

Russian Formalism

There is a marked awareness about the language of literature and its meaning both in Indian and Western aesthetic thinking. The aestheticians of both schools hold that the language of literature embodies a significant aspect of human experience, and represents a creative pattern of verbal structure to impart meaning effectively. Modern Western aesthetic thinking, which includes theories like formalism, new criticism, stylistics, structuralism, post-structuralism, deconstruction, discourse analysis, semiotics and dialogic criticism, in one way or another emphasizes the study of the language of literature in order to understand its meaning. Similarly, there is a distinct focus on the language of literature and its meaning in Indian literary theories which include the theory of *rasa* (aesthetic experience), *alaṅkāra* (the poetic figure), *rīti* (diction), *dhvani* (suggestion), *vakrokti* (oblique expression) and *aucitya* (propriety). This book explores how the language of literature and its meaning have been dealt with in both Indian and Western aesthetic thinking. In doing so, the study concentrates on Kuntaka's theory of *vakrokti* and *ṅaṇḍavardhana's* theory of *dhvani* in Indian aesthetic thinking and Russian formalism and deconstruction in Western thinking. The book categorically focuses on the intersection between the theory of *vakrokti* and Russian formalism and the meeting-point between the theory of *dhvani* and deconstruction.

The last half of the twentieth century has seen the emergence of literary theory as a new discipline. As with

any body of scholarship, various schools of thought exist, and sometimes conflict, within it. I.R. Makaryk has compiled a welcome guide to the field. Accessible and jargon-free, the Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory provides lucid, concise explanations of myriad approaches to literature that have arisen over the past forty years. Some 170 scholars from around the world have contributed their expertise to this volume. Their work is organized into three parts. In Part I, forty evaluative essays examine the historical and cultural context out of which new schools of and approaches to literature arose. The essays also discuss the uses and limitations of the various schools, and the key issues they address. Part II focuses on individual theorists. It provides a more detailed picture of the network of scholars not always easily pigeonholed into the categories of Part I. This second section analyses the individual achievements, as well as the influence, of specific scholars, and places them in a larger critical context. Part III deals with the vocabulary of literary theory. It identifies significant, complex terms, places them in context, and explains their origins and use. Accessibility is a key feature of the work. By avoiding jargon, providing mini-bibliographies, and cross-referencing throughout, Makaryk has provided an indispensable tool for literary theorists and historians and for all scholars and students of contemporary criticism and culture.

Until the 1940s, when awareness of Russian Formalism began to spread, literary theory remained almost exclusively a Russian and Eastern European invention.

The Birth and Death of Literary Theory tells the story of literary theory by focusing on its formative interwar decades in Russia. Nowhere else did literary theory emerge and peak so early, even as it shared space with other modes of reflection on literature. A comprehensive account of every important Russian trend between the world wars, the book traces their wider impact in the West during the 20th and 21st centuries. Ranging from Formalism and Bakhtin to the legacy of classic literary theory in our post-deconstruction, world literature era, Galin Tihanov provides answers to two fundamental questions: What does it mean to think about literature theoretically, and what happens to literary theory when this option is no longer available? Asserting radical historicity, he offers a time-limited way of reflecting upon literature—not in order to write theory's obituary but to examine its continuous presence across successive regimes of relevance. Engaging and insightful, this is a book for anyone interested in theory's origins and in what has happened since its demise.

"Form" and "formalism" are a pair of highly productive and polysemous terms that occupy a central place in much linguistic scholarship. Diverse notions of "form" – embedded in biological, cognitive and aesthetic discourses – have been employed in accounts of language structure and relationship, while "formalism" harbours a family of senses referring to particular approaches to the study of language as well as representations of linguistic phenomena. This volume brings together a series of contributions from historians of science and philosophers of language that explore

some of the key meanings and uses that these multifaceted terms and their derivatives have found in linguistics, and what these reveal about the mindset, temperament and daily practice of linguists, from the nineteenth century up to the present day.

Fredric Jameson's survey of Structuralism and Russian Formalism is, at the same time, a critique of their basic methodology. He lays bare the presuppositions of the two movements, clarifying the relationship between the synchronic methods of Saussurean linguistics and the realities of time and history.

Examines the influence of Nietzsche on Russian Formalists, Russian Modernism, and Mikhail Bakhtin, reinforcing the importance of the modernist theoreticians by reading them in the contemporary theoretical context.

"Some of the most important literary theory of this century."--College English Russian formalists emerged from the Russian Revolution with ideas about the independence of literature. They enjoyed that independence until Stalin shut them down. By then they had produced essays that remain among the best defenses ever written for both literature and its theory. Included here are four essays representing key points in the formalists' short history. Victor Scklovsky's pathbreaking "Art as Technique" (1917) vindicates disorder in literary style. His 1921 essay on Tristram Shandy makes that eccentric novel the centerpiece for a theory of narrative. A section from Tomashevsky's "Thematics" (1925) inventories the elements of stories. In "The Theory of the 'Formal Method'" (1927) Boris Eichenbaum defends Russian formalism from many attacks. An able champion, he describes formalism's evolution, notes its major workers and works, clears away decayed axioms, and rescues literature

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from "primitive historicism" and other dangers. These essays set a course for literary studies that led to Prague structuralism, French semiotics, and postmodern poetics. Russian Formalist Criticism has been honored as a Choice Outstanding Academic Book of the Year by the American Library Association.

Yuri Tynianov was a key figure of Russian Formalism, an intellectual movement in early 20th century Russia that also included Viktor Shklovsky and Roman Jakobson. Tynianov developed a groundbreaking conceptualization of literature as a system within—and in constant interaction with—other cultural and social systems. His essays on Russian literary classics, like Pushkin's Eugene Onegin and works by Dostoevsky and Gogol, as well as on the emerging art form of filmmaking, provide insight into the ways art and literature evolve and adapt new forms of expression. Although Tynianov was first a scholar of Russian literature, his ideas transcend the boundaries of any one genre or national tradition. Permanent Evolution gathers together for the first time Tynianov's seminal articles on literary theory and film, including several articles never before translated into English.

Seminar paper from the year 2009 in the subject English Language and Literature Studies - Other, grade: 1,2, University of St Andrews, language: English, abstract: In the course of this essay the terminology that was applied by the Russian Formalist theoreticians shall be investigated (many terms were even invented and introduced by the Formalists themselves). More precisely, a careful look will be taken at how the literary critics, Medvedev and Bakhtin in *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship* and Hansen-Love in *Der Russische Formalismus* examine the Formalist terms. In order to evaluate Formalist terminology accurately and objectively, the mentioned critics' theories shall be underpinned by and contrasted with the opinion of other

critics in this field. Two of Shklovsky's articles, *The Resurrection of the Word* and *Art as Device* are taken as a starting point for paving the way for a detailed analysis of the formal terminology. The major focus lies on the term 'ostranenie' that was firstly introduced by Shklovsky (1991) and is most commonly translated as 'estrangement', 'defamiliarisation' or 'making it strange'. The essay shall not only analyse the origins of this concept, but furthermore, compare the different interpretations the term entails. Hansen-Love's evaluation of the concept of ostranenie as well as Medvedev and Bakhtin's assessment of Shklovsky's analysis of Tolstoy's *Kholstomer* in the view of estrangement reveals the critical approach on which this essay is based on. Moreover, the Russian term of 'obnazenie', the 'laying-bare' of the work (Hansen-Love, 1978) and 'oveshchestvlenie', the process of materialisation (Medvedev & Bakhtin, 1978), shall be regarded throughout this essay, since both concepts go hand in hand with the idea of ostranenie. In the last part of the essay, the formal theory of shutting out subjective consciousness from the work (Medvedev & Bakhtin, 1978) and the effects of this concept are in the centre of the attention. Th"

Russian Formalism, one of the twentieth century's most important movements in literary criticism, has received far less attention than most of its rivals. Examining Formalism in light of more recent developments in literary theory, Peter Steiner here offers the most comprehensive critique of Formalism to date. Steiner studies the work of the Formalists in terms of the major tropes that characterized their thought. He first considers those theorists who viewed a literary work as a mechanism, an organism, or a system. He then turns to those who sought to reduce literature to its most basic element—language—and who consequently replaced poetics with linguistics. Throughout, Steiner elucidates the basic

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principles of the Formalists and explores their contributions to the study of poetics, literary history, the theory of literary genre, and prosody. Russian Formalism is an authoritative introduction to the movement that was a major precursor of contemporary critical thought.

This volume examines the elements of formalism and decisionism in Russian legal thinking and, also, the impact of conservatism on the interplay of these elements. This combination leads to internal contradictions in theorizing about law and rights in Russian legal culture.

The Russian formalists emerged from the Russian Revolution with ideas about the independence of literature. They enjoyed that independence until Stalin shut them down. By then, however, they had produced essays that remain among the best defenses ever written for both literature and its theory. Included here are four essays representing key points in the formalists' short history. Victor Shklovsky's pioneering "Art as Technique" (1917) defines the literary as a way to make us see familiar things as if for the first time. His 1921 essay on Tristram Shandy makes that eccentric novel the centerpiece for a theory of narrative. A section from Boris Tomashevsky's "Thematics" (1925) inventories the elements of stories. In "The Theory of the 'Formal Method'" (1927), Boris Eichenbaum defends Russian Formalism against various attacks. An able champion, he describes Formalism's evolution, notes its major figures and works, clears away decayed axioms, and rescues literature from "primitive historicism" and other dangers. These essays set a course for literary studies that led to Prague structuralism, French semiotics, and postmodern poetics. Russian Formalist Criticism has been honored as a Choice Outstanding Academic Book of the Year by the American Library Association.

The Death of Vazir-Mukhtar, a novel by Yury Tynyanov, one

of the leading figures of the Russian formalist school, describes the final year in the life of Alexander Griboedov, the author of the comedy *Woe from Wit*. As ambassador to Persia, Griboedov was murdered in 1829 by a Tehrani mob during the sacking of the Russian embassy. One of the central texts of Russian formalist literary production, the novel is a brilliant meditation on the nature of historical and poetic consciousness and of artistic creation. It is a complex and fascinating work that explores the relationships among individual memory, historical fact, and the literary imagination. The result is a hybrid text, containing elements of various genres—historical, biographical, existential, and adventure novels—and a deeply personal, almost confessional testament to the writer's relationship to his generation and the state. Completed in 1927, almost a century after the events it depicts, *The Death of Vazir-Mukhtar* marks the watershed between revolution and reaction. At a time when the Soviet regime was becoming increasingly restrictive of freedom of expression and conscience, Tynyanov grappled with the themes of disillusionment, betrayal, and unrealized potential. Unabashedly intellectual yet filled with intrigue and suspense, *The Death of Vazir-Mukhtar* is a great historical novel of Russian modernism.

Summary: Defamiliarisation or *ostrannenie*, the artistic technique of forcing the audience to see common things in an unfamiliar or strange way, in order to enhance perception of the familiar, has become one of the central concepts of modern artistic practice, ranging over movements including Dada, postmodernism, epic theatre, and science fiction, as well as our response to arts. Coined by the Soviet literary critic Victor Shklovskii in 1917, *ostrannenie* has come to resonate deeply in film studies, where it entered into dialogue with the French philosopher Derrida's concept of *différance*, bordering on 'differing' and 'deferring'. Striking, provocative

and incisive, the essays of the distinguished film scholars in this volume recall the range and depth of a concept that since 1917 changed the trajectory of theoretical inquiry.

This invaluable guide by Todd F. Davis and Kenneth Womack offers an accessible introduction to two important movements in the history of twentieth-century literary theory. A

complementary text to the Palgrave volume *Postmodern Narrative Theory* by Mark Currie, this new title addresses a host of theoretical concerns, as well as each field's principal figures and interpretive modes. As with other books in the *Transitions* series, *Formalist Criticism and Reader-response Theory* includes readings of a range of widely-studied texts, including Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*, and F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*, among others. *Transitions* critically explores movements in literary theory. Guiding the reader through the poetics and politics of interpretative paradigms and schools of thought, *Transitions* helps direct the student's own acts of critical analysis. As well as transforming the critical developments of the past by interpreting them from the perspective of the present day, each study enacts transitional readings of a number of well-known literary texts.

This is the first book-length study of Boris Eikhenbaum (1886-1959), a leading Russian Formalist and a pathbreaking Tolstoy scholar. The author carefully traces Eikhenbaum's intellectual trajectory from his pre-Formalist "philosophical" criticism, through Formalism to his later biographical criticism of Tolstoy and Lermontov. Eikhenbaum's contribution to Formalism has not heretofore received clear definition, and the author shows that his ideas and influence were even greater than previously supposed. His shift away from Formalism, with its emphasis on purely literary analysis, toward a criticism that emphasized the writer as a cultural figure is seen as a response to both political exigency and

personal need. Although by the late 1910's Formalism had become poetics non grata in the Soviet Union, the author demonstrates that Eikhenbaum also had compelling intellectual reasons to move away from Formalism, which had reached a dead end. The author asserts that Eikhenbaum prolonged his scholarly life by concentrating on nineteenth-century Russian authors whose moral opposition to mainstream Russian intellectual thought served as a model for his own ethical stance in Stalin's Russia. This is particularly true of his monumental three-volume work on Tolstoy, which in its own way has been as influential as his Formalist writings. Throughout, the author relates Eikhenbaum's critical thinking to such current literary issues as intention, perception, meaning, reader reception, deconstruction, and the New Historicism.

Investigating the conceptualisation of structure and form within literature, the Russian Formalists affected both the creation of art during the 1920s and 1930s and the development of literary theory as a scientific discipline.

Crucial to the understanding of this theoretical movement, this collection of essays by and about the Russian Formalists features work by: - Boris M. Eichenbaum ("The Theory of the Formal Method") - Viktor Shklovsky ("The Mystery Novel: Dickens's Little Dorrit") - Roman Jakobson ("On Realism in Art") - Mikhail Bakhtin ("Discourse Typology in Prose") - Osip M. Brik ("Contributions to the Study of Verse Language") A new introduction by Gerald L. Bruns provides a context for understanding why these works remain as important and influential now as when they were first written.

This volume explores the extraordinary contribution that classical poetics has made to twentieth and twenty-first century theories of narrative, aiming not to argue that modern narratologies simply present 'old wine in new wineskins', but rather to identify the diachronic affinities shared between

ancient and modern stories about storytelling. By recognizing that modern narratologists bring a particular expertise to bear upon ancient literary theory, and by interrogating ancient and modern narratologies through the mutually imbricating dynamics of their reception, it seeks to arrive at a better understanding of both. Each chapter selects a key moment in the history of narratology on which to focus, providing an overview of significant phases before offering detailed analyses of core theories and texts, from the Russian formalists and Chicago school neo-Aristotelians, through the prestructuralists, structuralists, and poststructuralists, up to the latest unnatural and antimimetic narratologists. The reception history that thus unfolds offers some remarkable plot twists and yields valuable insights into the interpretation of some notoriously difficult ancient works. Plato in the Republic is unmasked as an unreliable narrator and theorist, while Aristotle's On Poets reveals a rare glimpse of the philosopher putting narrative theory into practice in the role of storyteller. Horace's Ars Poetica and the works of ancient scholia by critics and commentators evince a rhetorically conceived poetics and sophisticated reader-response-based narratology which indicate a keen interest in audience affect and cognition - anticipating the cognitive turn in narratology's most recent postclassical phase.

Featuring the latest research findings and exploring the fascinating interplay of modernist authors and intellectual luminaries, from Beckett and Kafka to Derrida and Adorno, this bold new collection of essays gives students a deeper grasp of key texts in modernist literature.

Provides a wealth of fresh perspectives on canonical modernist texts, featuring the latest research data

Adopts an original and creative thematic approach to the subject, with concepts such as race, law, gender, class,

time, and ideology forming the structure of the collection
Explores current and ongoing debates on the links between the aesthetics and praxis of authors and modernist theoreticians Reveals the profound ways in which modernist authors have influenced key thinkers, and vice versa

Profiles the careers of Russian authors, scholars, and critics and discusses the history of the Russian treatment of literary genres such as drama, fiction, and essays

Is there any clear and consistent relationship between the functions in the Russian folktales and in the African/Yombe tales and why? This book addresses this legitimate concern as it applies the Russian formalists' theory of functions to the structural narrative strategies in the African folktales. This is very significant because it is necessary for the scholar to know whether the format of the African folktale is an unconscious accident or is dictating to other cultures or visa versa.

Born in Vyborg in 1884 by parents of German descent, Vasily (Wilhelm) Sesemann grew up and studied in St. Petersburg. A close friend of Viktor Zhirmunsky and Lev P. Karsavin, Sesemann taught from the early 1920s until his death in 1963 at the universities of Kaunas and Vilnius in Lithuania (interrupted only by his internment in a Siberian labor camp from 1950 to 1956). Botz-Bornstein's study takes up Sesemann's idea of experience as a dynamic, constantly self-reflective, ungraspable phenomenon that cannot be objectified. Through various studies, the author shows how Sesemann develops an outstanding idea of experience by reflecting it against empathy, Erkenntnistheorie

(theory of knowledge), Formalism, Neo-Kantianism, Freudian psychoanalysis, and Bergson's philosophy. Sesemann's thought establishes a link between Formalist thoughts about dynamics and a concept of Being reminiscent of Heidegger. The book contains also translations of two essays by Sesemann as well as of an essay by Karsavin.

Introduces readers to the modes of literary and cultural study of the previous half century A Companion to Literary Theory is a collection of 36 original essays, all by noted scholars in their field, designed to introduce the modes and ideas of contemporary literary and cultural theory. Arranged by topic rather than chronology, in order to highlight the relationships between earlier and most recent theoretical developments, the book groups its chapters into seven convenient sections: I. Literary Form: Narrative and Poetry; II. The Task of Reading; III. Literary Locations and Cultural Studies; IV. The Politics of Literature; V. Identities; VI. Bodies and Their Minds; and VII. Scientific Inflections. Allotting proper space to all areas of theory most relevant today, this comprehensive volume features three dozen masterfully written chapters covering such subjects as: Anglo-American New Criticism; Chicago Formalism; Russian Formalism; Derrida and Deconstruction; Empathy/Affect Studies; Foucault and Poststructuralism; Marx and Marxist Literary Theory; Postcolonial Studies; Ethnic Studies; Gender Theory; Freudian Psychoanalytic Criticism; Cognitive Literary Theory; Evolutionary Literary Theory; Cybernetics and Posthumanism; and much more. Features 36 essays by noted scholars in the field Fills a

growing need for companion books that can guide readers through the thicket of ideas, systems, and terminologies Presents important contemporary literary theory while examining those of the past The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Literary Theory will be welcomed by college and university students seeking an accessible and authoritative guide to the complex and often intimidating modes of literary and cultural study of the previous half century.

The history of the most hotly debated areas of literary theory, including structuralism and deconstruction.

A comparison of two schools of literary criticism, showing how the Polish Formalist School modified and transcended the original ideas of Russian Formalism.

Russian Formalism and Marxist criticism had a seismic impact on twentieth-century literary theory and the shockwaves are still felt today. First published in 1979, Tony Bennett's *Formalism and Marxism* created its own reverberations by offering a ground-breaking new interpretation of the Formalists' achievements and demanding a new way forward in Marxist criticism. The author first introduces and reviews the work of the Russian Formalists, a group of theorists who made an extraordinarily vital contribution to literary criticism in the decade following the October Revolution of 1917. Placing the work of key figures in context and addressing such issues as aesthetics, linguistics and the category of literature, literary form and function and literary evolution, Bennett argues that the Formalists' concerns provided the basis for a radically historical approach to the study of literature. Bennett then turns to the situation of Marxist criticism and sketches the risks it has run in becoming overly entangled with the concerns of traditional aesthetics. He forcefully argues that through a serious and sympathetic reassessment of the Formalists and

