

Re: new book on the spread of IE

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On Feb 21, 1:53 am, "John Atkinson" <johna...@xxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

Let's assume there was once a language which the linguists' "Proto-Indo-European" is a pale approximation of(though, admittedly, not everyone agrees that PIE isn't just a linguist's idealisation, and never actually existed as a human language, which is maybe what you're getting at (?)).

Then, like every other human language, it must have had a community of speakers (at least two people). In recent times, the usual situation among people not influenced by "civilisation" has been for each "tribe" (numbering from a few hundred to some thousands) to be associated with its own language. There's no reason to think this wasn't the case way back then.

The problem of PIE is the lacking time depth, and a lot of ambiguities, such as a missing definition of what sound laws are. PIE rests on sound laws, and sound laws hold without exceptions, or when there are exceptions there is a reason for them that we can explain, but then again sound laws are just observed regularities, not real laws like Kepler's laws in astronomy, on the other hand linguists are experts on language and should be able of coining proper terms, and they go on using the term sound law, so they are laws ... I had a long discussion on sound laws with Peter T. Daniels in the thread "apes and language." Sound laws are laws are no laws are laws are no laws are laws ... How can you base PIE on such a shaky ground? The biggest problem, in my opinion, is the lacking time depth of PIE, and so I propose this solution:

Early PIE -- Ice Age language spoken in Eurasia, from Northern Spain to Malta in Siberia, center in the Franco-Cantabrian space

Middle PIE -- center Göbekli Tepe, begin of agriculture at the base of the Karacadag some

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10,000 years ago, first mining and melting of copper in the Jordan valley and in Anatolia at the same time

Late PIE — spoken in the steppes between Anatolia, rich in copper, and Central Asia, rich in tin, giving way to IE with the casting of bronze, with bridles and taming horses

Now let us have a look at Early PIE, which would have reached its peak with Magdalenian. These were not just tribes living in Eurasia, they were concentrated in the Franco–Cantabrian space, and telling by the highly evolved cave art, they formed a well organized early society along the rivers, reflected in a common language. Archaeology does have a say in paleo–linguistics.

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