

NICHOLAS AWDE (ed.): *Armenian Perspectives*. x, 436 pp. London: Curzon Caucasus World, 1997.

In September 1993 the Association Internationale des Etudes Arméniennes (AIEA) held its 10th anniversary conference at SOAS (with one session in Oxford), and this volume is based on papers presented there; both the conference and the publication were supported by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. There are 36 articles (mainly in English but with French, German and Italian contributions), notes, short opening address by Association president Michael Stone, and a select index by Claude E. Cox.

As with most such collections, there is catering for a variety of scholarly tastes, ranging from the dawn of Armenian history (A. Kossian's 'The end of the Hittite empire' pp. 35-38), through studies touching on philology, linguistics, literature or more recent history, to a rather philosophical disquisition by Boghos Levan Zekiyani on the dating of Armenian culture's entry into the modern age (323-354). The suggested periodisations are: Gestation c. 1510-1630, Ascent of Armenian Capitalism c. 1630-1700, Humanism 1700-1840, Final Awakening (a 75-year period associated with the rise of a new literary language). The final paper is Dickran Kouymjian's response to Zekiyani, with the suggestion that the evolution from 1400 to 1550 of the wealthy merchants and traders (the so-called *khodjas*) into an active middle class should not be under-valued in this process.

Andrzej Pisowicz (215-230) revisits the thorny and much discussed problem of the shifts manifested in the post-classical diversification of articulation for plosives and affricates across the dialects. Rejecting the term 'voiced aspirate' in favour of 'murmured' or 'breathy voiced' consonant, he queries the accuracy of some of the descriptions of modern dialectal pronunciation, introduces the concept of Voice Onset Time (VOT) into his description of the diverse changes in articulation, and detects the causes of the whole panoply of consonant-shifts 'in the specific character of affricates reluctant to assume aspiration as their distinctive feature. It is due to the fricative element of an affricate which is hardly compatible with a following aspiration. Aspirated spirants are extremely rare' (219). Bert Vaux (231-248) then goes on to include VOT in his analysis of the phonology of voiced aspirates in the New Julfa dialect, arguing that a phonetic 'model which incorporates independently motivated theories of contour segments (Steriade, 1992; Blevins, 1993) and constraints and repairs (Calabrese, 1995) enables us to account for the range of synchronic and diachronic laryngeal phenomena attested' (248).

A brief paper that I found particularly appealing was Paola Pontani's investigation of the extent to which evidence suggests that translators of the Hellenistic School might have utilised Greek lexicons (e.g. Hesychius, the Suidas, and Pollux's *Onomasticon*) in their work; the translation of the Philonic *De Abrahamo* provides the source. The intriguing evidence is exemplified by the synthetic translation of the Greek *γελοῖα*

'laughable' as *zca*oü *ar*anian 'worthy *ar*ani of laughter *ca*r', which seems to be calqued on Suidas' *γέλωτος ἄξιον*, in preference to the perfectly adequate analytic translation-equivalent *ca*rakan.

Apart from noting that typos were detected in all of the scripts employed in the work, I have two technical complaints. There is surprisingly no list of origins or academic affiliations for the authors, which is annoying, when knowledge of a writer's background (American-based Western Armenian speaker vs Eastern Armenian speaker from Transcaucasia, let us say for sake of argument) might have helped to contextualise the views being expressed. 361 pages of text are accompanied by 66 pages of notes, incorporating for five authors (Valentina Calzolari, Dora Sakayan, Pisowicz, Vaux, and Stone) what to my mind is the only sensible way of presenting bibliographical information, namely by a once-and-for-all list of works referred to in the article. This should become the universally accepted method of presenting such information. Then, in order to avoid possible repetition across individual lists appended to each chapter of collections such as this, a combined bibliography could be compiled by the editor to stand at the end of the volume as a whole. The folly of adopting the (sadly popular) practice of assigning its own footnote to each reference and of coupling this with the annoying practice of placing footnotes not at the foot of each page (or even at the end of each chapter) but at the end of the entire volume manifests itself especially in S. Peter Cowe's discussion of metaphor for the spiritual life in Erišē's *Armenian War* -- an 8-page article has no fewer than 103 notes running across four pages of their own (377-380), requiring an eye-straining and spine-splitting (sc. of the book!) attempt almost simultaneously to read two widely separated sections of a substantial volume.

#### References

- Blevins, Juliette. 1993. Klamath laryngeal phonology, in *International Journal of American Linguistics*, 59.3, 237-279.
- Calabrese, Andrea. 1995. A new approach to markedness theory, in *Linguistic Inquiry*.
- Steriade, Donca. 1992. Segments, contours and clusters. UCLA ms.

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