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PSYCHOLOGY IN RUSSIA*

From the Psychological Laboratories of the Akademii Kommunisticheskogo Vospitaniya im. N. K. Krupskoi

A. R. LURIA

I

Russian psychological literature, which has not been very numerous in former years, has recently shown a remarkable growth, bringing to life many new ideas and principles and a great many interesting researches. The most remarkable thing in modern Russian researches is the prevalence of tendencies towards an objective study of human behavior. Indeed, modern Russian psychology has been under considerable influence from the American behaviorists who in their turn owe very much to the Russian physiological school of Professor Pavlov in their development of the science of behavior. The doctrine of scientific materialism has also exercised a remarkable influence upon the Russian psychologists, thanks to which the latter have given up the metaphysical and semi-metaphysical conceptions which in Europe are associated with Husserl and the phenomenologists, and in Russia with the names of Lopatin, Chelpanov, and others. The recent psychological theories of the West, such as *Gestaltpsychologie*, the work of E. R. Jaensch, and the individual psychology of Adler, have also had their influence upon Russian psychologists.

The work of the modern Russian psychologists may be divided into several branches. We notice a considerable development of the physiological school of Professor Pavlov, and of the reflexological school of the late Bekhterev. The psychologists as a rule share the objective position of the physiologists but carry on their work on a much broader basis, approaching psychology from the point of view of that structural behavior which is determined by social conditions. To that wing belong most of the Russian psychologists who do not accept the mechanistic point of view of the reflexologists. It will suffice in this connection to mention the names of Professor Kornilov, Professor Blonski (his psychological work is of a distinctly genetic character), Professor Bassov, and L. Vigotski. Much has recently been done in the line of pedology, which in Russia is understood to be the science of the growing organism and its symptom complexes (including the somatic, psychological, and social peculiarities of

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the child). Thanks to the work of the Russian scientists pedology has made remarkable progress. The First Russian Congress of Pedologists, which took place in January, 1928, and in the work of which over one thousand pedologists, psychologists, and physicians participated, clearly indicated that pedology attracts great attention in Russia. We must also mention here that the science of applied psychology has greatly developed; unfortunately space considerations will not permit us to discuss that subject at any length.

II

The most interesting event in connection with the work of the physiology of behavior must be considered the publication of a new book by Professor Pavlov, "Lectures on the Work of the Large Hemispheres of the Brain." Psychologists and those interested in psychology have long been awaiting the appearance of a systematic work on the theory of the conditioned reflexes in which the author of that theory would state the results of his labor. The "Twenty Years' Experience in the Study of the Higher Nervous Activity in Animals" was not a systematic exposition of the theory. That book contained separate papers read by Professor Pavlov at different times and on different subjects in connection with the theory of conditioned reflexes. The "Lectures" recently published is a systematic work, the theory of that subject. Considered from this point of view, the publication of the "Lectures" is an event of great importance. The "Lectures" deals with the phenomenon of unconditioned and conditioned reflexes and demonstrates as the principal position of the author that the study of animal behavior can be approached only from the objective physiological point of view. A special chapter in that book is devoted to the technique of the study of conditioned reflexes. Several chapters of the book deal with the study of the accurate investigation of the activity of conditioned reflexes, the law of inhibition and its chief forms (external and internal inhibition are dealt with), conditions of the activity of the analyzers and the fundamental forms of the analyzing and synthetic work of the cortex, the laws of the irradiation and concentration of nervous processes which had been carefully examined in the work with conditioned reflexes, the laws of induction as they are manifested in the inhibition of an excited part of the brain, etc.

Several other chapters refer to the latest work of Professor Pavlov not yet published in the foreign press. I refer to the work which treats of the problems of dream and hypnosis, and establishes the thesis that the latter are forms of the same internal inhibition. Pavlov succeeds in showing that through external agencies easily registered in the laboratory one can provoke states very like the

hypnotic state. Very close to this work is another branch of researches which aims at finding ways for an objective analysis of the mechanisms that are fundamentally related to diseases of the nervous system. An objective study of dogs by the method of the conditioned reflexes afforded Pavlov the possibility of establishing typological differences in the activity of the nervous system; it was found that some animals belong to the exciting type and others to the inhibiting type. Furthermore, Pavlov succeeded in provoking something which reminds one very much of an artificial neurosis. By a collision of the impulses of inhibition and excitation (as in the process of differentiation), Pavlov induced a distinct change in the animal's behavior, which for a considerable time caused a disturbance in all the conditioned reflexes of the animal. This process, which Pavlov calls the disintegration of behavior, is characteristic of pathological states of the nervous system. It is impossible in this short review to consider any further this important work of Pavlov's. It is to be hoped that the American and European psychologists will soon be able to read the book in their own languages.

Very close to Professor Pavlov's work are the researches of his disciples, and parallel is the work of Bekhterev's school. Both schools have shown a tendency to apply experiments with conditioned reflexes to man. Bekhterev's school has for a long time been occupied with it. Great interest has lately been shown in the study of the genesis of the chief mechanisms of the nervous system from early childhood; a special laboratory conducted by Chelovanov at the Bekhterev Institute in Leningrad is occupied with that problem.

III

We shall now pass to the review of the psychological researches carried on along purely objective lines. Professor Kornilov's work, "The Study of Human Reaction," follows this direction. This work deals with the measurement of the energetic side of behavior, with the expenditure of energy at different degrees of reaction. By the means of a dynamoscope, which Professor Kornilov constructed for the purpose, he established that by observing the intensity of the reaction of the hand which is simultaneous with some other central activity, one can indirectly infer the amount of energy which that activity requires, i.e., one can estimate its energetic coefficient. After several years of experimentation Professor Kornilov established the basic principle of what he calls the unipolar expenditure of energy. Such energy has the tendency to expand peripherally or centrally. This theory is of considerable theoretical interest and has also been considered the basis for many practical investigations in regard to

the application of experimental psychology to school practice, professional fitness, etc.

Professor Kornilov, as well as the investigators of the physiological school, has objectively approached the analysis of types of behavior and has given them a new classification which takes into consideration the rapidity of the reaction of the subject and his inclination for a greater or smaller expenditure of energy. In his work Professor Kornilov took into consideration adaptation to the environment, process of reaction as the fundamental mechanism of behavior formed under the influence of the social conditions of the subject, and the subjective side of the process which must not be ignored by the psychologist but which should not be studied as an independent phenomenon. The methodological side of this work is given in another book of Professor Kornilov's, "Modern Psychology and Marxism," where he states that his point of view can be best formulated as the application of the doctrine of dialectic materialism to psychology. The researches which are conducted by the State Institute of Experimental Psychology at Moscow are of the same character, and the three volumes published by the Institute, "Psychology and Marxism" (1925), "Problems of Modern Psychology" (Vol. I, 1926 and Vol. II, 1928), contain several experimental and theoretical investigations dealing with the study of different types and forms of human reaction.

IV

The problems of pedology and genetic psychology are occupying a considerable place in the modern psychological literature in Russia. In 1925 appeared the first edition of Professor Blonski's "Pedology," and in a few months there was a demand for a second edition. That book has undoubtedly played an important rôle in the development of the science of the child in Russia. It is the first time that pedology has been regarded not as child psychology and not as experimental pedagogy but as a genetic science of the growth of the child. In this book every phase of the child's development is considered from three different angles: growth, constitutional peculiarities, and behavior. Availing himself of a wealth of material Professor Blonski is considering the growth of the child from a synthetic point of view. According to Professor Blonski the problems of constitution, growth, and behavior are so closely combined that it is impossible to understand one side of the child's life without considering the other sides also. The wide application of biological analysis, the development of statistical method introducing a series of new and important formulae for the analysis of the somatic peculiarities of the child, the application of new biological data for the study of types of children—

all make the book a very important feature in the present pedological literature. The same views are popularly stated in other books of his: "Pedagogics," "Pedology in Public Schools," and also in the two volumes of the researches of his laboratory at the Academy of Communist Education—"Pedology and the School."

Next in importance is his other book, "Outlines of Psychology." In these essays the author attempts to give a consistently genetic point of view concerning human behavior. He is inclined to regard the psyche dynamically as a gradual development of the biological processes from the dream-state to the state of being awake. This point of view allows him not only to analyze the successive stages in the development of human behavior from the simplified to the most complex forms, but also to find in the human psyche the co-existence of processes which can be regarded as the typical representatives of separate phases of such evolution, e.g., the dream, primitive impulses and instincts, automatic behavior, intellectual activity, etc. The genetic point of view and the author's tendency to study the individual from the biological and psychological points of view constitute the typical features of the book as well as of the trend in Russian pedology which Professor Blonski represents.

V

A very important place in pedology is occupied by the Leningrad school under the direction of Professor Bassov. Many years ago in St. Petersburg there originated the psychological school of Professor Lazurski's, the aim of which was to combine the positive features of psychological experiment with and natural observation of the child. That school maintained that psychological experiments with and natural observation of the child must not be isolated, that the experiment must be carried on under natural school conditions, must consist of a concrete task, must not go beyond the usual lesson, that every task is to reveal a certain psychological function, and that the estimated results would be characteristic for the child. Such were the ideas expressed by Professor Lazurski in his book, "The Natural Experiment and its Application in School," and only the early death of Professor Lazurski prevented him from consummating this interesting work.

The problem which Professor Lazurski put before himself—that of attaining a method for the objective observation of the natural processes of the child—has been further developed by his disciple, Professor Bassov, who has approached the subject from a somewhat different angle but who has accomplished good results. Professor Bassov holds that the chief aim of the psychologist who studies the growth of the child is to become able to register and to analyze

correctly and objectively that rich material which is given in every stage of the natural behavior of the child in kindergarten, school, etc. It is only necessary to understand correctly single acts of behavior and their causes in order to understand the fundamental laws of child behavior. Professor Bassov thinks that this can be achieved by the method of objective systematic observation.

In line with psycho-behaviorism, Professor Bassov maintains that every phase of the natural behavior of the child must be studied both from the point of view of the stimulus which causes the reactions and also from that of the structure of the reactions. The latter, the study of the structure of child behavior, is very important. Just in that respect does human behavior show a distinct difference from animal behavior. Indeed, in the case of men one can demonstrate that some behavior is entirely caused by the stimuli in the environment. In other cases human behavior appears to be much more complicated and cannot be explained in terms of stimuli in the environment. New factors are in evidence here in the complicated social experience of men; in other words, there is here a complicated structural process. Indeed, that process is simpler with the child than with adults. Watching the play of the child, his solving of problems, his work, etc., we can get an idea of how the processes of child behavior are constructed. Recording those processes and concluding about the stimuli which caused them, Professor Bassov considers it possible to distinguish at least three forms of structural behavior: (1) simple reflex behavior (or simple temporal connection of acts), (2) associatively determined processes, (3) apperceptively determined behavior, which is caused by various problems, aims, etc. These processes certainly do not develop at once. In his investigations Professor Bassov is trying to give a detailed picture of the continuous addition of the most complicated forms of behavior to the primitive forms of the conduct of the child. The most important of Professor Bassov's books is "The Method of the Psychological Observation of the Child."

We have reviewed those psychological researches which have already been published and which represent different theories in Russian psychological thought. Space does not permit us to review the work on child reflexology (Chelovanov, Ivanov, Smolenski, Sorokhtin, Frolov, and others). We have not said anything about applied psychology and pedagogical tests, which are very much used in Russia at the present time. To these we shall return in a subsequent review, in which we shall also refer to the research work of

the psychological laboratories in Russia and to the First Pedological Congress of the Soviet Union, recently held at Moscow.

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LA PSYCHOLOGIE EN RUSSIE

(Résumé)

La psychologie russe moderne montre de très visibles signes d'activité. Les oeuvres parues pendant les derniers ans nous permettent de conclure qu'il y a une seule tendance manifestée par toute la pensée psychologique russe. Cette tendance est vers une étude objective du comportement humain, laquelle se trouve clairement sous l'influence de la doctrine du matérialisme scientifique. Telle est la direction de la psychologie russe de nos jours, et elle touche les sphères les plus diverses du comportement des animaux et des êtres humains.

Il faut considérer comme l'événement le plus important de la littérature russe du comportement la publication dans les derniers ans de deux livres par l'académicien I. P. Pavlov: "L'Expérience de vingt ans dans l'étude de la plus haute activité nerveuse (le comportement) des animaux" (1923) et "Conférences sur la physiologie des grands hémisphères du cerveau" (1928). Dans celui-ci, Pavlov donne une description systématique de l'enseignement des réflexes conditionnels et les résultats. Une série d'enquêtes à l'école de Pavlov étudie les problèmes des types, de la pathologie et de la génétique des réflexes conditionnels. Le dernier problème a occupé l'attention de l'école du feu académicien, V. M. Bekhterev, qui étudiait depuis longtemps les réflexes conditionnels des êtres humains.

Parmi les oeuvres de psychologie objective les oeuvres du professeur K. I. Kornilov possèdent un grand intérêt. Dans son enquête expérimentale "La Doctrine des réactions humaines" (1922, 1926), il a essayé d'interpréter les lois du comportement humain au point de vue de la dépense de l'énergie quand la réaction est de différents types. Dans son oeuvre "La Psychologie moderne et le Marxisme" Kornilov essaie de baser son enseignement sur la méthodologie scientifique—matérialiste.

Les enquêtes les plus importantes des derniers ans au champ de la pédologie et de la psychologie génétique ont été faites par le professeur P. P. Blonski qui a fait paraître en 1925 sa "Pédologie" et en 1927 les "Essais psychologiques". Dans les deux livres se trouve un point de vue toujours génétique de l'homme, et on considère le développement comme une accumulation de couches séparées, se suivant l'une l'autre génétiquement, et la pédologie est définie pour la première fois comme une science des complexes [symptomatiques de l'âge] de la constitution, de la croissance, et du comportement d'un enfant.

On a étudié les enfants (surtout ceux de l'âge pré-scolaire) récemment dans l'école du professeur M. J. Bassov (Leningrad). Basant ses idées sur les méthodes de l'observation et sur l'expérience naturelle, le professeur Bassov a formulé les méthodes de l'observation systématique des enfants, laquelle observe les réactions des enfants dans un milieu naturel pour les enfants, et qui nous permet d'étudier leur structure de plus près. Dans une série d'enquêtes ("Les Méthodes de l'observation objective des enfants", 1925; "L'Etude objective des enfants", 1924), le professeur Bassov décrit en détail ses méthodes et les données principales établies à l'aide de ces méthodes.

LURIA

DIE PSYCHOLOGIE IN RUSSLAND

(Referat)

Die moderne russische Psychologie zeigt deutlich Spuren innerer Bewegung. Die in den letzten Jahren erschienenen Werke deuten darauf hin, dass die ganze russische, psychologische Gedankenwelt ein und demselben Ziele zustrebt, nämlich, einer objektiven Erforschung des menschlichen Verhaltens, und unter dem merklichen Einfluss der Lehre des wissenschaftlichen Materialismus steht. Die Haupttendenz der russischen Psychologie folgt dieser Richtung und berührt die verschiedensten Gebiete des Verhaltens von Menschen und Tieren.

Das wichtigste Ereignis in der russischen Literatur über das Verhalten, ist das Erscheinen zweier Werke des Akademikers I. P. Pavlov: "Zwanzigjährige Erfahrungen beim Studium der höchsten Nerventätigkeit (Des Verhaltens) der Tiere" (1923), und "Vorträge über die Physiologie der beiden Grosshirnloben" (1928). In diesen Reden giebt Pavlov einen systematischen Bericht über die Lehre der bedingten Reflexe und deren Errungenschaften. Eine Reihe von Untersuchungen, die in Pavlov's Schule ausgeführt wurden, handeln von den Problemen der Typen, der Pathologie und der Entstehung bedingter Reflexe. Letzteres Problem zog die Aufmerksamkeit der Schule Bekhterevs auf sich, des kürzlich gestorbenen Akademikers, der sich seit längerer Zeit mit der Untersuchung der bedingten Reflexe des Menschen beschäftigt hatte.

Auf dem Gebiet der objektiven Psychologie, sind die Werke von Professor K. F. Kornilov von besonderem Interesse. In seinen experimentellen Untersuchungen "Über die Lehre der Menschlichen Reaktionen" (1922, 1926), versucht er die Gesetze des menschlichen Verhaltens in Bezug auf die Energieausgabe bei verschiedenen Reaktionstypen, zu deuten und erklären. In seinem Werk: "Die moderne Psychologie und der Marxismus" begründet Kornilov seine Lehre auf die wissenschaftlich materialistische Methodologie.

Die bedeutsamsten Untersuchungen der letzten Jahre auf dem Gebiet der Pedologie und der genetischen Psychologie, wurden von Professor P. P. Blonski ausgeführt, der, 1925, seine "Pedologie," und 1927, seine "Psychologischen Skizzen," herausgab. In beiden Werken offenbart der Verfasser seinen konsequent einheitlichen, genetischen Gesichtspunkt in Bezug auf den Menschen, und betrachtet dessen Entwicklung als eine Ansammlung einzelner, genetisch einander folgender Schichten; zum ersten Mal wird hier die Pedologie, als die Wissenschaft der symptomatischen Alterskomplexe, der Leibesbeschaffenheit, des Wachstums und des Verhaltens des Kindes, dargestellt.

In letzter Zeit wurden in der Schule von Professor M. J. Bassov (Leningrad) Untersuchungen an Kindern, und zwar besonders im Vorschulalter, ausgeführt. Analog seiner Ansicht über Beobachtungsmethoden und dem natürlichen Experiment, entwickelte Professor Bassov eine Methodik der systematischen Beobachtung des Kindes, wobei dessen Reaktion und Verhalten in seiner natürlichen Umgebung untersucht wird, und welche es ermöglicht den Charakter, die Natur des Kinds weit eingehender zu studieren. In einer Reihe von Untersuchungen ("Über die Methodik der objektiven Beobachtung des Kindes" 1924), beschreibt Professor Bassov seine Methodik in eingehender Weise und teilt auch die Hauptdaten mit, welche er dadurch erzielte.

LURIA

ПСИХОЛОГИЯ В РОССИИ

(Из современной психологической литературы).

(Реферат)

В современной русской психологии безусловно заметно определенное оживление. Появляющиеся за последние годы работы дают возможность говорить о единой тенденции, обнаруживающейся во всей русской психологической мысли. Это — тенденция к объективному подходу к человеческому поведению, на которую оказывает заметное влияние доктрина научного материализма. Основные достижения русской психологии за последнее время и идут в этом направлении, охватывая самые разнообразные области поведения животных и человека.

Важнейшим явлением в русской литературе о поведении следует считать появление за последние годы двух книг акад. И. П. ПАВЛОВА: «Двадцатилетний опыт изучения высшей нервной деятельности (поведения) животных» (1923) и «Лекции по физиологии больших полушарий головного мозга» (1928). В последней из них И. П. ПАВЛОВ дает систематическое изложение учения об условных рефлексах и его достижений. Ряд ведущих исследований в школе акад. ПАВЛОВА остаются наливается на проблемах типологии, патологии и генетики условных рефлексов; последняя проблема занимает и школу недавно умершего акад. В. М. БЕХТЕРЕВА, уже давно изучавшую условные рефлексы на человека.

В области работ по объективной психологии значительный интерес представляют труды проф. К. Н. КОРНИЛОВА, давшего в своем экспериментальном исследовании «Учение о реакциях человека» (1922, 1926) попытку подойти к законам поведения человека с точки зрения затраты энергии при различных типах его реакций. В работе «Современная психология и марксизм» проф. КОРНИЛОВ старается подвести под свои труды базис научно-материалистической методологии.

Важнейшие исследования в области педологии и генетической психологии были за последние годы проведены проф. П. П. БЛОНСКИМ, опубликовавшим в 1925 году свою «Педологию», а в 1927 году «Психологические очерки». В обоих книгах последовательно проводится целостная генетическая точка зрения на человека, при чем развитие рассматривается как напластование отдельных генетически следующих друг за другом слоев, и педология впервые обосновывается, как наука о возрастных симптомокомплексах, о конституции роста и поведении ребенка.

Изучение ребенка (особенно дошкольного возраста) проводилось за последнее время в школе проф. М. Я. БАСОВА (Ленинград). Исходя из методов наблюдения и естественного эксперимента, проф. БАСОВ разработал методику систематического наблюдения над детьми, учитывая реакцию ребенка в естественной для него обстановке и дающей возможность ближе изучить их структуру. В ряде исследований («Методика психологических наблюдений над детьми». 1925 г. и «Опыт объективного изучения детства». Сборн. под ред. проф. М. БАСОВА. 1924.), Проф. М. Я. БАСОВ дает детальное изложение своей методики и основных фактов, которые были установлены с ее помощью.

ЛУРИЯ
(Luria)

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