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Roger Comtet (Toulouse, France)

Jan Baudouin de Courtenay and linguistic laws

Abstract

The academic career of the Polish linguist Baudouin de Courtenay took place in pre-revolutionary Russia, where German cultural influences and tradition were particularly strong. This applies to linguistics too, where the role of German Neogrammarians was significant in the 1860-1870s; as we know, these Neogrammarians applied a strict historical phonetic model based on mechanical rules which did not admit any exception; in this way, they were related to the Romantic historico-comparative school, whose results they pretended to lead to a final conclusion. In fact, their model began to be contested in the 1870s by many European linguists including Baudouin. In this period Baudouin started criticizing the neogrammarian model, applying a radically different and new approach to linguistics: the predominance of psychological universal rules, the necessity of synchrony, the idea of areal linguistics, the importance of interlinguistic contacts, the firm belief that every language in the world results from mixing. All these features emphasize the close relation of Baudouin to Humboldt's philosophical linguistic tradition, whose legacy had begun to be exhumed by Steintal.

Alexander Schwarz (Lausanne, Switzerland)

Phonetic laws, analogy and anomaly in the works of Otto Behaghel, the last of the Neogrammarians

Abstract

Otto Behaghel (1854-1936), at the same time specialist in historical syntax and generalist in German language and linguistics, was still read with systematic and not only historical interest in the Seventies and Eighties. Thus forming a bridge between later 19th century Neogrammarians and late 20th century students of German, his views on laws and analogy are of special interest. He leads his readers to the conclusion that phonetic laws create chaotic conditions while analogy creates harmony, that is, as Behaghel has it, boredom.

Valéry Kossov (Grenoble, France)

The evolution of the concept of law in contemporary Russian political discourse

Abstract

During the 20 years since the dismantlement of the USSR, the legal terminology has been affected, on the one hand, by loanwords and neologisms which designated new emerging legal concepts and, on the other hand, by transformations of the meanings for the existing legal concepts. This kind of transformation seems to have touched the concept of Law and some related notions such as Legislation, Lawmaking or Rule-Making, Legality. This transformation process has also impacted on the sense of Law-abiding or Law-breaking notions and the principle of legal equality and parity. This article aims at studying, from a diachronic angle, the evolution of the concept of Law in Russian political discourse during the transition period of Boris Yeltsin and throughout the new age of two lawyer-presidents Vladimir Putin and Dmitry Medvedev. This question will be studied from two perspectives, firstly, the common and divergent elements of the concept of Law in different discursive models of Soviet and post-Soviet periods and, secondly, the role of the concept transformations in the ideological objectives of the present Russian political authorities.

Ekaterina Velmezova (Lausanne, Switzerland)

August Schleicher, Max Müller and... Prosper Mérimée about linguistic laws

Abstract

The notion of law was one of the rarest linguistic concepts to be reflected in literature – in particular, in P. Mérimée's short story "Lokis" (1869). Well known linguists August Schleicher and Max Müller were the main prototypes of one of its characters, professor of comparative linguistics Wittembach who, in particular, spoke several times about linguistic laws. Analyzing the text of this short story together with Schleicher's and Müller's linguistic theories, we show that if both linguists could be the authors of some Wittembach's linguistic judgments, their interest in the *laws of human language evolution in general* (as opposed to the *laws of development of particular languages*) was not emphasized by Mérimée in his last and "most linguistic" short story.

Andrei Dobritsyn (Lausanne, Switzerland)

Once again about the laws and exceptions in language studies

Abstract

The article deals with the possibility of using the notions of law and exception in human sciences. Differences between theoretical, empirical and statistical laws in linguistics and philology are analysed in connection with their attitude to the general and individual phenomena.

Anastassia de La Fortelle (Lausanne, Switzerland)

The laws of literary evolution: Analysing contemporary Russian literature

Abstract

Grounded in formalist explanatory models, this article seeks to account for recent literary production in Russia, and identify the laws guiding its historical development to the present day. Contemporary literary works are examined in light of the development of Russian literature (19-20th centuries) viewed as a system of functional correlations where variability, rupture and mutation co-exist with continuity, the return to old forms and models, and the repetition of familiar patterns.

Anne Coldefi-Faucard (Paris, France)

The Law of the Underground

Abstract

Being beyond the norm, the hero of Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground* at the same time corresponds to various norms, especially to literary ones. Revolting against the laws of nature and science, feeling them incapable of guiding and governing humanity in the very near future, he exhausts himself in a vain search of another Law, a divine one, which he would never abandon because, paradoxically, he would believe in it.

Eduard Nadtochiy (Lausanne, Switzerland)

The myth of Prometheus and debates about the nature of law in the Russian culture of the first half of the 20th century

Abstract

The paper studies the problem of law in Russia in the first half of the 20th century in the context of discussions about titanism. The most fundamental interpretation of the problem is given by symbolist Vyacheslav Ivanov in his tragedy "Prometheus". In his theory, the concept of heroic actions and of the tragic human law is presented as a result of problematic relations between Gods and Titans which ends in the mystery of a tragic drama, creating human solidarity. Vyacheslav Ivanov synthesizes in his conception the interpretations of the ocean and of the diurnal and nocturnal sides of human life given by Schiller and Tyutchev. Ivanov's conception in the Soviet culture was developed in the discussion between Losev and Golosovker about the Titans. In this discussion the conception of Ivanov is split into two irreconcilable parts. If Losev defends the thesis about the overcoming titanism by divine isonomy, Golosovker develops the conception of freedom of titanic life from Olympic isonomy. This debate makes sense, if we put it in the context of the struggle of Stalin's conservative revolution with the avant-garde movement of the 1920s. Each of these projects has its own conception of the relationships between natural and positive law. In conclusion the author analyzes the problem of Ivanov's influence on Leonov's *Road to the Ocean*, and on his contemporaries M. Bulgakov, M. Bakhtin and T. Lysenko.

Arnaud Nikod-Clément (Lausanne, Switzerland)

Laws of literary ambience in Mikhail Zoshchenko's *Sentimental Tales*

Abstract

Sentimental Tales have the particularity to integrate in the text itself the reflections of their supposed author, I.V. Kolenkorov. They reveal the conditions, in which the writer works, showing what a *literaturnyi byt* (literary ambience) looked like in the second half of the 1920s and which laws were ruling it: laws of Marxist critics, laws of the writer's profession, laws of the market. It is possible to observe the determining role that these laws play in the text's elaboration, formal and thematical modalities of which are often provoked by their assaults. It prevents the author from respecting classical norms and rules of writing, thus blurring the understanding of the text. For Zoshchenko the matter was to sound the alarm, like the hero of *A Terrible Night*, to call attention to the questions of the freedom of expression and creation.

Leonid Heller (Paris, France)

Wear and fatigue of concepts (theses)

Abstract

In Russian the terminological dyad *zakon/zakonomernost'* (reproducing the German *Gesetz/Gesetzmässigkeit* and having direct correspondence neither in French nor in English) seems to build an intern relation similar to that of the sign as defined by Saussure. We propose in this paper to expand this analogy to the Potebnian word structure; further, we compare the wear of the inner form of a word with the fatigue of scientific terms and theories, provide examples and plead for the renewing of some old concepts and theories much in the way poetry is renewing used words.