

to itself or else—in advance of any regard to its confusing consequences—as logically inadmissible simply on the basis that it violates the rule.

The theory of types entails the view that language has atomic propositions that refer to facts but not to other propositions, as well as basic terms that refer to items of experience but lack any implication of structure. Russell takes “proper name” as a category for these basic terms that refer to distinct individuals rather than classes, but his specific applications of the idea evolved over his career. His analyses of syntax, quantifiers, and deictic words and structures are more convincing than his analyses of basic terms; despite his insistence on their representational function, Russell did not determine the nature of representation per se. In *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth* (1940), he acknowledges the difficulty: “Signs’ depend, as a rule, upon habits learnt by experience. . . . We may say that A is a ‘sign’ of B if it promotes a behaviour that B would promote, but that has no appropriateness to A alone. It must be admitted, however, that some signs are not dependent upon experience . . . The precise definition of ‘sign’ is difficult. . . . there is no satisfactory definition of ‘appropriate’ behaviour” (1940, p. 13). *An Inquiry into Meaning and Truth* deals with such issues as the interpretations of sentences, psychological aspects of language apart from literal meaning, the relation of language to knowledge, and the conditions under which statements are warranted. In the same work, Russell develops a semantic theory of basic words, based on association by habit that does not clearly distinguish meaning from the acquisition of it.

Russell appears to have acknowledged Charles Sanders Peirce’s work very rarely, despite the close parallel of their motivations, but he did so most notably with regard to the foundation of the algebra of relations. The shortcoming of Peirce’s algebra, for Russell, was its reliance on the extensional definition of classes, which resulted in a notation too cumbersome to permit progress because it requires all operations on classes to be shown in terms of summations. Otherwise, Peirce appears in many respects to have anticipated Russell’s interests and methods, as in his analysis of the concept of force in “How to Make Our Ideas Clear” (1878), his atomistic characterizations of perception, and his lifetime immersion in the practice and philosophical theory of science.

A major difference between them lies in Peirce’s adherence to a phenomenology of consciousness.

Lacking any probing consideration of consciousness, Russell’s notion of mind is very constrained. His *The Analysis of Mind* (1921) is concerned with the questions of whether physics and psychology deal ultimately with the same objects and, if they do, what constitutes the difference between their viewpoints. Russell finds very few grounds on which psychology and physics might differ. In order to identify the concerns of physics and psychology, however, Russell abandons any functional distinction between consciousness and unconsciousness so that unconscious memory can provide a physical explanation of conscious association. Neither Russell nor many theorists of semiotics seem fully aware that a theory of signs becomes gratuitous when the unconscious is regarded as part of the mind rather than part of the conjectural physical world.

[See also Frege; Meaning; Peirce; Sign; and Wittgenstein.]

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—DAVID LIDOV

RUSSIAN FORMALISM. In the 1920s and 1930s, a group of Russian scholars, collectively known as formalists, developed the basic concepts of a theory of literature and art that laid the foundations for modern structuralist and semiotic concepts of art and culture. The rise of a radically new theory of art and culture is best understood against the background of the contemporary historical and cultural events. Literature, in particular realistic prose, had lost its dominant ideological function at the turn of the century. The first Russian Revolution in 1905, the beginning of World War I in 1914, and the October Revolution in 1917 meant significant changes in whole of society. In academia, the younger generation began to question traditional concepts. Within linguistics, the neogrammarian theory as represented by Jan Baudouin de Courtenay was criticized by younger linguists for the exclusive emphasis it put on historical linguistics at the expense of the study of functions.

In 1915 and 1916, two groups of young scholars formed the organizational centers of Russian formalism: in Moscow, the Moscow Linguistic Circle (Moskovskij Lingvističeskij Kružok, MLK) and in Saint Petersburg, the Society for the Study of Poetic Language (Obščestvo po Izučeniju Poëtičeskogo Jazyka, OPOJAZ). In the beginning, they were small circles of young scholars or students who discussed questions of literary and linguistic theory.

The MLK existed from 1915 to 1924; its founders were Pëtr Bogatyřev, Roman Jakobson, and Grigorij O. Vinokur, with Jakobson serving as its first president from 1915 to 1920. The circle's main interests were language and linguistic approaches to literature and folklore; in addition to dialectological studies (including fieldwork), the basic activities of the circle were methodological discussions, on topics such as the distinction between practical and poetic language. The group was in close contact with contemporary poets, and many theoretical insights were derived from the futurist writings by Velimir Khlebnikov, Vladimir Majakovskij, and Aleksej Kručënych. A few, like Osip Brik, were both poets and theoreticians.

The Petersburg OPOJAZ was founded in 1916 by linguists including Lev P. Jakubinskij and Evgenij D. Polivanov, both disciples of Jan Baudouin de Courtenay. This group was later joined by literary scholars such as Viktor B. Šklovskij, Sergej I. Bernštejn, Boris M. Ejchenbaum, Jurij N. Tynjanov, and Boris V. Tomaševskij. At least at the beginning, there was no formal organization or institution, although Šklovskij has repeatedly been called the first president of this circle; his essay "The Resurrection of the Word" (1914) is one of the first documents of Russian formalism, and his "Art as a Device" (1917) has been called its manifest. In 1916 and 1917, OPOJAZ published two volumes called the *Theory of Poetic Language* (*Sborniki po teorii poëtičeskogo jazyka*), followed by a third volume in 1919 (*Poetika: Sborniki po teorii poëtičeskogo jazyka*). In 1920, OPOJAZ received a formal structure when the Section for Verbal Arts was founded at the State Institute for the History of Arts (GIII), headed by Viktor Žirmunskij, who later distanced himself from formalism; Ejchenbaum, Šklovskij, Tomaševskij, Tynjanov, V. V. Vinogradov, and others joined this section, which started to play an increasing role in the academic sphere.

Both OPOJAZ and the MLK supported the close interaction of linguistic and literary scholarship. De-

spite this common basis, they developed different approaches: whereas the MLK was more linguistically oriented, for OPOJAZ, linguistics was merely a related and helpful discipline from which methodological innovations in the study of literature could be gained. OPOJAZ more than the MLK sought to establish literary scholarship as an autonomous discipline; for the MLK, poetics was only one particular branch of a broadly conceived linguistics. Jakobson's statement that "poetry is nothing but language in its poetic function" is quite characteristic of the MLK's orientation. Regardless of these differences, both groups shared a broad spectrum of common interests and concepts, and there were close personal and professional contacts between their members, thus justifying the umbrella terms "Russian formalism," "Russian formalist school," and "formalist method." In addition, scholars who were not associated directly with either of these two groups identified with the movement and contributed important works in its overall endeavor, such as A. P. Skaftymov's analyses on the Russian folk epic (the *bylina*), Bogatyřev's pre-structuralist works, Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928), psychologist Lev S. Vygotskij's *Psychology of Art* (1925), and many others.

In the formalists' own view, the notion of "form" was not opposed to "content," and it was not a correlative term to it; rather, form was treated as an independent notion, as something essential for art. The concrete "material" and the specific techniques of the material's "formation" were at the center of their interest. Consequently, some formalists refused this very name and preferred to be called "specifiers," since their primary aim was to specify the properties of literariness (*literaturnost'*) and the techniques by which artificiality is achieved.

One of their basic and generally shared assumptions was that, as the expression of an author's individuality, as a social phenomenon, or as a historic document, a literary artifact might well be the object of psychological, sociological, historiographical, and other studies. But none of these disciplines deals with literature as a phenomenon in its own right. The object of literary scholarship is literariness: that is what makes a verbal text a poetic text or a literary artifact. Consequently, the formalists declared the literary device (*priëm*), not "literature" in general, the true object (the "hero") of literary scholarship. However, the notion of "device" and the formalists' understanding of its role evolved with time.

In view of such conceptual developments and individual divergences among the formalists, it is difficult to establish a clear-cut chronology of Russian formalism. Three successive stages of methodological relevance are usually identified: reductionism; intrinsic systemic functionalism; and extrinsic systemic functionalism.

The reductionist stage focused on specific devices, starting from the basic assumption that art liberates perception from automatization. Poetic language was defined as the deformation of everyday practical language, which is characterized by economy—that is, a maximum of automatization and a minimum of effort in perception. Thus, from a productive perspective, art was characterized by a process of “making strange” (*ostranenie*) in order to render perception more difficult; from a receptive perspective, artistic perception was understood as “seeing anew” (*videnie*) as opposed to “re-cognizing” (*uznavanie*). Consequently, art is characterized by deautomatization or defamiliarization, a process that is achieved by way of specific literary devices. The reception process itself becomes an end in itself: the process of making strange causes the recipient to detect or to “lay bare” the devices (*obnaženie priěma*), and it thus directs the recipient’s attention toward the literary artifact’s “differential qualities” or its “markedness.”

At this stage, these literary devices were considered in isolation rather than interacting within a literary artifact. This overall view culminated in Šklovskij’s 1921 definition of an artifact as “the sum of the stylistic devices applied in it.” The emphasis on the individual devices, however, should not be understood as the isolation of the artifact from the communication process; although Russian formalism is strictly text oriented in its analyses, it conceptualizes the artifact’s location within a communication process. For Šklovskij, indeed, artistic artifacts are exclusively those that are created by specific devices that make highly probable their reception as artistic objects. Thus, the focus on text aesthetic is framed by an aesthetics of intentional production and an aesthetics of competence-dependent reception.

In the second stage, the focus shifted from the device per se to the function of the individual device(s) in the artifact’s overall structure. A work of art became understood as a system with an underlying structure in which the various elements are closely interrelated and interdependent; they are organized hierarchically by a “constructive principle.”

Tynjanov’s *Problem of Verse Language* (1924) is a major theoretical work typical of this period. Tynjanov rejects the notion of the artifact as a closed, symmetrical whole; instead, he defines it as a dynamic unity whose elements are not related by the static sign of equality or by addition but by the dynamic sign of correlation and integration. A literary work must be understood as dynamic. Tynjanov’s later distinction between the autofunction and synfunction of the individual elements is helpful in this respect: autofunction is directed at one and the same function in different works of art (whether in synchrony or diachrony); synfunction, by contrast, alludes to one particular function that interacts with all other functions within a given work of art. Obviously, this concept of functionality also refers to elements external to a given text by situating it either in a synchronical or a diachronical relation to other texts; consequently, this concept was soon expanded to the whole area of art and culture, as expressed explicitly in the third stage.

In the third stage, both single works of art and literature as a whole are defined as systems and are also perceived in correlation with other social or cultural phenomena. The text, understood as a system, is part of a larger system (the genre), which in turn is part of the whole cultural-environment system. In analyzing art, immanent structures of the artifact are thus related to external structures. Although this sounds very close to the basic tenets of Czechoslovakian structuralism and a full-fledged semiotics of culture, the formalists themselves restricted their theoretical applications to two areas: literature and art’s socioeconomic and institutional environment and its evolution.

Their views on literary evolution were rather mechanical, derived from the early writings of the movement: if art mainly consists of “making strange” automatized forms, these new forms had to be made strange in turn as art evolves while maintaining an innovative character. In the second and third stages, the concept of artistic evolution was elaborated further. A given device is not simply eliminated or replaced by another device; literary evolution does not consist of sudden and complete innovations or mere transfers of formal elements but of a shifting process from center to periphery. Thus, a device and its function do not disappear but acquire a new function: all devices remain virtual in a given culture’s memory and can always be reactualized in a focal position at

a later time. This process was assumed to be relevant with regard not only to single devices and functions but also to particular genres. Finally, the history of a system is itself endowed with systematic properties, and only the analysis of the correlation between intrinsic and extrinsic structures can yield insights into questions of literary or artistic evolution.

However, the Russian formalists did not go as far as Marxist theoreticians in their socioeconomic analyses. Marxist critique of formalism began to appear in the early 1920s; although many formalists had initially seen themselves as revolutionaries in the realm of literature and as participants in the total transformation of society, their early, provocative neutralization of the social aspects of art was a challenge to Marxism. From a Marxist perspective, art is an expression of particular social relations and a means of cognition that primarily reflects social relations and, consequently, conveys a particular content. Therefore, the official ideology could not accept the formalists' insistence on the autonomy of art. The first Soviet commissar of education, Anatolij V. Lunačarskij, called both formalist art and theory "the last phalanx of bourgeois intelligence."

In the mid-1920s, there were also competent and fair critical remarks from other politicians, such as Lev D. Trockij and Nikolaj I. Bukharin. The most intriguing contemporary critique of formalism came from a philosophical group around Mikhail M. Bakhtin, Pavel N. Medvedev, and Valentin N. Voloshinov. Analyzing the formalist approach, Medvedev's book *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* (1928) attempted to establish a sociological poetics. But the fate of Medvedev's book is quite telling: whereas the first edition appreciated the role of formalism in asking the right questions about literary theory, the preface to the second edition (1934) placed the book into

an ideologically militant context and endeavored to unmask anti-Marxist concepts. In 1930, Šklovskij's autocritical article "A Memorial to a Scholarly Mistake" officially ended the formalist movement in the Soviet Union. Many of its ideas were continued and further elaborated in Czechoslovakian structuralism (the Prague School) and Soviet semiotics (the Moscow-Tartu School).

[See also Bogatyrev; Jakobson; Moscow-Tartu School; and Prague School.]

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ENCYCLOPEDIA OF SEMIOTICS

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99-1782

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OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

New York 1998 Oxford