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**The Formal method in Germany and in Russia**

The German speaking psychology is a direct source of the European Formalism movement as well in German context (Germany, Austria) as in Russia. This interest of the Formalists in the corporeal component of the linguistic and literary production has resulted in a particular research stream which could be defined as a « linguo-somatic orientation ». In particular, this is the case of Alois Riegl’s perseptive „tactil-optical“ method (1893; 1901) ; Adolf von Hildebrand’s architectonic conception (1909) ; Konrad Fiedler’s “sensorial aesthetics” (1887) ; W. Wölfflin’s “basic concepts” of the art history (1914), W. Worringer’s psychological Arts typology (1908) as well as Oskar Walzel’s sound-corporeal poetics elaborated during 1920. Within the Russian formalism, the psychological notions (“representation”, “sensation”, “apperception”, “series”, “clear and dark zones of consciousness”, “verbal gestures” and “sound gestures” are fundamental in the nearly all formalist conceptions (Roman Jakobson, Viktor Shklovski, Evgenij Polivanov, Lev Jakubinskij, Osip Brik, Boris Eixenbaum, Jurij Tynianov).

Thus, the European Formalism showed itself very receptive towards the new conception of the psychic life elaborated by the German psychologists during the XIXth century, towards the cognitive tradition inherited by the modern neuroscience. The formalist research program was presented by the formalists themselves like “anti-psychological” reaction against some dominated research tendencies; later it was also interpreted this way by different commentators and historians of the formalism. However, the attentive reading of the formalist texts beyond purely declarative programs reveals that they are saturated with psychological conceptions and terminology. This psychological background constitutes a rather heterogeneous constellation composed by means of psychological aesthetics and psychological linguistics of the second half of the XIXth century.

Independently of its intrinsic theoretical values, the formalist way of thinking art language and literature is based on the implicit psychologist dominant which takes its sense only in regards of the German cognitive tradition, appropriated by the *Geisteswissenschaften* of this time. In this respect, the European Formalism participates in the large movement of psychologisation of the humanities. To this extent the case of the Russian formalism is really emblematic, it invites to rethink the genealogy of the European structuralism in general. This accumulation of conceptual tools borrowed to the German psychological tradition reveals also a cognitive charge of the formalist theories. The latter constitutes a conceptual link between the properly psychological past of the European *Geisteswissenschaften* and the “cognitive” future of the actual research programs. Beyond the borrowing of conceptual tools from the psychological trend, the formal method has found in it its inspiration for producing new models of analysis. This intrinsically cognitivist dimension of the formalist program explains its late success during 1950-s – 1960-s, the period often and abusively called the period of the cognitivist revolution. In reality, it deals with a reemergence of the research program of the cognitivist sciences, rather exhaustively formulated by the German psychological tradition.