A. Introduction

It is common for a non-specialist in the field of linguistics to believe that Lithuanian might be somehow similar to Polish, Russian, Ukrainian, perhaps even to Estonian and Finnish (the latter two do not even belong to the Indo-European languages!), but very many people will express their belief that German, not to speak of English, has "nothing to do with Lithuanian," i.e., that these are two completely "different" languages. This belief, especially in the U.S.A., stems from the practical experience of an average American. In about the 3 last generations he has been watching immigrants from Poland and Russia, from Ukraine and Lithuania and from other European countries coming in, settling down and beginning to live in the new country. All these immigrants often lived side by side, they established their churches, schools and various organizations, a multitude of these, and the "on-looking" local American did not observe the differences in their languages which were "all the same" to him. The Americans knew something about German, French, Italian and Spanish because these languages were taught in some schools (Spanish was also spoken in New Mexico, Texas and California, some French in the northern New England states, etc...) Italian was better known as the language of operas, songs, etc. There were also numerically more immigrants from these nationalities. But the languages the average American "could not make out" were to him "one and the same thing."

Lithuanians themselves could not explain these differences between their own language and the others: like most of us, they knew their language well, but they did not know much **about** their language itself. To them, languages like German and

ABREVIATIONS

E.	= English
G.	= German
Gmc.	= Germanic
Goth.	= Gothic
I. E.	= Indo-Euopean
Lith.	= Lithuanian
M. E.	= Middle English
M. H. G.	= Middle High German
O. E.	= Old English
O. Fris.	= Old Frisian
O. H. G.	= Old High German
O. L. G.	= Old Low German
O. N.	= Old Norse
pr.	= pronounced
Prim.	= Primitive
>	= became, becomes
<	= came from, is derived from

Lithuanian and the Germanic Languages

Dr. ANTANAS KLIMAS

English certainly sounded like completely different languages in comparison with their native Lithuanian. This was simple. Let us take a practical example: who would think that Lith. **dantis,** E. **tooth** and G. **Zahn** originally were the same word in Primitive Indo-European. Or take Lith **žąsis** (pr. **zhaasis,** "ž" as "s" in E. **measure**), E. **goose** and G. **Gans;** or Lith. **gimti** ("g" as in E. **good**) "to be born," E. **come,** G. **kommen!!**

Even if there were some similarities, they were so few (at least that is how they sounded) that any relation between Lithuanian and German or English was not even considered. Take such a sentence:

Lith. **mano brolis turi penkias dukteris**
E. **my brother has five daughters**

In these two sentences, only the middle word, the verb **turi,** E. **has,** is not derived from the same word, while the other four words are derived from the same Indo-European forms. But who, without some knowledge of historical linguistics, would think that, for example, Lith. **penkias** and E. **five** are derived from the same original word: I. E. * **penkwe?**[1]

B. THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN LITHUANIAN AND THE GERMANIC LANGUAGES

When the Germanic languages were gradually separated from the rest of the Indo-European languages, certain characteristics were developed by them which separated them very sharply from most of the other sister languages of the original Indo-European family. Those will also be the main differences between Lithuanian and the Germanic prototypes since Lithuanian has retained a much more ancient character, and in many cases it can represent the original Indo-European pattern.

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The main differences which separated the Germanic languages from the rest of the Indo-European languages are these:

1. Fixing of the word accent on the first syllable of the word. In Primitive Indo-European and even in contemporary Lithuanian, there is no fixed position for the word accent. This Germanic innovation caused many changes in the sound and form structure of the Germanic languages.

2. The Germanic Consonant Shift:

I. E. k > Prim Gmc. ch (voiceles h), later h
  p > f
  t > th as in froth
I. E. b > p
  d > t
  g > k
I. E. bh > b (fricative)
  dh > d (fricative, th as in father)
  gh > g (fricative)

Some examples to illustrate these changes. Lithuanian here representing the original I.E. pattern:

  Lith. **karys** "warrior" — Goth. **harjis**, G. **Heer**
  Lith. **penki** "five — G. **fuenf**, E. **five**
  Lith. **dubus** — E. **deep**, G. **tief**, etc.

3. Change of Liquids and some Nasals:

I. E. vocalic r, vocalic l, vocalic m, vocalic n > Prim. Gmc. ur, ul, um, un.

4. I. E. short "a" and short "o" became short "a" in Prim. Germanic, while I. E. long "a" and long "o" became both long "o" in Prim. Germanic (the latter is an exclusive Germanic feature, not found in any I. E. language).

5. The reduction of the final syllables. Because of the fixing of the accent on the first syllable of the word, the final syllables with short vowels were weakened and then lost, most of the long vowels in the final syllables were shortened.

6. The systematic use of the inherited Indo-European ablaut[2] in the strong (irregular) verbs.[3]

7. Syncretization of declensional cases. Indo-European had 8 cases: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative, instrumental, ablative, locative, vocative. Most of the Germanic languages are recorded with only 4 cases: nominative, genitive, dative, accusative. This Germanic simplification most probably started already in the common I. E. family.

8. A special Germanic development of the so-called -n or weak declension (like G. der Mensch, des Menschen, etc.), although this already has its very beginnings in the Indo-European period.

9. The development and separation of two adjective declensions.

10. In the Germanic verbal system: the loss of formal categories, especially in the field of tenses and moods. In Primitive Indo-European there were the following tenses: Present, Future, Imperfect, Aorist, Perfect. In Germanic, only present tense was continued. Future disappeared completely, imperfect dissappeared, perfect and aorist were combined into a single preterit. (The so-called compound tenses, like E. "I have seen, I had seen, I shall see," are a much later development, they have nothing to do with the original I. E. tenses). Germanic languages have also lost moods and voices: passive voice was lost, subjunctive was lost, optative was used as subjunctive. (Again, such passive forms as G. "ich bin geschlagen worden" are a later development, actually a substitution).

11. The creation of the Germanic weak preterit. This is also a totally exclusive Germanic feature: in Primitive Indo-European, tenses were created primarily by changing the root vowel: E. **drink—drank—drunk**; G. **trinken—trank—ge-trunken**, etc. In this newly developed "weak preterit," past tense was formed by adding a dental suffix: German -TE (**sag-te, frag-te**), English -ED (**ask-ed, work-ed**).

These changes are characteristic of all Germanic languages. They might be also called Germanic innovations, or "reforms" of the original Indo-European pattern. Some of these changes have their very beginnings still in the I. E. common period, some are of a much later date. It is practically impossible to date them exactly. They most probably took place sometimes between ca. 1500 B.C. — 300 A.D.[4] The place — somewhere in Europe, between Southern Scandinavia, the Rhine and as far East as the Crimean peninsula.

We usually list the Germanic languages as follows:

I. Pre-historical Period: unrecorded language:
  Primitive Germanic (ca. 1500 B.C.—300 A.D.):
    A. North Germanic
    B. West Germanic
    C. East Germanic

II. Historical Times:
  A. North Germanic
    Old Norse (Old Icelandic)
      1. Swedish
      2. Norwegian
      3. Danish
      4. Icelandic
  East Germanic:
      1. Gothic
      2. Burgundian
      3. Langobardian
      4. Vandal
      5. Gepides
  C. West Germanic:
      1. Frisian:
        a. Old Frisian
        b. Frisian

2. **High German:**
   - a. Old High German
   - b. Middle High German
   - c. New High German
3. **Low German:**
   - a. Old Low German
   - b. Middle Low German
   - c. New Low German
4. **English:**
   - a. Old English
   - b. Middle English
   - c. New English

We usually add Dutch, Afrikaans, Flemish, Yiddish and Pennsylvania Dutch to the West Germanic languages.[5]

It can be easily seen from this listing of the Germanic languages that they all must have undergone many changes on their own which not only separated them more from Indo-European, but also separated them from each other and, thus, made them more different from Lithuanian with its much more conservative character. Just to mention a few specific changes in different Germanic languages: the High German Consonant Shift, "breaking" in English, various influences of various **umlauts** in almost all Germanic languages, and a multitude of other changes.

Let us take an example to illustrate these great changes in the Germanic languages and compare them with the changes in Lithuanian:

I. E. *wlkwos (vocalic l) "wolf"[6]

In Lithuanian:
Prim. Baltic — **vilkas**
Lith. **vilkas**

Explanation of the changes:

I F.	w >	Lith.	v
vocalic l >			il
kw >			k
o >			a
s =			s

In Germanic Languages:
Prim. Gmc. *wulchwaz (first stage)
        *wulfaz (second stage)

Explanation of the changes:

I.E.	w >	Prim. Gmc.	w
vocalic l >			ul
kw >	chw >		f
o >			a
s >			z

Then, from the Primitive Germanic form *wulfaz, the following forms developed:

- Goth. **wulfs**
- O. N. **ulfr**
- O. L. G. **wulf** and **wolf**
- O. E. **wulf** > M. E. **wolf** > N. E. **wolf**
- O. H. G. **wolf** > M.H.G. **wolf** > N. H. G. **Wolf**

Let us go back again and begin from the situation of today: Lith. **vilkas**, G. **wolf**, E. **wolf** are all derived from the same I. E. *wlkwos (vocalic l)!

Even more changes occurred in the feminine form of the same word. As an extreme example, let us take the Old Icelandic word for "she-wolf": **ylgr.** Does it look possible that this is originally the same word as Lith. **vilkē?** It is hard to believe because the two words, **vilkē** and **ylgr** seem to be miles apart. But they both have been developed from the same I. E. word — *wlkwi (vocalic l)[7] "she-wolf." Lith. **vilkē** is, of course, very close to the original I.E. form but the Old Icelandic word underwent great many changes:

I. E. *wlkwi (vocalic l)
Prim. Gmc. *wulchwi (1st stage)
        *wulgwi (g fricative) (2nd stage, Verner's Law!)
        *wulbi (b fricative) (3rd stage)
        *wulbi (4th stage)
West Gmc. *wulbbjo —
O. H. G. **wulpa**
M. H. G. **wuelpe**

The Old Icelandic **ylgr** was developed from the genitive singular form of the Primitive Germanic *wulgwi (g fricative) (see: second stage), i.e., before Prim. Gmc. g (fricative) w > b (fricative). This then was the development:

Prim. Gmc. *wulgwi (g fricative) (nominative singular)
        *wulgwjoz (g fricative) (genitive singular)
Prim. Old Norse 1) *ulgjoz (w is lost in Prim. O. N.)
        2) *ylgjaR (y is umlauted u, this is caused by the following j)

Old Icelandic **ylgr**

Sometimes during this development, this actually genitive form was accepted gradually as the nominative form, and the final result was: **ylgr** "she-wolf."

C. THE COMMON FEATURES IN LITHUANIAN AND IN THE GERMANIC LANGUAGES

There are quite a few features in both Baltic[8] and Germanic languages which show that these two branches of the Indo-European were either developed from closely related Indo-European dialects when the I.E. family broke up, or that the two of them lived side by side for quite a while and continued the same features, or invented them together before being finally separated.

The Indo-European language branches closest to Germanic languages are Celtic and Italic. Celtic is the closest. Therefore, one speaks sometimes of Germanic-Celtic-Italic group, or of Celto-Germanic, Germano-Celtic, and Italo-Germanic groups. And only recently linguists (Senn and others) also began to speak of Baltic-Slavic-Germanic, or Slavic-Baltic-Germanic group. The reason for that, I believe, is: most of the work on Lithuanian and other Baltic languages has been until recently

done by German scholars, and some of them, although outstanding specialists in their fields, simply did not know Lithuanian as well as they did Celtic, Latin, Greek, etc. It also seems to this author that, with a few exceptions, German scholars were not interested in "connecting" their native language and the other Germanic languages with Lithuanian. Celtic and Italic were "acceptable," but Lithuanian seemed to them, perhaps, "inferior" in some way. Such shades of sentiment should be excluded from scientific work.

Here is an example of such a hasty statement. A. Bach[9]) asserts that the very fact that the Germanic languages belong to the **kentum** group of the I. E. family already shows how different they are. But he seems to have forgotten another fact: there are linguists (Feist) who believe that the ancestors of the Germanic people were non-Indo-Europeans at all: they were complete strangers, a nation of some unknown language and origin!! They assumed I. E. language and, adopting it to their articulation, they changed it radically. Others (Karsten) believe that the ancestors of the Germanic people were Indo-Europeans, but they had been for a long time under strong influence of some unknown non-Indo-European people.

That shows how dark are the origins of the Germanic people themselves. On the other hand, nobody ever doubted the fact that Lithuanians are Indo-Europeans... The very fact of belonging to **satem** or **kentum** groups does not make these two branches of the Indo-European languages completely different. **Satem** and **kentum** features have many exceptions in both Baltic and Germanic languages.

After mentioning a few similarities between Germanic and Baltic, Bach states:

"Die genannten Gemeinsamkeiten werden in der Regel als juengere Entlehnungen des Balt.-Slaw. aus dem Germanischen angesprochen."[10])

This is a very rash statement. Bach is trying to present a guess as a scientific fact: this assertion of his has never been proven, and very few people even dared to take a guess in that direction. One might even assume that the Germanic languages borrowed it from Baltic, with just as much right as Bach in his statement just quoted.

Let us now enumerate and discuss briefly some of the common features in Lithuanian and in the Germanic languages.

1. Some similarity in the treatment of liquids and some nasals. As we have already seen before Germanic languages have changed the I. E. vocalic r, vocalic l, vocalic m, vocalic n, into Prim. Gmc. ur, ul, um, un. Like I. E. *plnos (vocalic l) "full" Goth **fulls**, O. N. **fullr**, O. E., O. L. G. **ful**, O.H.G. **fol**. In Lithuanian, the I. E. vocalic r, vocalic l, vocalic m, vocalic n > ir, il, im, in: Lith. **pilnas** "full."

2. The same treatment in both groups of the I. E. short "a" and short "o". They both became short "a" in both Lithuanian and the Germanic languages. I. E. *okto -(u) "eight" Goth. **ahtau**, O. N. **atta**, O. E. **eahta**, O. Fris. **achto**, O.L.G., O.H.G. **ahto**; Lith. **aštuoni.**

3. Exactly the same formation of the cardinals **eleven** and **twelve**: Goth. **ainlif, twalif**; O.H.G. **einlif, zwelif**; Lith. **vienuolika, dvylika.**

4. Similar formation of the dative plural — with "m," while most of the other I. E. languages (except Slavic which has a similar dative plural like in Germanic and Baltic) form their dative plural with "b". Examples: Goth. **wulfam, gibom, gastim, sunum, gumam...** Lith. **vilkams, rankoms, sūnums,** etc. On the other hand: Latin **hostibus,** Sanskrit **vrkēbhyas,** Celtic **Matrebo,** etc.

The last two instances, 3 and 4, were also cited by A. Bach (see above), and he was suggesting the possibility that they might be later borrowings from Germanic. That is not possible:

a) One cannot separate this formation in Lithuanian and in the Germanic languages from the Lithuanian verb **likti** "to stay behind, to remain (over)" which is very much alive in Lith. today: derivations: **liekana, likimas, palikimas, palikti,** etc. In Germanic this root was not productive at all. And such entire families of words are usually not borrowed from one language into another. That is clearly stated by such outstanding scholars as E. Prokosch:

"The formation is exactly as in Lithuanian: **vienuo-lika, dvylika. -lika** is the reduced ablaut grade of **liekas** "left over"....root *leikw- (L. linquo). ...Gmc. f < kw... The meaning was "(ten and) one left over, two left over."[11])

b) Although it is not alltogether clear whether the Germanic dative plural ending -m goes back to -mos or -mis (we have only in Runic inscriptions **gestumR** < *gestumz < *gestums, etc.), nevertheless this Germanic development has to be considered common to both branches-Germanic and Baltic. Lithuanian had such forms in the 16th century: dat. pl. **tarnamus** (Mažvydas: Catechism of 1547, etc.), and there is no reason whatsoever to assume that this could be a borrowing from Germanic.

5. Some common words which occur only in Germanic languages and in Baltic (most of these also in Slavic): German **Lachs, Leute, Silber**: Lith. **lašiša, liaudis, sidabras.**[12]) O.H.G. **bar**: Lith. **basas,** etc.

D. GERMANIC LOANWORDS IN LITHUANIAN

There are not too many words in Lithuanian which have been borrowed from Primitive Germanic: Lith. **yla, gardas, gatvė** and some others.

In the early Middle Ages very few borrowings were made into Lithuanian from the Germanic

languages. Only after 1200 A.D. were more German (not Germanic!!) loanwords taken into Lithuanian again. Lith. **kunigas** "duke, lord," later "priest" was borrowed after 1200 from Middle High German, and a number of others were borrowed later on.[13]) Lithuanian also borowed quite a few words from Low and High German in more recent times, even in the last decades.[14])

We cannot find any Lithuanian loanwords in Germanic languages, although some Lithuanian words were taken over by the German dialects in East Prussia. Thus, we cannot find any Lithuanian words in English.[15]) Modern Lithuanian, on the other hand, has some English loanwords: Lith. **bekonas** < E. bacon, **futbolas** < football, **nokautas** < K.O., and others. Most of these English loanwords in Lithuanian are from the area of sports, commerce and industry.

NOTES:

[1]) A star (*) in front of a word is used to indicate that this word or form has never been found recorded or otherwise preserved, but that it is reconstructed. We shall be using "kw" to indicate that Indo-European sound which is usually marked as "ku" by German scholars.

[2]) Ablaut: this German word is usually used also in English for this definition. In English, it is also called "vowel gradation": drink-drank-drunk: i-a-u, etc.

[3]) These verbs are called strong verbs in German (starke Verba). This expression has been coined by Jacob Grimm to indicate the "strength" of these verbs in preserving the original inherited pattern. In English, we usually call them irregular verbs.

[4]) Recently new voices have been heard again concerning the cherished unity of the original Indo-European mother-tongue (G. "Urfamilie"). See Scherer's article in "Indogermanische Forschungen" 61, 1954, 201-215 in which he assumes a possible early disintegration of the original mother tongue ("vorhergegangener Auseinanderfall der Urfamilie"), and doubts the theoretically reconstructed ideal picture of the Indo-European. Also in: Peter Hartmann, Zur Typologie des Indogermanischen, Heidelberg, 1956, esp. p. 16 ff. Our article is too limited to analyze these problems.

[5]) There are, of course, different methods used in classifying the Germanic languages. One may be mentioned here. Namely, dividing the Germanic tribes primarily from the point of view of linguistic geography:

1. North Germanic group
2. East Germanic group
3. The Elbe group
4. The North Sea group
5. The Weser-Rhein group.

This is used now in: A. Bach, Geschichte der Deutschen Sprache, 5th ed., Heidelberg, 1953 (and in later editions), esp. p. 58, and by other scholars.

[6]) Vocalic l — "half vowel l". The term "vocalic" before a consonant usually indicates that this consonant can be pronounced for a length of time; it can even form a syllable, as in Czech *vlk* "wolf", *Brno*, etc.

[7]) A long i.

[8]) We refer here to Baltic languages: Lithuanian, Latvian, Old Prussian, ...see our article "Lithuanian and Indo-European" in *Lituanus*, Dec. 1957. But all that is said here in this connection, holds true for Lithuanian, and the examples used are only Lithuanian, according to our theme.

[9]) A. Bach, op. cit., 34 ff.

[10]) "The common traits mentioned above are usually looked upon as later borrowings of Baltic and Slavic from the Germanic languages." A. Bach, op. cit., 34.

[11]) E. Prokosch, A Comparative Germanic Grammar, Philadelphia, 1939, 288.

[12]) *Silber, silver, sidabras* is most probably a borrowing from a non-Indo-European, language, perhaps a language of Asia Minor. See also: Philip Scherer, Germanic-Balto-Slavic Etyma, Yale University Dissertation, 1941.

[13]) A ghost Lithuanian form *"kuningas"* was used by 3 generations of German scholars as a Germanic loanword in Lithuanian, and some use it even now (cf. A. Bach in op. cit.). The foremost Lithuanian linguist, Professor Kazimieras Būga (1879-1924) started the "fight" to eradicate this misunderstanding, prof. A. Senn continued it until such scholars in Germany as Hans Krahe and Ernst Fraenkel (died 1957) helped to put a stop to it. There is and never has been a Lith. *"kuningas,"* there is only *kunigas!* The writer of this article reanalyzed this entire question in his doctoral dissertation "Primitive Germanic **kuningaz* and its Spread" (University of Pennsylvania, 1956, unpublished) in which he believes to have proven Lith. *kunigas* to be a borrowing from Middle High German, from the Germans in Livonia, around or after 1200 A.D.

[14]) The fullest collection of German loanwords in Lithuanian can be found in: K. Alminauskis, Die Germanismen des Litauischen. I: Die deutschen Lehnwoerter im Litauischen. Diss. Leipzig. Kaunas, 1933. The fullest discussion of the whole problem can be found in several books and articles by prof. Alfred Senn (now at the University of Pennsylvania).

[15]) Some years ago, in "Ripley's Believe it or not," English *to talk* was *"exhibited"* as the only English word borrowed from Lithuanian: Lith. *tulkoti, tulkavoti* "to speak, to explain, to translate." But this is simply nonsense: this verb in Lithuanian is a borrowing, and not a genuine Lithuanian word...