Review Essay

Grammars for East Caucasian

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1. Introduction. Within a six year period, the Russian linguist Alexandr E. Kibrik edited three grammatical descriptions of East Caucasian languages (A. E. Kibrik 1996, 1999, 2001). The three grammars are the output of what can be called "collective fieldwork" carried out by a large number of excursion members in a relatively short span of time (generally one to two months). One of the grammars, that on Tsakhur (A. E. Kibrik 1999), has experienced an enthusiastic reception among typologists (see Polinsky 2002), accompanied by the complaint that the Tsakhur grammar (like the Bagwalal grammar [A. E. Kibrik 2001]) was not written in English. In my brief essay, I want to turn the reader's attention to these three grammars and to strongly advocate scientific multilingualism as a necessary, but nevertheless seldom-realized, means of communication among linguists. Only such multilingualism guarantees that the two grammars written in Russian will become part of the standard database for linguistic argumentation among Western linguists. In addition, I use this occasion to give a brief report on grammar writing for East Caucasian languages. My main concern is to ascertain the extent to which Western scientific monolingualism prevents a sound appreciation of the East Caucasian grammatical tradition. Likewise, I want to show that even before the so-called "significant event in linguistics" (Polinsky 2002:403) that is said to be represented by the appearance of the three grammars, there had been a 150-year-old comprehensive tradition of description of languages from the (still not proven) East Caucasian language family. The many grammars that exist for East Caucasian languages differ in quantity and quality; still, they represent an important corpus rarely exploited for more general issues in linguistics.

For the sake of brevity, I will not go into the details of the individual grammars. The Ghodoberi grammar (A. E. Kibrik 1996) has been reviewed by Hewitt (1999), and the Tsakhur grammar (A. E. Kibrik 1999) by Polinsky (2002). In addition, the many reviews of Haspelmath's (1993) grammar will also orient the reader towards the major issues in East Caucasian linguistics. Schulze (2001) and Hewitt (2004) are the most recent overviews of (East) Caucasian; to these, we can add Schulze (1998:115–270), which gives more specific information on both the areal aspects and the typology of East Caucasian.

2. The emergence of the East Caucasian grammatical tradition. Until the late 1970s, the world of autochthonous and nonautochthonous languages in Eastern Caucasia had remained terra incognita for most approaches to language typology and general linguistics. Admittedly, some of the thirty or so indigenous languages, bearing such exotic names as Bagwalal, Chamalal, Kryts, or Akhwakh, as well as the "immigrant languages" such as Qalmyq, Qumyq, Azeri, Trukhmen/Qara-Papaq, Nogay, or Tāt showed up in specialized work only, most of which was written in either Russian or Georgian, or (less frequently) in German or French. Still, a closer look at standard typological work produced until, say, 1980 illustrates that such sources were rarely consulted. The linguistic structure of the "immigrant" languages (basically of Turkic and Iranian provenience) could easily be inferred from languages outside the region in question (such as Turkish proper or Persian). As for the autochthonous languages, however, rumors often replaced scientific certainty.

There are several reasons for this general neglect. On the one hand, the scientific perception of the region (i.e., roughly speaking, Northern Azerbaijan, Daghestan, and Chechnya) was controlled by what can be called the "Russian Zone"—that is, a scientific space oriented towards the general paradigmatic patterns of Russianized socialism. This orientation set the region apart and made it less accessible to Westerners. In addition, it ensured that most work on the particular communicative and linguistic world of the eastern Caucasus had been carried out in Russian (or in Georgian, the second scientific lingua franca in the Caucasus). Russian, however, suffered heavily from Western prejudices with respect to the Soviet Union. As a consequence, Russian was hardly ever part of the standard training program for linguists, either in Western Europe or in North America. In this respect, it is amazing to realize that even Russian-speaking North American scientists such as Maria Polinsky propagate metalinguistic monolingualism: "My only wish is that [A. E. Kibrik 1999] were available in English because it could then reach a broader audience" (Polinsky 2002:404).

This avoidance strategy (or metalinguistic apartheid) has also meant that a number of scientific presentations of autochthonous East Caucasian languages, produced already in tsarist times, were hardly ever noticed outside of the Soviet Union. This holds especially for the work of Baron Petr Karlovič Uslar (1816–75), Anton Schiefner (1817–79), and Adolf Dirr (1867–1930). In fact, these authors produced a number of grammars—some of them, excellent—on East Caucasian languages, listed in table 1. Accordingly, the grammatical documentation of East Caucasian languages before World War I covered at least thirteen autochthonous languages (or dialects of these languages). It is interesting to see that even by that time, some languages, such as Udi, Tabasaran, and Lak, were the subject of more than one description. This fact suggests that a scientific competition to produce the "best" description of these languages had already begun, a competition that was initiated especially by Adolf Dirr, the author of the first general overview on Caucasian languages (Dirr 1928).

Table 1. Grammatical Descriptions of East Caucasian Languages in the Tsarist Period

GRAMMAR	LANGUAGE
Schiefner (1856)	Bats
Schiefner (1863)	Udi
Schiefner (1866)	Lak
Uslar (1875)	Tabasaran
Uslar (1876)	Lezgi
Uslar (1888)	Chechen
Uslar (1889)	Awar
Uslar (1890)	Lak
Uslar (1892)	Dargwa
Dirr (1903)	Andi
Dirr (1904)	Udi
Dirr (1905)	Tabasaran
Dirr (1907)	Aghul
Dirr (1908)	Archi
Dirr (1909)	Andian/Tsezian
Dirr (1911)	Rutul

Except for Schiefner (1863), all descriptions mentioned in table 1 were based on extensive fieldwork carried out by their respective authors (Dirr [1910:42] explicitly used the term "wissenschaftliches Fieldwork" ['scientific fieldwork']). In other words, the quality of the data given in these grammars is notable. Still, the individual grammars did not find relevant attention outside the circle of specialists. An exception was the activities of Nikolai Trubetzkoy, whose work on phonology was considerably influenced by data from East Caucasian languages. In Germany, the activities of Dirr as a scientific assistant of the Munich Anthropological Museum (Münchener Völkerkundemuseum) (1913–30) meant that East Caucasian studies were (modestly) propagated. Gerhard Deeters (1892–1961), the grand seigneur of Caucasian studies in Germany, was in contact with Dirr while studying at the University of Munich (1922–25). Deeter's student Karl Horst Schmidt (b. 1929) worked in the same perspective and stimulated the Caucasian orientation of his three Ph.D. students D. M. Job, Roland Bielmeier, and myself. A partly parallel development can be described for Austria, where Robert Bleichsteiner (1891–1954) initiated studies in Caucasian linguistics, later on continued by Johann Knobloch (b. 1919), again one of my teachers.

It is beyond question that the development of Caucasian language studies in Germany and Austria was favored by the political setting, especially by the existence of huge prisoner-of-war camps in both the First and the Second World War. In these camps, a great number of tsarist or Soviet soldiers from the Caucasus were interned who were then subjected to "scientific treatment." At least Dirr and Bleichsteiner in World War I, and Knobloch in World War II, were involved in this type of dubious work. Deeters, on the other hand, was himself interned in World War I because of his Balto-Russian provenience. During

these times, he became acquainted with Georgian through contact with fellow-prisoners from Georgia.

Another German linguist who helped to popularize studies in East Caucasian was Karl Bouda (1901–79). Bouda summarized in German a number of local grammars and textbooks of the years 1930–40 (for Dargwa, Chechen, Lak, and Udi), which were of great relevance, but nevertheless difficult to access.

In sum, the German or German-based linguistic tradition was well equipped with pioneering studies on East Caucasian at a time when, in other nonlocal traditions, the Eastern Caucasus still played a marginal role (note that here I do not refer to West and South Caucasian linguistics, which attracted the interest of, e.g., French, Dutch, and English scholars). In fact, outside Germany and Austria, nonlocal East Caucasian linguistics was practically nonexistent. One exception was the work of N. Trubetzkoy, noted above; another was the typological study of Hjelmslev (1935–37) on the case systems of East Caucasian languages.

It is a remarkable fact that between 1913 and 1981, not a single reference grammar of an East Caucasian language was written in any Western country, whereas in the same time, some twenty such grammars had been published in the Soviet Union—whether in Russian, in Georgian, or in one of the vernaculars (see below). Nevertheless, just as was true for the pre-World War I grammars, none of these grammars helped the East Caucasian languages to be included in actual typological databases.

The situation remained largely the same until the late 1970s, when an admittedly small number of Western linguists started to work on East Caucasian languages. This shift was mainly due to factors in the personal history of the individual researchers. Nevertheless, it can also be related to the beginning of the political thaw, which allowed Westerners to take up studies in the Caucasus (especially in Georgia). In most cases, the objectives of the research were dictated by the general settings into which the researchers had been embedded. In other words, the conquest of the East Caucasian linguistic world by Westerners happened by chance, rather than systematically. For instance, Alice Harris turned to Udi because she had an Udi teacher (Evgeni Džejranišvili) in Tbilisi. Lak attracted Victor Friedman because he once met a Lak informant in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. The author of the present essay started to work on Udi because his teacher, K. H. Schmidt, once offered a course on Udi at the University of Bonn. In sum, the profiles indicated in table 2 gradually arose.

All of these authors were involved in fieldwork projects, some of which resulted in the publication of corresponding descriptive grammars, e.g., Charachidzé (1981) on Awar, Schulze (1982) on Udi, Van den Berg (1995) on Hunzib, Haspelmath (1993) on Lezgi, Authier (2004) on Kryts. To this list, we must add the comprehensive work of Johanna Nichols on Ingush and Chechen, which, however, has not yet been summarized in corresponding grammars. Still, to date only about one third of the thirty or so East Caucasian languages have been

systematically described by Westerners (note that for the non-Caucasian languages Qara-Papaq, Nogay, Qumyq, Tāt varieties, and Qalmyq, the picture is even worse). If we bear in mind that the degree of variation among East Caucasian languages is quite high, the number of languages documented in terms of classic descriptive grammars remains rather small. In addition, the fact that Schulze (1982) is written in German and Charachidzé (1981) in French (as is Authier [2004], which still awaits publication) does not help the reception of these grammars in the Anglophone-oriented community of typologists and general linguists. Consequently, the "world of East Caucasian" is often reduced to two languages, namely, Hunzib (van den Berg 1995) and Lezgi (Haspelmath 1993). In fact, these two languages serve as representatives for East Caucasian in typological studies that involve massive samples. Another consequence is that language data are frequently quoted from secondary sources that are not always fully reliable. (For example, Cysouw [2003] quotes East Caucasian with the help of Corbett [1991], Helmbrecht [1996], as well as Haspelmath [1993] and Nichols [1994b]. Likewise, Bhat [2004] uses Helmbrecht [1996], besides van den Berg [1995] and Haspelmath [1993].)

Table 2. Western Linguists Working on East Caucasian Languages in Recent Decades

LINGUIST	LANGUAGE
Gilles Authier	Kryts
Georges Charachidzé	Awar
Bernard Comrie	Tsez
Simon Crisp	Awar
Victor Friedman	Lak
Alice Harris	Udi
Martin Haspelmath	Lezgi
Dee Ann Holisky	Bats
Johanna Nichols and students	Chechen, Ingush
Bernard Outtier	Udi, Bats
Maria Polinsky	Tsez
Wolfgang Schulze	Udi, Tsakhur, Aghul, Chechen
Helena van den Berg†	Hunzib, Dargwa

NOTE: † = deceased.

In sum, one can hardly say that East Caucasian linguistics has become a backbone of crosslinguistic comparison and language typology. Rather, the languages are frequently referred to with very general and sometimes even false assumptions, instead of being described with concrete data from more than just the two sample languages mentioned above. The strong Anglophone orientation of language typology has considerably obscured the perception of East Caucasian linguistic data. Such data are, nevertheless, readily available; compare table 3, which lists the main nonlocal grammatical sources for East Caucasian arranged by language group. (Smeets [1994] and Job [2004] are omitted

from the table, because they are in part English translations of local grammatical abstracts.)

Table 3. Nonlocal, Non-Russian Grammars of East Caucasian Languages, 1850–2000

	NAKH (3)	AWAR/ ANDIAN (9)	TSEZIAN (5–6)	LAK/ DARGWA (2+)	LEZGIAN (9–10)
1850	Schiefner 1856				
1860				Schiefner 1866	Schiefner 1863
1870					Uslar 1875 Uslar 1876
1880	Uslar 1888	Uslar 1889			
1890				Uslar 1890 Uslar 1892	
1900		Dirr 1903 Dirr 1909a	Dirr 1909a		Dirr 1904 Dirr 1905 Dirr 1907 Dirr 1908
1910					Dirr 1911 Dirr 1913
1920					
1930					
1940					
1950					
1960					
1970					
1980		Charachidzé 1981			Schulze 1982
1990	*Nichols 1994a, 1994b*	*A. E. Kibrik 1996*	*van den Berg 1995*	*Haspelmath*	*1993*
2000	*Guerin 2001* *Nichols (work in preparation)*		*Comrie and Polinsky forthcoming*	*[Van den Berg]* *Sumbatova and Mutalov 2003*	*Authier 2004* *Schulze forthcoming*

NOTE: Numbers following names of language families indicate number of languages within the family. Works in English are in italics.

Table 3 shows that we can differentiate three phases: the pioneering phase 1850–1914; the "silent years" 1920–80; and the "typological turn," from 1980 on. Note that this classification refers to Western perceptions only. The years 1920–80 were anything but silent, if the linguistic activities in the Soviet Union are taken into consideration. As mentioned above, this phase witnessed the publication of some twenty grammars (disregarding the many school primers, etc., produced for the "young written languages"; see below). The overview in table 4 lists the standard corpus of reference grammars for East Caucasian. Grammars produced in the silent years are given in italics. Note that this list neglects brief

presentations such as those in Bokarev et al. (1967) or Gamzatov (2000). In addition, it does not consider the usually very short grammatical treatments published as appendices to vernacular-to-Russian dictionaries, some of which are nevertheless of considerable importance (e.g., that in Maciev [1961], translated into English as Matsiev [1995]).

Table 4. Grammatical Descriptions of the Autochthonous East Caucasian Languages

LANGUAGE GROUP	LANGUAGE	NUMBER OF GRAMMATICAL DESCRIPTIONS	MOST COMPREHENSIVE SOURCE	METALANGUAGE	TYPE
NAKH	BATS	2	Holisky and Gagua 1994	English	stG
	INGUSH	4	Nichols 1994b	English	stG
			Guerin 2001	French	dG
	CHECHEN	4	Nichols 1994a	English	stG
			Aliroev 1997	Russian	dG
AWARO-ANDIAN	AWAR	3	Charachidzé 1981	French	dG
			Alekseev and Ataev 1998	Russian	dG
	ANDI	1	*Cercvaʒe 1965*	Georgian	dGT
	BOTLIKH	1	*Gudava 1962*	Georgian	dGT
	GHODOBERI	2	*Saidova 1973*	Russian	dGT
			A. E. Kibrik 1996	English	tGT
	KARATA	1	*Magomedbekova 1971*	Russian	dGT
	BAGWALAL	2	A. E. Kibrik 2001	Russian	tGT
	CHAMALAL	1	*Bokarev 1949*	Russian	dGT
	TINDI	0			
	AKHWAKH	1	*Magomedbekova 1967*	Russian	dGT
TSEZIAN	TSEZ	2	*Imnajšvili 1963*	Russian	dG
	HINUKH	2	*Lomtadze 1963*	Russian	dG
	HUNZIB	1	Van den Berg 1995	English	tGT
	KHWARSHI	2	*Šarafutdinova and Levina 1961*	Russian	sdG
	BEZHTA	1	*Madieva 1965*	Russian	dGT
DARGI	DARGWA	5	*Žirkov 1926*	Russian	dGT
			Magometov 1963	Russian	dGT
			Magometov 1982	Russian	dGT
			Xajdakov 1985	Russian	dG
LAK	LAK	2	*Žirkov 1955*	Russian	dGT
LEZGIAN	LEZGI	4	Haspelmath 1993	English	tGT
			Alekseev and Šejxov 1997	Russian	dG
	TABASARAN	3	*Magometov 1965*	Russian	dGT
			Alekseev and Šixaliev 2003	Russian	dG
	AGHUL	1	*Magometov 1970*	Russian	dGT

	RUTUL	3	*Ibragimov 1978*	Russian	dG
			Džejranišvili 1983–84	Georgian	dG
	TSAKHUR	4	Ibragimov 1990	Russian	dG
			Schulze 1997	English	stGT
			A. E. Kibrik 1999	Russian	tGT
	KRYTS	3	*Saadiev 1972*	Russian	dGT
			Authier 2004	French	dGT
	BUDUKH	2	*Mejlanova 1984*	Russian	sdG
			Alekseev 1994	English	sdG
	ARCHI	2	*Kibrik et al. 1977*	Russian	tGT
			A. E. Kibrik 1994a	English	sdG
	UDI	6	Schulze 1982	German	tGT
			Schulze 1994	English	sdG
			Schulze forthcoming a	English	tGT
	CAUCASIAN ALBANIAN†	1	Schulze and Gippert forthcoming	English	tGT
LEZGOID	KHINALUG	3	*Kibrik et al. 1972*	Russian	dGT
			A. E. Kibrik 1994	English	sdG

NOTE: Special studies, primers, school books, etc., for the literary languages, as well as the works of the tsarist period, are not included. Italics indicate those grammars produced in the period when no Western works were published. d = descriptive, t = typological, G = Grammar, s = short/overview, T = texts, † = extinct.

The production of descriptive grammars during the silent years was centered in Tbilisi (the Institute of Linguistics of the Georgian Academy of Sciences), Maxačkala (the Institute for History, Linguistics, Arts and Literature of the Daghestan Division of the Academy of Sciences), and Moscow (the Institute of Linguistics of the Academy of Sciences). The list in table 5 (which is far from exhaustive) shows that, out of twenty-eight grammars published from 1949 to 1990, fifteen appeared in Tbilisi, nine in Moscow, and only four in Maxačkala.

Many of the grammars listed in table 5 were produced by native speakers or at least by speakers of a related language. This fact renders most of the grammars highly reliable. On the other hand, the explanatory and (in part) descriptive framework for these grammars was formed by the general linguistic paradigm of late Stalinism (for general linguistic issues, see Stalin [1950]) and Chikobavaism[1] (for issues in Caucasian linguistics, see Čikobava [1979]). Accordingly, the grammars had to follow a set of more or less explicitly stated postulates, some of which obscured the reality of East Caucasian grammatical systems. Nevertheless, the fact that most authors were close to their materials had a significant impact on the general quality of the descriptions. In addition, most grammars of this time offer a great number of texts, often with word-by-word glosses. Sometimes, the grammars even offer short lexical lists, either in alphabetical order or in thesauruslike order. Most such grammars certainly can

successfully compete with the corresponding (contemporary) Western grammar tradition.

Table 5. Places of Publication of Descriptive Grammars, 1949–90

YEAR	PLACE	LANGUAGE
1949	Moscow Academy of Sciences	Čamalal
1955	Moscow Academy of Sciences	Lak
1959	Moscow Academy of Sciences	Tsezian
1962	Tbilisi Academy of Sciences	Botlikh
1963	Tbilisi Academy of Sciences	Tsez
1963	Tbilisi Academy of Sciences	Hinukh
1963	Tbilisi Academy of Sciences	Dargwa (Kubachi)
1965	Maxačkala IHLL	Bezhta
1965	Tbilisi Academy of Sciences	Tabasaran
1965	Tbilisi Academy of Sciences	Andi
1967	Maxačkala IHLL	Archi
1967	Tbilisi Academy of Sciences	Akhwakh
1970	Tbilisi Academy of Sciences	Aghul
1971	Tbilisi Academy of Sciences	Karata
1971	Tbilisi Academy of Sciences	Bagwalal
1971	Tbilisi University	Udi
1972	Moscow University	Khinalug
1972	Tbilisi Academy of Sciences/Baku	Kryts
1973	Maxačakala IHLL	Ghodoberi
1974	Tbilisi Academy of Sciences	Udi
1977	Moscow University	Archi
1978	Moscow Academy of Sciences	Rutul
1979	Tbilisi Academy of Sciences	Archi
1980	Maxačkala Pedagogical Publishing	Awar
1982	Tbilisi Academy of Sciences	Dargwa (Meheb)
1983	Tbilisi University	Tsakhur Rutul
1984	Moscow Academy of Sciences	Budukh
1985	Moscow Academy of Sciences	Dargwa
1990	Moscow Academy of Sciences	Tsakhur

NOTE: IHLL = Institute of History, Language, and Literature.

3. Standard East Caucasian grammars. Most East Caucasian languages share essentially the same typological properties and probably stem from a common genetic source. These properties naturally condition the structure of the corresponding grammatical descriptions. They have frequently (and more or less accurately) been described in the literature (cf. Dirr 1928; Deeters 1963; Klimov 1969, 1986, 1994; Klimov and Alekseev 1980; Schulze 1998:115–270, 2001; Hewitt 2004) and hence do not call for a summary here. Nevertheless, it should be noted that all East Caucasian languages are highly morphological languages, showing large inventories of both nominal and verbal inflections. In addition, both the syntactic and the pragmatic domains are extensively coded by morphological elements, which again inflates the morphological apparatus. It is hence no

wonder that grammars on East Caucasian languages usually contain extended sections on morphology, to which a more or less elaborated presentation of syntactic or pragmatic constructions is occasionally added. Table 6 illustrates two examples of the organization of such grammars: Magometov (1965) (Tabasaran) and Magomedbekova (1967) (Akhwakh).

Table 6. Organization of Two Local Grammars of East Caucasian Languages

MAGOMETOV 1965	MAGOMEDBEKOVA 1967
(length: 398 pages)	(length: 254 pages)
Introduction	Introduction
Phonetics	Phonetics
Vowels	Vowels
Consonants	Consonants
Phonetic processes	Phonetic processes
Morphology	Phonetic correspondences between Akhwakh and Awar
Grammatical classes	Morphology
Nouns	Grammatical classes
Adjectives	Number
Numerals	Case Inflection
Pronouns	Nouns
Verbs	Adjectives
Verbal inflection	Numerals
Adverbs, conjunctions, particles, interjections	Pronouns
Basic problems of syntax	Verbal inflection
Texts	Person
	Tense
	Gerunds
	Mood
	Negation and Interrogation
	Causative
	Participle
	Masdar
	Southern Akhwakh
	Texts
	Glossaries

It becomes clear that the main goal of locally produced East Caucasian grammars is to present morphological variation. Here, both function-to-form and form-to-function approaches can be found. It is interesting to see that authors usually give priority to allomorphy, insisting on treating distinct morphemes as if they were allomorphs of a single morpheme; accordingly, many morphemes are derived from a "basic" morpheme with the help of sometimes obscure phonetic processes. In other words, these grammars display a considerable tendency to reduce the inventory of formal means. Naturally, this tendency also serves to facilitate the matching of East Caucasian and Russian linguistic categories (or to describe

East Caucasian languages in a fashion that makes Russian easier to parse for native speakers of East Caucasian). This holds true especially for the description of case systems and the tense-aspect-mood system of verbs; the latter usually concentrates on the question of aspectual features.

Usually, the individual grammars do not refer to texts in order to give illustrative examples. Rather, their authors make use of rather standardized phrases, such as 'father brought the miller some tobacco' (Magomedbekova 1967:55), 'the girl had flowers in her hair' (Magometov 1965:124), 'the girl loves her brothers' (Mejlanova 1984:199). Nevertheless, some authors also refer to examples taken from context, such as tales or, more rarely, conversation (e.g., Pančviʒe 1974). Still, it has to be admitted that the quality of the textual data themselves is generally much higher than that of the illustrative materials. Also, in only a few instances do locally produced grammars of the silent years follow the convention of indicating the source of an illustrative example (an exception again is the Udi grammar by Pančviʒe [1974], in itself an exceptionally good grammar).

Although the general setting of the East Caucasian languages allows questions of diachronic development to be addressed, the grammars in question rarely seek to explain linguistic data, be it from the point of view of grammaticalization or from the perspective of formal diachrony. One exception is the grammars by Aleksandr Magometov (1963, 1965, 1970, 1982). This author frequently turns to diachrony in order to prove that certain paradigms (especially case and tense-aspect-mood inflection) fall into the "Chikobava" type. This exception notwithstanding, we can safely characterize East Caucasian grammars of the silent years as highly descriptive—in part, even prescriptive—but rarely analytic or explanatory. They are "school grammars" in the best sense and often extremely important because of their textual data. To put it another way, they are descriptions of native languages from a "Basic Linguistic Theory" perspective, but in a pre-Dixonian sense (see Dixon 1997).

Hence, we can expect that this local tradition, once crossed with Western standards of typological categorization and linguistic description, would produce grammars of high quality. Unfortunately, this crossing took place for one tradition only—the Kibrik tradition described in the next section. Only very rarely did true local grammars (produced in Maxačkala, Tbilisi, or potentially in Baku or Groznyj) incorporate aspects of Western traditions (an example being Sumbatova and Mutalov [2003], on the Itsari variety of Dargwa). Obviously, the reception of Western traditions is strongly linked to knowledge of English, just as Western reception of Eastern grammars is linked to knowledge of Russian. Accordingly, the integration of Western typological traditions is strongly coupled with the location of a given research institute in Russia or the former Soviet Union: peripheral institutions such as the scientific center in Maxačkala are, in this respect, put at a disadvantage.

It should be noted that apart from the Kibrik tradition based on the activities of the Moscow State University (see below), there is another recent project to

document the languages of Russia (and hence the languages of the major part of Eastern Caucasia) in terms of encyclopedic grammatical descriptions. This project is linked to the Russian Academy of Sciences (and to the so-called Moscow State Linguistic University [Moskovskij Gosudarstvennyj Lingvističeskij Universitet]). The portion of it relating to Eastern Caucasia is strongly dominated by the activities of Mixail E. Alekseev, a former student of Aleksandr Kibrik. Unlike Kibrik, Mixail Alekseev can surely be called a specialist in East Caucasian languages. Unfortunately, his activities have not received the same attention as Kibrik's work. This also holds for the grammars now produced by Alekseev, usually with the help of a native speaker (Alekseev and Šejxov [1997] on Lezgi; Alekseev and Ataev [1998] on Avar; Alekseev and Šixaliev [2003] on Tabasaran; see also Aliroev [1997] on Chechen).

4. The Kibrik tradition. The task of mutually integrating the Eastern and the Western traditions of linguistic descriptivism are best embodied in the person of Aleksandr E. Kibrik. Born in 1939, Kibrik studied general linguistics and philology at Moscow State University. His principal teacher was Petr Savvič Kuznecov. Kibrik concentrated both on questions of computational linguistics and on language description. From 1967 onwards, he organized more than thirty linguistic expeditions in order to carry out fieldwork on unwritten and lesser-known languages of the former Soviet Union. Kibrik concentrated on the regions of the Caucasus, but also worked in Tyva, Kamchatka, and the Pamir region. He is said to have worked on the documentation of nearly forty languages.

Naturally, this challenging work could not and cannot be carried out by a single person. In fact, Kibrik usually recruited a number of younger scholars, and most of the actual fieldwork was characterized by a division of labor. Kibrik has described the basic methodological aspects of his approach to fieldwork (A. E. Kibrik 1972, [English version] 1977). Kibrik's doctoral dissertation (1976) explicitly dealt with the presentation of an East Caucasian language based on fieldwork. The resulting Archi grammar (in four volumes), published as Kibrik et al. (1977), probably represents the best grammar on an East Caucasian language yet produced. It is based on fieldwork expeditions carried out 1968, 1971, and 1973.

Already in 1970–71, Kibrik had organized a field trip to document Khinalug, perhaps the most remarkable East Caucasian language (see Schulze [2003] for details on Khinalug). Kibrik started the fieldwork with at least thirteen students and assistants in the village of Khinalug (summer 1970). The division of labor is described in table 7.

It is obvious that this division of labor is grounded both in the Soviet version of Basic Linguistic Theory and in certain peculiarities of the language under inspection, Khinalug. Kibrik obviously profited from earlier descriptions of Khinalug (especially Šaumjan 1940; Dešeriev 1959), even though the data and analyses presented in those earlier publications turned out to be unreliable.

Nevertheless, the descriptions given in those works allowed Kibrik to divide up the labor in accordance with the linguistic facts of Khinalug.

Table 7. Division of Labor in Kibrik's Khinalug Project

LINGUIST	TOPIC
M. E. Alekseev	case system (nouns)
A. N. Barulin	preverbs, pronouns
Je. V. Gecelevič	pronouns
A. N. Golovastikov	noun derivation
D. G. Gorodeckaja	noun class markers, preverbs
A. E. Kibrik	derivation, word formation, grammatical categories
S. V. Kodzasov	phonology, morphology
N. I. Laufer	verblike forms
I. A. Murav'eva	verbal roots, verblike forms
I. P. Olovjannikova	texts, glossaries
T. G. Pogibenko	tense, aspect, mood
I. M. Voronin	tense, aspect, mood
E. P. Voronina	adjectives
T. S. Zevaxina	adjectives

NOTE: From Kibrik et al. (1972:8).

A similar division-of-labor approach later produced the above-mentioned work on Archi (Kibrik et al. 1977), probably the most comprehensive description of an East Caucasian language currently available. Its size (1,420 pages) exceeds that of any other comparable grammar on East Caucasian. Table 8 displays the general layout of the Archi grammar.

Table 8. Organization of the Archi Grammar (Kibrik et al. 1977)

LINGUISTS	VOLUME NUMBER	TOPIC	LENGTH
A. E. Kibrik, I. P. Olovjannikova, D. S. Samedov	Vol. 1	lexicon	pp. 42–184
S. V. Kodzasov	Vol. 1	phonetics	pp. 185–365
A. E. Kibrik	Vol. 2	taxonomic grammar	345 pages
A. E. Kibrik	Vol. 3	dynamic grammar	321 pages
A. E. Kibrik, D. S. Samedov	Vol. 4	texts	pp. 7–179
A. E. Kibrik, D. S. Samedov, I. P. Olovjannikova, S. V. Kodzasov	Vol. 4	Archi-Russian dictionary	pp. 180–349
I. P. Olovjannikova	Vol. 4	Russian-Archi dictionary	pp. 350–89

Again, a number of students and associates participated in the Archi field trips. The members of the expeditions who are mentioned are listed in table 9.

Unlike the Khinalug grammar, the Archi grammar is explicitly organized on the basis of theory-driven principles. Its division between a pure taxonomic account and a so-called dynamic grammar (i.e., basically, a functional grammar) is an important innovation within the tradition of Soviet grammar writing. Likewise, the Archi grammar frequently refers the reader to Western sources, and, most importantly, includes a brief section on the typology of Archi. Still, it should be noted that both the Khinalug and the Archi expeditions did not aim at long-term fieldwork, as has become standard among field linguists in recent years. Rather, the expeditions were limited to two months at most (in part because the mountainous regions of Daghestan are difficult to access in seasons other than summer). This lack of time, however, was compensated for by the relatively large number of collaborators, listed in table 9.

Table 9. Members of Kibrik's Archi Field Trips

M. E. Alekseev	A. Leonov
T. Čučina	O. Novgorodceva
V. Gal'perina	I. P. Olovjannikova
O. Gulyga	D. S. Samedov
Je. Jonesjan	S. Starostin
A. E Kibrik	E. Voronina
S. V. Kodzasov	T. Zevaxina
Je. Kon'kova	

5. The Ghodoberi (Ghidu), Tsakhur, and Bagwalal grammars. In August 1993, the Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics at Moscow State University initiated a field trip to the village of Ghodoberi (the spelling of the name "Ghodoberi"[2] reflects the Awar denomination *ǧodoberi*; the local name of the village is *ǧidu*). In Ghidu or Ghodoberi as well as in neighboring Zibirxali (*šalu*), a Central Andian language is spoken by some 3,000 people. This trip, which lasted some thirty days, was the first in a series of six (or seven) organized by Kibrik in the 1990s (see table 10) in order to document three East Caucasian languages: Ghodoberi (dialect of Ghidu), Tsakhur (dialect of Mishlesh), and Bagwalal (dialect of Kwanch [Bagwalal *k^{w}'anč'*, Awar *k:^{w}'anada*, hence usually called "Kwanada"]). Ghodoberi and Bagwalal are closely related, whereas Tsakhur belongs to the Lezgian branch of East Caucasian (Western Samur division). Tsakhur thus is only distantly related to the other two languages (perhaps as distantly as English is related to Russian). It is interesting to see that the projects related to Tsakhur and Bagwalal were not carried out consecutively. Available data indicate that the Kibrik group started with Bagwalal, then turned to Tsakhur before coming back to Bagwalal. Finally, the two languages were dealt with in one and the same year (1998).

As for the number of people involved in the individual projects, it is clear that the Bagwalal project was the most labor-intensive: twenty-four people (plus two foreign guests) participated in at least one of the three field expeditions, as

opposed to fourteen people in the Tsakhur project and thirteen (plus two guests) in the Ghodoberi project. Table 11 lists the names of the participants.

Table 10. East Caucasian Field Trips of the Kibrik Group in the 1990s

LANGUAGE	PLACE	EXCURSIONS	DATE	DURATION (OVERALL)
GHODOBERI	Ghidu	1	August 1993	maximum of 30 days
TSAKHUR	Mišleš	2 + 1	July 1995, August 1996, April 1998	35 days plus a few weeks
BAGWALAL	Kwanch	3	1994, 1997, 1998	50 days

NOTE: For Tsakhur, the first and second expeditions were conducted by the entire group, while the third was carried out by only two members of the original group.

Table 11. Participants in Field Trips of the Kibrik Group

GHODOBERI (published 1996)	TSAKHUR (published 1999)	BAGWALAL (published 2001)
D. Asratjan	A. A. Bonč-Osmolovskaja	[K. Jeanich, France] (a, b)
N. Dobrušina	N. R. Dobrušina	[I. Maddieson, U.S.A.] (b)
O. Fedorova	K. I. Kazenin	A. Arxipov (b, c)
J. Gisatullina	E. Ju. Kalinina	D. Asratjan (a)
K. Kazenin	A. E. Kibrik	M. Čumakina (b, c)
A. E. Kibrik	S. V. Kodzasov	M. Danièl' (b)
Andrej Kibrik	E. A. Ljutikova	Ju. Daragan (b, c)
S. Kodzasiv	T. A. Maysak	N. Dobrušina (a, b, c)
M. Puzačeva	T. B. Sosenskaja	O. Fedorova (a)
A. Rjabčikov	G. S. Strokin	Je. Filimonova (a, b)
J. Sidorenko	S. G. Tatevosov	Ju. Gisatullina (a)
A. Solovjeva	Ja. G. Testelec	P. Graščenkov (b, c)
T. Sosenskaja	S. Ja. Toldova	Je. Kalinina (a, b, c)
S. Tatevosov	M. É. Čumakina	E. Kazenin (a, b, c)
S. Toldova		A. Kibrik (a, b, c)
[M. Haspelmath]		S. Kodzasov (a, b , c)
[A. Eulenberg]		Ju. Korjakov (a)
		Je. Ljutikova (a, b, c)
		T. Maysak (b, c)
		N. Moiseeva (b)
		A. Skobelkin (b, c)
		T. Sosenskaja (a, b, c)
		G. Strokin (b)
		I. Sverdlov (a)
		S. Tatevosov (a, b, c)
		S. Toldova (a, b, c)

NOTE: The three Bagwalal field expeditions are distinguished as "a," "b," and "c."

Table 11 shows that most of the participants of the Tsakhur project were also active in one of the two other projects. In contrast, most of those in the Bagwalal project did not participate in any of the other expeditions. Table 12 lists the

names of those researchers who were active in more than one of the three projects. It is interesting to note that apart from the main personnel (Kibrik, Kodzasov, Sosenskaja, Tatevosov, and Toldova), only three researchers (Asratjan, Fedorova, and Gisatullina) were occupied in working on the two closely related languages, Ghodoberi and Bagwalal. Thus, the experience stemming from the Ghodoberi project was only partially exploited in the Bagwalal project.

Table 12. Researchers Participating in Fieldwork on More than One Language

RESEARCHER	BAGWALAL	GHODOBERI	TSAKHUR
D. Asratjan	+	+	
O. Fedorova	+	+	
J. Gisatullina	+	+	
N. Dobrušina		+	+
K. Kazenin		+	+
A. E. Kibrik	+	+	+
T. Sosenskaja	+	+	+
S. Tatevosov	+	+	+
S. Toldova	+	+	+
S. V. Kodzasov	+	+	+
M. È. Čumakina	+		+
E. Ju. Kalinina	+		+
E. A. Ljutikova	+		+
T. A. Maysak	+		+
G. S. Strokin	+		+

The three projects were organized in accordance with the same principles that were relevant for the Khinalug and Archi projects and that were described in Kibrik (1972). Accordingly, "each member of the teem [*sic*] concentrated on a particular fragment [of the grammar] . . . and learnt it in detail trying to gain as deep insight into the subject as necessary in order to achieve the most adequate description" (A. E. Kibrik 1996:xii). Decisions as to what were relevant "fragments" were based on general typological parameters, "Basic Linguistic Theory," standard knowledge of East Caucasian, and reference to relevant grammars. In fact, as was true for Archi and Khinalug, the Kibrik group could make use of earlier grammatical descriptions for all three languages, as seen in table 13 (here, I mention book-length descriptions only).

Table 13. Earlier Grammars of Languages Studied by Kibrik and His Associates

LANGUAGE	GRAMMAR
KHINALUG	Dešeriev 1959
ARCHI	Dirr 1908; Mikailov 1967; K'aχaʒe 1979
GHODOBERI	Saidova 1973
TSAKHUR	Dirr 1913; Džejranišvili 1983–84; Ibragimov 1990; Schulze 1997
BAGWALAL	Gudava 1971

Likewise, the authors could refer to a number of grammars for other, related languages (see section 2 above) produced during the silent years. In other words, the individual groups profited from the fact that they did not have to start from zero. The individual researchers could thus concentrate on the data given in the appropriate sections of the grammars and develop specific questionnaires for their "fragments." The group effect also compensated for the fact that, with a few exceptions, none of the group members was a trained Caucasianist. Accordingly, the grammars are not written from a comparative perspective (whether genetically or areally grounded). Rather, they concentrate on a specific variety of the language at issue as used by their informants. As mentioned above, this was Ghidu (*gidu*) for Ghodoberi, the dialect of Mislesh (*mišleš*) for Tsakhur, and Kwanch (*k^{w}'anč'*) or Kwanada for Bagwalal. None of the three grammars representing the output of the projects has a special chapter devoted to dialectal variation, nor one on the question of standardization (relevant to Tsakhur, for which a norm used in primary schools seems to be gradually developing). Only the Tsakhur grammar incidentally refers the reader to dialectal variants—e.g., Gel'mec (once) and Mikik (four times).

It is a remarkable fact that, unlike the Archi project, little attention has been paid to sociolinguistic and anthropological issues. Likewise, questions of language contact play a minor role in the presentation of the Ghodoberi, Tsakhur, and Bagwalal data, although they are crucial at least with respect to the role of Awar (Salatavi dialect for Ghodoberi and Bagwalal, Kusur for western Tsakhur). In addition, it is not fully clear to me to what extent the researchers looked for distinctive characteristics of women's speech (documented, for instance, for Andi and the Keleb variety of Awar [see Schulze 1998, 1999]). Still, the many texts included in the grammars represent valuable sources for further anthropological studies and may perhaps compensate for the general lack of anthropological data in the grammars themselves.

The fact that the individual fieldwork expeditions usually did not last longer than four weeks also means that the researchers (most likely) did not learn the languages in the sense of having more than a rudimentary active competence and an elaborate passive competence. Therefore, it is rather unlikely that they could practice what sometimes is called "participant observation." Instead, they had to prepare laboratorylike conditions, inviting their informants to produce phrases and texts on the basis of corresponding Russian stimuli (by formulating adequate frames or scripts, or by producing phrases to be translated). It is not clear to me how far the researchers also documented (and exploited) dialogues, etc., produced among the native speakers (two such dialogues are documented for Bagwalal [A. E. Kibrik 2001:805–25], two for Tsakhur [A. E. Kibrik 1999:801–54], none for Ghodoberi). Nevertheless, the many and excellent texts (except for Ghodoberi) again compensate for the otherwise laboratorylike impression of the elicitation strategies.

The three expeditions produced three grammars, one in English and two in Russian. Table 14 summarizes the basic data for the three volumes. The italicized fields show that all three grammars are, to some degree, available in English. Whereas the Ghodoberi grammar is entirely in English, the Bagwalal grammar includes a rather helpful English summary (pp. 913–29). As for Tsakhur, we have at hand the presentation by Polinsky in the journal *Linguistic Typology* (2002). Unfortunately, Polinsky's summary is entitled "The Marvels of Tsakhur." Personally, I feel unhappy with this title, since it implies that Tsakhur grammar is something exceptional, strange, or exotic, something that cannot be grasped but in terms of "marvels." Such a title only makes sense if Polinsky wants to convey that, prior to her reviews, nothing had been known in the West about the world of East Caucasian and its peculiarities. If this were true, Tsakhur indeed would have told Western typologists a rather marvelous story. On the contrary, it must be stressed that Polinsky's title again reflects Western ignorance of non-English work on East Caucasian. And, even in English, the brief (and admittedly rather superficial) treatment of Tsakhur by Schulze (1997) was already available. If we also consider that, before Kibrik (1999), there had been on the market at least four (!) more or less extensive presentations of Tsakhur (see table 12 above), we should blame Western typologists for not having considered Tsakhur in their databases rather than characterize Tsakhur itself as some kind of marvelous language. (In addition, it emerges that much of what Polinsky lists among the "marvels" of Tsakhur belongs to the established typology of East Caucasian.) Still, Polinsky's presentation of Kibrik's Tsakhur data surely helps to make them available to a wider audience. Unfortunately, we again face the risk that Western researchers will be content to reference Polinsky (2002), instead of turning to the actual data in Kibrik (1999) (or Dirr 1913; Džejranišvili 1983–84; and Ibragimov 1990). In this sense, the English summary in the Bagwalal grammar is much more helpful. It carefully summarizes the basic facts without offering too many data; hence, it serves as a guide to the Russian text, if the reader wishes to take up an argument and illustrate it with the help of Tsakhur examples.

The fact that all three grammars are at least partially available in English (see table 14) allows the reviewer to avoid the challenging task of summarizing their contents in detail. This brief essay is merely intended to whet the reader's appetite for considering more closely non-English grammars in general, and the three grammars at issue in particular, for crosslinguistic typological sampling. In addition, I want to stress that the neglect of East Caucasian data in any kind of typology can no longer be justified by the claim that there are no English or (even worse) no "modern" grammars available. Such claims turn out to be sad reflections on typologists rather than well-considered judgments.

It goes without saying that all three grammars cover most aspects of the individual grammatical systems. Nevertheless, in the introduction to the Ghodoberi grammar, the authors Kibrik and Tatevosov stress that "due to the fact

that during the fieldwork the main concern of the expedition was the structural and functional properties of the noun phrase one can find that the material concerned with this subject to be slightly more detailed than the rest of the grammar" (A. E. Kibrik 1996:xii). In the Tsakhur and Bagwalal grammars, there is no preponderance of specific subdomains. Basically, the three grammars are organized according to the same principle, namely, the strict separation of form from meaning. This method is quite convenient when describing heavily morphologizing languages; still, it raises a number of doubts, all of which I cannot discuss in detail here. But it should at least be noted that in many instances the actual functional scope of a given morpheme can only be fully understood if one is referred to the formal history of the morpheme, either by unveiling its grammaticalization background or by comparing its functional scope with that of cognate morphemes. In addition, the many different paradigmatic patterns present in most of the East Caucasian languages can be related to both form and function and hence call for a more holistic treatment.

Table 14. Basic Data for Works Produced by the Kibrik Group

	GHODOBERI	TSAKHUR	BAGWALAL
YEAR OF PUBLICATION	1996	1999	2001
EDITOR IN CHIEF	Kibrik	Kibrik	Kibrik
NUMBER OF RESEARCHERS	17	14	26
PAGES	xvi + 306	943	929
METALANGUAGE	*English*	Russian	Russian
ENGLISH SUMMARY			*Yes*
SEPARATELY PUBLISHED SUMMARY		*Yes*	
TEXTS	3	9	26
TEXT PAGES	24	95	104
GLOSSARIES	thematic	alphabetic	alphabetic
GLOSSARY WORDS (VERNACULAR)	ca. 800	ca. 1,000	ca. 1,500
PHRASAL EXAMPLES IN GRAMMAR	ca. 650	ca. 2,000	ca. 1,300

The strict separation of form from function also reflects a problematic understanding of what morphology and syntax may be. Perhaps it would have been wiser to distinguish morphosyntax-morphosemantics both from constructional syntax and from informational syntax. The traditional opposition of morphology to syntax may be useful from the point of view of Basic Linguistic Theory, yet it further complicates the already complex description and analysis of East Caucasian grammars. A closer look at the organization of the three grammars reveals that the general editor, A. E. Kibrik, also had difficulty establishing a unified perspective. It is amazing to see how much the internal organization of the grammars has changed within some ten years (ca. 1990–2000). Table 15 is a synopsis of the three tables of contents.

Table 15. Tables of Contents of Kibrik (1996, 1999, 2001)

GHODOBERI	TSAKHUR	BAGWALAL
(length: xvi + 306 pages)	(length: 943 pages)	(length: 929 pages)
Introduction	Introduction	Introduction
Phonological preliminaries	Phonetics	Phonology
Consonants	Segmental phonetics	Segmental phonology
Vowels	Prosody of the word	Prosody of the word
Syllable	Intonation patterns	Intonation patterns
Word prosody	Transcription, acoustics	Morphophonology
Morphology	Morphology	Morphology
Nominals	Nouns	Parts of Speech
Attributive	Verbs	Noun Classes
Pronouns	Verbal paradigms	Verb
Verbs	Predicative	Noun
Studies in syntax and	Adverbs	Adjective
semantics	Postpositions	Pronouns
Usage of nominal forms	Pronouns	Adverbs and postpositions
Usage of verbal forms	Numerals	Particles, etc.
Transitivity in lexicon	Particles	Interjections
and grammar	Grammatical categories	Derivational morphology
Noun phrase structure	of the verb	Grammatical semantics
Clause structure	Empirical basis	Case and localization
Quantification	Systematic aspects	Aspect
Texts	Indicative	Time
Glossary (dictionary)	Potentialis	Evidentiality
Index (references)	Irrealis	Mood and modality
	Peripheral verbal forms	Nuclear verbal paradigms
	Imperative	Simple clauses
	Habitual	Predicative Nucleus
	Admirative	Transitivity and Diathesis
	Word order and constructions	Nominal groups
	Word order	Postpositional groups
	Constructions	Comparative construction
	Morphosyntactic means	Verbal predicates
	Semantic ergativity	Nominal predicates
	Agreement	Interrogation
	Attribution	Agreement
	Simple clauses	Complex clauses
	Nominal predicates	Relational clauses
	Verbal predicates	Phrases as actants
	Interrogative sentences	Gerundial constructions
	Commands	Adverbial clauses
	Complex clauses	Means of discourse organization
	Coordination	Anaphor
	Relative clauses	Focus
	Clauses as acants	Discourse particles
	Adverbial clauses	Texts
	Comparative constructions	Glossaries
	Means of discourse	Indices
	organization	Summary (English)
	Focus	

Discourse particles
Emphatic pronoun
Coreferential pronouns
Ellipsis
Epistemic markers
Verbs in narratives
Quantors
Texts
Glossaries
Indices

NOTE: Only the first two levels of organization are reproduced here. Russian titles have been slightly simplified.

It should be noted that the Ghodoberi grammar differs from the two others in an important point: it is less systematic, favoring more global thematic chapters instead. The book thus reminds us more of a collection of articles on Ghodoberi grammar than of a systematic grammar. Obviously, the technique applied during fieldwork (see above in this section) has become more visible in the Ghodoberi grammar than in the Tsakhur and Bagwalal grammars. The same point is also evident from the number of morphosyntactic or morphosemantic categories used in the interlinear glosses (and hence in the grammar). Although Ghodoberi and Bagwalal are closely related, Kibrik (1996) lists some 70 categories or subcategories for Ghodoberi, whereas some 120 categories or subcategories are attributed to Bagwalal (a number that roughly corresponds to that of the categories, etc., attributed to Tsakhur). Accordingly, the Ghodoberi description is less explicit than that of the other two languages. On the other hand, the Ghodoberi grammar entails a stronger function-to-form view. For instance, it includes a chapter—highly interesting, but nevertheless debatable in detail—on "transitivity in lexicon and grammar" (written by Andrej Kibrik). This chapter starts from the assumption that "Daghestanian languages are clearly on the transitivity increasing side" (A. A. Kibrik 1996:108). It describes various strategies to manipulate transitivity, which "is viewed here as a predominantly semantic parameter for cross-linguistic reasons" (A. A. Kibrik 1996:109). Accordingly, a semantic (or, in modern terms, cognitive) layer is said to be the motive for certain morphosyntactic patterns and constructions. It should, by the way, be noted that Andrej Kibrik uses purely heuristic grounds in this chapter to justify his resort to a semantic-cognitive layer of language. Still, it seems rather doubtful to me whether the notion of transitivity, which is motivated by semantic (cognitive, conceptual), syntactic (attention information flow), and pragmatic features (see Schulze 2000), can be reduced to the semantic layer for crosslinguistic reasons. Here, the reduction in favor of the semantic layer (often incorrectly described as basic) may cause researchers to deprive themselves of important tools for describing and analyzing functional layers of a linguistic domain.

The Tsakhur grammar, on the other hand, represents a typological grammar in as much as it takes its major categorical orientation from typological generalization. For instance, when discussing the functional scope of verb forms, the authors make use of the well-known questionnaire elaborated by Östen Dahl (1985). Interestingly enough, the grammar—although retaining the form-function dichotomy—does not show a clear division between morphology and syntax. Nevertheless, it is strongly oriented towards the description of syntactic and morphosyntactic features. In this sense, it meets the interest of many contemporary researchers in typology, be it from a formal or a functional point of view. This orientation is echoed in the Bagwalal grammar, which, however, has a stronger "semantic" emphasis. This emphasis reflects Kibrik's more recent orientation towards what may be called a modestly cognitive approach.

The fact that some of the topics in the two grammars are presented by the same author has a remarkable effect: occasionally both grammars show exactly the same wording. For instance, E. Kalinina discusses "sentences with nominal predicates" for Tsakhur (A. E. Kibrik 1999:420–48) and for Bagwalal (A. E. Kibrik 2001:430–43). In the initial paragraph of each discussion, she describes the basic typology in practically the same way and in part with the same words. In my view, such correspondences reveal a central problem of the Kibrikian fieldwork method. The individual researchers of the "stellar group of linguists," as Polinsky (2002:404) has put it, may be well trained in their specific domains. Still, this way of using specialized resources runs the risk of reproducing descriptive and analytic patterns instead of adjusting them to the data of the languages under consideration. In fact, the two grammars (Tsakhur and Bagwalal) are so similar to each other that one might wonder what the justification is for producing both. Naturally, the data of Tsakhur are considerably different from those of Bagwalal, as are the underlying grammatical systems. Nevertheless, if it is the objective of the grammars to document the particularities of the two languages, one might expect a more object-specific format of grammatical description. Otherwise, we might be left with the impression that the "Kibrik tradition" aims at developing a general format with affinities to the tradition of a *grammaire générale et raisonnée*. Such a general grammar would not necessarily be inappropriate for typological descriptions (Basic Linguistic Theory, in fact, does not do anything different). However, the reader might wonder whether the Kibrikian type of descriptive coherence really stems from an underlying conception of *grammaire générale*, or whether it simply reflects the division of labor and, with it, the reproduction of those specializations that are distributed among the members of the groups.

Although the general editor, Aleksandr E. Kibrik, surely has done his best to harmonize the contributions of different authors, the three grammars are nevertheless marked by a certain degree of heterogeneity. In this respect, a major shortcoming of the Kibrikian type of fieldwork becomes apparent. When reading the books, one never has the impression that there exists some kind of general

empathy of the authors towards "their" language. Rather, the books convey a rather sterile impression, which is only partially compensated for by the traditional East Caucasian genres documented in the tales. In fact, the three Kibrik volumes do not tell the story of Ghodoberi, Tsakhur, or Bagwalal. They rarely contextualize the grammatical facts either in the world of the East Caucasian communicative habitus or in diachronic scenarios that would explain the emergence of specific forms or functions. In this sense, the three grammars are highly technical, belonging to what Croft once called "typology proper" (1990:3). The reader will undoubtedly profit from the many valuable observations and the careful presentation (although one occasionally observes disturbing flaws, such as incorrect glosses[3]). All phrasal examples are glossed according to the typological standard. (One may, however, doubt the usefulness of certain conventions, such as the use of an equals sign ("=") to separate class markers. And, one may also note a certain functional overload in the glosses, e.g., in *ʕisa=w* 'Isa=GEN.M' [A. E. Kibrik 2001:689], the class marker *-w* [first class] does not encode the genitive [possession is constructional with male possessees]). However, the reader will quickly get used to the descriptive patterns employed by the editor. Nevertheless, I am not quite sure if the reader will be as happy with the books as Polinsky (2002) has indicated for the Tsakhur volume.

Nevertheless, it becomes clear that the Kibrikian way of approaching the task of typologically processing the grammar of lesser known (we cannot say "hitherto undescribed") languages represents an interesting option that undoubtedly stands in the tradition of the Soviet idea of collective scientific work. It may well be that through this kind of work, the individual grammars gain a descriptive (and in part explanatory) depth that would be difficult to achieve (for reasons of quantitative capacity) for a single researcher. Still, it should again be recalled that all three grammars under review ultimately depend on grammars that had been previously produced by individual researchers (e.g., Adolf Dirr, Patimat Saidova, Garun Ibragimov, Evgeni Džejranišvili, and T'ogo Gudava, for the three languages in question). In other words, Kibrik's approach to fieldwork may be important once a language has been described and categorially recorded and analyzed. However, I have the strong impression that it will pose many difficulties in cases where the language is practically unknown. Here, long-term field trips and a likewise long-term, trustworthy collaboration with informants seem crucial.

5. Final observations Whatever one's attitude towards the Kibrikian type of fieldwork, it is beyond question that Kibrik (1999) and Kibrik (2001), especially, represent very valuable contributions to both East Caucasian linguistics and general linguistics. Still, their value for East Caucasian linguistics seems to be less pronounced; in fact, the grammars confirm most of what their predecessors had already elaborated, especially for the formal layer—that is, for morphology. Hence, the grammars do not add much new with respect to the morphological substance of the three languages. It is true that they often give a more precise

and more elaborate description of the functional layers. Still, such a new look is more relevant for general linguistics than for East Caucasian linguistics, as it does not include a comparative notion, either substantial (form-based) or structural. This does not necessarily mean that descriptions of East Caucasian languages should at all costs respect this comparative perspective. Still, I strongly believe that even typological grammars should be embedded in the categorial and functional frame set up by areal and genetic conditions. Here, it does not suffice to relate one's work to standard assumptions about the categorial makeup of East Caucasian. Rather, the reader of such a grammar should be advised of the degree to which a given category or constructional type of a particular East Caucasian language is typical for the area or genetic group. For instance, when discussing possible split structures within relational patterns, it should be made clear to what extent East Caucasian languages make use of such splitting strategies at all (see Schulze 2000). Otherwise, a claim like that of Polinsky, that there is in Tsakhur "no evidence for split strategies" (2002:413, based on A. E. Kibrik 1999:347–53) is at risk of being up in the air, since there is no *tertium comparationis* that would help to categorize such a claim. (In fact, the claim is by itself rather doubtful. It does not consider the fact that Tsakhur has two different ergative morphemes distributed according to the feature [±human]. In addition, the so-called bi-absolutive construction [Kibrik (*horribile dictu*): "bi-nominative"] typical of many East Caucasian languages, including Tsakhur, strongly reflects splitting strategies).

Once a language has initially undergone a more or less comprehensive documentation, researchers can choose from among at least four options for their ongoing descriptive work: (i) crosslinguistic typological analysis; (ii) areal comparison and categorization; (iii) historical comparison and explanation; and (iv) theory-dependent analysis. Naturally, each of these options serves specific purposes. Nevertheless, it goes without saying that option (iv), for instance, should only be taken once the three other, more data-oriented options have been at least partially elaborated. The three grammars in question clearly belong to option (i). Their theory-oriented components aim not at sustaining a specific theoretical approach, but at better explaining given linguistic data. In my view, the lack of arguments stemming from options (ii) and (iii) cannot be excused. For one thing, there are studies available that at least provide a preliminary description of the genetic context of the three languages in question (e.g., for Ghodoberi and Bagwalal, see Alekseev [1988]; for Tsakhur, see Alekseev [1985]). The same holds true for grammatical descriptions of related languages, as discussed at length earlier in this article. Moreover, the issues of language contact (Awar for Bagwalal and Ghodoberi, and, at an earlier stage, perhaps "Middle Qumyq"; Rutul, Awar, and Azeri for Tsakhur) and of areal linguistics (e.g., the question of whether a given language belongs to "Northern Oriental"[4]) play a crucial role for the grammatical organization of these three languages and can also be pursued with relative ease.

In this regard, the three grammars surely prepare the ground for a linguistic description of the languages in question that goes beyond the production of a simple typology of their data. Today, it may no longer appear unreasonable to demand that descriptions produced in settings analogous to those of the three grammars under review aim at *explaining* linguistic findings, not just at documenting them in a new frame. Explanation, however, requires reference to a multicausal scenario that encompasses (among other things) functional synchrony, formal and functional diachrony, communicative routines in the present and the past, sociolinguistic parameters, and (hopefully) data relating to language acquisition (unfortunately, grammarians rarely refer to this aspect, even if they had the opportunity to ask relevant questions during fieldwork).

Thus, Polinsky surely is right to claim that "although some descriptions of Tsakhur are available in Russian (. . .), none of them achieves the level of detail and linguistic sophistication found in this excellent book" (2002:404). However, I am not sure whether this statement (easily extendable at least to the Bagwalal grammar) suffices to marginalize the critique made above. In fact, the three grammars do two things at the same time: they undoubtedly deepen the categorial perspective on each of the three languages and also provide new material for typological generalizations. In this sense, all three grammars surely are important and highly welcome. However, what they do not do is tell the reader how far the descriptions aim at reconstructing the linguistic practice of a speech community. Thus, the grammars do not exploit all possible options.

Unfortunately, the three grammars continue a tradition that has spread considerably among typological grammars: only in very rare instances do the authors give references for individual grammatical items or categories. Hence, the reader cannot always say whether a given analysis is taken from an earlier source or whether it is novel (this holds for both forms and functions). Naturally, such referencing would become absurd in dealing with a language for which a substantial and well-established tradition of description and analysis exists. However, in the case of languages that had previously been described in only one or two sources, the situation is different. Here, giving references is crucial, because the reader will rarely be in a position to cross-check given data. Interestingly enough, authors from the silent years such as Aleksandr Magometov, constantly referred to the old sources (Schiefner, Dirr, Uslar, and even Bouda). There is no reason to abandon this extremely helpful tradition.

All of the criticisms voiced in this essay do not detract from the overall value of the three books. Unfortunately, it is the weakest of the three grammars, namely, the Ghodoberi grammar, that has been published in English. Hence, the other grammars will only be fully appreciated after the reader has mastered "basic scientific Russian." Otherwise, the two grammars written in Russian (on Tsakhur and Bagwalal) run the risk of remaining "silent" in the Western world of typologists. Thus, their enticing contents may also serve another purpose—to motivate Westerners to question their monolingual Anglophone orientation in

scientific communication and to acquire a basic command of Russian as one of the major scientific languages of the world. (Non-English metalanguages seem to turn out to be endangered languages just as ordinary endangered languages do, with the same consequences.) The knowledge of basic scientific Russian would, in addition, allow linguists to exploit the many grammars written in Russian on languages of such groups as East, West, and South Caucasian, Iranian, Turkic, Mongolian, Paleo-Siberian, and Uralic—particularly relevant to the present case being the many East Caucasian grammars of the tsarist period as well as of the silent years. These grammars would also allow the reader to determine how much the Kibrikian tradition has contributed to the advancement of our knowledge in East Caucasian linguistics, and, in turn, enable the reader to utilize the data contained in these works with a greater degree of accuracy, whether for language typology or for linguistic theory.

Notes

1. Chikobavaism refers to the linguistic doctrines set up by the Georgian linguist Arnold Chikobava, according to which all grammars for Caucasian languages have to start from the paradigm, or *étalon*, of Georgian, which is said to represent the purest example of all Caucasian languages.

2. Unfortunately, Kibrik (1996) names the "Ghodoberi" language (and the village) according to the Russian transcription of the Awar xenonym *godoberi* > *Годоберu* > *Godoberi*. The local name of the language is *gibdiλ:i mic:i* 'language of the Ghidu people'. The many incoherencies in naming East Caucasian languages strongly call for a normalization, which should go along with the local (vernacular) names of the languages and peoples (as long as they exist). Hence, we should better speak of Ghidu instead of Ghodoberi. In this brief essay, I nevertheless retain the standard names, observing, however, the actual articulation more closely than is usually done.

3. For instance, the glosses for *ˀali* 'Ali' and *ekʷ'a* 'being' are mixed up in example 6.165b (A. E. Kibrik 2001:688).

4. "Oriental" is here used as a cover term to denote the ensemble of languages that have in common a significant, Sprachbund-like superstrate that involves Arabic, Persian, and/or Turkish, resulting from the Islamization of the region. Northern Oriental is that part of Oriental that is based on Persian and Turkish, rather than Arabic itself.

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