

Indo-European and the Indo-Europeans: A Reconstruction and Historical Analysis of a Proto-Language and a Proto-Culture, part I: *The Text*; part II: *Bibliography, Indexes*. By THOMAS V. GAMKRELIDZE and VJAČESLAV V. IVANOV. Translated by Johanna Nichols. Trends in Linguistics, Studies and Monographs, 80. Berlin: MOUTON DE GRUYTER, 1995. Pp. cvi + 864; xxxiv + 264. DM 378; 172.

This long-awaited English version of an already famous work appears in a two-volume format, differing from that of the Russian original. The first volume contains the languages and their written sources, a methodological introduction, phonology and morphophonology, morphology and syntax, dialectology, lexicon, homeland and migration patterns, and a brief epilogue. The only addition to the original that I noted is the very last footnote on page 864. The second volume contains bibliography and indices and, oddly, repeats the information on languages and sources.

Translation of this massive and complex text was an enormous task, and we owe a great debt to Johanna Nichols for taking on the burden of making this important work accessible to non-readers of Russian and carrying out the assignment with distinction. I cannot say the same for her tendentious and hyperbolic preface. Gamkrelidze's and Ivanov's Indo-European grammar is without doubt the most original comprehensive treatment since that of Hermann Hirt, and it was not necessary to misrepresent the history of Indo-European studies to make the present work appear even more revolutionary than it is. Neither the use of typology nor the "deductive canon" is a novelty in the field (both began with Franz Bopp!). What has changed is our conception of language universals and language typology. One of the great merits of Gamkrelidze and Ivanov is that they have brought to their analysis not only the results of recent Western scholarship in these areas, but also the work of scholars in the former Soviet Union either unknown or underappreciated in the West.

Predictably, the authors' own admirably succinct and lucid presentation of their methodology contains nothing at odds with standard practice in the field. The issue is not their method, but their application of it: does their model of PIE meet their own stated conditions (pp. xciv-xcv) of squaring both with the specific historical facts and established typological data (synchronic and diachronic)? I regret to say that the answer must be a resounding "No!"

The authors' approach suffers from two major defects. Their use of the "deductive canon" leads to rampant aprioricity, resulting in: (1) circular reasoning (evidence pointing to regressive voicing assimilation in stops in PIE must be dismissed, p. 133, note 4, since it is incompatible with the "glottalic" reinterpretation espoused earlier); (2) glaring inconsistencies (on p. 142, note 13, Semitic pharyngeals are cited as a typological parallel for the phonetics of PIE laryngeals, but on p. 182 this is flatly contradicted); (3) manipulation of the data to the point

of violence (having located the PIE homeland in the Near East, the authors offer a preposterous PIE etymology for Hittite "lion"). A second problem is that the authors share with many linguists an irrational reliance on symmetry as an explanatory principle (see the incredible chart on p. 184 for one example).

The phonology section is probably the most successful portion of the book in terms of exposition. The authors cover all relevant issues, some of which are often neglected. Many of their analyses are standard, others are novel and radical. The latter will surely meet a mixed reception. All are properly presented in a well-grounded context. Readers with a modicum of knowledge about Indo-European can fairly judge the proposals for themselves.

The radical redefinition of the PIE stop system in terms of the "glottalic theory" is already well-known, and its demonstrated inadequacies continue to mount. I will say here only that the problems which the authors raise in this connection are genuine and serious. While their own solution is patently false, they deserve lasting credit for having forced the field finally to confront this issue head-on. The search for a satisfactory solution must continue. I do urge readers to read the entire phonology for themselves, since it contains much beyond the "glottalic theory."

The weakest part of the book is unquestionably the morphology, which is not remotely adequate even at a rudimentary descriptive level. The richness of PIE nominal and verbal derivation is dismissed in a few pages of muddled and hopelessly confusing formulae. Discussion of the inflectional system is cast entirely in terms of speculations about pre-PIE as an "active" language. This topic is, per se, a very viable and interesting one, but the version presented here is doomed by its reliance on a false premise (p. 233). Contrary to the authors' claims, neither in Hittite nor in PIE are the genitive endings **-o/es* and **-om* indifferent to number. Old Hittite *-an* (< **-ǝm*) is plural only, and this function is confirmed by Lycian and Lydian.

The exposition of morphology is also skewed by the fact that the authors treat many topics in the chapter on PIE dialects. I am sympathetic to their view that much of the inflectional complexity traditionally attributed to PIE is a post-PIE, dialectal phenomenon. What is lacking is a brief, straightforward sketch of those features they do attribute to PIE proper (not pre- or post-PIE). As it is, most readers will be unable to make much sense of this entire section.

Chapter seven, on PIE dialectology, is for me by far the most useful portion of the book. While I inevitably cannot accept every analysis, the discussion offered here is a valuable contribution to the on-going debate, and I personally agree with the gist of their major conclusions.

The treatment of the PIE lexicon obviously is meant to be the centerpiece of the entire work. It is undeniably impressive in its scope and conception, and the fundamental idea of organizing the lexicon by semantic fields is an important and original contribution which will positively affect all future discussions.

Unfortunately, as already intimated above, the authors' preconceptions about the location of the PIE homeland permeate every area of the lexicon and prevent them from evaluating the evidence in an objective fashion. Thus, while there is much that is valid and useful here, this is not the definitive delineation of the PIE lexicon that it purports to be, but a grand design gone awry.

The authors' linguistic arguments for a PIE homeland in the Near East are weak. Much of the lexical "evidence" is based on gross distortions of the facts of the individual languages. Since the translator in her preface touts the fact that this grammar of Indo-European makes use of primary data from Hittite and Luvian, readers should be warned that the quality of the translations and validity of the claimed meanings of words from these languages are wildly variable and not to be trusted.

The authors do not even acknowledge the irreconcilable contradictions between their picture of PIE dialects (see, e.g., p. 363) and their posited homeland (see the map, pp. 850-51). One of these (at least) must be false, and based on the contrasting value of the evidence and arguments presented, I have no doubt that it is the latter, not the former.

In sum, this is a highly original, grandly conceived, provocative work which has already stimulated and will continue to stimulate valuable debate and reassessment of long-held views on PIE linguistics and culture. Its availability in English is thus much to be welcomed. The model it presents of PIE is, however, very seriously flawed, and non-specialists should use it with extreme caution.

H. CRAIG MELCHERT

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
