

**PROJECT OF HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS OF SLAVIC STUDIES OF 1958**

***PROJETO DE LINGÜÍSTICA HISTÓRICA DE ESTUDOS ESLÁVICOS DE 1958***

***PROYECTO DE LINGÜÍSTICA HISTÓRICA DE ESTUDIOS ESCLAVOS DE 1958***

Leonard Fyodorovich NEDASHKOVSKY<sup>1\*</sup>  
Nadezhda Igorevna NEDASHKOVSKAYA<sup>2</sup>

**ABSTRACT:** The article explores the paradoxes of methodology and political contexts of the project of historical linguistics of Slavic studies, which was officially declared during the IVth International Congress of Slavists (Moscow, 1958). The authors explore this significant project of historical linguistics from the point of view of intellectual history - through the problem of formation of ideas of researchers about the subject, method, and meta-language of Slavic studies, which has proved to be essential in the study of the history of this discipline. Semiotic analysis of the whole body of sources as a single text of ideology is utilized to attain the aim of the study. The project of historical linguistics of Slavistics (1958) is a fact of the history of discipline and ideology that reveals the relationship between the methodology of research and the practices of power and global projects to build national identity.

**Keywords:** Slavic studies. Historical linguistics. National identity. Historiography.

**RESUMO:** O artigo explora os paradoxos da metodologia e dos contextos políticos do projeto de lingüística histórica dos estudos eslavos, que foi oficialmente declarado durante o IV Congresso Internacional de Eslavos (Moscou, 1958). Os autores exploram esse significativo projeto da lingüística histórica do ponto de vista da história intelectual - por meio do problema da formação de ideias dos pesquisadores sobre o tema, o método e a metalinguagem dos estudos eslavos, o que se revelou essencial no estudo da história desta disciplina. A análise semiótica de todo o corpo de fontes como um único texto de ideologia é utilizada para atingir o objetivo do estudo. O projeto da lingüística histórica da eslavística (1958) é um fato da história da disciplina e da ideologia que revela a relação entre a metodologia de pesquisa e as práticas de poder e projetos globais de construção da identidade nacional.

**Palavras-chave:** Estudos eslavos. Linguística histórica. Identidade nacional. Historiografia.

**RESUMEN:** El artículo explora las paradojas de la metodología y los contextos políticos del proyecto de lingüística histórica de los estudios eslavos, que fue declarado oficialmente durante el IV Congreso Internacional de Eslavos (Moscú, 1958). Los autores exploran este significativo proyecto de lingüística histórica desde el punto de vista de la historia intelectual, a través del problema de la formación de ideas de los investigadores

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<sup>1</sup> Doctor of Historical Sciences, Professor, Department of History of Tatarstan, Archeology and Ethnology, Institute of International Relations, Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University, KFU, Russia, leonnedashkovsky@mail.ru, 89050229782, Id scopus 55543275600, ORCID Id <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7453-9960>

<sup>2</sup> PhD in Philology, Associate Professor, Faculty of History and Philology, Institute of History and Philology, Russian State University for the Humanities, RSHU, Russia n.nedashkovskaya@yandex.ru, 8(843)2956601, Id scopus 57189329228, ORCID Id <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1757-6287>

sobre el tema, el método y el metalenguaje de los estudios eslavos, que ha demostrado ser esencial en el estudio de la historia de esta disciplina. El análisis semiótico de todo el cuerpo de fuentes como un solo texto de ideología se utiliza para lograr el objetivo del estudio. El proyecto de lingüística histórica de la eslavística (1958) es un hecho de la historia de la disciplina y la ideología que revela la relación entre la metodología de la investigación y las prácticas de poder y proyectos globales para construir la identidad nacional.

**Palabras clave:** Estudios eslavos. Lingüística histórica. Identidad nacional. Historiografía.

## **Introduction**

Slavic studies were formed at the turn of the 18th-19th century as a complex discipline on Slavic culture, including historical, ethnographic, historical-literary, linguistic research, etc. The complexity of the approach, as well as the involvement of Slavic researches in political processes, also affected another branch of human research such as Golden Horde studies (Nedashkovskii, 2009; Nedashkovsky, 2012;

Nedashkovsky, 2014; Nedashkovsky, 2015; Nedashkovsky, 2016; Nedashkovsky, 2018; Nedashkovsky & Shigapov, 2019), to the struggle for the independence of Slavic peoples, are the reasons traditionally called by historiographers, explaining the contradictions and certain limitations observed both in the assessment of individual discoveries, the role of individual personalities and in the reflection of the heritage of entire research schools, periods of development. At the same time, insufficient attention is paid to the history of Slavic studies as an intellectual project, to the formation of ideas about the subject and method of Slavic studies, but, meanwhile, it is the initial stage of the development of Slavic studies that is key in the study of the history of this discipline (Nedashkovsky & Nurkhamitov, 2019).

The problems of self-representation and self-description are particularly relevant for the study of the history of the disciplines, which arose as part of cultural and political projects of nation-building. Slavic studies arose and developed in Europe and Russia in line with several national revival projects of Slavic peoples, based on the ideas of German romanticism and romantic philosophy of language. One of these projects' global objectives was to design a single Slavic world's ideologemes, which created a Slavic identity (Nedashkovsky *et al.*, 2018).

## **Methods**

The main method of studying the project of a transnational history of Slavic

studies as an object of intellectual history is semiotic analysis of the whole body of sources as a single text of ideology. Semiotic literary criticism, also called literary semiotics, is the approach to literary criticism informed by the theory of signs or semiotics. Semiotics, tied closely to the structuralism, which was extremely influential in the development of literary theory out of the formalist approaches of the early twentieth century.

## **Results and Discussion**

The narrative of Russian Slavic studies, which was developed by the beginning of the 20th century, is a complex multilayer and 'multilingual' text in which it is pointless to seek a single linear logic - such a way only strengthens the power of the narrative. The history of this discipline is a body of research, publicistic, artistic, epistolary, memoirs texts, each of which is a product of, among other things, extra-research intentions and must be read in the context of other texts. It is necessary to study the rhetoric of sources on the history of Slavic studies, to carry out archaeology of ideas, which became the foundation on which the history of researches was built in interpretation of different research schools and generations.

Thus, the strategies of self-description of Slavic studies should be considered as one of the most important practices of implementation of the intellectual project of Slavistics and, more importantly, further recoding of this project in accordance with the interests of new generations of politicians and Slavists.

The study of competing 'histories' of Slavistics created by different research generations in the context of methodological searches of discipline allows to consider the research heritage of Slavists of the 19th century from the perspective of historicism - as part of the intellectual project of Slavic nationalism, regardless of the specialization that has occurred, in the context of each other. Subsequent specialization has spread the history of separate Slavistic disciplines, and without taking into account the original design of Slavistics, there is a loss of its subject in these days.

The body of sources in question has never been seen as a single text, a single sign system. To date, there have also been no attempts to explain the repeated sharp change of methodological settings of Slavists during the 19th century, the analysis of the process of specialization, the reasons for 'rewriting' the historiography of this discipline. It is necessary to consider the specified 'dark places' of the history of Slavistics on the material of texts of self-description.

Obviously, it is necessary to develop an approach to the study of the history of Slavistics, in which the task of reconstructing the only right one, an unopposed version of its evolution is not set, and all its texts of research, publicistic, ideological, cultural, as well as biographical and other personal sources, would be studied in the context of each other as a unit of a common sign system, producing those sets of meanings and values that are actually subject to critical reading by the historiographer 'after' the nation-building era. This approach inherits many mental attitudes of semiotics and new historicism and, as a result, substantially complements the arsenal of the history of humanitarian knowledge, demonstrating the possibilities for it to overcome ideological and social programming. At present this is especially important, as the history of Slavistics at the modern stage continues to broadcast unread and therefore preserving its power ideologemes of national and state building, located in the field of out-of-source knowledge of historians and working as a priori true.

To date there is no transnational researches in this direction, and even works on national versions of cultural revival projects and the role of Slavists in them appear extremely rarely (Belov, 2007).

The historiographical tradition of Slavistics begins from the time of its professionalization in the 1810s-1820s (Nedashkovsky & Nedashkovskaya, 2016). And up to academician I.V. Yagich, whose extensive work 'The history of Slavic philology' (Yagich, 2003), which was the first complete history of European Slavistics, was published in 1910, historiographers had no doubt about the very possibility of generalizing national and transnational histories of Slavistics, despite its increasing specialization and loss of methodological ties with the initial projects of J. Dobrovsky, A.H. Vostokov, P.J. Safarik.

The crisis in the historiography of Slavistics was recognized only during the work of the International Commission on the History of Slavistics, which was established in 1958, at the IV International Congress of Slavists in Moscow (Prokof'eva, 1980), but it took several decades for it to be accepted by the Slavists themselves (Sibinovich, 1995). It was when the Commission began to prepare systematic studies and future publications that it appeared that there was no common view of what should actually be the subject of those studies. At the symposia in Vienna (1960) and Goettingen (1964) the concept was formulated that studies on the history of Slavistics should focus on the study of 'disciplines such as Slavic linguistics, Slavic literature studies, Slavic folklore, etc.' (Prokof'eva, 1980). This work was to lead to the writing of a comprehensive 'history of

Slavic philology, compiled in the form of an encyclopaedia, which will pay attention to both general theoretic issues, as well as very specific problems, such as the activities of outstanding philologists-Slavists' (Prokof'eva, 1980). that is, Slavic studies artificially turned into exclusively philological discipline, and the 'personal' history of Slavistics was mechanically disconnected from the process of development of discipline itself, becoming an applied field of historiography.

Only at the symposium in 1967 (Stirin) again prevailed the opinion that the history of Slavic studies should be created, clearly understanding that Slavistics is a 'complex', which includes linguistics, literature studies, history of art, history of Slavic peoples, history of culture. However, no research strategy has been proposed to explain how to do so. The debate on this issue, as well as on the principles of selection of material (history of study of the common or special in Slavic cultures), continues to the present day, and it is quite indicative that the project of history of Slavic studies has never come true.

In the 1990s, as a result of the updating of the study of nature and the history of nationalism, proposals arose to replace the ethnic approach in Slavistics, for example, with a geographical approach, which, according to Slovak comparatist D. Dyurishin, could expand the context of the history of research schools and methods (Dyurishin, 1993). With this approach, Slavic studies, like its history, will completely abandon its subject. However, such projects are very indicative to illustrate the state of discipline and its historiography. They confirm the existence of a crisis situation no less than a direct analysis of the materials of Slavistic congresses and commissions (Sibinovich, 1995).

The interdisciplinary design of this research discipline, formed under the influence of the ideas of the era, suggests that the history of Slavic studies should be interdisciplinary studies of strategies for creating Slavic identity by different generations of Slavists in the context of the intellectual history of Russia and Europe.

Already in the 1980s-1990s, Eastern Europe developed a tradition of studying the processes of interaction of the research community with ideological construction as a component of projects of national revival of Slavs (Yagich, I2003). This approach allows to update for the history of discipline the daily life of research activity, to reveal the relationship between the quality of research communication (dialogue, conflict of generations, mythologization of the history of researches) and the intellectual history of the era, to reduce the distance between the historiographer and his hero, and therefore to find true intensions of creation of certain research works and whole research areas, i.e. to reveal the essence of the idea itself of this discipline and its subject, which in modern

Slavistics was practically lost.

Projects of national revival of Slavic peoples relied on the ideas of the late Enlightenment and the German romanticism emerging at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries, especially J.G. Herder (Belov, 2007; Lapteva, 2005), ideas of the philosophy of language generated by the latter (Wolff, 1994), on the basis of which the ideologem of national construction 'language

- nation – state' was created. Therefore, the construction of a single complex method of research by Slavists is directly related to the designing of Slavic identity, and therefore the history of the method, the history of creating cognitive models, the metalanguage, the deconstruction of research metaphors allows us to uncover the mechanisms of interest to us and explain many 'dark places' of the history of Slavic studies, as, for example, an externally unsubstantiated stop in the development of some research schools in the transition to the second and third generation of Slavists, breaks of research traditions, to reconstruct the process of specialization of research, explain contradictory assessments of its national/regional versions.

At the present stage, due to the new challenges of the multicultural world (Repina, 2012), the methodological crisis of Slavistics has reached its peak. Retrospective analysis of these processes makes it possible to deconstruct the ideological practices of Slavists, who have created 'practical nationalism' in the cultural sphere and broad social context over two centuries.

The peculiar 'gap of discourse' (P.-M. Foucault), which has experienced modern Slavistics, is simultaneously a unique opportunity for the present moment to demystify the historiography of research, the content of its initial projects and the unused by modern civilization epistemological potential of individual disciplines, which gave Slavistics their tools.

One of the main tasks of Slavic national revival projects was to design the Slavic world as an analytical category (Belov, 2007; Mayorova, 2001). National histories became a symptom of the beginning of era of modernity (Bukharaev *et al.*, 2016; Antonova *et al.*, 2019). In the course of designing a connection was established between cultures of Slavic peoples based on the interpretation of the available facts of these cultures. The concept of the people/nation, based on linguistic unity, formed the basis of the research discipline on the Slavic world, dictated the structure, targeting of its researches. The designing was carried out in the course of various cultural practices of

intellectuals, among which the leading role belonged to researchers' - creators of Slavic studies. They became historiographers of this discipline, as its history proved to be a strategically significant part of the narrative of Slavic identity. Here narrative schemes and tropes were created, which structured the studies of researchers and allowed to transmit ideologies of Slavic studies into 'mass' research and public consciousness. Thus, historiography was assigned the metalanguage of the object under study, and with it non-reflexed cognitive models were transmitted.

## **Conclusions**

In the formation of Slavic studies, such methodologically founded disciplines as literature studies, linguistics, history, archaeology, ethnography, etc., were included in the system of artificially created lingvo centric research discipline. This model could become the research basis of complex researches of the Slavic world. However, history has shown that Slavic studies have not gone along this path, choosing a strategy of accumulation of facts and subsequent increasing specialization. This separated in methodology the next generations of Slavists with the initial project of discipline itself. The Slavic studies complex was maintained only at the level of a declaration giving Slavistics a special ideological interest and allowing remaining inside the process of nation-building. In turn, the historiography of Slavistics throughout its existence assigned its cognitive models, metaphors and ideologemes, putting on the same level the language and meta-language of research, and as a result practically lost the possibility of reflection. And today, discussing the truth/untruth of the ideologemes created by the first Slavists, it is inside the processes of designing a nation two hundred years ago. The history of Slavistics represents one of the facets of the intellectual life of the era of the construction of national empires, which created cognitive and narrative schemes of social knowledge of the modern time, from the limits and frames of which historiographers can emerge only by finding new ways of self-reflection.

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