Laura A. Janda & Anastasia Makarova

“Well, that’s an empirical question”…

…is what someone is likely to hear him say anytime they ask a random question about Russian grammar, or indeed many other topics even in unrelated fields. In other words, the go-to strategy is to collect the evidence, analyze the data, and search for an answer. It’s an unbiased reply from the open and perpetually curious mind of a dedicated scientist. This volume is comprised of studies inspired by Tore Nesset’s approach to knowledge.

Tore Nesset shows what happens when the pursuits of a clever mind are undergirded by steady caring friendship. He shares a warm relationship equally with senior and junior scholars, as well as students, be they advanced or beginners, and even potential students that haven’t registered (but might yet be enticed to study Russian). The fruits of his combination of sharp intellect with genuine goodwill are reflected in this collection of articles, essays, and congratulations presented to Tore Nesset in celebration of his 60th birthday on October 15, 2026. While this volume springs from the academic tradition of the festschrift, it also reaches beyond the traditional bounds of that genre, much as Tore Nesset has himself expanded ordinary perimeters in many directions, in terms of scholarship, collegiality, and mentorship. And he has led by example, always putting more than his share of effort into every thesis, dissertation, co-authored article, or grant proposal. In addition to pushing the frontiers of scientific investigation in historical Slavic linguistics, the linguistics of Russian and other languages, and language pedagogy, Tore Nesset’s scholarship extends to related fields of culture and history. All these disciplines are amply represented in this volume. Tore Nesset has especially prioritized support of the next generation of scholars, many of whom have participated in this project. It is particularly fitting that this volume is bookended by personal tributes: opening with essays by Hans-Olav Enger and Henrik Syse on enduring camaraderie, which in our opinion do a better job introducing the honoree than any traditional description of his “life and work”, and closing with Geir Flikke’s translation from Russian to Norwegian of a poem by Lermontov to commemorate the honors that he and Tore Nesset received for their work as beginning students of Russian.

This volume is presented to thank and honor Tore Nesset for his achievements, both as a scholar and as a friend. Dear Tore, we treasure you and look forward to continuing our scientific and human relationships with you.

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