

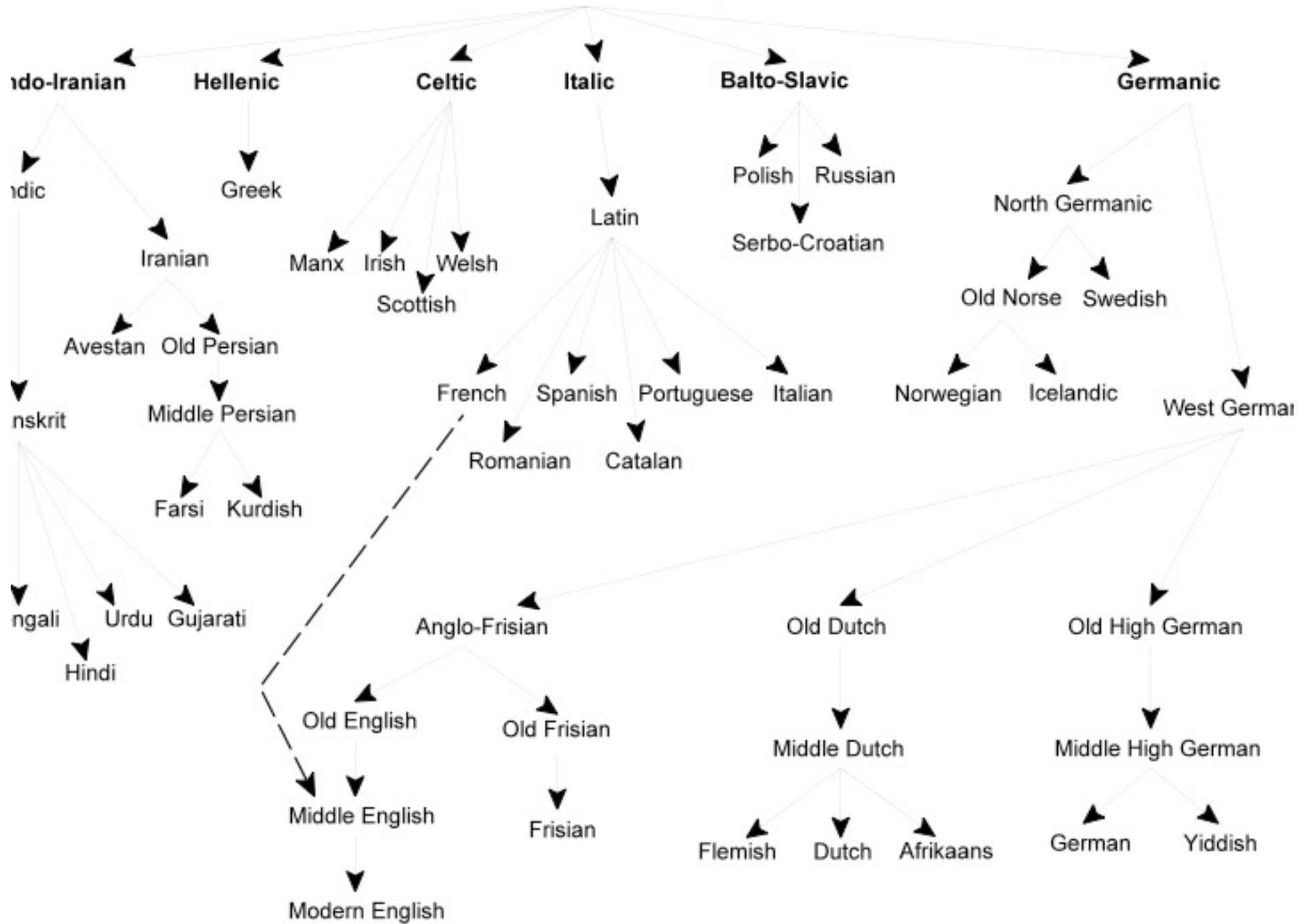
Getting it Across

Some notes on the art of
translation

OLLI Summer Term 2009

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Proto-Indo-European



Is it English?

- Hwæt! We Gardena in geardagum,
- þeodcyninga, þrym gefrunon,
- hu ða æpelingas ellen fremedon.
- Oft Scyld Scefing sceapena þreatum,
- 5
- monegum mægþum, meodosetla ofteah,
- egsode eorlas. Syððan ærest wearð
- feascraft funden, he þæs frofre gebad,
- weox under wolcnum, weorðmyndum þah,
- oðþæt him æghwylc þara ymb sittendra
- 10
- ofer hronrade hyran scolde,
- gomban gyldan. þæt wæs god cyning!

More or less...

- Hwæt! We Gardena in geardagum,
• þeodcyninga, þrym gefrunon,
• hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon.
Oft Scyld Scefing sceapena preatum,
• 5 monegum mægþum, meodosetla
ofteah,
• egsode eorlas. Syððan ærest wearð
feasceft funden, he þæs frofre gebad,
weox under wolcnum, weorðmyndum
þah,
• oðþæt him æghwylc þara
ymbsittendra
• 10 ofer hronrade hyran scolde,
gomban gyldan. þæt wæs god cyning!
- LO, praise of the prowess of people-kings
• of spear-armed Danes, in days long
sped,
• we have heard, and what honor the
athelings won!
• Oft Scyld the Scefing from squadroned
foes,
• from many a tribe, the mead-bench tore,
• awing the earls. Since erst he lay
• friendless, a foundling, fate repaid him:
• for he waxed under welkin, in wealth he
throve,
• till before him the folk, both far and near,
• who house by the whale-path, heard his
mandate,
• gave him gifts: a good king he!

Closer and closer...

- 1: Whan that aprill with his shoures soote
2: The droghte of march hath perced to the roote,
3: And bathed every veyne in swich licour
4: Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
5: Whan zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
6: Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
7: Tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
8: Hath in the ram his halve cours yronne,
9: And smale foweles maken melodye,
10: That slepen al the nyght with open ye
11: (so priketh hem nature in hir corages);
12: Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
- When April with his showers sweet with fruit
The drought of March has pierced unto the root
And bathed each vein with liquor that has power
To generate therein and sire the flower;
When Zephyr also has, with his sweet breath,
Quickened again, in every holt and heath,
The tender shoots and buds, and the young sun
Into the Ram one half his course has run,
And many little birds make melody
That sleep through all the night with open eye
(So Nature pricks them on to ramp and rage)-
Then do folk long to go on pilgrimage,

To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep;
No more; and by a sleep to say we end
The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;

2 degrees of separation...

- ¡Ser o no ser: he aquí el problema!
¿Qué es más levantado para el espíritu:
sufrir los golpes y dardos de la
insultante Fortuna, o tomar las armas
contra un piélago de calamidades y,
haciéndoles frente, acabar con ellas?
¡Morir..., dormir; no más! ¡Y pensar
que con un sueño damos fin al pesar del
corazón y a los mil naturales conflictos
que constituyen la herencia de la carne!
¡He aquí un término devotamente
apetecible! ¡Morir..., dormir!
¡Dormir!... ¡Tal vez sonar! ¡Si, ahí está
el obstáculo!
- (Shakespeare, tr. Luis Marín)
- To be or not to be; that is the problem!
- Which is more uplifting to the spirit,:
- To suffer the blows and darts of offensive
Fortune,
- Or to take arms against a sea of calamities,
And meeting them head on, be finished with
them?
- To die.... To sleep, no more... And to think
- That with a dream we put an end to the
heart's grief,
- And to the thousand natural conflicts
- That make up the inheritance of the flesh!
- Here I have an end devoutly tempting!
- To die... to sleep! To sleep! Maybe to
dream!
- Yes, there is the obstacle!
- (Shakespeare, tr. Marín; Marín, tr. Davis)

The machines take over...

- ¿Para ser o no ser? ésa es la pregunta. Si ' los tis más nobles en la mente para sufrir las hondas y las flechas de la fortuna indignante o para tomar los brazos contra un mar de apuros y oponiéndose, los terminan. Para morir, dormir... no más.
- To be or not to be? that one is the question. If ' tis more noble in the mind to undergo the slings and you shoot with an arrow of the indignante fortune or to take the arms against a sea from hardships and being been against they finish, them. In order to die, to sleep not more.....

2nd generation machine...

- ¿Para ser o no ser? aquél es la pregunta. Si ' los tis más nobles en la mente para experimentar las hondas y le tiran con una flecha de la fortuna del indignante o tomar los brazos contra un mar de dificultades y que es sido contra ellos acaban, ellos. Para morir, dormir no más....
- To be or not to be? that one is the question. If ' tis more noble in the mind to experience the slings and throw to him with shoots with an arrow of the fortune of the indignant or to take the arms against a sea from difficulties and that is be against them finish, they. In order to die, to sleep not more....

3rd generation...

- ¿Para ser o no ser? aquél es la pregunta. Si ' los tis más nobles en la mente para experimentar las hondas y el tiro a él con los lanzamientos con una flecha de la fortuna del indignante o para tomar los brazos contra un mar de dificultades y de ésa son sean contra ellos final, ellos. Para morir, dormir no más....
- To sees or not to sees? that one is the question. If ' tis dwells noble in the mind to experience the slings and throw to him with shoots with an arrow of the indignant Fortune of the or to take the arms against to is from difficulties and that is sees against them finish, they. In order to die, to sleep not dwells....

Rubaiyats

- Here with a Loaf of Bread beneath the Bough,
A Flask of Wine, a Book of Verse - and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness -
And Wilderness is Paradise enow.
--FitzGerald, 1859
- Yes, Loved One, when the Laughing Spring
is blowing,
With Thee beside me and the Cup
o'erflowing,
I pass the day upon this Waving Meadow,
And dream the while, no thought on Heaven
bestowing.
--Garner, 1888
- A Book of Verses underneath the Bough,
A Jug of Wine, a Loaf of Bread--and Thou
Beside me singing in the Wilderness--
Oh, Wilderness were Paradise enow!"
--FitzGerald, 1889
- I desire a little ruby wine and a book of
verses,
• Just enough to keep me alive, and half a loaf
is needful;
• And then, that I and thou should sit in a
desolate place
• Is better than the kingdom of a sultan.
--Heron-Allen, 1898

More Bread and Wine...

- A gourd of red wine and a sheaf of poems —
A bare subsistence, a half a loaf, not more —
Supplied us two alone in the free desert:
What Sultan could we envy on his throne?
- In spring if a houri-like sweetheart
Gives me a cup of wine on the edge of a
green cornfield,
Though to the vulgar this would be
blasphemy,
If I mentioned any other Paradise, I'd be
worse than a dog.
- --Karim Emami, 1988
- --Graves and Omar Ali-Shah, 1967

Inferno!

- Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita
mi ritrovai per una selva oscura
ché la diritta via era smarrita.
- Ahi quanto a dir qual era è cosa dura
esta selva selvaggia e aspra e forte
che nel pensier rinova la paura!
- Tant'è amara che poco è più morte;
ma per trattar del ben ch'i' vi trovai
dirò de l'altre cose ch'i' v'ho scorte.
- Io non so ben ridir com'i' v'intrai,
tant'era pien di sonno a quel punto
che la verace via abbandonai.
- (Divinia Commedia, Inferno, Canto I)
- Midway in the journey of our life
- I came to myself in a dark wood
- For the straight way was lost.
- Ah, how hard it is to tell
- The nature of that wood, savage, dense, and
harsh—
- The very thought of it renews my fear!
- It is so bitter death is hardly more so.
- But to set forth the good I found
- I will recount the other things I saw.
- How I came there I cannot really tell,
- I was so full of sleep
- When I forsook the one true way.
– (Princeton Dante Project)

Longfellow and Musgrave

- (Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, 1867)
- Midway upon the journey of our life
- I found myself within a forest dark,
- For the straightforward pathway had been lost.
- Ah me! how hard a thing it is to say
- What was this forest savage, rough, and stern,
- Which in the very thought renews the fear.
-
- So bitter is it, death is little more;
- But of the good to treat, which there I found, Speak
- will I of the other things I saw there.
-
- I cannot well repeat how there I entered,
- So full was I of slumber at the moment
- In which I had abandoned the true way.
- George Musgrave, 1896—"Spenserian Stanzas"
- Amiddle of the Journey of our Life
- I found me wandering in a Dark Wood,
- For the Right Way was lost. Ah, bitter strife
- To tell how savage 'twas, and rough, and rude,
- For all my fears are even now renew'd
- But only thinking on't—scarce bitterer
- Were death itself! Howbeit, to show the Good,
- I lighted on therein, I will declare
- All of the Other Things that I had sight of There.
-
- Yet, how I entered it, I scarce can say,
- So full was I of drowsihead, alas,
- When from the True Path first I fell away!...

Whodunnit?

- Dorothy L. Sayers, 1949 – terza rima
- Midway this way of life we're bound upon,
• I woke to find myself in a dark wood,
• Where the right road was wholly lost and gone.
- Ay me! How hard to speak of it—that rude
• And rough and stubborn forest! The mere breath
• Of memory stirs the old fear in the blood;
- It is so bitter, it goes nigh to death;
• Yet there I gained such good, that, to convey
• The tale, I'll write what else I found therewith.
- How I got into it I cannot say,
• Because I was so heavy and full of sleep
• When first I stumbled from the narrow way...
- C. H. Sisson, 1983
- Half way along the road we have to go,
• I found myself obscured in a great forest,
• Bewildered, and I knew I had lost the way.
- It is hard to say just what the forest was like,
• How wild and rough it was, how overpowering;
• Even to remember it makes me afraid.
- So bitter it is, death itself is hardly more so;
• Yet there was good there, and to make it clear
• I will speak of other things that I perceived.
- I cannot tell exactly how I got there,
• I was so full of sleep at that point of my journey
• When, somehow, I left the proper way.

Ciardi's Dante -1950-70

- Midway in our life's journey, I went astray
- From the straight road and woke to find myself
- Alone in a dark wood. How shall I say

- What wood that was! I never saw so drear,
- So rank, so arduous a wilderness!
- Its very memory gives a shape to fear.

- Death could scarce be more bitter than that place!
- But since it came to good, I will recount
- All that I found revealed there by God's grace.

- How I came to it I cannot rightly say,
- So drugged and loose with sleep had I become
- When first I wandered there from the True Way.

Your translation here...