

L. S. VYGOTSKY

[Concrete Human Psychology]

An unpublished manuscript by Vygotsky

For L. S. Vygotsky the end of the '20s was a time of intensive theoretical and experimental work in developing the basic postulates of his cultural-historical theory of the human mind. The relatively calm and, in spite of everything, happy first five years of his life in Moscow, after moving there in 1924 from **Gomel'**, lay **behind** him. This was a period of his development as a psychologist when his star was in the ascendancy; when within a few years, this still quite young **man** was transformed from a provincial teacher, known to no one, into one of the leading and most outstanding figures in young Soviet psychology, a scholar with an inviolable scientific authority, surrounded by a group of young, also talented, and solemnly dedicated disciples; a **man** with a deep awareness of his mission in the development of science, full of ideas, intentions, and plans, most of which, unfortunately, were destined to remain **unrealized** because of Vygotsky's premature death. Vygotsky worked all these years rapidly and intensively, as if he had a presentiment of his death. One after the other, great works, which today constitute the body of the cultural-historical concept, and have long since become part of the treasures of Soviet and world psychological literature, flowed from his pen. Almost every one of them was prepared by degrees, in preliminary sketches and notes Vygotsky had made mostly for himself, not intending them for print. But even this special "inner speech" of Vygotsky's is usually in the form of independent, coherent, and sometimes fully finished texts, **thanks** to his

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generally striking capacity to live and do everything in his life immediately "from scratch," without any "rough drafts." Such is the manuscript published below, which Vygotsky wrote in 1929; it is from his family archives, kindly provided by his daughter, G. L. Vygotskaya. This work gives us a glimpse into the creative laboratory of this extraordinary thinker, enabling us, with almost visual clarity, to view the process of crystallization of some of the basic postulates of his cultural-historical theory, which we know well from Vygotsky's classical works of the early '30s. Moreover, it also contains a number of original ideas and reflections that were not dealt with further in his later works. In this sense, Vygotsky's notes published here should shed new light on some of the fundamental postulates of his concept, sometimes within a context that makes them extremely timely for contemporary psychology as well.

The similarity of specific themes, formulations, examples, and, to a certain extent, the general logic of construction of the text to be published as *Istoriia razvitiya vysshikhpsikhicheskikh funktsii* [History of the development of higher mental functions] (especially its second chapter) indicate that this manuscript was a preliminary sketch, an outline of Vygotsky's main work, most likely not its official version, which has become generally familiar since its initial publication in 1960 and the recent reprinting of it in the third volume of his collected works, but an earlier and shorter, hitherto unpublished, version, which was stored in the scholar's family archives.

The text presented here contains the peculiarities of syntax and all the extracts from the original. The orthography, however, has been brought up to date. Numerous abbreviations were restored in deciphering the manuscript. All the insertions in the text, identified by square brackets, and all footnotes and notes are mine, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

A. A. PUZYREI

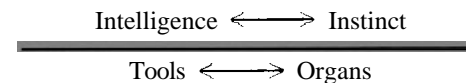
N.B.: The word *history* (historical psychology) for me means two things: (1) a general dialectical approach to things—in this sense, **everything** has its history; this is what **Marx** meant: the only science is history (Archives. P. X)¹; **natural** science = the

history of nature, natural history; (2) *history in the strict sense, i.e.*, human history. The first history is dialectic; the second is historical materialism. In contrast to lower functions, the development of higher functions is governed by historical laws (see the character of the Greeks and our character). The uniqueness of the human mind lies in the fact that both types of history (evolution + history) are *united* (synthesis) in it. The same is true in child psychology (see 2 lines).⁷

* * *

A constructive method implies two things: (1) it studies constructions rather than natural structures; (2) it does not analyze, but construes a process (contra a method of grasping unexpectedly, analysis, tachistoscope; contra the systematic method of the **Wurzburgians**). But a cognitive construction in an experiment corresponds to a real construction of the process itself. This is a basic principle.

N.B.: **Bergson** (see collection by Chelpanov, 109).⁸
Intelligence and tools.



Human psychology also deals with *homo faber* [workman in Latin].

Tools are outside the person; organs are within the person. The essence of intelligence lies in tools. Instinct is a capacity to use and construct organized* instruments; intelligence is unorganized. It has its merits and its shortcomings.

But constructive psychological activity (will) is something fundamentally new—a synthesis of one or another kind of activity. Because organic structures and functions are constructed in the brain using external, unorganized means, instincts are built. **See Ukhtomskii**: the system of neurological functions

is an organ. In this sense, man *builds* new organs, but organic ones, with the aid of instrumental activity.

Janet (Book 6. P. 425⁵) called the nondistinction of speech from other reactions (adaptations to nature) the greatest illusion. This is Watson's mistake: speech = a motor habit, like swimming and playing golf. But this is *precisely not how it is*: the problem of verbalized behavior is the central problem in the whole history of the cultural development of the child.

N.B.: We know the general law: first a means of acting on others, then on oneself. In this sense, all cultural development has three stages: development in itself, for others, and for oneself (e.g., a demonstrative gesture—at first it is simply a failed grasping movement aimed at an object and designating an action; then the mother understands it as an instruction; and, finally, the child begins to point). See S. Buhler: portrait of a child *pointing*.⁶ This is already for oneself. See Marx: Peter and Paul.⁷ We become ourselves through others. In its purely logical form, the essence of the process of cultural development consists precisely in this. Marx: on *class*.⁸ The personality becomes a personality for itself by virtue of the fact that it is in itself, through what it previously showed is itself for others. This is the process of the development of the personality. Hence, it is clear *why* everything that is internal in higher functions was necessarily once external: i.e., it was for others what today it is for itself. This is the key to the entire problem of internal and external. See the problem of internalization in Janet and *Kretschmer* (Buhler): the transfer of selection, testing from within (yet they still do not notice that selection is done by the personality itself). It is *not this* externality that we have in mind. For us, to speak about the *external* process means to speak of the *social*.⁹ Any higher psychological function was external; this means that it was social; before becoming a function, it was the social relation between two people. The means of acting upon oneself is *first* a means of acting on others and the action of others on one's personality.

In general form: *the relation between higher psychological functions was at one time a physical relation between people. I*

relate to myself as people related to me. Reflection is a dispute (Boldouin, Piaget); thinking is speech (conversation with oneself); according to Janet, a word was a command for others; imitation, or altering a function led to discrimination of the function from action (3. Pp. 155 ff.¹⁰) [Paradigm: at first one person cries out and fights, and the other does the same in imitation; then one screams and does not fight, and the other fights, but does not scream: supervisor and subordinates.—Note by Vygotsky]. *It is always a command*.¹¹ Hence, it is a principal means for mastery. But why does the word have a voluntary function for us; why does the word *subordinate* motor reactions to itself? Whence comes the power of the word over an event? From the real function to command? Behind the psychological power of the word over psychological functions stands the real power of a boss and a subordinate. *The relation of psychological functions is genetically [developmentally] linked to real relations between people: regulation of the word, verbalized behavior = power—submission.*

Hence: speech [and Janet's law of verbalization—note by Vygotsky] is a central function, social relation + psychological means. Compare direct and mediated relations among people. *Hence* digression: imitation and social division of functions as a mechanism for the modification and transformation of functions.

Hence *Leont'ev's* example of labor: both what the overseer does and what the slave does are combined in one person: this is a mechanism of voluntary attention and labor.

Hence the secret of willpower, not muscle or spiritual power, but the resistance of the organism to a command.

Hence my underestimation of the role of whispering, secrets, and other social functions. I neglected the external fading away of speech.

Hence, in the case of the child, one can follow step by step this change in oneself, for others, and for oneself in speech functions. First, the word must acquire sense (a relation to things) in itself (an objective connection; and if it is not there, nothing is there); then the child's mother uses it functionally as a word, and, finally, the child does so.

Piaget: the emergence of dispute = the emergence of verbal thinking. *All* forms of verbal communication between adult and child later become psychological functions. A *general* law: *Every function appears on the scene twice in the child's cultural development, i.e.*, on two levels, first the social, and then the psychological, first between people as an interpsychological category, and then within the child. Cf.: La loi du *décalage* [The law of "blocking" or shifting—French] in Piaget. This applies to voluntary attention: memory, etc. *This is a law.*

Consider: indicating to another, to oneself; the claws of a lynx, to another, to itself;

Consider: a letter is to oneself in time and to another; to read one's own jottings, to write for oneself, means to relate to oneself as to another, etc. *This is a general law for all higher psychological junctions.*

Of course, the transition from outside to inside transforms the process.

Genetically social relations, real relations between people, underlie all higher functions and their relationships. *Homo duplex* [a dual person—Latin]. *Hence* the principal method of *personification* in the study of cultural functions, i.e., voluntary attention: the one side controls, the other is controlled. *Renewed division into two of what had been fused in one* (Cf. modern labor), the experimental unfolding of a higher process (voluntary attention) into a *small drama*. See *Politzer: psychology in terms of drama*.¹²

Applied to our topic, the word *social* has many meanings: (1) the most general—all things cultural are social; (2) a sign or symbol *independent of* the organism, such as a tool, is a social means; (3) all higher functions evolve in phylogeny not biologically, but socially; (4) the crudest meaning—the mechanism of such functions is a copy of the social. *They are internalized relations of a social order, transferred to the individual personality*, the basis of the social structure of the personality. Their composition, genesis, and function (mode of action)—in a word, their *nature—are* social. Even transformed in the personality into

psychological processes, they remain quasi-social. The individual and personal *are* not in opposition, but a higher form of sociality.

To paraphrase Marx: *the psychological* nature of man is the totality of social relations shifted to the inner sphere and having become functions of the personality and forms of its *structure*.¹³ Marx: man as genus (i.e., the species essence of man); here, the individual.

Cultural development = social development *not in the literal sense* (development of latent aptitudes, and frequently from without; the role of instruction, the compacting of developed forms, e.g., voluntary attention, the role of exogeny in development). More frequently, the shift of structures from without to within: a different relationship of ontogeny and phylogeny from that in organic development. In the latter case, phylogeny is *potential*, and is repeated in ontogeny; in the former case, there is a *real interaction between phylogeny and ontogeny*: man is not necessary as a biotype: for the human fetus or embryo to develop in the mother's uterus, it is not necessary for it to interact with a mature biotype. *In cultural development, this interaction is the principal driving force of all development* (adult and child arithmetic, speech, etc.).

General conclusion: If relationships among people genetically underlie psychological functions, then: (1) it is ridiculous to look for specific centers of higher psychological functions or supreme functions in the cortex (or in the frontal lobes; Pavlov); (2) they must be explained not on the basis of internal organic relations (regulation), but in external terms, on the basis of the fact that man controls the activity of his brain from without through stimuli; (3) they are not natural structures, but constructs; (4) the basic principle of the functioning of higher functions (*personality*) is social, entailing *interaction* [autostimulation, "to enter into control of one's own body," control—note by *Vygotsky*] of functions, in place of interaction between people. They can be most fully developed in the form of *drama*. Digression: In constructive activity, the convergence of stimuli corresponds to a

convergence of cerebral processes, to two forms of nervous activity: (1) dominant (catalyzation), and (2) association corresponding to: (1) indication, intensification, accent, and (2) memory techniques. [The following is written between the lines with a pencil: "concentration, irradiation—all these have their correlates."'] By bringing objects (stimuli) closer together, I also bring about a convergence of nervous processes (reactions); I control the most internal processes by acting from outside. What do all the organizations, regulations (Basov), and structures mean compared with this highest type of **control—constructive activity**? The nature of voluntary attention and any higher function cannot be derived from individual psychology. Consider the problem of autosuggestion and XYZ. [The reference is to the next page of the manuscript, which has these designations (see below), evidently inserted later.]

A total revision of the neurology of higher processes. The localization of functions, not centers.

[Page XYZ] N.B.! **Bergson**: memory is what differentiates spirit from matter. The existence of spirit is necessary in general for any intentional process (orientation toward the past). I do not think the mental aspect of a psychological process is indifferent for it, especially with regard to its relationship to an object, which cannot be compared with anything else; but it is not *pure spirit*, and, most importantly, this is not what distinguishes motor memory from **nonmotor** memory. *There are transitional forms, but there are no such transitional forms between spirit and matter.* A transitional form is memory techniques. **Bergson** himself likens the memory of the spirit to a memory technique, and **Bühler** likens a memory technique to the memory of a chimpanzee. Here is the point: orientation to a specific single instance of memorization can exist, but memory (recollection) cannot. Consider a marker and a motive (I: [know that there are] three mnemonic features, but I do not know what [they] mean.) Ergo: direction is a necessary accompaniment to recollection, and an *independent component of higher memory* (the result of the demonstrative, mediating role of a sign).

N.B.! *On the social nature of higher mental functions.*

The functions of a word according to Janet were first divided and distributed among people, and then became part of the person. Nothing similar could exist in individual consciousness and behavior. First, the social was derived from individual behavior (the individual responds alone and in a collective, imitation generalizes individual reactions). We derive individual functions from forms of collective life. Development proceeds not toward socialization, but toward *individualization* of social functions (transformation of social functions into psychological **functions—e.g.**, speech, the social **prins** [(sic!) according to manuscript; evidently this should be principle]. All psychology of the collective in child development in a new light: it is usually asked how a specific child behaves in a collective. We ask. How does the collective create higher functions in a particular child? Earlier it was assumed that a function exists in the individual in a finished, half-finished, or embryonic form, and that it is **exercized**, developed, grows more complicated, is enhanced, enriched, inhibited, suppressed, etc., in the collective. Now, a function is first formed in a collective in the form of relations among children; then it becomes a psychological function of the personality. *Dispute*. Formerly it was thought that every child had thought, and that disputes arose from the clash of these thoughts. Today we say that reasoning is born of dispute. The same is true of all functions [end of sheet XYZ].

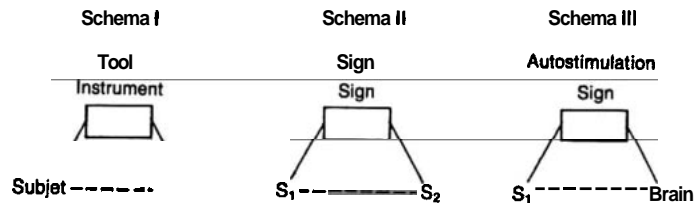
Posing the principal problems of collective psychology (child psychology) on this basis: everything is the inverse of what is now done.

See note on page XYZ.

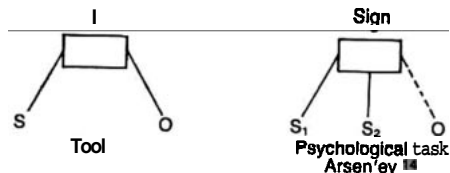
Distinguish between:

A direct and indirect (through a sign) relation to others. Impossible to relate directly to oneself. Indirectly it is possible. Consequently, initially a sign is placed *between* an object and a subject as an instrument. Later it is placed between me and my memory. *The stimulus-object of an operation is not the object to which the stimulus-instrument is applied: this is the most important differ-*

ence between a sign and a tool. The object of application of an instrumental stimulus is the brain (Schema I):



Construction differs from an instrumental operation (*Werkzeugdenker*) [written thus in the manuscript, but it evidently should be *Werkzeugdenken*, i.e., instrumental thinking, a term of Bühler's] (see [*Collected works*], Vol. 2, p. 103, etc.) in that it takes place on two levels and has two objects (Schema 2):



If S_1 and S_2 are in one person, an operation always has two objects: *the brain* and *the object of a psychological task (to remember, etc.)*. Essentially this is due to the facts that S is not a tool (i.e., it does not act physically) and that a task acts *psychologically* (not on the object, but on behavior). If the object is another's brain, *everything* is easy. Things become difficult when the object is one's own brain.

We must reject the implicit identification of a psychological operation with a motor operation (remembering = grasping).

Thus, an instrumental operation is always a social action on oneself, using the means of social communication, and is fully revealed as a social relation between two people. Formerly we

took into account the object of an operation and the tool. Today we also include the object of the action of a *stimulus*. *The stimulus does not act on the object of an operation. The starting and executive mechanism, the will, is the product of social relations: a command, a condition ('One screams, the other fights'—Janet).* *Between what and what comes the sign: between man and his brain.* It sustains an operation aimed at the object. But *its* object is the operation itself, the nervous process. Thus, at the basis of an instrumental operation lies Peter and Paul combined in one person. The relation between stimulus-object and *stimulus-means*—[this relationship:] the psychologically natural and the artificially constructed.

Sociogenesis is the key to higher behavior. We find here the *psychological* function of the word (not its biological function). The **sociogenetic** method.

Autostimulation is a special case (extremely special) of social stimulation: *socio-personnelles* in Janet's terms (see the function of communication in reasoning. Natorp).

Signification: a person creates connections from without, and controls the brain, and through the brain, the body. The internal relation of functions and layers of the brain, *as* a fundamental regulatory principle in nervous activity, *is replaced* by social relations independent of the person and in the person (controlling the behavior of another) as a new regulatory principle. But how is the creation of connections and regulatory relations between centers and functions *from without* at all possible? This possibility arises when two factors come together: (1) the mechanism of the conditional reflex (according to Pavlov this is a cerebral mechanism, but *according to Ukhtomskii, it is an organ!* constructed from without), and (2) the factor of social life, i.e., the change of nature, ergo, natural connections, and *the interaction of individuals of another order than communication of other objects*. Hence, there are three stages: (1) a conditional reflex—a mechanism created from without, but = copy of natural connections, corresponding to passive adaptation; (2) domestic animals (slave?), man himself = domestic animal (Thurnwald)¹² = pas-

sive formation of connections from without; (3) active participation in the firming of connections + autostimulation as a special case of social stimulation. Consider vocal, **semivocal**, and mute instruments—the latter correspond to active adaptation to nature = **i.e.**, human psychology. *The question rests in the personality. Pavlov compared the nervous system with a telephone network, but the whole uniqueness of human psychology lies in the fact that the telephone and telephone operator are combined in him in one being, i.e., the apparatus and the control of that apparatus by man. Nature controls man through the mechanism of the conditioned reflex, but natural connections can give rise to any and all kinds of behavioral connections, except a change in nature itself. The necessity of labor is not included in natural connections.*

What is a telephone operator (let us eliminate the mechanistic aspect of comparison and the sign +)? They will say: the soul, the psyche, and, not coincidentally, a telephone operator. Cf. Stern: **Injen + Masch.** ine. [engineer + machine]. *That's not it.* Indeed, one cannot understand the activity of any nervous apparatus without man. *This brain is a man's brain. This is the hand of a man.* Herein lies the gist of the matter. *For example, a nodal point is a telephone connection made by the telephone operator.*¹⁶

Pavlov's idea also purports to show that what is thought is what is done by the telephone operator (soul), and by the apparatus itself (body, brain). Ergo: the telephone operator is not the soul. But then what? *The social personality of a person. A person as a member of a specific social group. As a definite social unit. As a being in itself—for others and—for itself.* See Lichtenberg et al. *Thoughts occur to me and I think.*¹⁷ The problem of the ego: even a child must say: I (see Piaget). All development consists in the fact that the development of a function goes from *me to I*. See Levy-Bruhl. **J'en rêverai** [I shall dream of this]. See above and later on. See also in Vygotsky's work: (*The development of higher mental junctions. Collected works. Vol. 3, pp. 69 and others*). Indeed, the personality alters the role of individual psychological functions, systems, layers, and strata, establishing connections

that do not, and cannot, exist in the biology of the individual. *It is not the relation of subcortical centers to cortical centers, but the social structure of the personality that determines which layers are to dominate.* Cf. A **dream** and the leader of the **Kaffirs**:

1. The function of sleep is different in animals.

2. In him (the leader of the **Kaffirs**) *sleep acquired a regulatory junction through the social significance of dreams (unexplainable difficulty, etc., the beginnings of magic, cause and effect, animism, etc.)*: what he sees in his dreams, he will do. This is a reaction of a person, and not a primitive reaction.

3. The relation of a **dream** to future behavior (*the regulatory junction of sleep*) amounts genetically and functionally to a social function (a wizard, the council of the wise men, an interpreter of dreams, someone who casts lots—are always divided into two persons). *Then the social junction is combined in one person. The real history of a telephone operator (personality)—in the history of Peter and Paul (see Marx: [On language and consciousness])¹⁸—in the transformation of a social relation (between people) into a psychological relation (within a person). The role of a name in primitive man, in a child, in - - - [the sentence breaks off here in the manuscript].*

Most basic is the fact that man not only develops: *he also constructs himself.* Constructivism. But contra intellectualism (**i.e.**, artistic construction) and mechanism (**i.e.**, semantic construction).

The task of psychology is to study the reactions of the personality, **i.e.**, relations of the type dream = regulatory mechanism. The role of religion, etc. Every ideology (social) is matched by a psychological structure of a specific type—but in the sense of subjective perception and vehicle of ideology, in the sense of the construction of strata, layers, and functions of the individual person. Cf. **Kaffir**, Catholic, worker, peasant. Cf. my **ideas**—[relationship] of a structure of interests to the social regulation of behavior. Cf. [A blank spot is left here in the manuscript. There are four question marks in the margin.]

It is not thought that thinks: a person thinks. This is the starting

point [In margin] Feuerbach: Deborin—Hegel, **XXVI**.¹⁹

What is man? For **Hegel**, he is a logical subject. For Pavlov, it is a soma, an organism. For us, man is a social person = *an aggregate of social relations, embodied in an individual* (psychological functions built according to social structure). [In margin] Man is always consciousness or self-consciousness for **Hegel** **XXXVII**.²⁰

Let's go further. The Kaffir could: J'en **rêverai**, because *he actively sees his dream*; we would say: *Ihada dream*. Ergo: there is both a *me* and an *I* in every function, but these are primitive reactions (passive—personal) and personalities (**active—personal**).

Further, as soon as a *person thinks*, we ask: *What person* (Kaffir, a Roman with an omen = dream, the rationalist **Bazarov**, the neurotic Freud, an artist, etc. etc.)? The process will be different, although the laws of thought are the same (see **Hoefding**: the laws of association and thought), depending on in *what* person it takes place. Cf. not natural (the cortex, the subcortex, etc.) but social relations of thought (*its role in a specific individual*). Consider the role of sleep. It is not a matter of indifference *who* dreams, what person dreams. The following are possible: (1) I can have a dream with "I" or with "me," (2) *one and the other* will take place differently.

Both must be studied: the basis of concrete psychology—a relationship of the type: "the dream of the **Kaffir**."²¹ Abstract: relations of the type: *dream—abreaction* (**Freud, Wundt, etc.**) of *pleasant stimuli*.

(*Here*, in the idea of the social personality, *doubtless* lies the role of the mind. Is a commodity = a suprasensuous thing (Marx) possible without a mind? The essence of the mind from a positive standpoint is an intentional relation to an object (from a negative standpoint, inaccessible to others = internal perception, nonextension). **Deborin**: *thinking without content is empty*. (Cf. **Kant**: empty and blind. Consequently, in studying thought we study a relation to objects.) [S.] **XXVI**:²² "If by pure thought is meant an activity of reason free of any sensuous perceptions, then

pure thought is a fiction since thought freed from all ideas is *empty* thought. . . ." "Indeed, concepts are nothing other than processed perceptions and ideas. In a word, thinking is preceded by sensations, perceptions, ideas, etc., not the reverse. Even thought itself, in the sense of a higher capacity to form concepts and categories, is a product of historical development." Cf. the logical structure of speech [c.] XVI- [and **XVI-XVII**].²³ *Digression*: I *am* a social relation of *me* to myself.

Further: Goethe: the problem becomes a postulate (Note: the problem of creative syntheses **gsttheorie** [gestalt theory] became a postulate). The same is the case with I and the personality. *It is primary, something created together with higher functions*.

The relationship between sleep and future behavior (the regulatory function of sleep for a **Kaffir**) is mediated by the entire personality (the aggregate of social relations transferred inwardly); it is not a direct connection.

Study this in the child.

Digression! See **Politzer**: psychology = drama. Concurrence: concrete psychology and Dilthey (on **Shakespeare**).²⁴ But drama truly is full of *such connections*: the role of passion, niggardliness, and jealousy in a *particular* personality structure. One character is broken down into two in Macbeth-Freud.

A *drama truly full of internal struggle is impossible in organic systems*: the dynamic of the personality is drama.

Sleep of the Kaffir

Future behavior

A wife was unfaithful in a dream (Othello), so she is killed: a tragedy. A drama is always a struggle of *such connections* (duty and feeling, passion, etc.). A drama cannot be otherwise, *i.e.*, it is a *clash of systems*. *Psychology is "humanized."*

Direct. **The** role of the environment. For biology: the factor of phenotypic changes. The mechanisms are ready and change in quantity. **Social** connections function as natural connections

(e.g., a domestic animal). But this is true only for elementary functions. Even they (for example, the perception of the structures of form, etc.) are not always universal for all mankind. But if much in elementary functions is universal, this is because all social groups and classes have much in common. **There is nothing higher if one acknowledges** that organs are created from without, the brain is regulated from without, the personality = an aggregate of social relations. . . A connection of the type "the dream of the Kaffir" from without, the dynamics of the personality = drama, **sociogenesis is the one true perspective, i.e., mechanisms are created in the environment** (constructions).

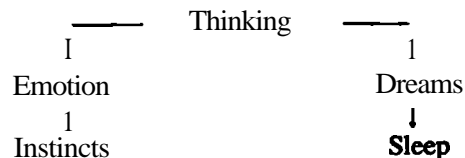
Conspectus: The personality is a totality of social relations. Higher mental functions are created in the collective. Connections of the type: "the Kaffir's dream." The content of the personality. The personality as a participant in a drama. The drama of the personality [What do love, dreams, thinking, art, mean in it? What type of person thinks, loves, etc.?—note by **Vygotsky**]. Concrete psychology. [In the margin]. The functions change their role: sleep, thinking, practical intelligence.

My history of cultural development is an abstract treatment of concrete psychology.²⁵

Conclusion: The real history of the telephone operator and the telephone: the shift of social relations to within. The telephone operator and the telephone are only an especially difficult to regulate activity (the regulatory principle). **The personality:** special forms of regulation.

[In margin] 12.IX.1929.

There is no permanent hierarchy of functions.



etc., or something similar.

Ergo: There is no permanently **fixed will**. But there is a natural range of possibilities for each function, determining the sphere of possible roles for that function.

Compare: The natural data of an actor (**emploi**) determine the range of his roles, but nonetheless every drama (= personality) has its roles. Commedia dell Arte, fixed roles, play types (Columbine, Harlequin, etc.) change the drama, but the role is one and the same = itself. A drama with fixed roles = the idea of old psychology. **New:** within a type there is a variation of roles. Sleep in drama (personality) of a **Kaffir** is one **role**, while for the neurotic it is another: the hero and villain, the lover.

For example: for Spinoza thought is the master of passions. For Freud and the artist, thought is the slave of passions. Psychiatrists know this. In other words, schematically:

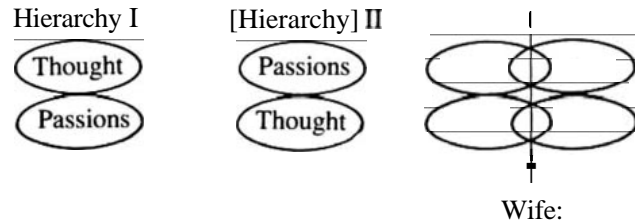


I[In margin] Operating with functions as not further reducible units. **See** Pavlov on physics and inhibition.

Psychiatrists know this very well. The issue is: **Who thinks,**²⁶ what role, function, does thinking fulfill in the personality? **Autistic thinking differs from philosophical thinking not in terms of the laws of thought, but by virtue of roles (ethics or onanism).**

I: on the psychology of roles. See **Politzer:** drama. Social role (judge, physician) determines a hierarchy of functions: **i.e., functions change the hierarchy in different spheres of social life. Their conflict = drama. See my schema of interests.**²⁷ A similar schema can be created for the particular spheres of behavior (**Lewin**). Compare schemata (Schema 3):

(1) **Judge** (professional complex) (2) **Husband** (familial), (3) **drama:** (professional complex)



As a person
I empathize,
as a judge
I judge,
Cf. medal +
execution??

I know that she
is bad, but I
love her

I know that she
is bad, but I
love her; I
empathize, but
condemn. What
will win out?

Task: among adolescents and in **tien** [?] (concrete psychology) to study the different spheres of behavior (professional complex, etc.), the structure and the hierarchy of functions where they relate to and clash with one another.

Ideal: this is how the professional complex of a Moscow worker is structured, etc.

Comparative method. General pathology.

The general laws of sleep and thought (superseded category) take a unique form in the different hierarchies of the personality. Marx: without a knowledge of distinguishing features—logistics. LIII.²⁸

Basov: the nature of organization. This is what distinguishes science (mechanics, chemistry, biology, sociology, etc.). But a special type of **organization** is taken as a primary concept: body, substance, organism, socio, etc.

The telephone operator plus the telephone is a special type of organization, a primary concept in higher psychology.²⁹ Not only the telephone but also the telephone operator develops. The two together: the entire uniqueness of child development.

When I say that the telephone operator plus the telephone (special type of organization) + self-regulation: this regulation is

by no means more mystical and no closer to the soul than regulation of higher nervous activity of the muscles, etc. But the mechanism is more complicated: in the one case there is one part of the body, in the others, what regulates and what is regulated are separate; **A** regulates **B**; but here a human being as a social being (**A**) regulates **B** (his behavior or cerebral activity). **A** new and unique regulation and organization of the **process—I want only to say** that without the human (= telephone operator) as a whole, one cannot explain the activity of the human being's apparatus (brain), that **man regulates or controls his brain, the brain does not control man (socio!)**, that without the person one cannot understand the person's behavior, that psychology must be developed in the concepts of drama, not in the concepts of processes. **When Politzer says: it is the person who works, not his muscles. he has said everything that needs to be said.** This can be said about the whole of man's behavior. **Three additional postulates:**

1. The difference between a mentally ill and a normal person and between different mentally ill persons is not so much that (**a**) the laws of mental life are violated in the mentally ill or (**b**) patients have something (neoplasms) that normal people do not have (tumor). Rather, normal people have the same thing as the mentally ill: delusions, suspicions. Delusions of reference, obsessive ideas, fear, etc. But the **role** of all this, the hierarchy of the entire system, is different, **i.e.**, another function, not the one that we have, moves onto center stage and acquires regulatory functions. **It is not delusions that differentiate the mentally ill person from us, but the fact that he believes in the delusions and feels culpable, whereas we do not. Cf. the sleep of the Kaffir.**

In any case, this is the way it is with hysterics, neurotics, etc. Another system gains control in another situation: the hysteric with the physician, and the hysteric at home.

2. For Freud: the connection between sleep and sexual functions is not primary, but rather a connection of the type **Kaffir's** dream: for the neurotic, sleep serves the sexual instinct. But this is not a general law; it is a law only for the neurotic. For a Kaffir, sleep **[has]** other functions. Thinking is different in the autistic

person. This is the law of concrete psychology (*i.e.*, the special *hic et nunc* [here and now—Latin], not general psychology. Freud's error is that he mistook one for the **other**.³⁰

3. In child development, a shift in systems of the “*Kaffir's* sleep” type takes place. The sleep of the one-year-old or the 7-, 15-, or 70-year-old does not have the same role. Often infantile qualities do not disappear, but only lose their role, their place, their significance. For example, with the acquisition of culture, a *Kaffir's* sleep would lose its meaning. A shift of roles = a shift of attention (*i.e.*, the center of the structure)—see Adler. Psychoanalysis and individual psychology are unconsciously based on this.

General: Psychology is being humanized. *Homopsychologie* [human psychology—German] has emerged with zoopsychology, a psychology of humans arises together with a scientific psychology of animals. This is the sense of **Politzer's** article. This is the essence of the “drama.” This is the sense of human psychology. [in margin]. A *preface to a human psychology*.

Animal psychology [as it relates to] human psychology [as] phylosociology and zoosociology [relates to] human sociology. Basov: the psychology of the *human within* animals is not correct. For **Politzer** there is no common formula for the psychology of animals and humans. *Ecce homo!*

What is the relationship among the three ideas: the telephone operator, an instrumental act, and the social structure of the personality? The human being acts on himself in a *social way*. The *way* of controlling behavior and the *means* (*i.e.*, instrumental act) are given. But the telephone operator is also an idea of a special form of regulation in accordance with this way.

1. A person acts on another person, necessarily from without, with the aid of signs.

2. A person acts on himself, from without, and with the aid of signs, *i.e.*, in a social manner.

3. In addition to intracerebral regulation of behavior, one may hypothesize autostimulation as a special *case* of social stimulation (the telephone operator controls the telephone). One cannot draw

analogies between the whole of behavior and the activity of a telephone. But apparatus + man. . . .

Notes

1. [*Archives of Marx & Engels*], Vol. 2; See K. Marx & F. Engels [*Works*], Vol. 3, p. 16, note.

2. Compare the idea, which Vygotsky was fond of repeating, that the distinctive feature of the situation of the child's mental development is that **two** lines are united: natural and cultural-historical development. See, for example, [The history of the development of higher mental functions]. [*Collected works*], Vol. 3, pp. 30–34 and others.

3. Vygotsky is apparently referring to a work by Pavel Popov entitled [**Bergson** and his critics]. In [*For Georgi Ivanovich Chelpanov from participants in his seminars in Kiev and Moscow, 1891–1916. Articles on philosophy and psychology*]. Moscow, 1916. Pp. 101–119. We find in this article an analysis of Bergson's book *Creative evolution*, with numerous quotations (Pp. 149–63 of the French edition), to which this fragment of Vygotsky's work refers. For example: “The preparation of use of synthetic instruments is even today at the center of our social life” (P. 150); “Man is not so much *homo sapiens* as *homo faber*” (P. 151); “For animals, only a part of their body is a tool. Instinct corresponds to instruments[here]” (P. 152); “Instinct is an innate knowledge of some thing; intelligence is the capacity to make *inorganic*, *i.e.*, artificial, tools” (P. 163); **etc.** As we see, Vygotsky's distinction between “instinct” and “intelligence” is discussed here in detail. However, in **Bergson** this discussion is in a purely philosophical, mainly epistemological, form. Vygotsky, on the other hand, tries to discuss [the subject] as a psychologist, using the methods of psychology. Hence, in addition to sentences in which he fully agrees with Bergson's thought, we find not only a further development of these thoughts but also modifications and contrasts of them.

4. When Vygotsky uses the term *organize* in this case, he essentially means *organismic*, *i.e.*, belonging to the organism or body, *i.e.*, within the body. However, the term *organize* is obviously not used merely coincidentally in this context; this is not linguistic negligence, but perhaps Vygotsky's desire to stress the special, artificial *organization* and the subsequent “intrinsic growth” of this organization, its “transformation into an organ” in the case of strictly human forms of mental activity, and thus to make their contrast to the forms existing in animals uniform. Thus, he is not completely satisfied with the term *organic* as used in **Popov's** article, although sometimes he also uses it (see below).

5. We were unable to identify this work of Janet's to which Vygotsky is referring here and further on.

6. See Ch. **Bühler**, B. **Tudor-Hart**, & G. **Heizer**, [*Social psychological study of the child in the first year of life*], edited by L. S. Vygotsky & A. R. Luria. Moscow, 1931. Table II, Figure 13. Vygotsky knew this

work from its 1927 German edition.

7. K. Marx & F. Engels, [*Works*], Vol. 23, p. 62: "In merely referring to the person Paul as someone like himself, the person Peter begins to relate to himself as to a person. But even Paul, as the whole of his Paulian corporeality, becomes for him a specific manifestation of the species 'man.'"

8. K. Marx & F. Engels, [*Works*], Vol. 4, p. 183: "The economic conditions first transformed the mass of the population into workers. The reign of capital created an identical situation and common interests for this mass. Thus, this mass is already a class with regard to capital, but not yet a class for itself. This mass is forged in struggle; it is constituted in struggle as a class for itself."

9. Here is formulated the conception of internalization, which is extremely important for the entire cultural-historical theory, namely, internalizations as primarily the transition from social forms of relations among people (interpsychic level) to individual forms of mental activity (intrapsychic level), a conception that distinguishes Vygotsky's position from both the positions of earlier scholars and from the interpretation of internalization that gained ascendancy in the subsequent history of psychology.

10. See note 5.

11. Vygotsky later repeated and elucidated these notions of Janet's many times (see, for example, [*Collected works*], Pp. 222–227).

12. In this case, Vygotsky had in mind the work by G. Politzer, *Critique des fondements de la psychologie*. Vol. 1. Paris, 1928. However, it is possible that Vygotsky was also familiar with the basic psychological work of Politzer's entitled [Mythological psychology and scientific psychology], which came out in 1929 in the first issue of *Revue de Psychologie Concrete* (in Russian translation in the book by G. Politzer, [*Selected philosophical and psychological works*], Moscow, 1980, especially Pp. 245–85).

13. "...the essence of man is not abstract, inherent in a specific individual. In its reality, it is the totality of all social relations" (K. Marx & F. Engels, [*Works*], Vol. 3, p. 3).

14. Probably what is meant is the case, often mentioned by Vygotsky, of man's active exertion of influence on his own memory, presented by V. K. Arsen'ev, the well-known scholar of the Ussuri district (see, for example: [*Collected works*], Vol. 3, p. 73).

15. Vygotsky liked to repeat Thurnwald's idea that man himself was the first domestic animal (see, for example, [*Collected works*], Vol. 3, p. 83).

16. Here and in what follows, Vygotsky presents, in his unique metaphorical form, the idea, fundamental for all cultural-historical theory, that the specifically human way to regulate behavior in the mind always necessarily also includes a specially structured action (initially shared between people, and then carried out by the individual) for "refining" and finally using special symbolic objects as means and methods for man to control his mental activity, its organization, and its reorganization. What is fundamentally important here is that these "significant acts" (as Vygotsky himself called them) or, in other words, these special "psychotechnical acts" are acts by means of which the mental apparatus is transformed and the laws of its functioning are altered (not the 'raw' mind by itself, to use Lévi-Strauss's expression) and should, if the

cultural-historical approach is applied consistently, be regarded as the real "object" and "unit of analysis" in psychology. This position, in many respects paradoxical for modern psychology, once again demonstrates how radical and totally unpreconceived the change in the complexion of psychology brought about by the cultural-historical theory has remained even today (see the relevant places in the second chapter of [*The history of the development of higher mental functions*] and other of Vygotsky's works).

17. Georg Krystov Lichtenberg (1742–1799), a German writer and popularizer of science. See [The historical meaning of the crisis in psychology]. [*Complete works*]. Vol. 1, p. 366 and [*The history of the development of higher mental functions*], Vol. 3, p. 85 (in the last case, the passage is erroneously quoted).

18. "Language is as old as consciousness; language is practical, real consciousness existing for other people and only in this way existing also for myself; language arises only out of need, from the genuine necessity to communicate with other people" (K. Marx & F. Engels, [*Works*], Vol. 3, p. 29).

19. Vygotsky is referring to Deborin's preface to the first volume of Hegel's *Collected works* (see G. W. Hegel, [*Collected works*], Vol. 1. Moscow, 1929).

20. See note 19.

21. Vygotsky's idea, which sounds strikingly modern, even in the light of the idea of some leading post-Freudian currents in modern foreign psychology and in the criticism of the ideas of orthodox psychoanalysis, beginning with the founder of the analytical school of psychology, K. Jung. As we know, in contrast to Freud, Jung rejected the attempt to reduce the specific facts of a human being's mental life to some ultimate "causes" and insisted on the primordially of mental structures themselves (semantic and dynamic). This thesis was also defended by representatives of the phenomenological and existential schools (see, for example, [Sartre and his theory of emotions]. In [*Texts on the psychology of the emotions*], Moscow, 1984).

22. See note 19.

23. See note 19.

24. In his work [The historical meaning of the crisis in psychology], ([*Collected work*]. Vol. 1, pp. 289 ff.), indissolving the idea of "general psychology," which he understood as the "methodology of psychotechnology" (in the broad sense) or "a philosophy of practice," Vygotsky formulated one of the most fundamental characteristics of such a psychology: its orientation toward psychotechnology in the broad sense of the word, i.e., the techniques of practical work with the mind, its transformation, control over it, and its development. Vygotsky writes, "The goal of such a psychology is not Shakespearean concepts, as Dilthey says, but psychopraxis, i.e., a scientific theory that would result in subordination and mastery over the mind, in the artificial control of behavior."

25. This statement by Vygotsky, which seems improbable to the contemporary reader, contains Vygotsky's direct assessment of his own concept, how it evolved in the early '30s, i.e., in its mature and classic form, only as a transitional form and, in many respects, a compromise in terms of realizing the

idea of a concrete human psychology; it not only shows how free and critical he was in evaluating his own work but also the depth and radicalism of his thinking. He was far ahead of his contemporaries and those who came after him, even the "boldest" of his critics (see Leont'ev's marginal comment to Vygotsky in one of the volumes of Kuno Fisher's *History of philosophy*) and also outlines the direction in which Vygotsky saw the "general line" of further development of cultural-historical psychology. This current could signify a radical surmounting of "academicism" in traditional psychology. This should mean, first, a *rejection of the experimental paradigm of investigation*, in which the psychologist essentially attempts to create, with the aid of a special form of engineering activity, i.e., the "experiment," artificial conditions under which it will become possible to realize the modeled *ideal and "natural," law-governing, living object of study, an object that, in terms of the real "objects" of practice, whether that practice be education or upbringing, psychotherapy or psychological consultation ("pedological clinic"), is always a peculiar kind of "degenerate," artificial (laboratory) case, remote from life. This further means a move to a completely new type of investigation, which, by virtue of some of the fundamental features of its "object," a cultural-historical and evolving object, and fundamental (deriving from the latter) requirements of its methods, namely, externalization and analysis, must itself be implemented within the organized framework of some psychopractical action, or perhaps even some regular system of psychotechnical practice, serving as a necessary organ that makes possible the projection, realization, reproduction, and directed development of this practice. This project of radically restructuring psychology remains essentially unrealized in the subsequent history of psychology.*

26. This idea, which is found repeatedly in this text of Vygotsky's, can also be found in many contemporary psychologists and psychotherapists of the post-Freudian school, for example, representatives of the "humanist" school, which attaches fundamental importance to it. However, this idea can also be found, perhaps in its clearest and most concise form, in the works of Thomas Mann. Thus, in the preface to the American one-volume edition on Dostoevsky (see T. Mann, *Collected works*, Vol. 10), where he discusses to what extent the fact that Dostoevsky was apparently mentally ill (an epileptic) left its mark on his literary production, Mann insists that is not, and cannot be, a direct and unambiguous causal relationship between the nosological characteristics of a disease (even in the case of a mental disorder) and a person's personality traits and the general line of his mental development. It is important to know, according to Mann's basic idea, not *what illness* a person has, but *what person* has a particular illness. Similar thoughts can be found in Vygotsky's earlier works, particularly in those devoted to an analysis of the problem of character. See, for example, the work from 1928 [The problem of the dynamics of child character], *Collected works*, Vol. 5, pp. 153, 165, and elsewhere. See also the postulate that it is not possible to determine unambiguously the development of the Personality in terms of individual properties in Leont'ev's later works (for example, *Activity Consciousness. Personality*, Moscow, 1975. P. 177 and others).

27. See Vygotsky's work [The structure of interests in the transitional age

and the interests of working youth]. In *Problems of the ideology of working youth*, Moscow, 1929, No. 4, pp. 25–68, and [The pedagogy of youth], *Collected works*, Vol. 4, pp. 6–40.

28. Vygotsky was unable to locate this reference.

29. See note 16.

30. See note 21.