

УДК 811.161.2'0 + 811.161.1'0

DOI <https://doi.org/10.24195/2616-5317-2024-39.2>

## THE PRINCIPLE OF HISTORICISM AND THE ORIGINS OF THE COMPARATIVE-HISTORICAL METHOD

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### **SUMMARY**

*The principle of historicism is a leading ontological component of the comparative-historical method. It played a key role in the emergence and development of this method. Similarities between languages had long been noticed by scholars, but they were primarily interpreted from a static perspective using the apparatus of universal grammar. The idea of a genetic relationship between certain languages had also been expressed, but for centuries it did not become dominant. A certain impetus that marked the starting point for the emergence of the comparative-historical method was the discovery of Sanskrit by Europeans. G.-L. Coœurdoux, W. Jones, and other 18th-century researchers emphasized that Sanskrit, Ancient Greek, Latin, and the Germanic, Celtic, and Iranian languages belong to a single linguistic family and originate from a common source.*

*Comparative linguistics in the first quarter of the 19th century represented a significant advancement compared to earlier linguistic-genetic constructions. For 17th- and 18th-century linguists, linguistic material was illustrative in nature, and facts were interpreted arbitrarily. Additionally, lexical units, which are the least stable, were at the forefront. Comparative linguistics, however, bases historical comparison of languages on their grammatical and phonetic structures, and in lexicon, appeals to archaic (primary) layers.*

*Early comparativists identified identical functional morphemes in related (Indo-European) languages (F. Bopp), formulated the principle of regular phonetic correspondences in cognate words and forms*

*of these languages, and on this basis reconstructed historical phonetic laws (R. Rask, J. Grimm, A. Chr. Vostokov). They also reconstructed the common lexical stock of Indo-European languages (R. Rask, J. Grimm). All language changes were interpreted as regular.*

*This created a favorable basis for the refinement of the comparative-historical method in comparative linguistics in the 1870s–1930s.*

**Keywords:** *comparative-historical method, comparative linguistics, principle of historicism, regularity of language changes.*

**Introduction.** In a series of works, we have advocated for a broad interpretation of the method, particularly in linguistics. Within such an interpretation, a method is viewed as a heterogeneous phenomenon and considered a complex unit that incorporates three distinct components: ontological, operational, and teleological (Глущенко, 2017: 12; Глущенко, 2010: 41).

Under this approach, a complex of scientific techniques (operations, procedures) and the methodology for their application constitute the operational component of a scientific method. The teleological component relates to the objectives of the research.

Let us elaborate on the ontological component of the method. Ontology serves as a tool through which the researcher perceives the world as a structured whole presented to them within a system of philosophical categories. From our perspective, it is appropriate to include tools of cognition such as principles and approaches as part of the ontological component of the scientific method (Глущенко, 2017: 12; Глущенко, 2010: 42).

A scientific principle serves as the theoretical and methodological foundation of a method. Principles are broad assertions with extensive applicability.

A scientific approach, closely related to the principle, is defined as a methodological orientation of research. While the approach determines the direction of inquiry, it does not function as a direct tool of cognition; instead, approaches are reflected in the principles, techniques, and procedures of a specific method. For example, the historical approach to linguistic phenomena is embodied in the principle of historicism, as well as in the techniques of genetic identification of facts, their chronological and spatial localization, and the procedure of linguistic reconstruction (within the comparative-historical method).

The **purpose** of this study is to uncover the role that the principle of historicism played in the emergence of the comparative-historical method.

This purpose is specified in the following **tasks**:

1. To analyze the views on language held by linguists of the 11th–18th centuries.
2. To identify the most valuable aspects inherited by the founders of the comparative-historical method and comparative linguistics.
3. To demonstrate the innovations introduced by early comparativists compared to their predecessors in comparative-historical linguistics.
4. To establish the contributions of the founders of the comparative-historical method and comparative linguistics to the methodology and techniques of linguistic-genetic research.

The **research material** consists of linguistic texts, specifically works by linguists from the 11th to the 19th centuries, focusing on language history and the comparison of languages in synchrony.

The study employs the actualist **method** as a tool for linguistic-historiographical research (Glushchenko, 2017: 7).

**Results and discussion.** The principle of historicism is illustrative, as it demonstrates the validity and importance of identifying the ontological component within the structure of a method.

Indeed, scholars have long observed similarities between languages, but these were mostly interpreted from a static perspective: similarities in phonetics, vocabulary, and grammar were explained as resulting from the shared communicative function of languages. The idea of genetic relatedness among certain languages was occasionally proposed but did not dominate for centuries.

Let us consider some examples, distinguishing between works with a linguistic-genetic focus and comparative studies.

The Central Asian philologist Mahmud al-Kashgari, in the «Compendium of Turkic Dialects» (1072–1074), proposed the idea of linguistic relatedness (based on the study of Turkic languages), which was grounded in a historical approach to linguistic phenomena. In the 14th century, Dante Alighieri discussed the relatedness of Romance languages in his «De vulgari eloquentia», suggesting that Romance languages emerged from a common source. Similar ideas regarding various languages were later expressed by scholars

such as G. Postellus (1538), A. Bogorych (1584), E. Guichard (1606), J. J. Scaligeri (1610), M. Lithuanus (1615), G. W. Leibniz (1646–1716), L. ten Kate (1723), P.-J. Strahlenberg (1730), Ph. Ruhig (1747), M. V. Lomonosov (1755), J. Dobrovský (1792), S. Gyarmathi (1799), F. Schlegel (1808), among others (Ковалик, Самійленко, 1985: 53–57; Глущенко, Лихачова, Рибальченко, 2021: 10–16).

At the same time, most scholars viewed language as a static phenomenon, and the idea of linguistic relatedness did not become widespread. Even in the 18th and early 19th centuries, works were published comparing all known languages; while these studies had some scientific value (mainly for comparative linguistics), they did not incorporate the concept of genetic relatedness (Кочерган, 2006: 26). Language was not regarded as a historical phenomenon. For instance, P. Pallas published a dictionary in 1786–1787 containing lexical correspondences across 200 languages of Europe and Asia, which expanded to 272 languages in the 1791 edition. L. Hervás y Panduro produced a catalog (1800–1804) covering the vocabulary and grammar of 307 languages, including Amerindian and Austronesian languages. Similarly, J. Adelung and J. Vater compiled «Mithridates, or General Linguistics» (1806–1817), including observations on 500 world languages and translations of the «Our Father» prayer into these languages (Ковалик, Самійленко, 1985: 55).

Thus, the principle of historicism and the related principle of linguistic relatedness did not immediately gain acceptance in linguistics. At the same time, as V. Thomsen noted, during the 18th century, the comparative-historical method «was in the air» (Thomsen, 1927: 68). A specific stimulus was required to mark the starting point for the emergence of this method.

Such a stimulus was the discovery of Sanskrit by Europeans in the second half of the 18th century, a language previously almost unknown in Europe. It is noteworthy that as early as the 16th century, Filippo Sassetti observed similarities between Sanskrit and Italian, particularly in Latin numerals and some other words (e. g., Sanskrit *Deva* – Italian *Dio* for ‘God,’ Sanskrit *sarpa* – Italian *serpe* for ‘snake’). In the 18th century, researchers began documenting lexical and, to a lesser extent, grammatical

correspondences between Sanskrit, Latin, Ancient Greek, Gothic, and other languages.

In 1767, G.-L. Coeurdoux (1691–1779) noted the relatedness of Latin, Ancient Greek, and Sanskrit, proposing that they originated from a common source – a language that no longer exists. By the late 18th century, interest in Sanskrit was growing. The English scholar William Jones (1746–1794) emphasized that Sanskrit, Ancient Greek, Latin, as well as the Germanic, Celtic, and Iranian languages, belong to a single linguistic family and originate from a common source. These theses were supported by P. a S. Bartolomeo (Johann Philipp Wesdin), who prepared two Sanskrit grammars, a dictionary, and a treatise on the relatedness of several European languages.

Further studies of Sanskrit and its comparison with other Indo-European languages continued in the 19th century, led by scholars such as Henry Thomas Colebrooke, Charles Wilkins, Friedrich Schlegel, and others.

All these scholars of the 18th and early 19th centuries can be considered precursors of comparative-historical linguistics and the comparative-historical method. Working predominantly with lexical and, to a lesser extent, grammatical material, they substantiated the idea of linguistic relatedness, grounded in the interpretation of language as a historical phenomenon.

As noted by R. O. Shor and N. S. Chemodanov, comparative-historical linguistics in the first quarter of the 19th century represented a significant advancement compared to the linguistic-genetic constructions of the 17th and 18th centuries (Shor, Chemodanov, 1945: 264), and even more so compared to earlier periods. Linguists of the 17th and 18th centuries primarily used linguistic material as illustrative data, often interpreting the facts arbitrarily. Lexicon was given primary importance. As an example, R. O. Shor and N. S. Chemodanov cite the aforementioned dictionary by P. Pallas, which, among other things, includes a distinct language of pedlars and hawkers. Indeed, if one focuses solely on lexical composition, such an interpretation might seem logical. However, it is impossible to ignore the phonetic-phonological, morphological, and syntactic levels. Consequently, in P. Pallas's dictionary, the jargon is treated as a separate language.

On the other hand, the Armenian language contains numerous Persian loanwords, yet this does not indicate a special genetic relationship between the two languages, as these cases involve substantial borrowing from Persian into Armenian. As is well known, the lexical level is the least stable (Shor, Chemodanov, 1945: 264).

R. O. Shor and N. S. Chemodanov rightly emphasized that the lexical level is the least stable and should not be prioritized.

In the context of comparative-historical linguistics, historical comparison of languages is based on their grammatical and phonetic structures (Shor, Chemodanov, 1945: 264–266) (see below).

The introduction of the principle of historicism into linguistics underscored the importance of considering each language as an object worthy of comprehensive study. Linguists began to focus less on commonalities and universal aspects of languages and more on the differences among languages and their various historical stages.

By the late 18th and early 19th centuries, linguists had collected significant factual material that confirmed the relatedness of various languages, primarily Indo-European, as well as Turkic, Finno-Ugric, and Afro-Asiatic languages. The task was to systematize these facts, gather new data, and develop scientific methods for studying related languages to reconstruct their histories (Ковалик, Самійленко, 1985: 58).

The founders of comparative-historical linguistics and the comparative-historical method – Franz Bopp, Rasmus Rask, Jacob Grimm, and Alexander Chr. Vostokov – set these goals for themselves. Scholars consider the first quarter of the 19th century to be the time of the emergence of comparative-historical linguistics and its associated method.

Throughout the 19th century and the first quarter of the 20th century, the comparative-historical method held a leading position in global linguistics.

As is well known, the operational component of the comparative-historical method includes techniques for the genetic identification of facts, the chronological and spatial localization of linguistic phenomena, and their systematically connected sets, as well as the procedure of linguistic reconstruction. The latter is the most essential part of the operational component

of the comparative-historical method (Klimov, 1971: 58–59). However, to apply these operational elements in practice, a linguist must think historically and systematically, focusing on the identification and study of causal relationships (Глущенко, 2017: 15–23). Thus, a comparative linguist must employ the principles of historicism, causality, and systematicity (which can be considered specific manifestations of the general principle of interconnected phenomena) (Глущенко, 2017: 23), enabling them to carry out these techniques and the procedure of linguistic reconstruction.

Previously, we characterized the discovery of Sanskrit by Europeans as an important factor in the emergence of the historical approach to language. However, familiarity with Sanskrit was merely an external catalyst for the further development of linguistic thought. More substantial factors came into play, influencing the change in approaches to language and prompting the search for new methods and the formulation of a new research principle that would better align with the spirit of the era and ensure the coherence of linguistics.

This principle was historicism. It was the principle of historicism that gave rise to comparative-historical linguistics.

The orientation toward the principle of historicism arose naturally. The late 18th and early 19th centuries were marked by profound changes in scientific thought, characterized by the promotion and implementation of ideas of historicism and development.

These ideas were not only the result of the independent development of biology and linguistics but also the influence of the philosophy of history advocated by French Enlightenment thinkers and Johann Gottfried Herder's theory of language origin.

The scientific achievements of the first half of the 19th century were directly reflected in the philosophical views of Friedrich Schelling and Georg Hegel. F. Schelling formulated the universal principle of the interconnection of phenomena. This thesis was supported and further developed in G. Hegel's dialectical theory, which became the philosophical foundation of a new scientific movement.

G. Hegel's philosophical concept significantly contributed to the establishment of historicism as a defining feature of scientific thought at the beginning of the 19th century. The ideas of development found applications in the study of the history of nations,

cultures, religions, laws, literature, and languages. The realization that language evolves and that linguistic phenomena are interconnected in their changes was fully formed under the influence of F. Schelling's and G. Hegel's ideas.

Franz Bopp (1791–1867) set two primary tasks for himself: 1) to prove the relatedness of a number of languages, which would later be classified as Indo-European, and 2) to uncover the origin of inflectional forms in the languages he studied. In addressing these tasks, F. Bopp created a comparative-historical grammar of Indo-European languages. It is important to emphasize that F. Bopp's innovation as a comparative linguist lay in his focus on the grammatical forms of verbs in Sanskrit and other Indo-European languages as the object of historical comparison.

Today, it is well established that inflections, as functional morphemes, are rarely borrowed. They generally persist in languages from ancient times, undergoing modifications in accordance with the laws of language development. In F. Bopp's time, this was a significant discovery in comparative linguistics, demonstrating the effectiveness of the comparative-historical method, which began to take shape in the first quarter of the 19th century. Notably, proponents of comparative linguistics and etymology still reference the parallel forms first identified by F. Bopp in Sanskrit, Ancient Greek, Gothic, Latin, and other ancient languages with preserved written records.

F. Bopp demonstrated the common origin of Indo-European languages from Proto-Indo-European, taking into account all the groups he identified within the Indo-European family.

The scholar considered the following languages to be Indo-European: Sanskrit, Ancient Greek, Latin, Avestan, Persian, Gothic, German, Lithuanian, Old Russian, Old Church Slavonic, Armenian, Albanian, and the Celtic languages (Bopp, 1833). He proved their relatedness through the historical comparison of verbal inflections in these languages.

F. Bopp's ambition to expand the scope of comparative-historical studies led him to attempt to establish connections between Indo-European languages on the one hand and Malay-Polynesian and South Caucasian languages on the other (Bopp, 1833). However, these attempts were unsuccessful.



Rasmus Rask (1787–1832) is primarily credited with developing the criteria for determining linguistic relatedness. These criteria include:

- 1) grammatical correspondences,
- 2) phonetic correspondences,
- 3) the identity of archaic (primary) lexical layers, including terms for kinship, body parts, animals and animal products, plants and their parts, natural objects and phenomena, dwellings, tools, food items, actions, processes, and qualities.

R. Rask paid special attention to vocabulary, identifying a common lexical stock among related (Indo-European) languages. He formulated the principle of regular sound correspondences in cognate words and forms in these languages. For instance, in the Latin *pater* and Old Icelandic *fadir* ('father'), there is a correspondence between [p] and [f]; in Latin *cornu* and Old Icelandic *horn* ('horn'), there is a correspondence between [k] and [h].

R. Rask was one of the first to articulate the law of consonant shifts in Germanic languages (e. g., [p] > [f], [k] > [h], as seen in the examples above). This law was independently discovered by Jacob Grimm and Jacob Bredsdorff (although linguist historians differ on the extent of J. Bredsdorff's contribution). The consonant shift in Germanic languages is referred to in two ways: 1) Grimm's Law; 2) Rask – Grimm's Law (see below).

While 17th- and 18th-century linguists compared linguistic facts from various historical periods arbitrarily, Jacob Grimm (1775–1863) systematically studied the regular relationships reflected in ancient manuscripts of related languages. According to J. Grimm, all linguistic changes occur systematically. His primary focus was on phonetic regularities (Grimm, 1826: 265–266).

The works of the founders of the comparative-historical method reflect Romanticism, a new worldview that emerged at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries as a reaction to the ideals of the Enlightenment. Romanticism is most vividly expressed in the works of J. Grimm. For example, in his book *Reinhart Fuchs* (1834), J. Grimm painted a poetic picture of the lives of ancient Indo-Europeans, characterized by their closeness to nature.

In the history of linguistics, J. Grimm is best known as the author of the foundational *Deutsche Grammatik* in four volumes. This work presents a historical comparison of all Germanic languages.

J. Grimm used not only ancient written records (like F. Bopp and R. Rask) but also contemporary dialect data as sources for studying linguistic history. This opened broad opportunities for future researchers and contributed to the emergence of a new linguistic discipline – dialectology.

Romantic philosophy of language, influenced by Friedrich Schlegel, is reflected in J. Grimm's development of the concept of *Ablaut* – the alternation of vowels in word roots. J. Grimm defined *Ablaut* as a systematic alternation of vowels that permeates the entire language. According to J. Grimm, *Ablaut* represents the spirit of the German language, as it is a very ancient phenomenon found in all Germanic languages. He argued that *Ablaut* is the driving force of Germanic languages, imparting beauty through the harmony of vowel alternations [10, Bd I, S. 35; Bd II, S. 1].

J. Grimm developed a detailed classification of strong verbs and related parts of speech in Germanic languages. His predecessor in studying *Ablaut* was the 18th-century scholar Lambert ten Kate [Kate, 1723].

J. Grimm is also known for his book *Geschichte der deutschen Sprache* (1826), in which he presented the first scientific periodization of German language history.

A landmark achievement in the historical phonetics of Germanic languages was the formulation of the law of the first Germanic consonant shift (e. g., [p] > [f], [k] > [h]).

It is worth adding that as early as the 17th century, J. J. Scaligeri (1540–1609) divided Germanic languages into *Water* and *Wasser* languages based on the word for 'water' (Scaligeri, 1610), thus anticipating the outlines of the Rask – Grimm Law, formulated two centuries later.

What facts about Germanic and other Indo-European languages led to the discovery of the Rask – Grimm Law?

Comparing Germanic words with those of other Indo-European languages (e. g., Latin, Ancient Greek, Sanskrit) reveals consistent correspondences, summarized as follows:

1. Indo-European voiceless stops [p], [t], [k] correspond to Germanic voiceless fricatives [f], [þ], [h];

2. Indo-European voiced stops [b], [d], [g] correspond to Germanic voiceless stops [p], [t], [k];

3. Indo-European voiced aspirated stops [bh], [dh], [gh] correspond to Germanic voiced stops without aspiration [b], [d], [g].

The Rask – Grimm Law is a vivid example of the fruitful application of genetic identification and linguistic reconstruction techniques within the comparative-historical method.

In developing the comparative-historical method and establishing Slavic comparative-historical linguistics, the work of Alexander Chr. Vostokov (1781–1864) played a significant role. Among his contributions, *Considerations about the Slavic Language* (1820) stands out for its original ideas and observations. For example, A. Chr. Vostokov identified the phonetic significance of Cyrillic *juses* and *yers*.

The determination of the phonetic significance of *juses* and *yers* was one of A. Chr. Vostokov's greatest achievements, marking the application of the comparative-historical method to Slavic languages.

A. Chr. Vostokov was the first to show that Proto-Slavic had nasal vowel phonemes, which were represented by *juses* in early (Old Church Slavonic) manuscripts written in Cyrillic. In all Slavic languages (except Polish, Kashubian, some Macedonian dialects, and one Slovenian dialect), nasal vowels disappeared, transitioning into non-nasal vowels.

This brilliant discovery was made possible by A. Chr. Vostokov's comparison of Cyrillic *juses* with the nasal vowel sounds of contemporary Polish. For example, the Old Church Slavonic words *зѣбѣ* ('tooth'), *рѣка* ('hand'), *клатва* ('oath'), and *пять* ('five') correspond to the Polish *zqb*, *ręka*, *klątwa*, and *pięć* (Vostokov, 1865: 7–13). Thus, the genetic identification of the same morpheme, and consequently all its sounds in Old Church Slavonic and modern Polish, facilitated the deciphering of the phonetic value of *jus* (Глущенко, 2017: 28–32).

An essential condition for A. Chr. Vostokov's groundbreaking discovery was his introduction of an ancient Slavic written monument – the *Ostromir Gospel* – into scholarly use.

As is well known, A. Chr. Vostokov also initiated the study of the letters ѣ and ѥ. He was the first to conclude that these letters in ancient Cyrillic texts represented specific sounds distinct from [o] and [e] in East Slavic languages. Using contemporary Slavic

languages as material, where different full vowels replaced ancient [ъ] and [ь], A. Chr. Vostokov labeled these sounds «semi-vowels» (Vostokov, 1865: 7–10), emphasizing their vocalic nature.

In his research, A. Chr. Vostokov progressed from the usage of letters in ancient manuscripts to data from the live pronunciation of related languages. His linguistic reconstruction had a prospective character, which was typical of comparative studies in the 1820s–1860s. Undoubtedly, during this period, when the comparative-historical method was still in its formative stages, this approach represented the only viable and genuinely innovative path for linguistic reconstruction (Глущенко, 2017: 32). The well-known skepticism toward A. Chr. Vostokov's deciphering of the phonetic value of *juses* by J. Dobrovskĕ and his follower J. Kopitar attests to the novelty and unconventional nature of A. Chr. Vostokov's reconstructions, even for leading Slavacists of the time.

As we see, the concept of phonetic law as sound shifts emerged in the work of the first comparative linguists. The term *phonetic law* was introduced into the discipline by F. Bopp. This term became entrenched in linguistics to denote the systematic sound changes that occurred under specific historical conditions. Later, the work of the Neogrammarians (of the Leipzig linguistic school) played a significant role in substantiating the principle of the exceptionlessness of phonetic laws, a concept that A. Schleicher had previously speculated about.

R. Rask's and J. Grimm's theses on the importance of lexical data, when analyzed systematically and with attention to the shared lexical stock of related languages, also sign R. Rask, for instance, to identify the Baltic group of languages within the Indo-European family for the first time (Rask, 1818), and J. Grimm to raise the question of the degree of relatedness between Germanic languages and other Indo-European languages. J. Grimm argued that Germanic languages are closest to Baltic and Slavic languages in their origins (Grimm, 1826).

Historical phonetics made remarkable progress during this period, emerging as a testing ground for the comparative-historical method. It retained a leading position throughout the 19th century and the first quarter of the 20th century, until the emergence of historical phonology. Historical phonology, in turn, would not

have been possible without historical phonetics, and it absorbed the best achievements of the latter over more than a century of development.

It can be asserted that the comparative linguists of the 19th century and the first quarter of the 20th century, who studied the history of phonetic systems in various languages, were intuitive phonologists. They appealed not to the sound as a unit of speech but to the sound type as a unit of language.

Some comparative linguists of the 19th century later sought to theorize this phenomenon. For example, M. Kolosov, a representative of the Kharkiv Linguistic School, wrote: «Reduced vowels have long disappeared in Russian (East Slavic languages – V. G.) as a separate sound category, as sounds that once consistently manifested themselves in specific cases; yet *the possibility of pronouncing* (the author highlighted – V. G.) a reduced vowel is still retained in certain dialects» (Kolosov, 1878: 7). M. Kolosov distinguished between the overt vowels replacing ancient reduced vowels and the reduced vowels as phonemes. He used the term *separate sound category* in the sense later associated with the term *phoneme*. Thus, M. Kolosov became a precursor to 20th-century linguists working in synchronic and diachronic phonology (Глущенко, 2017: 178).

Our analysis of the works of the first comparative linguists (F. Bopp, R. Rask, J. Grimm, A. Chr. Vostokov) shows that their discussions of sounds and even letters implied sound types. This is unsurprising, as true science always strives for generalization, transitioning from an empirical to a theoretical level.

As is well known, the development of phonological systems involves changes in the phoneme inventory of languages (in the set of phonemes and the system of distinctive features), changes in phoneme distribution, syllable structure, stress patterns, etc. Changes in the phoneme inventory are governed by internal phonetic laws. The reasons for these changes are not always apparent. Among phonetic laws, we distinguish:

1) laws governing the functioning of a language during a specific period — these are active phonetic processes;

2) laws of development or historical laws, which operated in past epochs.

It is worth emphasizing that in the study of phonological history, researchers focus specifically on historical laws. This was true during the early period of comparative linguistics, in the 1820s–1860s.

**Conclusions and prospects for further research.** Our study has demonstrated that the founders of comparative-historical linguistics applied the principle of historicism (and its associated principles of causality, systematicity, and interconnectedness of phenomena) to the analysis of linguistic phenomena. They developed comparative-historical research techniques, applied linguistic reconstruction to specific languages (primarily Indo-European), and laid the groundwork for the genealogical classification of Indo-European languages.

This created a favorable foundation for refining comparative-historical research techniques, expanding the scope of languages studied (e. g., T. Benfey, G. Curtius), and developing models of linguistic historical development (e. g., the «family tree» model by August Schleicher and the «wave model» by Johannes Schmidt and Hugo Schuchardt). During this period, the first scientific classification of Indo-European languages was established in A. Schleicher's works. A. Schleicher identified key phonetic and morphological correspondences in Indo-European languages, reconstructed Proto-Indo-European, and created a genealogical classification of Indo-European languages. At the same time, etymological dictionaries were compiled, and A. F. Pott laid the foundations for the scientific comparison of the vocabulary of related languages and outlined the theoretical principles of etymology.

The further development of comparative-historical linguistics from the 1870s to the 1930s is associated with the names of Alexander A. Potebnia, Philipp F. Fortunatov, Jan A. Baudouin de Courtenay, Ferdinand de Saussure, the Neogrammarians (August Leskien, Karl Brugmann, Hermann Osthoff, Hermann Paul, Bernhard Delbrück), Bedřich Hrozný, and others.

Studying the specifics of the comparative-historical method in the works of linguists from the 1870s to the 1930s offers promising perspectives for further research.

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## ПРИНЦИП ІСТОРИЗМУ Й ВИНИКНЕННЯ ПОРІВНЯЛЬНО-ІСТОРИЧНОГО МЕТОДУ

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### **АНОТАЦІЯ**

Для онтологічного компонента порівняльно-історичного методу провідним є принцип історизму. Він відіграв ключову роль у виникненні й становленні цього методу. Риси подібності в мовах учені побачили давно, але інтерпретували їх переважно зі статичного погляду, використовуючи апарат універсальної граматики. Висловлювалася й ідея генетичної спільності певних мов, проте вона впродовж століть не була провідною. Певним поштовхом, який став відправною точкою для виникнення порівняльно-історичного методу, стало відкриття європейцями санскриту. Г.-Л. Керду, В. Джонс та інші дослідники 18-го ст. наголосили на тому, що санскрит, давньогрецька та латина, а також мови германські, кельтські й іранські становлять єдину мовну сім'ю та походять з єдиного джерела.

Компаративістика першої чверті 19-го ст. стала важливим кроком уперед порівняно з попередніми лінгвогенетичними побудовами. Для мовознавців 17-го і 18-го ст. мовний матеріал мав ілюстративний характер, причому факти інтерпретувалися довільно. До того ж на першому плані стояли одиниці лексичного рівня, а він є найменш стійким.

Компаративістика ж закладає в основу історичного порівняння мов їхню граматичну й фонетичну будову, а в лексичі апелює до архаїчних (первинних) шарів.

Перші компаративісти встановили тотожні службові морфемні у споріднених (індоєвропейських) мовах (Ф. Бопл), сформулювали положення про регулярні звукові відповідності у спільнокореневих словах і формах цих мов і на цьому ґрунті відновлювали історичні фонетичні закони (Р. Раск, Я. Грім, А. Х. Востоков), реконструювали спільний лексичний фонд індоєвропейських мов (Р. Раск, Я. Грім). Усі мовні зміни інтерпретувалися як закономірні.

Це створило сприятливий ґрунт для вдосконалення порівняльно-історичного методу в компаративістиці 70-х рр. 19-го ст. – 30-х рр. 20-го ст.

**Ключові слова:** порівняльно-історичний метод, компаративістика, принцип історизму, закономірність мовних змін.



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*Стаття надійшла до редакції 29.11.2024*