

Vygotsky Circle as a Personal Network of Scholars: Restoring Connections Between People and Ideas

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Abstract The name of Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) is well-known among contemporary psychologists and educators. The cult of Vygotsky, also known as “Vygotsky boom”, is probably conducive to continuous reinterpretation and wide dissemination of his ideas, but hardly beneficial for their understanding as an integrative theory of human cultural and biosocial development. Two problems are particularly notable. These are, first, numerous gaps and age-old biases and misconceptions in the historiography of Soviet psychology, and, second, the tendency to overly focus on the figure of Vygotsky to the neglect of the scientific activities of a number of other protagonists of the history of cultural-historical psychology. This study addresses these two problems and reconstructs the history and group dynamics within the dense network of Vygotsky’s collaborators and associates, and overviews their research, which is instrumental in understanding Vygotsky’s integrative theory in its entirety as a complex of interdependent ideas, methods, and practices.

Keywords Lev Vygotsky · Alexander Luria · Vygotsky Circle · Personal network · Group dynamics · Cultural-historical psychology · Soviet psychology

During his lifetime Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934) failed to establish himself as a leader of an institutionalized scientific school in the human sciences associated with his name, unlike, for instance, his contemporaries and compatriots Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) or Vladimir Bekhterev (1857-1927). Both Pavlov and Bekhterev not only founded scientific theories and rival research schools, but also set up institutionalized “factories” for massive production of scientific knowledge (Todes 2002). However, Vygotsky was fairly well-known, and for his contemporaries the name of Vygotsky was associated with his theory of human development that was at different times variously referred to as “instrumental”, or “cultural” psychology, or a “theory of cultural development”, or a “theory of cultural development of higher mental

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(psychical) functions” (Van der Veer and Valsiner 1991). This terminological diversity and fluidity reflects the constant search for the adequate descriptors for the original research program and theoretical innovation of integrative human developmental science introduced by Vygotsky and his associates in a wide range of fields and disciplines. This study explores the dense network of scholars associated with Vygotsky during his lifetime, the interpersonal and professional interrelationships of Vygotsky and his group, and the dynamics of group change in the interwar period (1924–1941) (Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5).

The “School of Vygotsky-Leontiev-Luria” Narrative

The first written contributions to the emergent historiography of Vygotsky’s psychology (that perhaps tell us more about their authors than the subject of their papers) appeared as early as in the middle of 1930s in obituaries and memorial speeches written or delivered by his closest collaborators soon after Vygotsky’s death (Leontiev 1934; Luria 1935a, 1935b; 1935/2003). However, the core of the now widely disseminated narrative about “the school of Vygotsky” was not formed until mid-1970 to early 1980s. This is when a pile of publications on the history of the “school” came out, including a series of memoirs, public presentations, and interviews with the protagonists of the history of Vygotskian psychology in the Soviet Union (Leontiev 1976/1986; Leontiev and Leontiev 1976/2005; Leontiev and Luria 1976; Luria 1979, 1982) as well as a number of publications by their followers and students (Davydov and Radzikhovskii 1980; 1980/1985; 1981; Radzikhovskii 1979). Quite a few of these appeared around the time of the death of Alexander Luria (in 1977) and Aleksei N. Leontiev (in 1979) (e.g., Elkonin 1983; 1983/1984; Galperin 1983; 1983/1984; e.g., Zaporozhets and Elkonin 1979), which might account for the laudatory and elevated rhetorical style of these publications, and the sometimes uncritical and rather heroic depiction of the protagonists. Two memorial edited volumes on the scientific legacy of the two scholars are especially notable as the two foundational and comprehensive collections of articles on the life and scientific legacy of Luria and Leontiev authored by their former colleagues and students (Khomskaia et al. 1982; Zaporozhets et al. 1983).

The stream of these and related publications formed the solid corpus of what we might refer to as the “canonical” account about the “school of Vygotsky-Leontiev-Luria” that has several key narrative elements. The core of the narrative is the story about the 1924 meeting in Moscow of the three founding fathers, Lev Vygotsky, Alexander Luria and Aleksei Leontiev, and formation of the first alliance of the “trojka” (“the three”). Then, a second alliance was formed by the five first-generation students of “the triumvirate”, named the “pyaterka” (“the five” in Russian), which included Alexander Zaporozhets, Lidia Bozhovich, Roza Levina, Nataliya Morozova, and Liya Slavina. According to this canonical narrative, the group of these eight individuals constituted the “school of Vygotsky”. Typically, this narrative does not provide us with any information about the later fate of “the pyaterka”, but we are told that at the end of 1931 a group of Vygotsky’s followers that included a part of the trojka (Luria and Leontiev) and a part of the pyaterka (Zaporozhets and Bozhovich) left Moscow for Kharkov, then capital of Soviet

Ukraine, to start their work in a new organizational unit, the Sector of Psychology at the Ukrainian Psychoneurological Academy (UPNA). In Kharkov, the Muscovites met with a group of local scholars, including Piotr Gal'perin, Piotr Zinchenko, Vladimir Asnin, Kseniya Khomenko, and Grigorij Lukov, who formed an alliance that later became to be known as the Kharkov group or the Kharkov school of psychology. According to this narrative, Luria headed the Psychology *Sektor* (Sector) at UPNA, whereas a position of a head of the *Otdel* (Department) of Child and Genetic Psychology was offered to Leontiev. However, Luria reportedly soon returned to Moscow; and after his departure Leontiev became the head of the Psychology *Sektor* and supervised virtually all administrative and research work from then on. A series of recent publications added the name of Mark Lebedinsky as one of those scholars invited from Moscow to Kharkov as well as other minor details (e.g., Leontiev 2003/2005, p. 32), but the structure of the narrative, the sequence and the interpretation of the main events remains basically identical across the vast majority of “traditional” publications on this topic (Ivanova 1995, 2002; Leontiev 1983; 2003/2005; Leontiev et al. 2005; Sokolova 2001, 2007)

The history of “trojka da pyaterka” (“the three and the five”, in Russian) and the interpretation of the history of Vygotskian psychology along the lines of A.N. Leontiev’s activity theory is not the only interpretation of the history of the Vygotskian research project after Vygotsky’s death. A number of researchers questioned the validity of the construct “the school of Vygotsky - Leontiev - Luria” now and then, and doubted the legitimacy of the claims of the continuity of Vygotsky’s original framework in the research program of activity-oriented psychological studies. For instance, Luchkov and Pevzner (the latter, as it happened, another of the first-generation of Vygotsky’s students) argued that “we have every reason to doubt the appropriateness of the phrase the *activity theory of Vygotsky - Leontiev - Luria*, as well as the juxtaposition of these three names with respect to this theory. Furthermore, in the school of Leontiev, it has recently become usual to talk, generally, about the *school of Vygotsky - Luria - Leontiev ...* which is also illegitimate, in our opinion” (Luchkov and Pevzner 1981, pp. 251-252).

However, the full-scale revision of the “trojka da pyaterka” version of the history of Vygotsky school started around the end of the 1980s-beginning of the 1990s and seems to have coincided with the processes of *perestroika* in the Soviet Union. The traditional history of Vygotskian psychology evoked much criticism from authors who questioned Leontiev’s role as leader of the school of Vygotskian scholars and challenged the claim that Leontiev’s activity theory was a direct continuation of Vygotsky’s theory of cultural development. The critique of the “official” historiography can often be recognized by the authors’ insistence on the split between Vygotsky on the one hand and Leontiev and the Kharkov group that reportedly departed from Vygotsky’s research program, on the other. Another characteristic feature of the “revisionist” historiography of Vygotskian psychology is the authors’ insistence on the rupture in Vygotsky’s theory development in the works of his students and followers—despite recognizing the continued influence of Vygotsky on his students (Kozulin 1984, 1986, 1990; Orlov 2003; Valsiner 1988; Van der Veer and Valsiner 1991; Veresov 2007). Some scholars even discuss Leontiev’s and Luria’s personal betrayal of Vygotsky and “his case” that allegedly took place some time around the end of 1933, approximately half a year before Vygotsky’s death (Van der Veer and Valsiner

1991; Vygodskaya and Lifanova 1996, 1996/1999). However, despite considerable criticism of the “school of Vygotsky-Leontiev-Luria”, scholars in favour of the canonical interpretation of the history of Vygotskian psychology are still fairly active and skillfully defend against the revisionists by providing new evidence in support of the direct lineage from Vygotsky’s cultural-historical psychology to Leontiev’s activity theory (Leontiev 2003, 2003/2005; Leontiev and Leontiev 2003; Leontiev, Leontiev and Sokolova 2005; Sokolova 2001, 2005, 2007; Voiskunskii, Zhdan and Tikhomirov 1999; Zhdan 2007).

Notably, the vast majority of these publications follow the tradition of “Great Men” histories, or, in other words, represent “hagiographic” historiography that is characterized by distinctly celebratory (or, otherwise, accusatory and denunciatory) accounts of the history of ideas against the background of personal life-stories of a few protagonists, typically, Vygotsky, Leontiev, or Luria. In contrast, the present study is inspired by the idea that, “remarkably, Vygotsky’s approach *de facto* embodies, in its real life history, the very theoretical principles central to it, such as the inseparability of knowledge and action, theory and practice, and the collaborative nature of cognition” (Stetsenko and Arieivitch 2004, p. 58). This approach is fairly reminiscent of Vygotsky’s famous dictum that each mental function in human cultural development “appears on the stage twice, in two planes, first, the social, then the psychological, first between people as an intermental category, then ... as an intramental category. ... Genetically, social relations, real relations of people, stand behind all the higher functions and their relations” (Vygotsky 1931/1997, p. 106). Following the proposal of a cultural-historical approach to the history of Vygotskian psychology (Cole 1996; Stetsenko 2003, 2004; Stetsenko and Arieivitch 2004; Valsiner and Van der Veer 2000), this study contrasts with the traditional account of the history of the school of Vygotsky-Leontiev-Luria by investigating the “cultural-historical school as a collaborative, multi-generational, value-laden, and ideologically-driven investigative project that stretched far beyond the confines of science in its traditional mentalist guise” (Stetsenko 2003, p. 96). In her introduction to a recent publication of Vygotsky’s *Tool and sign*—that was authored by Vygotsky and Luria, according to the English language manuscript of the same work, titled *Tool and symbol in child development*, and first published in the original in 1994 (Vygotsky and Luria 1930/1994),—Anna Stetsenko stresses essentially the collective and collaborative nature of the “Vygotsky project”:

“Vygotsky wrote *Tool and Sign* in close collaboration and in lively discussions with a number of people... They formed the so-called Vygotsky Circle, which included several brilliant women, and they carried out research projects collectively. It is quite revealing, in this respect, that even the authorship of *Tool and Sign* is disputed; there is some reason to believe that Vygotsky wrote it together with Luria... Whatever the case of the authorship of this particular work, the ubiquitously collaborative nature of Vygotsky’s project in general must be emphasized, especially because it has often been underestimated or even ignored in previous accounts of his heritage” (Stetsenko 2004, pp. 502-503).

I follow the lead of those researchers who underline the importance of informal personal networks for understanding the processes of science development. Mark B.

Adams who introduced the notion of informal networks in the historiography of science discourse clarifies:

Here, I am not referring to anything arcane or technical—not to the ‘networks’ of the sociologist, dynamist, or social studies theoretician, much less the computer specialist—but to the looser, more evocative meaning the word has come to have in everyday language, one familiar to every kind of historian: personal networks. A personal network is much looser, less coherent ‘structure’ than either an institution or a discipline. Developed out of extended family, old school ties, mutual experience, hobbies, private passions, and shared interests, such networks involve ramifying contacts that are multiple and complex—as are all free associations that underline civic society. They can also form ‘nodes’ or ‘ganglia’ where various networks interface and new connections are made—sometimes in the form of informal circles, private societies, clubs, salons, soirées, and the like, sometimes in more organized forms, ranging from things we might call ‘movements’ to interest groups, political organizations, and even ‘mafias’. And some of these, in turn, might eventually gain further structure as would-be disciplines or proto-institutions (Adams 2001, p. 261).

The informal personal network of Vygotsky includes a lot of individuals, many of which are not necessarily related to his scientific enterprise. Tracking down the agency of a network of such individuals is obviously a very ambitious goal. Therefore, this paper focuses on a smaller subset of the larger network: the people who either directly collaborated with Vygotsky or made considerable impact on him through personal contacts, discussions, and, possibly, correspondence. This “node” of the network of thinkers and scholars is discussed here as the Vygotsky Circle of those who—willingly or unwillingly—contributed to Vygotsky’s research program and whose impact on Vygotskian psychology can be discerned. Apparently, in many instances at the same time the reverse impact of Vygotsky on these individuals and their research agenda is even more notable. And still, even with its focus on a relatively smaller group of Vygotsky’s collaborators, this study is almost necessarily somewhat limited and fragmentary—as much as limited and fragmentary are the available data. Therefore, this paper presents perhaps the first systematic—yet somewhat superficial—attempt at reconstructing the composition of the Vygotsky Circle, the range of scholarly activities of its participants, and the dynamics of the intergroup change within this group of scholars. The data used in this study include mainly scientific publications of the interwar period and, to somewhat smaller extent, materials of correspondence between the members of Vygotsky Circle and some second-hand sources, like postwar research overviews and memoirs.

The Vygotsky Circle

There are several historical precedents of casual references to the “Vygotsky Circle” in scholarly literature (e.g., Blanck 1990, pp. 39-40; Bruner 1995, p. 84), but, ironically, perhaps the most remarkable depiction of the Vygotsky Circle—or, for that matter, “Vygotsky Circles”—was given by none other than the “godfather” of

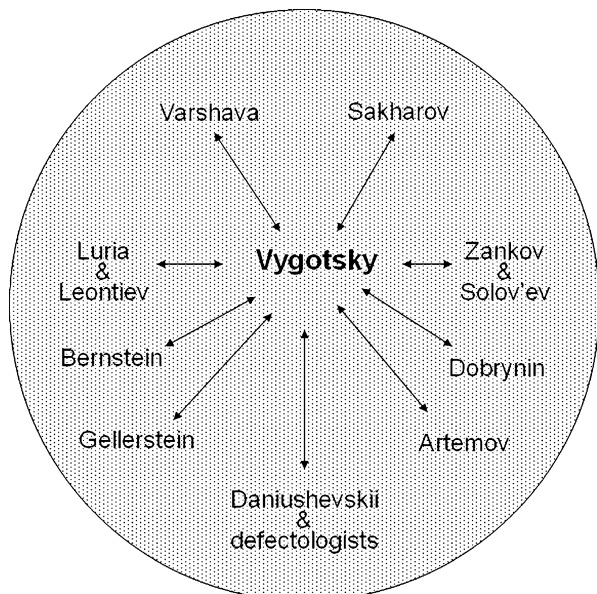
the “school of Vygotsky-Leontiev-Luria” construct: by A.N. Leontiev himself. In his 1976 interview Leontiev mentioned that “in 1927-29, up to 1930 there started gathering *circles* around Vygotsky” (Leontiev and Leontiev 1976/2005, p. 373). However, all these references to the “Vygotsky Circle(s)” in the scholarly literature are fairly incidental, and a systematic analysis of this group of scholars has never been done. The development of the Vygotsky Circle is traced throughout the period of 1924-1941 and has been divided into several phases.

Phase One (1924–27), Prehistory of the Vygotsky Circle: Multiple Interconnections, Vygotsky in Search of a New Research Program and a Team

The first phase of Vygotsky’s Circle starts with Vygotsky’s move from Gomel’ to Moscow, and is characterized by his initial activities at the Institute of Psychology and in various defectological institutions. During this period he made his only foreign trip in the summer of 1925 to a conference in London on the problems of the deaf (see the paper by Van der Veer and Zavershneva in this issue). After his return from that European trip, in the fall of 1925, Vygotsky was hospitalized with tuberculosis and spent several months of 1925-6 in the hospital. At the end of 1925, on the basis of his unpublished dissertation *The psychology of art* that Vygotsky most likely wrote before 1924—that is, while still in Gomel’—he was awarded a doctoral degree without defence, in absentia. During this period Vygotsky also wrote his seminal methodological work *The historical meaning of the crisis in psychology* (1926).

Vygotsky’s major academic contacts and collaborators during this time were his first graduate students (Zankov, Solov’ev, Sakharov, and Varshava) and relatively short-term collaborators at the Moscow Institute of Psychology such as Vladimir

Fig. 1 The Vygotsky Circle in 1924–1927



Artemov, Nikolai Dobrynin, Nikolai Bernstein, Solomon Gellerstein, and Aleksander Luria. Two books were written in collaboration with the latter group (Artemov et al. 1927a, b). We have no evidence of Artemov and Dobrynin's involvement in Vygotsky's research. However, following a recently published account of the personal life of Nikolai Bernstein, we may assume fairly strong connections between Bernstein and Vygotsky and Luria (Feigenberg 2004). These ties were enforced during World War II when a group of Vygotsky's associates launched a series of clinical studies on the rehabilitation of motor skills in the wounded and speech disorders of the patients with brain lesions. This group included, among others, Solomon Gellerstein, which might also be an indicator of his affinity to the Vygotsky-Luria group in the 1920-30s.

Another major area of Vygotsky's activity was defectological work that was done chiefly in collaboration with Daniushevskii, his friend from Gomel'. Luria and Leontiev were continuing investigation of affect by using Luria's combined motor method, a research project initiated by Luria in which Vygotsky did not seem to have been interested or to have participated—at least not during his first years in Moscow. Vygotsky's main research interest in 1922-27 was the investigation of dominant reactions in collaboration with his students Zankov, Solov'ev, Sakharov, and Gagaeva (Van der Veer and Valsiner 1991, pp. 33, 128), and defectological work with Daniushevskii, Zankov and others. Also, during this period Vygotsky initiated his classic research on concept formation in collaboration with his student Leonid Solomonovich Sakharov (1900-1928) (Sakharov 1928, 1930, 1930/1994). Sakharov's research was most likely completed by the end of 1927: according to van der Veer and Valsiner, on January 1, 1928 Sakharov presented his research at the Pedological Congress in Moscow, and on May 10, 1928 he died under unknown circumstances (Van der Veer and Valsiner 1994, p. 96). Another of Vygotsky's collaborators during his first years in Moscow was Boris Efimovich Varshava (1900-1927), whose premature and tragic death in July, 1927 Vygotsky mourned in the introduction to their only collaborative publication, a *Psychological dictionary* that came out in 1931:

Varshava was just at the beginning of his path as a psychologist-researcher and a writer. He made only first steps on this road that was interrupted by his death. But these first steps left no doubt to anybody who knew him as to *what kind of* road was waiting for him. This road was one of creative scientific work and a struggle for the complete reconstruction of psychological science on a new methodological foundation, and his choice for this road was very early and decisive... (Vygotsky 1931, pp. 3)

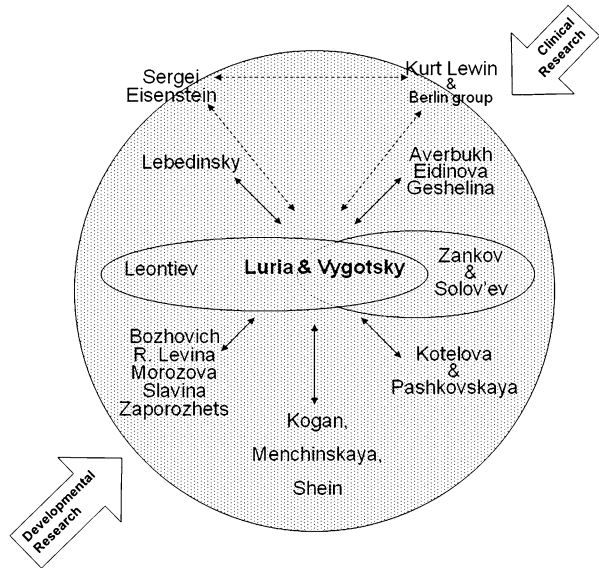
We tend to measure the extent of the loss of those who worked along with us by the extent of what they achieved, accomplished, completed. And this is correct. But the opposite is correct too: to measure by what remains unrealized. This measure will be great if we apply it to the death of Boris Efimovich Varshava. What he could have achieved is incomparably more than what he has achieved. The measure of what he was destined to carry out and what is left unrealized is greater than the measure of his achievements. And this is the true meaning of the tragedy of his death (Vygotsky 1931, pp. 5-6).

The projects undertaken by many of Vygotsky's colleagues and collaborators in the years 1924–1927 do not leave the impression of being interrelated pieces of a unified research program. Indeed, this period of Vygotsky's thought development is characterised by a search for a research methodology and a theoretical foundation. However, by the end of the 1920s several disparate lines converged and became increasingly intertwined, leading to the emergence of new research alliances and new teams of collaborators.

Phase Two (1927–1931): The Luria-Vygotsky Circle Formation

According to the traditional historiographical narrative, Vygotsky's psychology was first developed by the members of Vygotsky's "trojka". In contrast, I argue that we have no compelling evidence of the *trojka*, the trio of Vygotsky-Leontiev-Luria during the last decade of Vygotsky's lifetime (1924–1934), and it is more appropriate to single out the duo of Luria and Vygotsky and their numerous personal and professional connections and interrelations that, collectively, may be referred to as **Vygotsky-Luria Circle** of the end of 1920s and first half of the 1930s. There are a number of reasons for selecting the duo of Luria-Vygotsky as the intellectual and organizational core of a team developing cultural-historical theory in 1920–30s, and if only the number of publications alone is indicative, then from the sheer number of collaborative publications it is clear that Vygotsky and Luria were closely connected indeed. For instance, in mid-1920s they wrote two introductions to the Russian translations of psychological books (Vygotsky and Luria 1925a, 1925b); then, participated in preparing educational materials and handbooks (Artemov et al. 1927a, b); co-authored a paper on egocentric speech that Luria presented at the IX International Congress of Psychology held at Yale University, which Vygotsky was unable to attend (Vygotsky and Luria 1929/1930), and a chapter *Tool and symbol in child development* that was to appear in Murchison's *Handbook of Child Psychology* in 1930 (Vygotsky and Luria 1930/1994). Finally, their collaborative book was written in the end of 1920s and published in 1930 (Vygotsky and Luria 1930, 1930/1993). In contrast, the only paper that came out under the names of both Vygotsky and Leontiev was the introduction to the book on psychology of memory written by the latter under the supervision of the former (Leontiev 1931). It is also interesting how the contemporaries—mostly the outsiders and critics—perceived and attributed the Vygotsky's group and theory. Thus, for instance in his speech given in June of 1931 in Kharkov Talankin attacks the "Vygotsky and Luria group" and calls for Marxist critique of their cultural-historical theory (Talankin 1931, 1931/2000). Around the same time, another critique of the "theory of cultural development" came from Feofanov, for whom it is clearly associated with just two individuals: Vygotsky and Luria (Feofanov 1932). Somewhat later, in 1934 Razmyslov severely criticized Vygotsky's and Luria's cultural-historical theory of psychology (Razmyslov 1934, 1934/2000). Finally, in 1936 an author that identified (or rather *did not* identify) himself with the just two letters G.F.—which presumably stand for the name of philosophy professor Filipp Georgiev (Leontiev, Leontiev, and Sokolova 2005)—also mentions the school of Vygotsky and Luria in the context of its critical discussion in the light of the Party decree of July 1936 (F.G. 1936). Judging

Fig. 2 The Vygotsky-Luria Circle in 1927–1931



from their personal correspondence and the facts of their biographies the connections between Vygotsky and Luria remained very close until the very last days of Vygotsky's life. For instance, in the fall of 1931 Vygotsky and Luria resumed their studies in medicine: they both got accepted as the students at the Medical Department in the Kharkov, and were spending much time together preparing for their exams (Luria 1994). At the same time they were involved in intensive research in clinical settings conducted in parallel in Kharkov and Moscow (Vygotsky 2004).

The Vygotsky and Luria circle includes all their co-workers and like-minded individuals of that time, and their acquaintances; the exchange of ideas in a circle normally takes place through more or less informal communications and personal discussions (e.g., Vygotsky's "internal conferences" and his correspondence). The **periphery of the Circle**, however, is formed by the individuals who can not fully qualify as students or collaborators of either Vygotsky or Luria, but whose work and ideas must have been instrumental in the development of their theory of the development of higher mental functions and whose influence on Vygotskian psychology—despite the lack of any formal records such as scholarly references to published works or coauthored papers—must have been pervasive and profound. In-depth analysis of the interrelations between the Vygotsky-Luria group and these peripheral members of the circle remains beyond the scope of this research on the Vygotsky Circle, yet a cursory overview is needed in order to demonstrate the complexity and the multitude of the professional connections of this scientific alliance if only to delimit the "inner circle" of Vygotsky and Luria.¹

¹ I focus on just two individuals: movie director and film theorist Sergei Eisenstein and Gestalt psychologist Kurt Lewin. However, a number of other individuals are of great importance for the complete reconstruction of Vygotsky's "peripheral circle" of his "invisible college". Among these are psychotechnic and physiologist Nikolaj Bernstein, poet Osip Mandelstam, Georgian psychologist Dimitry Uznadze (Uznadze), philosopher and psychologist Sergei Rubinstein, and psychotechnic Solomon Gellerstein, to mention but a few.

Sergei Eisenstein (1898-1948), a revolutionary Soviet film director and film theorist, first met Luria around 1925-beginning of 1926 (Bulgakowa 1989, pp. 180-181) soon after the theatrical release of Eisenstein's *Bronenosets Potemkin* (*The battleship Potemkin*) in order to discuss psychological problems of the "theory and psychology of expressiveness" that were of great interest to him at that time. Luria most likely introduced Vygotsky and Eisenstein to each other, and the three eventually became close friends (Luria 1994, p. 121). In the late 1920s, Eisenstein—along with Vygotsky and Luria—participated in psychological studies on human movement under hypnosis (in December, 1928) (Luria 1994, p. 122) and the investigation of the phenomenal memory of the famous mnemonist Shereshevskii:

He [Shereshevskii] presents a unique example of a man who—along with the absolutely full and perfect development of a normal human being—preserved as well the entire set of early mechanisms of perception. Over the years, professors Vygotsky and Luria were doing a wide range of psychological observations and experiments with him. In turn, I managed to have a series of most interesting discussions with him about the problem that interested me: synaesthesia that was represented in him in utmost completeness (in 1928 and in 1933) (Eisenstein 1937/2000, p. 385).

In the 1950s, Shereshevskii recalled the voices of Vygotsky and Eisenstein and described Vygotsky's "crumbly, yellow voice" and Eisenstein's voice as an "entire composition, a bouquet ... listening to him, it was as though a flame with fibers protruding from it was advancing right toward me" (record of November, 1951) (Luria 1987, p. 24). The discovery of the only surviving manuscript of Vygotsky's doctoral dissertation *Psikhologiya iskusstva* (*The Psychology of Art*) in Eisenstein's personal archives attests to the fact that the contacts between these three individuals in the 1920s, before Eisenstein's trip to Europe and North America (August, 1929-May, 1932), were remarkably intense. In the early 1930s, after Eisenstein's return to the Soviet Union, another research project was conceived: the film director and theorist Sergei Eisenstein, the philologist academician Nikolai Marr, and the two psychologists Lev Vygotsky and Alexander Luria planned to systematically analyze the "problems of the nascent language of cinematography". However, the untimely death of Vygotsky (in June, 1934) and Marr (in December, 1934) put an end to this ongoing research (Eisenstein 2002a, p. 136). Still, there is evidence that the group produced—or, at least, planned to produce—several scholarly papers that would present their findings to the Western audience. Thus, according to the announcements of 1932-33 in the column *Some forthcoming articles* of the journal *Character and personality*, several papers by Russian authors were scheduled to come out, specifically the articles by Vygotsky (two papers titled *Comparative psychology of the child* and *Strong memory and the structure of personality*), Luria's *Self-analysis and social conduct*, and Eisenstein's *The dynamics of facial expression (an experimental study in cinematography)*. For unknown reasons, the publications never took place, and we do not know the whereabouts of these manuscripts or even if they ever were submitted to the journal. The connections between the three of them seem to have been fairly strong, so even after Vygotsky's death and Luria's relatively short stay in the Kharkov's Ukrainian Psychoneurological Academy in 1931-34, personal and professional contacts between Eisenstein and Luria continued.

The evidence for that can be found in Eisenstein's diaries, for instance, the entry of December 29, 1938 about the schizophrenic case of "Tyoma" that Luria demonstrated to Eisenstein on December 26, 1938 (Eisenstein 2004, p. 672) or his reference to the experiments with Luria in his diary entry of July 24, 1940 (Eisenstein 2002b, p. 431).

Kurt Lewin (1890-1947), a German psychologist of the Berlin school of Gestalt psychology, is another important node in the very complex network of interconnected scholars and thinkers. The first contacts between the Moscow and Berlin psychologists were established in 1925 when both Vygotsky and Luria travelled to Europe, Luria in July-September, 1925 (Luria 1994, pp. 43-44) and Vygotsky, in the summer of 1925 (Van der Veer and Valsiner 1991; Zavershneva 2008, 2010; cf. Van der Veer and Zavershneva, this issue). It was during his first European trip that Luria met his Berlin colleagues again and, curiously enough, even took part in Tamara Dembo's psychological study on the dynamics of anger (Dembo 1931; Van der Veer 2000)—as an experimental subject himself (Luria 1994, pp. 44-45; Yaroshevskii and Zeigarnik 1988). During his next foreign trip, to the USA (via Germany and the Netherlands) around August, 1929, Luria had another opportunity to converse with his foreign colleagues, including Kurt Lewin and other representatives of the Berlin school: First during his transit trip via Germany, and, then, at the IX International Congress of Psychology held in Yale September 1-7, 1929. Notably, at the Congress, Kurt Lewin's presentation on *Die Auswirkung von Umweltkräften* [The impact of environmental forces] and Vygotsky and Luria's paper *The function and fate of egocentric speech* were assigned to the same session on Child Development headed by Karl Bühler and held on September 4 (Cattell 1930, p. xxii). Luria was most likely instrumental in organizing the meeting of Eisenstein and Lewin in Berlin in 1929-1930. In fact, Oksana Bulgakowa published two letters from Luria written during his 1929 trip to the IX International Congress of Psychology in New Haven, addressed to Lewin (dated September 20) and to Eisenstein (dated October, 24), and, thus, introduced the two to each other (Bulgakowa 1989, p. 190). It seems though that the letter to Eisenstein was dated incorrectly, and that it was actually written on *September*, 24. For one thing, in this very letter Luria describes his plans to stay in Berlin through October, 25-November, 5 (that is, on his way back to the Soviet Union from the Congress in North America), Also, a series of Luria's published essays that he wrote during his transatlantic trip are dated October 11-13, 1929 guarantees that Luria must have arrived in Europe in mid-October, 1929 (Luria 1994, pp. 50-55). The meeting between Lewin and Eisenstein reportedly took place and correspondence between the three ensued (Bulgakowa 1989, p. 177). The meeting was important for both Lewin and Eisenstein and resulted in mutual influences: thus, Lewin's field theory and topology found its place in Eisenstein's theory of cinematography, whereas Eisenstein inspired Lewin as a filmmaker and might even have participated in the production of Lewin's demonstrational films (Van Elteren 1992). In her memoirs, Luria's daughter argued that

not only was Sergei Mikhailovich [Eisenstein] well familiar with Luria's experiments, but also involved Aleksander Romanovich [Luria] himself in film production. From the correspondence between Luria and Lewin we know that Luria was making films about children's counting, attention and memory as

involved in counting operations. Aleksander Romanovich put an effort into the organization of the International Association of Scientific Cinematography and founded a psychological laboratory in the Institute of Cinematography, where his assistants were supervising graduate theses at the Department of Directing (Luria 1994, p. 124).

Quite characteristic of the interrelationships between Lewin's and Vygotsky's research programs, when two of Lewin's "Russian" students, Nina Kaulina, Gita Birenbaum and Bluma Zeigarnik, returned to Moscow in the early 1930s, according to Zeigarnik, they started working with Vygotsky "literally the next day" (Yaroshevskii and Zeigarnik 1988). When Lewin's short-term teaching contract in North America was finished, he decided to return to Germany through Japan and Soviet Union, countries where his former students were living at that time. On leaving Japan, he learned from Japanese newspapers about Hitler's accession to power at the end of January, 1933, but could not grasp the full meaning of this event until he reached Moscow, where he met his German-speaking friends and former students. Lewin remained in the Soviet Union for several months and finally reached Berlin in May, 1933 in order to pick up his family and leave Germany for the United States in August, 1933, never to return (Marrow 1969, pp. 66-68). In Moscow, Lewin again met his friends including Luria, Eisenstein, Vygotsky, Zeigarnik, and Birenbaum, and had numerous personal as well as professional encounters and discussions. On a number of occasions, Lewin met with Vygotsky in his Moscow apartment and had heated and most passionate discussions in German (Vygodskaya and Lifanova 1996, p. 299). Recent studies based on the unpublished materials from Vygotsky's personal archives reveal a close affinity between Vygotsky and Lewin, who was the major source of inspiration and the principal opponent for Vygotsky so that "discussion with Lewin became one of the main engines for Vygotsky's thought development during the last years of his life" (Zavershneva 2007).

From the end of the 1920s, for a number of organizational, social, political, professional, and—last but not the least—personal reasons, research in the "**Inner Circle(s)**" of Vygotsky and Luria was conducted by several relatively independent groups. The independence and the isolation of these groups varied. Typically, in the traditional, "Leontievian", version of the history of psychology, the separation of Vygotsky's former graduate students Zankov and Solov'ev from Vygotsky was one of the elements of the history of the construct of the "trojka" as the alliance of the most devoted Vygotsky's students with their teacher. Vygotsky's letter to Leontiev of July 2, 1929 was considered proof of Vygotsky's critique of Zankov and Solov'ev and the evidence of their departure from Vygotsky's research program. Thus, Vygotsky wrote:

Zankov and Solov'ev are the most difficult part. There has been no response. They are coming again tomorrow. First they want everything to be at a single institution, and that it be a clinic if Zankov is to go there, and this greatly ties my research interests to practical issues; then they want to split the work among institutions. In a word, things are not going well. That is just between us. Nevertheless, a decision has to be made on this one way or the other (Vygotsky 2007, p. 25).

Based on this, one might be persuaded to believe that Zankov and Solov'ev were "ambiguous about Vygotsky's research program" and that they were "hesitant and doubtful" about it (Leontiev and Leontiev 1976/2005, p. 372). Interestingly enough, at the same time Leontiev unwittingly spoke about the "struggle for the place near Vygotsky" (Leontiev and Leontiev 1976/2005, p. 373). This struggle is perhaps best illustrated by an episode reported by A.N. Leontiev, when, after Vygotsky's death, the "Kharkovite" students of Vygotsky (i.e., Luria and Leontiev) were not allowed to take part in the mourning ceremonies that were organized in June, 1934 by Zankov, Solov'ev, and their associates at the Experimental Institute of Defectology in Moscow (Leontiev and Leontiev 1976/2005, p. 378; Vygodskaya and Lifanova 1996, p. 328). Quite a different version of the history of interrelations between Vygotsky and his former "Kharkovite" colleagues is presented by Vygotsky's daughter Gita Vygodskaya and her collaborator Tamara Lifanova, who argue that it was Leontiev who betrayed Vygotsky, accusing him of an unethical separation from his former teacher some time around 1933 (Vygodskaya and Lifanova 1996). In turn, the son and the grandson of Aleksei N. Leontiev in a number of publications argue that the idea of Leontiev's separation and betrayal of Vygotsky is inconceivable and totally false (Leontiev and Leontiev 2003; Leontiev et al. 2005). The modern reader, then, is confronted with conflicting versions of putative splits in the Vygotsky Circle. In the continuation, I will try to verify these two opposing versions of this controversy on the basis of the available historical evidence in the next section dealing with the period of 1931-34.

This period was perhaps the most productive period for Vygotsky and his group's experimental research. Thus, Vygotsky continued the concept formation studies, which had been interrupted by Leonid Sakharov's sudden death in May 1928. Vygotsky's collaborators Kotelova and Pashkovskaya undertook this research, and the study was completed by the end of 1929. As it follows from the final footnote to the posthumous publication of Sakharov's paper that was read several months before his death at the Pedological Congress in Moscow, the study had been completed by the time of this publication, and a monograph was being prepared for the press (Sakharov 1930, 1930/1994). The monograph, though, was never published, and we do not know yet if it was ever actually written.

Also during the late 1920s, Luria and Vygotsky initiated research in clinical settings, typically in collaboration with medical specialists (neurologists, psychiatrists, etc.), such as Lebedinsky. This research was typically conducted under the auspices of the G.I. Rossolimo Clinic of Nervous Diseases of the 1st Moscow University and the Department of Clinical Psychology at the Academy of Communist Education (AKV) (Lebedinsky and Luria 1929; Luria 1929, 1931, 1932). The alliance of Luria with Lebedinsky seems to have been instrumental in sustained clinical research in the Vygotsky's Circle from the end of 1920s onwards. Also, it was during this period that Lebedinsky conducted major research on the development of "higher motor functions" in children that was published as a book in 1931 (Lebedinskii 1931).

Another group of Vygotskians during the period is formed by the five students of the Department of Pedology at the Second Moscow University (1925-1930), later known the "pyaterka" ("the five") of Zaporozhets, Bozhovich, R. Levina, Morozova, and Slavina. This group, along with "the trojka" ("the three") of Vygotsky, Luria,

and Leontiev, was involved in a series of experimental studies conducted under the aegis of either the Second Moscow University or the Psychological Laboratory at the Academy of Communist Education (AKV), such as: “The development of memory” (Leontiev), “Motor skills development in children” (Zaporozhets), “The role of sign-mediated (*znakovyi*) operations in the reaction of choice” (i.e., The development of complex choices in small children) (Morozova), “The planning role of speech” (R. Levina), and “The development of imitation in children” (Bozhovich and Slavina). At the same time, the whole group was collaboratively involved in the studies using the “method of pictograms”, when the children of different ages were asked to invent pictures that would help them memorize a set of abstract words (Luria 1979, pp. 46-51; Vygotskaya and Lifanova 1996, p. 104). After their graduation in 1930, the members of the “pyaterka” were appointed to mandatory jobs in different geographic locations (the so-called *raspredelenie*), in a few cases outside of Moscow, and ceased to exist as a unity or a research team.

From Vygotsky and Luria’s overviews of the experimental studies done by their group by the beginning of the 1930s (Vygotsky 1930; Vygotsky and Luria 1930/1994), we also know about the studies on “active” (i.e., voluntary) remembering and attention (studies by Zankov, Solov’ev and Veresotskaya), visual thinking (Geshelina), the transition of external to internal speech (Leontiev, Shein), as well as clinical studies on patients with oligophrenia (Zankov, Leontiev, Bozhovich, and Slavina), aphasia (Luria, Slavina, Bozhovich, and Morozova), and hysteria (Eidinova and Zaporozhets). In his postwar publication, Luria also noted that a study on hysteria and the role of “hypoboulie” (i.e., unconscious) processes was initiated by Vygotsky in collaboration with Averbukh and Eidinova (Luria 1960, pp. 434-435).

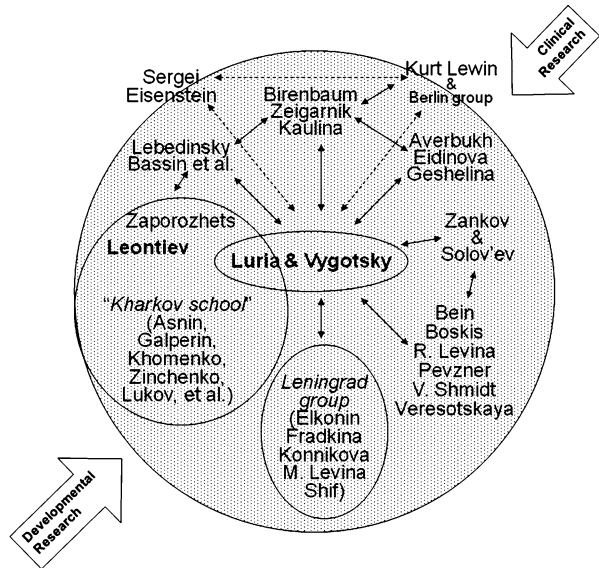
Only a few of these studies were published back then (Leontiev 1931; Zankov 1930), several others were published much later (Bozhovich 1935/2006a, 1935/2006b, 1935/2006c; Bozhovich and Slavina 1929/2007a, 1929/2007b, 1929/2007c, 1929/2008; Levina 1968, 1968/1981), and many of these still remain unpublished and, thus, unknown. In any case, as remarked Luria in his memoirs of the end of the 1970s, in retrospect, this series of pilot studies laid a solid methodological foundation for the cultural-historical theory (Luria 1979, p. 51).

Phase Three (1931–1934): The Vygotsky-Luria Circle and the Beginning of Specialization and Separation

During the period of 1931-34, several groups of Vygotskians were working in parallel in a number of institutions in three cities of the Soviet Union: Moscow, Kharkov, and Leningrad. However, the internal unity of this geographically and thematically extended research project was guaranteed by Vygotsky and Luria’s role as mediators between these groups and as coordinators of a whole range of studies of normal development, pathology and clinical research.

The aforementioned version of the separation of Zankov and Solov’ev from the Vygotsky group in 1929, presented in the “Leontievian” historical account, is essentially undermined by discoveries in the Vygotsky’s archives that have recently been published in Russian. According to Vygotsky’s notes, in 1932-3 the alleged “separatists” kept taking part in Vygotsky’s “internal conferences”

Fig. 3 The Vygotsky-Luria Circle in 1931–1934



(research meetings that he was organizing for his closest students and collaborators). Furthermore, at least one study was done at that time by Solov'ev under direct supervision of Vygotsky: Solov'ev replicated research on “mental satiation” (*Sättigung*) originally conducted by Kurt Lewin's student Anitra Karsten (Karsten 1928) and even published a paper with his report on the findings (Solov'ev 1935). This study was presented at one of the research meetings of the larger Vygotsky Circle in October, 1932. Leontiev also presented a research report and participated in discussion, but we still do not know all the names of the rest of Vygotsky's colleagues who attended the meeting (Vygotsky 1932/2007; Zavershneva 2007). Furthermore, both Zankov and Solov'ev appear on the list of the individuals that Vygotsky was planning to invite to the Department of Psychology that he was organizing in the All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine (VIEM), in early 1934, only months before his death—a list that includes the names of Solov'ev, Zankov, Veresotskaya, R. Levina, Slavina, Shif, but neither Leontiev or Luria (Vygodskaya and Lifanova 1996a, p. 129). Furthermore, the obituary that came out immediately after Vygotsky's death was signed by a group of Vygotskians and by a number of the highest officials from VIEM (Vygodskaya and Lifanova 1996a, p. 141): Again, the name of Leontiev can not be found here —unlike those of Zankov, Solov'ev, Luria, Daniushevskii, V. Schmidt, Geshelina, Zeigarnik, and Birenbaum.

Until 1931, Vygotsky's closest and direct collaborators were working in a number of educational and research institutions in Moscow, but the end of the year was the turning point in the history of the group. That is when many of Vygotsky's former colleagues left Moscow for **Kharkov** (the capital of Soviet Ukraine) to head the research at the Psychology Sector of the newly formed *Ukrainian Psychoneurological Academy* (UPNA). This group of ‘Kharkovites’, formed by the local psychologists (e.g. Gal'perin, P. Zinchenko, Asnin, Khomenko, Lukov, Rozenblyum, and others) and the newcomers from Moscow (Luria, Leontiev, Lebedinskii, Bozhovich, Zaporozhets and his wife Ginevskaya), is commonly referred to as the “Kharkov school of psychology” and is most well

known for its work on the foundations of the so-called Leontiev's activity theory (Yasnitsky 2008, 2009; Yasnitsky and Ferrari 2008a, 2008b).

Vygotsky also might have planned to move to Kharkov at some point and—along with Luria— even started his studies at the extramural department at the Medical Institute, but his move to Kharkov never took place—and instead, in the Fall of 1931, he accepted the invitation to lecture part-time in **Leningrad** at the local Herzen State Pedagogical Institute, and a third center where Vygotskian studies were conducted was formed. From 1931 until his death, Vygotsky frequently commuted to Leningrad to lecture and supervise the research of the Leningrad group of his students that included El'konin, M. Levina, Shif, Konnikova, Fradkina, and several others. This research that was done under the aegis of Department of Pedology considerably decreased after Vygotsky's death, and especially later, after the publication of the “pedological decree” in 1936 that effectively banned the entire discipline of pedology in the country.

In **Moscow**, Vygotskian studies continued in the field of defectology under the auspices of the Moscow *Experimental Defectological Institute* (EDI), where a major group of Vygotsky's students was working from the institute's inception. Others, like Shif from Leningrad, later joined the group, which included such long-time Vygotsky collaborators as Daniushevskij, Vlasova, Zankov and Solov'ev and their students, as well as the newly hired defectologists V. Schmidt, Pevzner, Boskis, R. Levina, Morozova, Bejn, Veresotskaya, Eidinova, Geshelina, and Shif. These new collaborators were quite diverse and included several fugitives from other academic and applied disciplines that were criticised or unable to work in their field such as former psychoanalysts (V. Schmidt, Geshelina), or Vygotsky's former Leningrad student Shif.

Another line of Vygotskian research in Moscow in the early 1930s was conducted by Kurt Lewin's former Berlin students Blyuma Zeigarnik, Gita Birenbaum and Nina Kaulina, who returned to the Soviet Union in 1930-1931 and started collaborating with Vygotsky on psychological research in clinical settings. In 1931-32 Birenbaum and Zeigarnik worked at the Clinical Department of the *Institute for the Research of the Higher Nervous Activity* (IVND), and later, moved to the *All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine* (VIEM), where from 1933 until Vygotsky's last days they worked under his supervision and collaborated with a group of researchers at the Psychiatric Clinic, mostly medical doctors—psychiatrists and neurologists—that included N.V. Samukhin, E.S. Kaganovskaya, and A.M. Dubinin. The work of the Moscow group of clinical psychologists was paralleled by clinical research in Kharkov, at the Department of Clinical Psychology of the *Ukrainian Psychoneurological Academy* (Luria, Lebedinsky, Gal'perin, Zaporozhets, Kozis, Margolis, and Voloshin).

During the last months of his life, Vygotsky was hectically working to organize a psychological department—hypothetically, a department of clinical psychology—at the *All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine* (VIEM) (Vygotskaya and Lifanova 1996a, pp. 129, 318–319), most likely with the Psychological Sector of the UPNA in Kharkov as a model for this new organizational unit. According to Vygotsky's archival documents, he was going to form another research team and invite a number of individuals, including Solov'ev, Zankov, Veresotskaya, R. Levina, Slavina, and Shif (Vygotskaya and Lifanova 1996a, p. 129). Unfortunately,

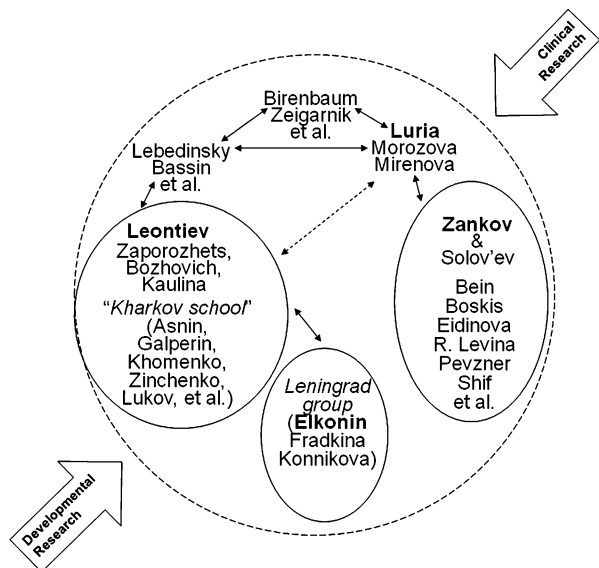
this project was never realized: in May, 1934, due to throat haemorrhage that was caused by chronic tuberculosis, Vygotsky was prescribed bed rest until his hospitalization and death in June, 1934. This is the situation Alexander Luria described in his speech at the L.S. Vygotsky memorial meeting in Moscow at the *Dom Uchenykh (House of Scientists)* on January 6, 1935: “This death was even more tragic given that Lev Semenovich died amongst everybody’s devotion and love, for the first time in his life being on the verge of bringing all his plans to life and gathering the organized group of researchers he had been dreaming about all his life, and who could undertake the realization of everything that was hidden in this brain of a genius” (Luria 1935/2003, p. 275).

Phase Four (1934–1936): The Circles of Vygotskians and Disintegration of the Original Research Program

After Vygotsky’s death, several groups (or for that matter, several circles) of researchers evolved. They were typically institutionalized in specific research or educational organizations, and comprised more or less constant groups of researchers during specific periods of time. In addition to these circles, a number of nomads migrated between groups and remained relatively independent or even distanced themselves from any research or institutional affiliation. The two major circles were comprised by Vygotsky’s students at the Defectological Institute and scholars of the so-called Kharkov group (Kharkov school) that remained virtually unchanged from the preceding period.

In 1934 both Luria (in March) and Leontiev (in the end of the year) returned to Moscow from Kharkov. Well before he officially quit as the Head of Department of Psychology in Kharkov, Luria was hired by Medico-Biological Institute (from

Fig. 4 The Circles of Vygotskians in 1934–1936



March 1935 Medico-Genetic Institute) where he took charge of the Psychological Department and, following earlier work of Lebedinskii and his collaborators Anna Mirenova and Faina Yudovich (Lebedinskii 1932; Mirenova 1932, 1934; Mirenova and Kolbanovskii 1934; Mirenva [sic] 1935), headed this team of researchers and launched a series of experimental studies with twins. The results of all these studies were chiefly published in the 1930s (Luria 1936; Luria and Mirenova 1936a, 1936b; Luria et al. 1936), although some of these came out only several decades later (Luria 1962; Luria and Yudovich 1956, 1956/1959). This research on the interrelation between genetic and cultural factors in development of twins made visible impact on Vygotsky's thought in the last year of his life as evidenced by his increasing involvement with the problems of the role of inheritance and environment in the child's development in his 1933-34 "paedological" writings (Vygotsky 1935/1994, 1996, 2001).

From October, 1934, Luria was also serving as the Head of the Department of Clinical Psychology at the All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine (VIEM). It is not quite clear yet if Luria was officially employed at the Defectological Institute, but, by his own account, he collaborated with researchers from this institute, many of whom had been members of the Vygotsky-Luria circle. Thus, Luria's "inner circle" and research team of that time included Birenbaum, Morozova (Clinical Psychology Department of the All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine), Mirenova, and Yudovich (Department of Psychology of the Medico-Genetic Institute), as well as R. Levina, Boskis, S.Ya. Rabinovich (all from the Defectological Institute, the latter seems to have been also employed at the Medico-Genetic Institute) (Luria 1937).

Leontiev also left Kharkov and in October 1934, like Luria, was hired by the Institute of Experimental Medicine, where he headed the Laboratory of Genetic (i.e. Developmental) Psychology. Around this time, Leontiev also became a Professor at the *Vysshiĭ Kommunisticheskiĭ Institut Prosvescheniya* (VKIP, Higher Communist Institute of Enlightenment). Formally, he also remained employed by the Ukrainian Psychoneurological Academy in Kharkov (until December 1936) and the Kharkov State Pedagogical Institute (until December 1, 1937), and occasionally traveled to Kharkov to supervise the work of his colleagues (Leontiev et al. 2005, pp. 59, 63). The work of the group of Kharkov scholars was previously discussed in recent publications on the development of Vygotskian psychology in the "Kharkov school". During this period the Leningrad group of developmental psychologists from the Herzen State Pedagogical Institute lead by El'konin established first personal and professional contacts with the Kharkov group and became increasingly closer to the Kharkov developmentalists (Yasnitsky and Ferrari 2008a, 2008b). An interesting research project, very highly reminiscent of Kurt Lewin's "topological psychology", was conducted in Gorky Central Park of Culture and Leisure in Moscow in 1935 under the supervision of Leontiev and his colleague from Kharkov Institute of Labour A.I. Rozenblyum, another former student of Vygotsky, Lydia Bozhovich also participated (Leontiev and Rozenblyum 1935/1999). The fact that this was the only "topological" study conducted by the associates of Vygotsky appears not that mysterious, given that among the participants of the study was Nina Kaulina, a former Berlin student of Kurt Lewin (Yasnitsky 2011a).

This period may well be referred to as the brief "Golden Age" of Vygotskian psychology in the interwar period (Yasnitsky 2011b). Thus, after a dramatic decline

of the number of Vygotsky's publications in 1932–33 (e.g., just two publications in 1933: a scholarly paper on thinking in schizophrenia and a two-page long introduction to a book), a pile of Vygotsky's books came out posthumously in 1934–36, including his *Thinking and speech* (1934), *Foundations of paedology* (two editions: Moscow: 2nd Moscow State University, 1934 and Leningrad: Herzen State Pedagogical Institute, 1935), *Mental development of children in the process of learning* (1935), *Mentally retarded child* (1935, co-edited by Vygotsky and Danyushevskii), and *Diagnostics of [human] development and paedological clinica; treatment of abnormal childhood development* (1936). All these book publications became possible due to the concerted effort of Vygotsky's students and collaborators, the former members of the Vygotsky-Luria Circle. Thus, for instance, *Thinking and speech* was prepared for posthumous publication by Zankov and Shif (Kolbanovskii 1934, p. v), and another posthumous volume was published in 1935 also by Zankov and Shif, in collaboration with El'konin (Vygotsky 1935b). The latter book presents a quite remarkable collection of Vygotsky's works of the 1930s on the problems of the interrelation between learning and development. It was in this book that perhaps the most well-known of Vygotsky's theoretical innovations, the "zone of proximal development", was discussed at considerable length. Some of these texts that came out in English translation four decades later (Vygotsky 1978) were instrumental in the beginning of the "Vygotsky boom" among North American educators and psychologists (Cole 2004). Also in 1935, a volume of collected defectological papers by Vygotsky, Zankov and Solov'ev-Elpidinskii came out in Moscow under the supervision of the director of the Defectological Institute Danyushevskii (Vygotsky and Danyushevskii 1935), a handbook was published in Leningrad under the editorship of M. Levina of the Herzen Pedagogical Institute (Vygotsky 1935a), and yet another booklet was prepared to publication in 1935 and published the next year in Moscow by R. Levina of the Experimental Defectological Institute (Vygotsky 1936).

Finally, during this period Vygotsky's students conducted research on normal and retarded child development and the degradation of mental functions (for an overview see Yasnitsky 2008; Yasnitsky and Ferrari 2008a). Several works in the fields of defectology and clinical psychology were published with explicit recognition of Vygotsky's supervision or collaboration (Birenbaum 1934; Birenbaum and Zeigarnik 1935; Kaganovskaya and Zeigarnik 1935; Samukhin et al. 1934; Zeigarnik 1934; Zeigarnik and Birenbaum 1935), and several books by former Vygotsky's students came out with a dedication to the memory of their late teacher (Levina 1936; Shif 1935; Zankov 1935).

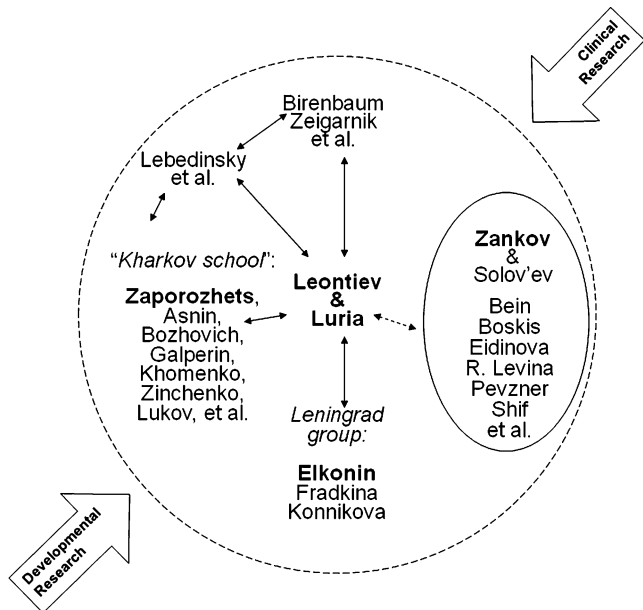
Phase Five (1936–1941): Formation of a New Center, the Beginning of the "Kharkov School of Psychology" and the "Vygotsky-Leontiev-Luria School"

The notorious decree of the Communist Party on "paedological perversions"—which officially banned studies in paedology (i.e. the interdisciplinary study of the child)—also had a considerable negative affect on all psychological research nationwide (Joravsky 1989). For instance, dramatic changes in the status of local psychologists took place in Kharkov. From the end of 1936 to the beginning of 1937, the *Ukrainian Psychoneurological Academy* was reorganized and renamed the *Ukrainian Psycho-*

neurological Institute (Voloshin 1994) and its Psychological Sector significantly reduced. Out of the three Departments of the Psychology Sector, only the Department of Clinical Psychology survived. As a result, psychologists like Filip Bassin or Anatolii Rozenblyum moved to other cities (Moscow and Poltava, respectively), whereas others like Pyotr Gal'perin, a Medical Doctor by education, had to resume full-time clinical practice (Haenen and Galperin 1989). By the end of 1936, Luria had to resign from all his chief positions and “disappear” in the relative quietness of his new internship at the N.N. Burdenko's Clinic of Neurosurgery in Moscow that he qualified for as a recent Medical Department graduate (graduated in 1937), in isolation from the social pressure. This internship (1937-39) probably helped him survive the years of the Great Terror. Then, and in 1939, he joined the Institute of Experimental Medicine where he headed the Laboratory of Experimental Psychology (Luria 1994, p. 89). Generally, the two years of 1936-1937 of Stalin's Great Terror can be best described as a period of the utmost instability, anxiety and disorientation. The period is notoriously underrepresented by the historians of Soviet psychology. Yet, I argue that this period seems to be particularly important for the development of the entire course of Soviet psychology. Let us see why this is so. The careers of two protagonists, Alexei Leontiev and Alexander Luria, are particularly interesting in this respect and deserve a closer analysis.

On the basis of fairly fragmentary evidence available to date we know that both Leontiev and Luria were very active and had made quite impressive careers by their mid-thirties when the disastrous July 4, 1936 decree prohibiting paedology was issued. A series of discussions of the decree ensued. Criticism of Vygotsky and his associates, one of the leaders of paedology at the time, concluded with a notorious booklet by E. Rudneva, called *Vygotsky's Paedological perversions*. This publication that came out in January of 1937, virtually replicated the title of the Communist

Fig. 5 The Circles of Vygotskians in 1936–1941



Party decree and culminated the major offensive against Vygotsky and his followers. There is circumstantial evidence to show that both Leontiev and Luria were forced to quit their jobs around 1936–1937. We can also assume that Luria had to flee from Moscow and found a relative refuge in the Caucasus area. From the publication of Luria's correspondence with Max Wertheimer we know, for example, that his letter to Wertheimer of September, 1936 was sent with the return address in Teberda (Caucasus region) (King and Wertheimer 2005). Likewise, it was in Tbilisi, Soviet Georgia, under unclear circumstances, that Luria defended his doctoral dissertation, in 1937. Perhaps, resigning from his professorship and fleeing from the capital were not the only social strategies for physical and professional survival used by Luria and Leontiev. Thus, we know about a paper by Leontiev on "The teaching about environment in pedagogical works of L.S. Vygotsky (a critical investigation)" that was most likely the basis for an oral presentation that he made some time during the turbulent years of 1936–7 (Leontiev 1937/1998, 1937/2005). For instance, such a presentation could have taken place in 1937 when, after a considerable break, Leontiev returned to the Institute of Psychology. This paper was originally located in the archives of the Institute and was not published until the late 1990s, when it was accidentally discovered by the well-known Russian scholar Irina Ravich-Shcherbo. Leontiev's critique of Vygotsky in this paper might have served the purpose of distancing himself from the then outlawed former teacher. Another strategy that both Leontiev and Luria must have applied was to establish personal connections with decision-makers and key individuals in power at that time; in the absence of any official or archival documents, we can only speculate about such possible connections. For example, Alexander Luria's father, Roman Al'bertovich Luria, was one of the most successful medical professionals of the time, and the personal doctor to quite a few of the elite inhabitants of the Moscow Kremlin, including the Prosecutor General of the USSR Andrei Vyshinskii (Luria 1994). Another of Alexander Luria's possible connections with the Communist Party leadership was Lev Sheinin, an aide to Vyshinskii in late 1930s, with whom Luria collaborated during his studies on the traces of affective reactions in suspected criminals (Luria 1928/2003, 1929/1930). This research resulted in the publication of Luria's first major book *The nature of human conflicts* (Luria 1932), which was instrumental in designing the lie detector as we know it today. It is still unclear who exactly helped Luria and Leontiev establish personal connections with key figures in power, but it is fairly clear that both scholars were successful in building such connections with powerful patrons of the time.

It is not incidental that it was in 1939 that both Luria and Leontiev were appointed to supervisory positions in research and educational institutions in Moscow and Leningrad. As Kremontsov points out

by 1939, Soviet scientists understood perfectly well the principles of operation of the Stalinist science system and had learned to use that system to their own advantage. They knew that the real power was concentrated in the highest party bodies—the Central Committee and its Secretariat—and they petitioned party bosses in numerous letters. For their part, the party bosses read scientists' petitions and relayed them with their own remarks and notes to the lower level of the party hierarchy "for consideration" or "for implementation," and

sometimes “for archiving”. These second-hand echelon bureaucrats prepared concrete decisions and sent them back to the top for approval. The behaviour of both the top officials and their subordinates was shaped by their own interests and agendas, and thus by considerations external to the scientific questions raised in the petition (Krementsov 1997, p. 80).

It is clear that from that the end of 1930s onwards only those individuals who thoroughly understood the real meaning of Soviet science policy and the internal mechanics of decision-making in the country could make scientific careers in the Soviet Union.

In 1940 Leontiev defended his dissertation on the “Genesis of the psyche”, largely based on empirical research on the origin of sensation conducted in Kharkov and Moscow in mid-1930s under his supervision. Along with S.L. Rubinshtein and B.M. Teplov, an opponent at Leontiev’s doctoral dissertation defence was Leon Orbeli, a great Pavlovian scholar and one of the most influential figures in Soviet scientific hierarchy before World War II. By 1940 Orbeli, considered Pavlov’s scientific heir, was the Head of the Institute of Physiology of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (from 1936), I.P. Pavlov Institute of Evolutionary Physiology and Pathology of Higher Nervous Activity (from 1939), Member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR (from 1935); furthermore, in 1942 Orbeli was appointed Vice-President of the Soviet Academy of Sciences and in 1943 – the Head of the Military Medical Academy in Leningrad. It seems that connections with Orbeli as well as with a number of other prominent scholars (and, most likely, Soviet officials) of the highest rank in the hierarchy of the Soviet scientific establishment was one of the key factors that facilitated Leontiev’s future success as one of the leaders of Marxist Soviet psychology. Furthermore, as a token of recognition of their trustworthiness and loyalty, both Luria and Leontiev were invited to coauthor two articles for the most prestigious *Bol’shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia* (Great Soviet Encyclopaedia), particularly such important ones as *Psikhologiia* (Psychology) and *Rech’* (Speech) (Leontiev and Luria 1941; Luria and Leontiev 1940). In addition, they contributed an independent article each: both Luria’s *Psikhoanaliz* (Psychoanalysis) (Luria 1940) and Leontiev’s *Psikhika* (Psyche) (Leontiev 1940) came out in 1940. These publications of Luria and Leontiev in this multi-volume edition—perhaps the most prestigious edition of the time—marked the inclusion of their authors in the Soviet scientific *nomenklatura* of the highest rank. Hence, not surprisingly, during the war Luria and Leontiev were appointed heads of hospitals in the Ural region. Fairly soon thereafter, both joined the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Luria in 1943, Leontiev in 1948), a move that, according to “the existing rules of the game”, should most likely be interpreted as a precondition of social success, given that “Party membership served as an obligatory stepping stone to any serious aspirations for career advancement in the Soviet Union” (Cole and Levitin 2006, p. 270).

Thus, from the end of the 1930s Luria and Leontiev became the new organizational centre of Vygotskian psychology. Also, this is the origin of the “school of Vygotsky-Leontiev-Luria” and the “Kharkov school of psychology”—terms that was first introduced in 1938, but would not enter meta-psychological discourse until the late 1970s (Yasnitsky 2009). As the new center, Luria and Leontiev served as mediators between different groups of scholars who continued

the Vygotskian line of research in the country. For instance, the remains of the Leningrad group and the Kharkov group received a considerable support from Leontiev around the mid-1930s when they established personal and professional ties between the two groups in Kharkov and in Leningrad (thus, for instance, Leontiev served as an official supervisor of the dissertation of El'konin, from Leningrad, at his defence in 1935). The ties between the Leningrad and Kharkov groups especially strengthened after 1939 when Leontiev—like Vygotsky in 1931—started commuting between Moscow and Leningrad where he spent ten days of each month lecturing and heading the Department of Psychology at the Leningrad Krupskaya Pedagogical Institute (Leontiev et al. 2005, p. 74). In turn, Luria was instrumental in establishing correspondence and exchange between clinical and defectological researchers that, in turn, considerably contributed to his own studies on brain and the then-nascent discipline, neuropsychology (Luria 1937).

Relatively little is known about research of the former members of the Vygotsky-Luria Circle after 1936. There was no a single specialized psychological journal in the country at that time: the journals *Psikhologiya* (Psychology) and *Pedologiya* (Pedology) were closed down in 1932, *Sovetskaya psikhotehnika* (Soviet Psychotechnics) – in 1934. In 1936, *Nevropatologiya, psikhatriya i psikhogigiena* (Neuropathology, psychiatry, and mental hygiene) was renamed and shortened to just *Nevropatologiya i psikhtriya* (Neuropathology and psychiatry). Still, this Moscow journal, along with journal *Sovetskaya psikhonevrologiya* (Soviet psychoneurology) that was published in Kharkov, was accepting studies of clinical psychologists and defectologists, and several studies of former Vygotskians such as Zeigarnik, Lebedinskii, Boskis, Levina and their associates were published there (Boskis and Levina 1936, 1936/2006; Dubinin and Zeigarnik 1940; Lebedinskii 1936, 1938, 1940). Another major outlet for psychologists during that period was the journal *Sovetskaya pedagogika* (Soviet pedagogy, founded in 1937) that published several papers by defectologists, developmentalists, and educational psychologists (Boskis and Levina 1938; Bozhovich 1937, 1940; Leontiev 1937; Levina 1940; Slavina 1939). Quite a few studies were published in various *Scientific Notes* of institutes such as the Herzen State Pedagogical Institute in Leningrad and the Kharkov State Pedagogical Institute. Finally, several books were published in clinical psychology (Lebedinskii 1941), but mainly in defectology (Boskis 1939; Danyushevskii and Zankov 1941; Korsunskaya and Morozova 1939; Pevzner 1941; Zankov 1939; Zankov and Danyushevskii 1940; Zankov and Solov'ev 1940). These studies present an interesting yet unexplored development of what we might refer to as the “Vygotsky-Luria-Lewin project” of the mid-1930s. However, one should certainly keep in mind that in many instances only indirect, camouflaged references to Vygotsky or, for that matter, Kurt Lewin, were possible after 1936, which certainly complicates the task of historical and theoretical reconstruction.

Presentist Conclusion: Why Bother About the “Vygotsky Circle”?

This somewhat lengthy historical paper needs a conclusion that would suggest a tentative answer to the above question, that is: For what reason does a researcher—other than an historian of psychology—need to bother about the “Vygotsky Circle”?

I could think of many reasons why this study is of interest to the scholars outside the field of the historiography of human sciences and the many audiences of readers interested in reading this paper. Among these, I believe, we can distinguish two major distinct—yet overlapping—groups of scholars: those interested in Vygotsky and those striving for an integrative and non-reductionist psychological and behavioral science.

The first group might be interested in the promise of uncovering the personal network of Vygotsky Circle as a “collaborative, multi-generational, value-laden, and ideologically-driven investigative project that stretched far beyond the confines of science in its traditional mentalist guise” (Stetsenko 2003, p. 96) yet again attempting at “understanding Vygotsky” (Van der Veer and Valsiner 1991). For instance, the regrettable gaps in our knowledge of the larger Circle of scholars have led some authors to a conclusion that “a composite picture of Vygotsky as clinical practitioner cannot be reconstructed” (Van der Veer and Valsiner 1991, p. 77). Yet, I would argue that a thorough analysis of the corpus of clinical Vygotskian studies that were published by the members of Vygotsky Circle in the interwar period alone—analysis done by historians and clinical psychologists working hand in hand—might potentially dramatically change our understanding of the composite picture of Vygotsky’s clinical method of rehabilitation and its interplay with his general psychological—or, for that matter, psychoneurological—developmental theory. By the same token, I would argue that an in-depth study of the works produced by the Vygotsky Circle in other fields and domains, such as defectology, child development, cross-cultural psychology, psychology of art, or psychology of personality, will substantially advance and expand our understanding of Vygotsky and his research project. Which immediately brings us to the second group of potential readers of this paper.

The general composite picture of the Vygotsky project is of utmost interest to us now that empiricist North American psychology dominates globally, and calls for “decolonizing”, “indigenization”, “internationalization”, and globalization” of psychology and of our knowledge about psychology are fairly frequent these days (see, e.g., Brock 2006; Pawlik and Rosenzweig 2000; Stevens and Gielen 2007; Stevens and Wedding 2004). There are certainly numerous forces behind this international movement in psychology, but, from the theoretical and methodological standpoint, the main reason for the overcoming North American domination seems to be reductionism, overspecialization, unjustified fascination with statistics and quantitative methods of research, and, subsequently, knowledge fragmentation, associated with the American empiricist tradition and its domination worldwide (see, e.g., Clegg 2009; Toomela and Valsiner 2010). Vygotsky’s legacy as a collaborative and widely distributed project is a particularly important contribution to the ongoing quest for the integrative human, social and behavioral science. But in order to uncover the potential contribution of Vygotsky’s cultural-historical theory of development of higher mental functions to contemporary psychology, it needs to be restored in its entirety, as a system of interlinked ideas, methods, and practices mostly shared by the group of scholars of Vygotsky Circle. This paper is hoped to contribute to our continuous effort to understand Vygotsky’s theory in its complexity and to bring it to life in contemporary psychology, here and now.

Appendix: Vygotsky Circle Collaborators

(the list does not include some of Luria's collaborators of 1920-30s and those members of the Kharkov group of researchers who did not work directly with Vygotsky; for an overview of the so-called "Kharkov school of psychology" see Yasnitsky and Ferrari 2008a, 2008b)

Artemov, Vladimir Alekseevich (1897-1982)—Vygotsky's collaborator at the Institute of Psychology in mid-1920s, with whom Vygotsky coedited and coauthored two textbooks in 1927

Averbukh, Roza Abramovna (1883-date of death unknown)—medical doctor (Berne, Geneva, Kazan); along with Luria, a member of Kazan Psychoanalytical Society in early 1920s; when Luria left Kazan in 1923, followed him to Moscow where they joined Russian Psychoanalytical Society; later joined Vygotsky's team, and, in collaboration with *Eidinova* (see *Eidinova, Mariya Borisovna*), conducted research on "hypoboulc mechanisms" (unpublished study, referred to by Luria in 1960); according to Vygotsky's notes, participated in the group's research meetings in October 1933 with a presentation on the topic of "Environment—experiencing (*perezhivanie*)—character"

Bassin, Filipp Veniaminovich (1905-1992)—medical doctor (Kharkov, 1931), along with *Luria, Lebedinskii* and others worked at the Clinical Psychology department of Ukrainian Psychoneurological Academy, where he, following Vygotsky's research on thinking in schizophrenia, conducted a study on the alteration of word meanings in schizophrenia (unpublished manuscript of 1935), in 1936 moved to Moscow, worked in All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine (VIEM); collaborated with *Bernstein* (see *Bernstein, Nikolai Aleksandrovich*)

Bernstein, Nikolai Aleksandrovich (1897-1982)—prominent physiologist and psychotecnic, Vygotsky's collaborator at the Institute of Psychology in mid-1920s, with whom Vygotsky coedited and coauthored a textbook in 1927, and whose work was one of the main inspirations for most Vygotsky's followers research from the end of 1930s onwards

Bein (Bejn), Esfir' Solomonovna (1906-1981)—neurologist, defectologist, under Vygotsky's supervision conducted research on pathology of speech and perception

Birenbaum, Gita Vasil'evna (1903—1952)—former Berlin student of Kurt Lewin (see *Lewin, Kurt*), returned to Soviet Union around 1930, under the supervision of Vygotsky conducted experimental and theoretical studies in clinical settings in Moscow in early 1930s, after Vygotsky's death in collaboration with *Zeigarnik* (see *Zeigarnik, Bluma Vul'fovna*) and *Samukhin* (see *Samukhin, Nikolai Vasil'evich*) published several papers that creatively integrate Vygotsky's and Kurt Lewin's theoretical work

Boskis Rakhil' Markovna (1902-1976)—medical doctor (Kiev), in 1931 moved to Moscow, under Vygotsky's supervision conducted research on thinking and speech in deaf children at the Defectological Institute in Moscow

Bozhovich, Lidiya Il'ichna (1908-1981)—Vygotsky's student at Pedological Department of the 2nd Moscow State University (1925-1930), the member of the "pyaterka" ("the five") of his students; research on children's imitation in late 1920s (in collaboration with *Slavina, Liya Solomonovna*), various research projects in Moscow, Kharkov, and Poltava in 1930s

Danyushevskii Izrail' Isaakovich (1890-1950)—Vygotsky's collaborator of Gomel' period and in Defectological Institute in Moscow, defectologist, coedited with Vygotsky a posthumously published book on defectology (1935)

Dobrynin, Nikolai Fedorovich (1890-1981)—Vygotsky's collaborator at the Institute of Psychology in mid-1920s, with whom Vygotsky coedited and coauthored two textbooks in 1927

Eidinova, Marina Borisovna (dates of birth and death unknown)—medical doctor, neurologist, around 1930, in Vygotsky's research team, conducted studies on degradation of mental functions in hysteria and, in collaboration with *Averbukh*, on "hypoboulc mechanisms" (unpublished study, referred to by Luria in 1960); later, research on cerebral palsy in children and its treatment

Eisenstein, Sergei Mikhailovich (1898-1948)—Soviet film director and film theorist; peripheral participant of Vygotsky-Luria Circle from 1925-6 onwards

El'konin Daniil Borisovich (1904-1984)—former student and associate of prominent psychologist M.Ya. Basov (Leningrad), Vygotsky's student and collaborator in Leningrad Herzen Pedagogical Institute (in 1931-1934), research on children's play

Fradkina, Frida Iosifovna (dates of birth and death unknown)—Leningrad student and collaborator of Vygotsky, research on children's play and speech development

Gellerstein, Solomon Grigor'evich (1896—1967) —Vygotsky's collaborator at the Institute of Psychology in mid-1920s, with whom Vygotsky coauthored two textbooks in 1927

Geshelina, Liya Solomonovna (1892— date of death unknown)—medical doctor, member or Russian Psychoanalytic Society (up to 1930); Vygotsky's collaborator in 1930s, around 1930 conducted a study of visual thinking and perception, in 1930s worked with Vygotsky in clinical settings

Kaulina, Nina Nikolaevna (dates of birth and death unknown)—former Berlin student of Kurt Lewin (see *Lewin, Kurt*), returned to Soviet Union around 1930, possibly took part in pathopsychological studies in Moscow along with *Birenbaum* (see *Birenbaum, Gita Vasil'evna*) and *Zeigarnik* (see *Zeigarnik, Bluma Vul'fovna*), after Vygotsky's death participated in "topological" psychological research in Gorky Park in Moscow along with A.N. Leontiev (see *Leontiev, Aleksei Nikolaevich*), A.I. Rozenblum, L.I. Bozhovich (see *Bozhovich, Lidiya Il'inichna*), and others

Kogan, Vladimir Mikhailovich (1903—1985)—Vygotsky's graduate student at the Institute of Psychology in 1925-1929; after graduation affiliated mainly with psychotechnics (industrial psychology) projects

Konnikova, Tat'yana Efimovna (1909-1975)—Vygotsky's student and collaborator in Leningrad Herzen Pedagogical Institute (in 1931-1934), doctoral research on the earliest stages in the development of children's speech conducted under the supervision of Vygotsky and his associate Levina (see *Levina, Mira Abramovna*)

Kotelova, Yuliya Vladimirovna (1903-1980)—psychotecnic; in collaboration with *Pashkovskaya* (see *Pashkovskaya, E.I.*) and under supervision of Vygotsky continued studies on concepts formation (in 1927-1930) after Sakharov's death (see *Sakharov, Leonid Solomonovich*)

Lebedinskii (Lebedinsky), Mark Samuilovich (1895-1980)—medical doctor, neurologist, Vygotsky and Luria's collaborator in Moscow (from mid-1920s) and

in Kharkov (from 1931), where he conducted and supervised a wide range of developmental, psychogenetic, and clinical psychological studies, mainly on aphasia and schizophrenia

Levina, Mira Abramovna (dates of birth and death unknown)—former student and associate of prominent psychologist M.Ya. Basov (Leningrad), Vygotsky's collaborator (in 1931-1934) in Leningrad Herzen Pedagogical Institute, where she was the Head of Pedological Department; edited posthumous Vygotsky's book *Foundations of pedology* (Leningrad, 1935)

Levina, Roza Evgen'evna (1908-1989)—Vygotsky's student at Pedological Department of the 2nd Moscow State University (1927-1932), the member of the "pyaterka" ("the five") of his students; research on the planning role of "egocentric speech" (late 1920s), "autonomous speech" (early 1930s), and speech pathology (from mid-1930s onwards)

Leontiev, Aleksei Nikolaevich (1903-1979)—Vygotsky's close associate, along with Aleksander Luria (see *Luria, Aleksander Romanovich*), the member of the "trojka" ("the three"); research on the development of mediated remembering and attention (late 1920s, under the supervision of Vygotsky, the book published in 1931); various research projects of the 1930s

Lewin, Kurt (1890-1947)—German-American Gestalt-psychologist; peripheral participant of Vygotsky-Luria Circle from 1925-6 onwards

Luria, Aleksander Romanovich (1902-1977)—Vygotsky's closest associate and collaborator, the co-creator of the "theory of the cultural-historical development of higher mental functions"; along with Aleksei Leontiev (see *Leontiev, Aleksei Nikolaevich*), the member of the "trojka" ("the three")

Menchinskaya, Nataliya Aleksandrovna (1905-1984)—Vygotsky's graduate student at the 2nd Moscow State University in 1927-1930; under Vygotsky's supervision conducted doctoral research on development of arithmetic operations in schoolchildren, an excerpt from the study published in 1931

Morozova, Nataliya Grigor'evna (1906-1989)—Vygotsky's student at Pedological Department of the 2nd Moscow State University (1925-1930), the member of the "pyaterka" ("the five") of his students; various research projects under the supervision of Vygotsky and Luria

Pashkovskaya, E.I. (full name and dates of birth and death unknown)—in collaboration with Kotelova (see *Kotelova, Yuliya Vladimirovna*) and under supervision of Vygotsky continued studies on concepts formation (in 1927-1930) after Sakharov's death (see *Sakharov, Leonid Solomonovich*)

Pevzner, Mariya Semenovna (1901-1989)—medical doctor (in Saratov), psychiatrist and defectologist, in 1931 moved to Moscow in order to study psychopathic disorders in children under Vygotsky's supervision in Experimental Defectological Institute

Sakharov, Leonid Solomonovich (1900-1928)—Vygotsky's student, and initiated studies on concept formation using modified method of Narziss Ach (1871-1946), presently known as the method of "double stimulation" or "Sakharov-Vygotsky's method"

Samukhin, Nikolai Vasil'evich (dates of birth and death unknown)—researcher at All-Union Institute of Experimental Medicine (VIEM), conducted a series of clinical studies on dementia, published a research paper in collaboration with Vygotsky and Birenbaum (see *Birenbaum, Gita Vasil'evna*)

Shein, A.A. (full name and dates of birth and death unknown)—Vygotsky's collaborator around 1930; research on the transition from external to internal speech; edited Leontiev's book "Development of memory" (1931)

Shmidt (Schmidt), Vera Fedorovna (1889-1937)—the wife of academician O.Yu. Shmidt, active member and secretary of Russian Psychoanalytical Society, worked at Psychoanalytical Institute in Moscow (experimental psychoanalytical boarding school and research laboratory that were closed down in 1925), provided research data for Vygotsky and Luria's *Etudes on the history of behaviour* (1930), from around 1930 employee of Defectological Institute and a member of Vygotsky's defectological research team

Shif, Zhozefina Il'inichna (1904-1978)—Vygotsky's graduate student and collaborator in Leningrad Herzen Pedagogical Institute (in 1931-1933) and Moscow Defectological Institute (from 1933 onwards), doctoral research on thinking and scientific concepts development in children, defended in Leningrad in 1933, published as a book in 1935 with Vygotsky's posthumous introduction of February 1934; co-edited (with Zankov, *Leonid Vladimirovich*) the posthumous publication of Vygotsky's "Thinking and speech" (1934)

Slavina, Liya Solomonovna (1906-1988)—Vygotsky's student at Pedological Department of the 2nd Moscow State University (1925-1930), the member of the "pyaterka" ("the five") of his students; research on children's imitation in late 1920s (in collaboration with *Bozhovich*)

Solov'ev (alias *Solov'ev-El'pidinskii*), *Ivan Mikhailovich* (1902-1986)—defectologist, Vygotsky's graduate student (in 1925-1929) and, along with Zankov (see *Zankov, Leonid Vladimirovich*), collaborator from mid-1920s; notably, under Vygotsky's supervision in early 1930s replicated Anitra Karsten's study on satiation (Sättigung) that was originally done in Berlin group of Kurt Lewin (see *Lewin, Kurt*)

Varshava, Boris Efimovich (1900-1927)—Vygotsky's collaborator of 1920s and co-author of *Psychological Dictionary* (published in 1931, after Varshava's death)

Veresotskaya, K.I. (full name and dates of birth and death unknown)—defectologist, around 1930 conducted research on voluntary attention and voluntary remembering, visual thinking and eidetic memory, Vygotsky's collaborator in Defectological Institute in 1930s

Zankov, Leonid Vladimirovich (1901-1977)—defectologist, Vygotsky's graduate student and, along with Solov'ev (see *Solov'ev, Ivan Mikhailovich*), collaborator from mid-1920s, most notable research conducted under Vygotsky's supervision is a series of studies on memory and remembering in normal and mentally retarded children; co-edited (with *Shif*) the posthumous publication of Vygotsky's "Thinking and speech" (1934)

Zaporozhets, Alexander Vladimirovich (1905-1981)—Vygotsky's student at Pedological Department of the 2nd Moscow State University (1925-1930), the member of the "pyaterka" ("the five") of his students; various research projects under the supervision of Vygotsky and *Luria* in Moscow, and *Luria, Leontiev*, and *Lebedinskii* in Kharkov; Head of Department of Psychology of the Kharkov State Pedagogical Institute (from 1938) and the leader of the Kharkov group from mid-1930s

Zeigarnik, Bluma Vul'fovna (1900-1988)—former Berlin student of Kurt Lewin (see *Lewin, Kurt*), returned to Soviet Union in 1931, under the supervision of Vygotsky conducted experimental and theoretical studies in clinical settings in

Moscow in early 1930s, after Vygotsky's death in collaboration with *Birenbaum* (see *Birenbaum, Gita Vasil'evna*) and Kaganovskaya published several papers that creatively integrate Vygotsky's and Kurt Lewin's theoretical work

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