. The predominance of Germanic philologists of the 19th century accounts for the earlier term Indo-Germanic. Aryan was the name which the fair skinned bringers of the Hindu civilization to India from the North gave themselves to distinguish them from the darker and less cultured peoples whom they largely conquered.

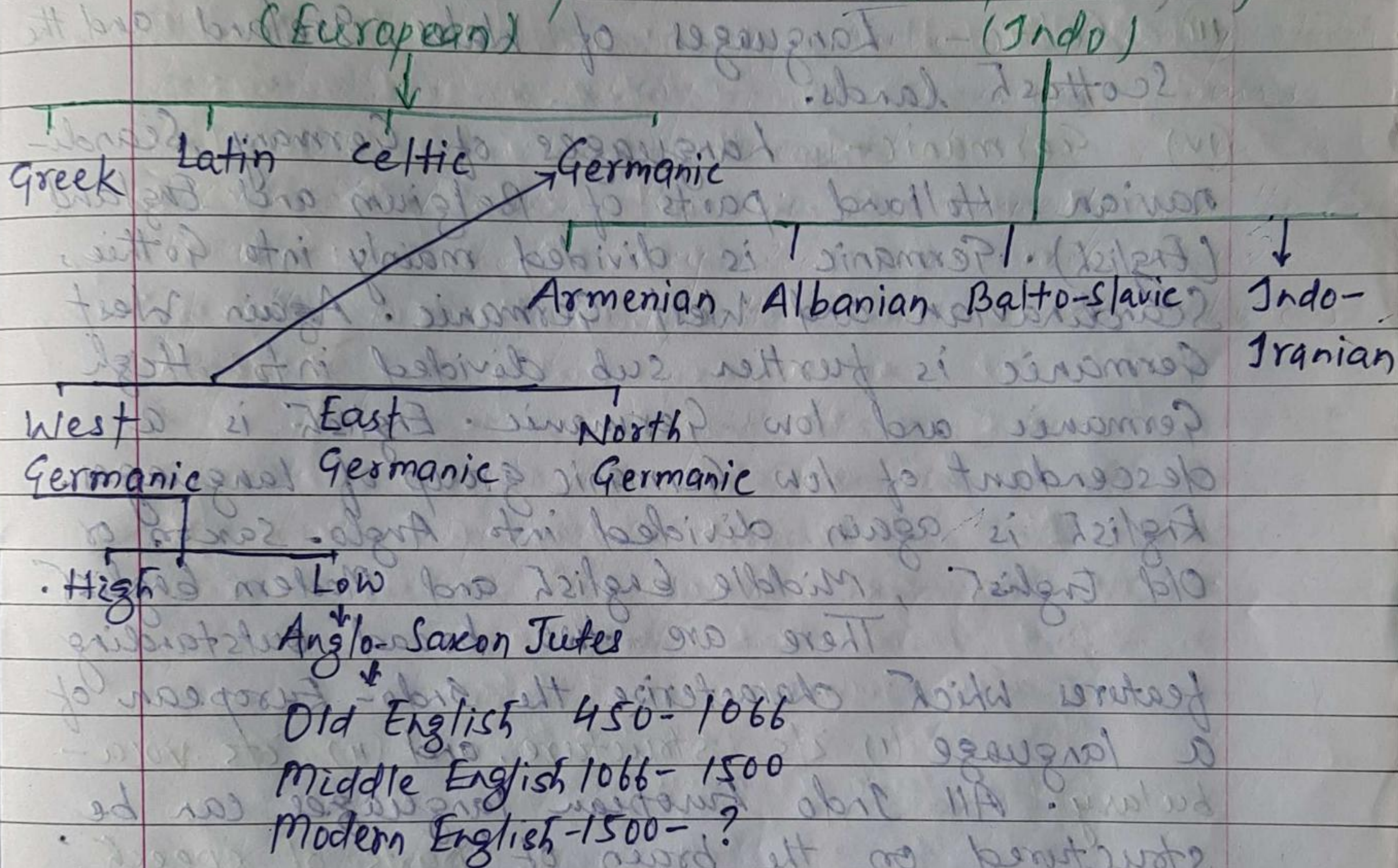
From a close study of the family Diagram of Indo-European Languages, it pre-
cipitator that there are eight main groups of Indo-European Languages. These are divided roughly into a "Eastern" and a "Western" set of groups.

The Eastern set consists of four groups of languages:

The Indo-European Family

Western Family

Eastern Family



(i) Armenian: Languages of the South of Caucasus mountains and the eastern end of the black sea.

(ii) Albanian: Languages of the North-East of Greece.

(iii) Balto-Slavic: Languages of Baltic countries such as Lithuania and Latvia.

(iv) Indo-Iranian: Languages of the old and New India of which Sanskrit is the type and of Iran-Persia.

The western group of languages are sub-divided into following four groups:-

- (i) Greek - Ancient and modern with their many dialects.
- (ii) Latin or Italic - Including all its derivatives like French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Rumanian.
- (iii) Celtic - Languages of Wales, Ireland and the Scottish lands.

(iv) Germanic - Languages of Germany, Scandinavian, Holland parts of Belgium and England (English). Germanic is divided mainly into Gothic, Scandinavian and West Germanic. Again West Germanic is further sub divided into High Germanic and Low Germanic. English is a descendant of Low Germanic group of languages. English is again divided into Anglo-Saxon or Old English, Middle English and Modern English.

There are two broad outstanding features which characterize the Indo-European of a language (i) its structure, and (ii) its vocabulary. All Indo-European languages can be structured on the basis of 'parts of speech', a form invented and named by the ancient Greeks, Chinese, Hungarian and French are some of the languages which do not show parts of speech. Instead, they have a phrase. Complex pattern with prefixes and suffixes. The second feature of Indo-European languages is their common basis of vocabulary. They share the nucleus of fundamental roots. For instance, most of the name of family relationship of elementary domestic materials and familiar animals are shared by the Indo-European language. English is Indo-European in the sense that it shares the above

mentioned features

The Germanic has the following characteristics which distinguish it from other Indo-European languages:—

(i) A strong tendency to fix the stress of a word on its root syllable. It is known as the stress shift of the Teutonic accent.

(ii) The building up of a two tense system in the verb.

(iii) Sub-division of the verbs into strong verbs and weak verbs.

(iv) The series of sound changes, known as the great consonant shift or Grimm's Law. According to it a series of consonants in Indo-Germanic were subjected to regular shifting in the Germanic languages. For instance—

(a) Indo-Germanic *bh, dh, gh* became Germanic *b, d, g*.

(b) Indo-Germanic *p, t, k* became Germanic *f, th, k* respectively—

Examples:—

<i>bhrata</i>	brother	<i>lubricus</i> (L)	Slippery
<i>madhya</i>	middle	<i>syadu</i> (S)	Sweet
<i>hamsa</i>	goose	<i>gana</i> (G)	Knee

Pita father

Anfara other

kra kua (Q.E.)