The Oxford Introduction to Proto-Indo-European and the Proto-Indo-European World (Oxford Linguistics)

By J. P. Mallory, D. Q. Adams

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This book introduces Proto-Indo-European and explores what the language reveals about the people who spoke it. The Proto-Indo-Europeans lived somewhere in Europe or Asia between 5,500 and 8,000 years ago, and no text of their language survives. J. P. Mallory and Douglas Adams show how over the last two centuries scholars have reconstructed it from its descendant languages, the surviving examples of which comprise the world's largest language family. After a concise
account of Proto-Indo-European grammar and a consideration of its discovery, they use the reconstructed language and related evidence from archaeology and natural history to examine the lives, thoughts, passions, culture, society, economy, history, and environment of the Proto-Indo-Europeans. Our
distant ancestors had used the wheel, were settled arable farmers, kept sheep and cattle, brewed beer, got married, made weapons, and had 27 verbs for the expression of strife. The subjects to which the authors devote chapters include fauna, flora, family and kinship, clothing and textiles, food and drink, space and time, emotions, mythology, religion, and the continuing quest to discover the Proto-Indo-European homeland.

Proto-Indo-European-English and English-Proto-Indo-European vocabularies and full indexes conclude the book. Written in a clear, readable style and illustrated with maps, figures, and tables, this book is on a subject of great and enduring fascination. It will appeal to students of languages, classics, and the ancient world, as well as to general readers interested in the history of language and of early human societies.

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Editorial Review

Review
All chapters are well written and indeed the pleasingly readable style of the whole book must be applauded.
* Linguist List *

About the Author
J. P. Mallory is Professor of Prehistoric Archaeology at the Queen's University of Belfast. He holds a Ph.D. in Indo-European Studies (1975) from the University of California. His books include In Search of the Indo-Europeans (1989) and, with Victor Mair, The Tarim Mummies: The Mystery of the First Westerners in Ancient China (2000). He is currently the editor of the Journal of Indo-European Studies and was elected to the Royal Irish Academy in 1996.D. Q. Adams is Professor of English at the University of Idaho. He holds a Ph.D. in Linguistics (1972) from the University of Chicago (1972). His published work includes An Introduction to Tocharian Historical Morphology (1988), A Dictionary of Tocharian B (1999), and numerous articles on Indo-European and especially Tocharian topics. J. P. Mallory and D. Q. Adams are the co-editors of the Encyclopedia of Indo-European Culture (1997).

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