

GEORGIJ A. KLIMOV *Einführung in die kaukasische Sprachwissenschaft*. Aus dem Russischen übersetzt und bearbeitet von Jost Gippert. 405 pp. Hamburg: Buske Verlag, 1994. DM 96.

Giorgi Klimov is undoubtedly the most accomplished Russian specialist of Georgian and its sister-languages. From his pen have flowed a steady stream of both descriptive and theoretical works, among which should be mentioned his etymological dictionary of the Kartvelian languages (1964, in Russian), his early description of all the Caucasian languages (1965, in Russian), translated into German by W. Boeder and published by Buske Verlag in 1969 (which latter, it has to be said, sets the precedent for the present volume in its enhancement of the Russian original), his essay on the general theory of ergativity (1973, in Russian), his typology of languages of the active type (1977, in Russian), his discussion of the most ancient Indo-Europeanisms of the Kartvelian languages (1994, in Russian) and, with M.E. Alekseev, the useful typology of the Caucasian languages (1980 in Russian). The present text, then, is clearly one to merit serious attention.

The Cyrillic alphabet is not, to reveal a personal prejudice, the easiest of scripts on the eye, thanks to the paucity of characters with ascenders and descenders. Klimov's 1986 original is a demanding read of 207 pages of relentless text, without breaks within the paragraphs, since all examples are incorporated within the text. To this was added one final page of abbreviations for the journals, languages and dialects mentioned in the body of the work or the bottom-of-page footnotes with their page-by-page bibliographical references. Gippert has taken this drab Soviet product and transformed it (doubling the length in the process) into a really attractive volume that anyone with a budding interest in the indigenous languages of the Caucasus and their rich variety of challenging features will want to possess. Manifestly this transformation rests on more than a mere change of language (albeit to one with a more appealing script!).

Each of the three Caucasian language-families (North West Caucasian, South Caucasian or Kartvelian, and North East Caucasian or Nakh-Daghestanian) have a chapter to themselves where the salient features of phonology, morphology and syntax are discussed. This core of the book is preceded by Klimov's short introduction and a chapter describing the present state and past history of Caucasian linguistics; it is followed by chapters on: (i) the question of the possible genetic relationship between the three indigenous

language-families, (ii) the typological links between the families, (iii) the areal ties between them, and (iv) a short section of concluding remarks. To this Gippert has added his own brief introduction and note on his treatment of the language-material. But the translator has done much more than this. In the Russian original native language-material was given in transcription and assigned an immediate translation into Russian, and nothing more; apart from transcription and German translation, in Gippert's edition all words have a comprehensive morpheme-gloss appended to them, by which stroke alone this book is made so much more valuable than the original. In addition, should the language concerned have a written form, the material is first presented in its native script, which, with the inclusion of the unique Georgian and Armenian alphabets (not to mention the various adaptations of Cyrillic employed throughout the Caucasus), lends an extra piquancy to the visual effect of the German edition.

Gippert has also altered the deplorable system of giving bibliographical references at the foot of each page so that an end-bibliography now enhances the German volume; this has further allowed Gippert to add more recent works dealing with the topics covered by Klimov, and all such updatings are marked in the now general bibliography with an asterisk. Sadly S.L. Nikolayev and S.A. Starostin's 1,406-page [sic] North Caucasian etymological dictionary (1994) did not appear in time to be included, though A.E. Kibrik's and S.V. Kodzasov's 1988 and 1990 studies of the North East Caucasian verb and noun respectively are, of course, listed.

Apart from compiling the end-bibliography and list of all relevant journals, Gippert has included a further three appendices. Appendix 3 contains a number of separate indexes for: (A) authors; (B) key-words, subdivided into (a) ethnic groups and peoples, (b) ethnological terms, (c) geographical terms, (d) (unfortunately also styled 'c' in error) literary references, and the longest (e) (not 'd' as given) linguistic terms; (C) languages; (D) word-forms (with German translation), subdivided according to language. Appendix 4 contains a most valuable set of transcription-tables, beginning with the labial consonants, after which come the dental and alveolar consonants, the palatals, the laterals and velars, the uvulars, pharyngals and laryngals, and the simple vowels and diphthongs; the final table contrasts the Armenian, Georgian, Greek and Hebrew scripts. The final appendix classifies all of the indigenous languages, together with their dialects. The maps are of: (i) the Caucasus as a whole, (ii) East Georgia together with East Daghestan, and (iii) Central Daghestan.

Gippert has palpably put such an effort into the creation of this volume that I am sure Klimov would not object if I were to conclude by saying what a pleasure it is to be able to recommend without reservation Klimov's *and* Gippert's *Einführung* to all prospective (or indeed current) students of these languages.

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