The spider carries out operations reminiscent of a weaver and the boxes which bees build in the sky could disgrace the work of many architects. But even the worst architect differs from the most able bee from the very outset in that before he builds a box out of boards he has already constructed it in his head. At the end of the work process he obtains a result which already existed in his mind before he began to build. The architect not only changes the form given to him by nature, within the constraints imposed by nature, he also carries out a purpose of his own which defines the means and the character of the activity to which he must subordinate his will.

Karl Marx, Capital

It is precisely the alteration of nature by men, not nature as such, which is the most essential and immediate basis of human thought.

Friedrich Engels, Dialectics of Nature

Educated as a lawyer and philologist, Lev S. Vygotsky had already made several contributions to literary criticism when he began his career as a psychologist following the Russian Revolution in 1917. He was a student in the heyday of Wilhelm Wundt, the founder of experimental psychology, and William James, the American pragmatist. His scientific contemporaries included Ivan Pavlov, Vladimir Bekhterev, and John B. Watson, popularizers of stimulus-response theories of behavior, as well as Wertheimer, Köhler, Koffka, and Lewin, the founders of the Gestalt psychology movement. The reader might expect, then, that Vygotsky’s work will prove to be primarily of historical interest—perhaps as a glimpse of the way in which modern psychology’s founding fathers influenced Soviet psychology in postrevolutionary Russia. These essays are certainly of interest from the perspective of intellectual history, but they are not historical relics. Rather, we offer them as a contribution to quandaries and discussions in contemporary psychology.

In order to understand how the ideas in this volume can retain their relevance across the reaches of time and culture that separate us from Vygotsky, we have repeatedly found ourselves reflecting upon the state of European psychology which provided the initial setting for Vygotsky’s theories. We have also found it helpful to examine the condition of psychology and society in postrevolutionary Russia, since they were the source of the immediate problems facing Vygotsky as well as a source of inspiration as he and his colleagues sought to develop a Marxist theory of human intellectual functioning.
直到19世纪后半叶，人类的科学研究才开始成为哲学的领域。英国的约翰·洛克（John Locke）在英国发展了他的经验主义解释。这些英国经验主义者的目标是描述感觉如何产生复杂思想的定律。在18世纪下半叶，伊曼努尔·康德（Immanuel Kant）认为思想源于空间和时间的概念，而洛克则认为这些概念源于经验和感觉。康德认为，人类的思想可以分解为更基本的元素。另一方面，理性主义者（they were considered by their contemporaries）则认为心理学应该研究人类的本能过程。当《物种起源》这本书出版时，它被用作该领域研究的依据。《物种起源》这本书由查尔斯·达尔文（Charles Darwin）撰写，他提出了一个自然选择的模型，这个模型可以解释人类和动物之间的差异。达尔文认为，人类和动物共享一些基本的生理过程，比如反射和本能。达尔文还指出，人类和动物的行为是有因果关系的，这些关系可以通过观察和实验来研究。}

研究人类行为的科学传统可以追溯到18世纪下半叶。这可以分为两个主要流派：生理学和心理学。生理学研究的是人体的生理过程，而心理学则研究的是思想的过程。这两个流派的创始人是伊曼努尔·康德和让-雅克·卢梭（Jean-Jacques Rousseau）。康德认为，思想是先天的，而卢梭则认为，思想是后天的。这两种观点导致了对人类行为的两种截然不同的解释。}

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冯特的理论是建立在对人类行为的观察和实验的基础上的。他的理论认为，人类的思考过程是可以通过科学的方法来研究和描述的。}

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reflexes (which built upon Sechenov) and Darwin's assertion of the continuity of man and beast, they opened up many areas of animal and human behavior to scientific study. In one important respect, however, they agreed with their introspective antagonists: their basic strategy was to identify the simple building blocks of human activity (substituting stimulus-response bonds for sensations) and then to specify the rules by which these elements combined to produce more complex phenomena. This strategy led to a concentration on processes shared by animals and humans and, again, to a neglect of higher processes—thought, language, and volitional behavior. The second line of attack on descriptions of the contents of consciousness came from a group of psychologists who objected to the one point upon which Wundt and the behaviorists agreed: the appropriateness of analyzing psychological processes into their basic constituents. This movement, which came to be known as Gestalt psychology, demonstrated that many intellectual phenomena (Köhler’s studies with anthropoid apes were an example) and perceptual phenomena (Wertheimer’s studies of apparent movement of flickering lights, for example) could not be accounted for in terms of either the basic elements of consciousness postulated by Wundt or simple stimulus-response theories of behavior. The Gestalt psychologists rejected, in principle, the possibility of accounting for complex processes in terms of simple ones.

Such, in great brevity, was the situation in European psychology when Vygotsky first appeared on the scene. The situation was not very different in Russia.

POSTREVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY IN RUSSIA

In the early decades of the twentieth century psychology in Russia, as in Europe, was torn between contending schools, each of which offered partial explanations of a limited range of phenomena. In 1923 at the first all-Russian psychoneurological congress K. N. Kornilov initiated the first major organizational and intellectual shift in psychology following the revolution. At that time the prestigious Institute of Psychology in Moscow was headed by G. I. Chelpanov, an adherent of Wundt’s introspective psychology and a foe of behaviorism. (He had published the sixth edition of his book, The Mind of Man, a critique of materialist theories of the mind, in 1917, just before the revolution.) Chelpanov assigned a restricted role to Marxism in psychology, asserting it could help explain the social organization of consciousness but not the properties of individual consciousness. In a talk entitled “Contemporary Psychology and Marxism” Kornilov criticized Chelpanov both for the idealistic basis of his psychological theory and for the restricted role he assigned to Marxism in psychology. Kornilov, who called his own approach reactology, sought to subsume all branches of psychology within a Marxist framework that used behavioral reactions as the basic data.

Kornilov’s critique of Chelpanov in 1923 won the day. Chelpanov was removed as director of the Institute of Psychology and was replaced by Kornilov, who immediately brought together a corps of young scientists dedicated to formulating and promoting a behavioral, Marxist theory of psychology. Vygotsky must have produced quite a sensation one year later at the second psychoneurological meeting when he gave a talk entitled “Consciousness as an Object of the Psychology of Behavior.” Whatever else one extracted from Kornilov’s reactological approach, it quite clearly did not feature the role of consciousness in human activity, nor did it accord the concept of consciousness a role in psychological science.¹

Vygotsky was dissenting from newly established authority. He was not, however, promoting a return to the position advocated by Chelpanov. In his initial speech and a series of subsequent publications, he made it clear that in his view none of the existing schools of psychology provided a firm foundation for establishing a unified theory of human psychological processes. Borrowing a phrase from his German contemporaries, he often referred to the “crisis in psychology” and set himself the task of achieving a synthesis of contending views on a completely new theoretical basis.

For Vygotsky’s Gestalt contemporaries, a crisis existed because established theories (primarily Wundt’s and Watsonian behaviorism) could not, in their view, explain complex perceptual and problem-solving behaviors. For Vygotsky, the crisis went much deeper. He shared the Gestalt psychologists’ dissatisfaction with psychological analysis that began by reducing all phenomena to a set of psychological “atoms.” But he felt that the Gestalt psychologists failed to move beyond the description of complex phenomena to the explanation of them. Even if one were to accept the Gestalt criticisms of previous approaches, a crisis would still exist because psychology would remain split into two irreconcilable halves: a “natural science” branch that could explain elementary sensory and reflex processes, and a “mental science” half that could describe emergent properties of higher psychological processes. What Vygotsky sought was a comprehensive approach that would make possible description and explanation of higher psychological functions in terms acceptable to natural science. To Vygotsky, explana-
tion meant a great deal. It included identification of the brain mechanisms underlying a particular function; it included a detailed explication of their developmental history to establish the relation between simple and complex forms of what appeared to be the same behavior; and, importantly, it included specification of the societal context in which the behavior developed. Vygotsky's goals were extremely ambitious, perhaps unreasonably so. He did not achieve these goals (as he was well aware). But he did succeed in providing us with an astute and prescient analysis of modern psychology.

A major reason for the continued relevance of Vygotsky's work is that in 1924 and the following decade he constructed a penetrating critique of the notion that an understanding of the higher psychological functions in humans can be found by a multiplication and complication of principles derived from animal psychology, in particular those principles that represent the mechanical combination of stimulus-response laws. At the same time he provided a devastating critique of theories which claim that the properties of adult intellectual functions arise from maturation alone, or are in any way preformed in the child and simply waiting for an opportunity to manifest themselves.

In stressing the social origins of language and thinking, Vygotsky was following the lead of influential French sociologists, but to our knowledge he was the first modern psychologist to suggest the mechanisms by which culture becomes a part of each person's nature. Insisting that psychological functions are a product of the brain's activity, he became an early advocate of combining experimental cognitive psychology with neurology and physiology. Finally, by claiming that all of these should be understood in terms of a Marxist theory of the history of human society, he laid the foundation for a unified behavioral science.

MARXIST THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Contrary to the stereotype of Soviet scholars scurrying to make their theories conform to the Politburo's most recent interpretation of Marxism, Vygotsky clearly viewed Marxist thought as a valuable scientific resource from very early in his career. "A psychologically relevant application of dialectical and historical materialism" would be one accurate summary of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of higher mental processes.

Vygotsky saw in the methods and principles of dialectical materialism a solution to key scientific paradoxes facing his contemporaries. A central tenet of this method is that all phenomena be studied as processes in motion and in change. In terms of the subject matter of psychology, the scientist's task is to reconstruct the origin and course of development of behavior and consciousness. Not only does every phenomenon have its history, but this history is characterized by changes both qualitative (changes in form and structure and basic characteristics) and quantitative. Vygotsky applied this line of reasoning to explain the transformation of elementary psychological processes into complex ones. The schism between natural scientific studies of elementary processes and speculative reflection on cultural forms of behavior might be bridged by tracing the qualitative changes in behavior occurring in the course of development. Thus, when Vygotsky speaks of his approach as "developmental," this is not to be confused with a theory of child development. The developmental method, in Vygotsky's view, is the central method of psychological science.

Marx's theory of society (known as historical materialism) also played a fundamental role in Vygotsky's thinking. According to Marx, historical changes in society and material life produce changes in "human nature" (consciousness and behavior). Although this general proposition had been echoed by others, Vygotsky was the first to attempt to relate it to concrete psychological questions. In this effort he creatively elaborated on Engels' concept of human labor and tool use as the means by which man changes nature and, in so doing, transforms himself. In chapters 1 through 4 below, Vygotsky exploits the concept of a tool in a fashion that finds its direct antecedents in Engels: "The specialization of the hand—this implies the tool, and the tool implies specific human activity, the transforming reaction of man on nature"; "the animal merely uses external nature, and brings about changes in it simply by his presence; man, by his changes, makes it serve his ends, masters it. This is the final, essential distinction between man and other animals" (p. 291). Vygotsky brilliantly extended this concept of mediation in human—environment interaction to the use of signs as well as tools. Like tool systems, sign systems (language, writing, number systems) are created by societies over the course of human history and change with the form of society and the level of its cultural development. Vygotsky believed that the internalization of culturally produced sign systems brings about behavioral transformations and forms the bridge between early and later forms of individual development. Thus for Vygotsky, in the tradition of Marx and Engels, the mechanism of individual developmental change is rooted in society and culture.

In later chapters (especially chapter 5) Vygotsky generalizes his conception of the origin of higher psychological functions in a way that
reveals the close relationship between their fundamentally mediated nature and the dialectical, materialist conception of historical change.

Citations of Marxist classics were sometimes used to excess by certain Soviet psychologists as they sought a means for building a Marxist psychology from the chaos of competing schools of thought. Yet in unpublished notes Vygotsky repudiated the “quotat method” of relating Marxism to psychology and made explicit the way in which he thought its basic methodological principles might contribute to theory-building in psychology:

I don't want to discover the nature of mind by patching together a lot of quotations. I want to find out how science has to be built, to approach the study of the mind having learned the whole of Marx's method. ... In order to create such an enabling theory-method in the generally accepted scientific manner, it is necessary to discover the essence of the given area of phenomena, the laws according to which they change, their qualitative and quantitative characteristics, their causes. It is necessary to formulate the categories and concepts that are specifically relevant to them—in other words, to create one’s own Capital.

The whole of Capital is written according to the following method: Marx analyzes a single living “cell” of capitalist society—for example, the nature of value. Within this cell he discovers the structure of the entire system and all of its economic institutions. He says that to a layman this analysis may seem a murky tangle of tiny details. Indeed, there may be tiny details, but they are exactly those which are essential to “micro-anatomy.” Anyone who could discover what a “psychological” cell is—the mechanism producing even a single response—would thereby find the key to psychology as a whole. [from unpublished notebooks]

A careful reading of this manuscript provides convincing proof of both Vygotsky's sincerity and the fruitfulness of the framework he developed.

THE INTELLECTUAL AND SOCIAL SETTING

Developmental and historical approaches to the study of human nature were not unique to Vygotsky in the Soviet Union in the 1920s. Within psychology, an older colleague, P. P. Blonsky, had already adopted the position that an understanding of complex mental functions requires developmental analysis. From Blonsky, Vygotsky adopted the notion that “behavior can be understood only as the history of behavior.” Blonsky was also an early advocate of the view that the technological activities of people were a key to understanding their psychological makeup, a view that Vygotsky exploited in great detail.

Vygotsky and many other Soviet theorists of the day were also heavily influenced by the work of western European sociologists and anthropologists, like Thurnwald and Levy-Bruhl, who were interested in the history of mental processes as reconstructed from anthropological evidence of the intellectual activity of primitive peoples. The scant references in this book are a pale reflection of the extent of Vygotsky's interest in the development of mental processes understood historically. This aspect of his work received special attention in a publication entitled Studies in the History of Behavior published jointly with A. R. Luria in 1930. It served as the impetus for Luria's two expeditions to Central Asia in 1931 and 1932, the results of which were published long after Vygotsky's death.

This historical emphasis was also popular in Soviet linguistics, where interest centered on the problem of the origin of language and its influence on the development of thought. Discussions in linguistics dealt with concepts similar to Vygotsky's and also similar to the work of Sapir and Whorf, who were then becoming influential in the United States.

While an acquaintance with academic issues of the 1930s is helpful to understanding Vygotsky's approach to human cognition, a consideration of sociopolitical conditions during this time in the Soviet Union is essential as well. Vygotsky worked within a society that put a premium on science and had high hopes for the ability of science to solve the pressing economic and social problems of the Soviet people. Psychological theory could not be pursued apart from the practical demands made on scientists by the government, and the broad spectrum of Vygotsky's work clearly shows his concern with producing a psychology that would have relevance for education and medical practice. For Vygotsky, the need to carry on theoretical work in an applied context posed no contradiction whatsoever. He had begun his career as a teacher of literature, and many of his early articles had dealt with problems of educational practice, especially education of the mentally and physically handicapped. He had been a founder of the Institute of Defectology in Moscow, with which he was associated throughout his working life. In such medical problems as congenital blindness, aphasia, and severe mental retardation Vygotsky saw opportunities both for understanding the mental processes of all people and for establishing programs of treatment and remediation. Thus, it was consistent with his general theoretical view that his work should be carried out in a society that sought the elimination of illiteracy and the founding of educational programs to maximize the potential of individual children.

Vygotsky's participation in the debates surrounding the formulation
of a Marxist psychology embroiled him in fierce disputes in the late 1920s and early 1930s. In these discussions ideology, psychology, and policy were intricately intertwined, as different groups vied for the right to represent psychology. With Kornilov's ouster from the Institute of Psychology in 1930, Vygotsky and his students were for a brief time in the ascendency, but he was never recognized as the official leader.

In the years just prior to his death Vygotsky lectured and wrote extensively on problems of education, often using the term “pedology,” which roughly translates as “educational psychology.” In general he was scornful of pedology that emphasized tests of intellectual ability patterned after the IQ tests then gaining prominence in western Europe and the United States. It was his ambition to reform pedology along the lines suggested in chapter 6 in this volume, but his ambition far exceeded his grasp. Vygotsky was mistakenly accused of advocating mass psychological testing and criticized as a “Great Russian chauvinist” for suggesting that nonliterate peoples (such as those living in nonindustrialized sections of central Asia) had not yet developed the intellectual capacities associated with modern civilization. Two years following his death the Central Committee of the Communist Party issued a decree halting all psychological testing in the Soviet Union. At the same time all leading psychological journals ceased publication for almost twenty years. A period of intellectual ferment and experimentation was at an end.

But by no means did Vygotsky’s ideas die with him. Even before his death he and his students established a laboratory in Kharkov headed by A. N. Leontiev (currently Dean of the Psychology Faculty at Moscow University) and later by A. V. Zaporozhets (now Director of the Institute of Preschool Education). Luria completed his medical training in the latter half of the 1930s and went on to carry out his world-famous pioneering work in developmental and neuropsychology. Many of Vygotsky's former students hold leading positions in the Institute of Defectology and the Institute of Psychology within the Soviet Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, as well as university departments of psychology such as that at Moscow University.

As inspection of any compendium of Soviet psychological research will show, Vygotsky continued and continues to influence research in a wide variety of basic and applied areas related to cognitive processes, their development and dissolution. His ideas have not gone unchallenged, even by his students, but they remain a living part of Soviet psychological thought.

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Vygotsky’s references in the text to experiments conducted in his laboratory sometimes leave readers with a sense of unease. He presents almost no raw data and summaries are quite general. Where are the statistical tests that record whether or not observations reflect “real” effects? What do these studies prove? Do they in fact lend any support to Vygotsky’s general theories, or is he, in spite of his disclaimers, conducting psychology in a speculative manner without subjecting his central propositions to empirical test? Those steeped in the methodology of experimental psychology as practiced in most American laboratories may be inclined to withhold the term “experiment” from Vygotsky’s studies and consider them to be little more than interesting demonstrations or pilot studies. And so, in many respects, they were.

We have found it useful to keep in mind the nature of the manuscripts that are the basis of this book. They do not constitute a report of a series of research studies from which general propositions are extrapolated. Rather, in these writings Vygotsky was concerned with presenting the basic principles of his theory and method. He drew upon the very limited pool of empirical work available to him in order to illustrate and support these principles. The description of specific studies is schematic and findings are often given as general conclusions rather than as raw data. Some of the studies referred to have been published in greater detail by his students and a few are available in English.6 Most studies, however, were conducted by students as pilot investigations and were never prepared for publication. Vygotsky’s laboratory existed for only a decade and his death from tuberculosis was expected at any time. The implications of his theory were so many and varied, and time was so short, that all energy was concentrated on opening up new lines of investigation rather than pursuing any particular line to the fullest. That task remained for Vygotsky’s students and their successors, who adopted his views in varying ways, incorporating them into new lines of research.7 However, the style of experimentation in these essays represents more than a response to the urgent conditions in which they were conducted. Vygotsky’s concept of the experiment differed from that of American psychology, and understanding this difference is important for an appreciation of Vygotsky’s contribution to contemporary cognitive psychology.

As every student of an introductory experimental course knows, the purpose of an experiment as conventionally presented is to deter-
mine the conditions controlling behavior. Methodology follows from this objective: the experimental hypothesis predicts aspects of the stimulus materials or task that will determine particular aspects of the response; the experimenter seeks maximum control over materials, task, and response in order to test the prediction. Quantification of responses provides the basis for comparison across experiments and for drawing inferences about cause-and-effect relationships. The experiment, in short, is designed to produce a certain performance under conditions that maximize its interpretability.

For Vygotsky, the object of experimentation is quite different. The principles of his basic approach (presented in chapter 5 of this volume) do not stem from a purely methodological critique of established experimental practices; they flow from his theory of the nature of higher psychological processes and the task of scientific explanation in psychology. If higher psychological processes arise and undergo changes in the course of learning and development, psychology will only fully understand them by determining their origin and mapping their history. At first sight it would appear that such a task precludes the experimental method and requires study of individual behavior over long periods of time. But Vygotsky believed (and ingeniously demonstrated) that the experiment could serve an important role by making visible processes that are ordinarily hidden beneath the surface of habitual behavior. He wrote that in a properly conceived experiment the investigator could create processes that "telescope the actual course of development of a given function." He called this method of investigation the "experimental-genetic" method, a term he shared with Heinz Werner, an outstanding contemporary whose developmental, comparative approach to psychology was well-known to Vygotsky.

To serve as an effective means of studying "the course of development of process," the experiment must provide maximum opportunity for the subject to engage in a variety of activities that can be observed, not just rigidly controlled. One technique Vygotsky effectively used for this purpose was to introduce obstacles or difficulties into the task that disrupted routine methods of problem solving. For example, in studying children's communication and the function of egocentric speech Vygotsky set up a task situation that required children to engage in cooperative activity with others who did not share their language (foreign-speaking or deaf children). Another method was to provide alternative routes to problem solving, including a variety of materials (Vygotsky called them "external aids") that could be used in different ways to satisfy the demands of the task. By careful observation of the uses made of these external aids by children at different ages under different conditions of task difficulty, Vygotsky sought to reconstruct the series of changes in intellectual operations that normally unfold during the course of the child's biographical development. A third technique was to set a task before the child that exceeded his knowledge and abilities, in order to discover the rudimentary beginnings of new skills. This procedure is well illustrated in studies on writing (chapter 7), in which young toddlers were provided with pencil and paper and asked to make representations of events, thus disclosing to the investigator the child's earliest understanding of the nature of graphic symbolism.

With all these procedures the critical data furnished by the experiment is not performance level as such but the methods by which the performance is achieved. The contrast between conventional experimental work (focusing on performance) and Vygotsky's work (focusing on process) has its contemporary expression in recent studies on children's memory by American investigators. Many studies (including a number of our own) have presented children of various ages with lists of words to be remembered and have analyzed such performance measures as number of words recalled and the order of recall. From these indicators the investigators have sought to make inferences about whether or not, and to what extent, young children engage in organizing activities as a memory strategy. On the other hand, John Flavell and his colleagues, using procedures very much like those of Vygotsky's students, provided children the materials to be remembered, and instructed them to do whatever they wanted to help them remember. They then observed children's attempts at classifying the items, the kinds of grouping they made, and other indices of children's tendency to use organizational strategies in remembering. As with Vygotsky, the central question is: What are the children doing? How are they trying to satisfy task demands?

In this connection we would like to clarify a basic concept of Vygotsky's theoretical approach and experimental method that we believe has been widely misinterpreted. In several places in the text Vygotsky, in referring to the structure of behavior, uses a term that we have translated as "mediated." Occasionally this term is accompanied by a figure depicting a stimulus, a response, and a "mediating link" between them (for example, S-X-R). The same term, and virtually the same diagram, were introduced into American learning theory in the late 1930s and became very popular in the 1950s as attempts were made to extend stimulus-response theories of learning to complex human behavior, especially language. It is important to keep in mind that Vygotsky was
not a stimulus-response learning theorist and did not intend his idea of mediated behavior to be thought of in this context. What he did intend to convey by this notion was that in higher forms of human behavior, the individual actively modifies the stimulus situation as a part of the process of responding to it. It was the entire structure of this activity which produced the behavior that Vygotsky attempted to denote by the term "mediating."

Several implications follow from Vygotsky's theoretical approach and method of experimentation. One is that experimental results will be qualitative as well as quantitative in nature. Detailed descriptions, based on careful observation, will constitute an important part of experimental findings. To some, such findings may seem merely anecdotal; Vygotsky maintained that if carried out objectively and with scientific rigor, such observations have the status of validated fact.

Another consequence of this new approach to experimentation is to break down some of the barriers that are traditionally erected between "laboratory" and "field." Experimental interventions and observations may often be as well or better executed in play, school, and clinical settings than in the psychologist's laboratory. The sensitive observations and imaginative interventions reported in this book attest to this possibility.

Finally, an experimental method that seeks to trace the history of the development of psychological functions sits more comfortably than the classical method alongside other methods in the social sciences concerned with history—including the history of culture and society as well as the history of the child. To Vygotsky, anthropological and sociological studies were partners with observation and experiment in the grand enterprise of accounting for the progress of human consciousness and intellect.

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**Biographical Note on L. S. Vygotsky**

Lev Semyonovitch Vygotsky was born November 5, 1896, in the town of Orsha, northeast of Minsk in Byelorussia. In 1913 he completed gymnasium in Grodno with a gold medal. In 1917, after graduating from Moscow University with a specialization in literature, he began his literary research.

From 1917 to 1923 Vygotsky taught literature and psychology in a school in Grodno, where he also directed the theater section of the adult education center and gave many speeches and lectures on problems of literature and science. During this period Vygotsky founded the literary journal Verask. Here he published his first literary research, later reissued as *The Psychology of Art*. He also founded a psychological laboratory in the Teacher Training Institute, where he gave a course on psychology, the contents of which were later published in *Pedagogical Psychology*.

In 1924 Vygotsky moved to Moscow and began to work first at the Institute of Psychology and then in the Institute of Defectology, which he founded. At the same time he directed a department for the education of physically defective and mentally retarded children in Narcompros (Peoples Committee on Education), and taught courses in the Krupkaya Academy of Communist Education, the Second Moscow State University (later the Moscow State Pedagogical Institute), and the Hertzen Pedagogical Institute in Leningrad. Between 1925 and 1934 Vygotsky gathered around him a large group of young scientists working in the areas of psychology, defectology, and mental abnormality. An interest in medicine led Vygotsky simultaneously to undertake medical training, first in the medical institute in Moscow and later in Kharkov,
where he gave a psychology course in the Ukrainian Psychoneurological Academy. Not long before his death Vygotsky was invited to head the department of psychology in the All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine. He died of tuberculosis June 11, 1934.

A. R. Luria

Part One / Mind in Society

Basic Theory and Data