More than kin, less than kind
Tocharian as an inner Indo-European language?

Hannes A. Fellner
University of Vienna

From the perspective of modern Indo-European historical linguistics, most of the old handbooks on Tocharian are outdated regarding nominal morphology. The treatment of nominal morphology in the handbooks is also incoherent and non-exhaustive from a synchronic point of view – not at least because until recently Tocharian texts were not easily accessible. Thus, inquiries into the history of Tocharian nominal morphology have been scarce (e.g., Hackstein 2011, Kim 2009, Pinault 2011, Malzahn 2014) and there is no up-to-date monograph on this topic.

The goal of this talk is to sketch out the most important trends in the development of the main Indo-European nominal categories into the Tocharian languages, highlighting archaisms and innovations. In doing so the investigation aims at contributing to a better understanding of the position of Tocharian among the other Indo-European languages. Specifically, I will address the question whether nominal morphology provides evidence that Tocharian was the second language to split off from Proto-Indo-European after the Anatolian branch, as has been argued by Ringe et al. (2002), Jasanoff (2003), and Anthony and Ringe (2015).

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