

History and Theory of Culture

Original article

UDC 78.1

<https://doi.org/10.56620/2782-3598.2024.1.182-190>

EDN: WCLXCY



Creativity as a Universal Phenomenon of Existence (About Olga Zhukova's Authorial Conception)

Polina S. Volkova

*Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia, St. Petersburg, Russian Federation,
polina7-7@yandex.ru*, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2424-7521>

Abstract. This article is devoted to the issue of creativity, which is perceived by the example of the monograph *Tvorchestvo i religioznost' v russkoi kul'ture. Filosofskie issledovaniya* [*Creativity and Religiosity in Russian Culture. Philosophical Studies*] (2022) written by Russian philosopher and cultural scholar Olga Zhukova. Although the philosophical and cultural analysis of the artistic process is carried out in the researcher's work mainly based on the material of literature, the universal nature of creativity allows the author to discover the parallels between the verbal, philosophical and musical modes of discourse. Since the provisions and ideas expounded in the monograph create the precedent for discussing the current topical theoretical and methodological issues of the art of music, the purpose of the article is determined by constructing a system of argumentation that ensures the legitimacy of the following statement: creativity acts as a phenomenon of existence, determining the self-justification of the artist's personality, whether he or she is a poet, artist or composer, or a reader, viewer and/or listener (performer). At the same time, the central task of this article is to position music as a spiritual and intellectual type of creativity, the universal forms of which are the knowledge of reality and the creation of an image of meaning, revealed in the structure of an artistic text. Relying on the experience of well-known philosophers, cultural and art historians, word artists and performing musicians, the author expresses the necessity to tune the ear of every artist to the sounding entity, the essence of which is able to be revealed with the most completeness only by music.

Keywords: sounding entity, the creative process, the structure of literary text, music and philosophy

For citation: Volkova P. S. Creativity as a Universal Phenomenon of Existence (About Olga Zhukova's Authorial Conception). *Problemy muzykal'noi nauki / Music Scholarship*. 2024. No. 1, pp. 182–190. <https://doi.org/10.56620/2782-3598.2024.1.182-190>

■ История и теория культуры ■

Научная статья

Творчество как универсальный феномен бытия (об авторской концепции О. А. Жуковой)

Полина Станиславовна Волкова

*Российский государственный педагогический университет имени А. И. Герцена,
г. Санкт-Петербург, Российская Федерация,
polina7-7@yandex.ru[✉], <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2424-7521>*

Аннотация. Статья посвящена проблеме творчества, которая рассматривается в монографии российского учёного — философа и культуролога О. А. Жуковой «Творчество и религиозность в русской культуре. Философские исследования» (2022). Несмотря на то, что философско-культурологический анализ творческого процесса осуществляется в работе исследователя преимущественно на материале литературы, его универсальный характер позволяет автору обнаружить параллели между словесным, философским и музыкальным дискурсами. Поскольку положения и идеи, выдвигаемые в монографии, создают прецедент для обсуждения актуальных теоретико-методологических проблем музыкального искусства, цель статьи определяется построением системы аргументации, обеспечивающей правомерность следующего утверждения: творчество выступает в качестве бытийственного феномена, обуславливающего самооправдание личности творца, независимо от того, идёт ли речь о поэте, художнике, композиторе либо читателе, зрителе и слушателе (исполнителе). При этом центральная задача настоящей статьи — позиционировать музыку в качестве духовно-интеллектуального творчества, универсальными формами которого выступают познание реальности и созидание смыслообраза, раскрывающегося в структуре художественного текста. Опираясь на опыт известных философов, культурологов и искусствоведов, художников слова и музыкантов-исполнителей, автор статьи приходит к необходимости настраивать слух всякого творца на звучащее бытие, суть которого с наибольшей полнотой способна раскрыть лишь музыка.

Ключевые слова: звучащее бытие, творческий процесс, структура художественного текста, музыка и философия

Для цитирования: Волкова П. С. Творчество как универсальный феномен бытия (об авторской концепции О. А. Жуковой) // Проблемы музыкальной науки / Music Scholarship. 2024. № 1. С. 182–190. (На англ. яз.) <https://doi.org/10.56620/2782-3598.2024.1.182-190>

The monograph of Russian philosopher and cultural scholar Olga Zhukova, which saw the light of day in 2022, titled: *Creativity and Religiosity in Russian Culture. Philosophical Studies*,¹ presents the final part of the trilogy, unified by an authorial concept, which has developed during a considerable amount of time: the first monograph — *The Philosophy of Russian Culture. A Metaphysical Perspective of Man and History* was published in 2017,² the second — *An Essay on Russian Culture. The Philosophy of History, Literature and Art* — came out in 2019.³ The essence permeating all three of the books is the centrality of ideals present in Russian culture. What is meant here is “the path of salvation, or justification by creativity,” which is so idiomatic for the Russian tradition, by means of which the controversy between the autonomous mind and the religious conciliarity is alleviated.⁴

The very fact that Olga Zhukova offers the reader on the pages of her monograph a “philosophical analysis of the cultural and intellectual heritage of Russia in terms of the continuity of the creative experience, the essence of which becomes the mutual semantic conditionality of religion, artistic creativity (mainly pertaining to literature) and philosophy,”⁵ is what allows us to discuss the modernity and the timeliness of the conception developed by the Russian

scholar, confirmed by a number of academic studies undertaken within the international humanistic tradition, as well as those indirectly affecting the issue advocated by the author present in many areas, including musical content, musical hermeneutics, musical cultural studies, philosophy and axiology of music. For the author of the book, a professional musicologist, the philosophical aspects of music, literature and the other arts have long become the defining topic of research.

The material for the author’s numerous years of research is the history of Russian culture in a variety of forms of artistic and philosophical creativity. Creativity is examined by Olga Zhukova in the ontological-epistemological, the historical-cultural, the psychological and the aesthetic aspects. It is noteworthy that in the new book a significant position is held by the theory of creativity, the psychology of creativity, the peculiarities of artistic comprehension of the world, and the forms of pre-predicative thinking that reveal themselves in the artistic and spiritual-religious experience. This research line connects the book with the first monograph of the philosophical trilogy, *The Philosophy of Russian Culture. The Metaphysical Perspective of Man and History*, wherein the author traced out in a special way the path of the formation of the aesthetic ideals of Russian culture in composers’ artistic endeavors.

¹ Zhukova O. A. *Tvorchestvo i religioznost' v russkoi kul'ture. Filosofskie issledovaniya* [*Creativity and Religiosity in Russian Culture. Philosophical Studies*]. Moscow: Soglasie, 2022. 594 p.

² Zhukova O. A. *Filosofiya russkoi kul'tury. Metafizicheskaya perspektiva cheloveka i istorii* [*The Philosophy of Russian Culture. The Metaphysical Perspective of Man and History*]. Moscow: Soglasie, 2017. 720 p.

³ Zhukova O. A. *Opyt o russkoi kul'ture. Filosofiya istorii, literatury i iskusstva* [*Essay on Russian Culture. Philosophy of History, Literature and Art*]. Moscow: Soglasie, 2019. 588 p.

⁴ Zhukova O. A. *Tvorchestvo i religioznost' ...* [*Creativity and Religiosity...*]. P. 2.

⁵ Ibid. P. 62.

The scholar's focus of thought is on the structure of the interdependence of religion and art in professional musical practice at the stage of creating the Russian school of composition as an artistic synthesis of folk, church and secular (Europeanized) musical traditions.⁶ The author shows that the art of music became a link of continuity and the moment of self-foundation of the cultural tradition during the time period between the 18th and 20th centuries through the artistic reinterpreting by composers of the aesthetic and ethical ideals of Russian religious culture and the artistic values and practices of European modernity.⁷

It is interesting to compare the approaches to the phenomena of musical, literary and philosophical creativity developed in Olga Zhukova's philosophical trilogy about Russian culture and a number of other monographs by the author with the types of studies that, in addition, formulate the theoretical models interpreting the universal aspects of creative activities.

In this context, we must cite Natalia Kireeva's large-scale research work in which the art historian elaborates on the communicative and axiological model of interaction of subjects that unite under the sign of musical theatricalization as a phenomenon that integrates various forms of musical and theatrical action and the musical and theatrical genres that have gradually developed during their evolution from their initial state of sacred ritual to that of artistic performances.⁸

By creating an axiomatic model of formation of the artistic personality, Kireeva emphasizes the importance of the following instance. Based on the formation of a holistic worldview, marked by the conformity of nature and the mindfulness of self-development, the desired model initiates the need for artistic self-expression as a response aroused in order to prevent or resolve the contradictions topical for a concrete sociocultural situation. [1] Motivated by the experience of the need to restore the lost integrity of being, such types of creative activity are implicitly oriented towards a value-permeated result, and the predominant features such as moral principles and the selfless service to the ideal. [2]

Returning to Olga Zhukova's monographic study, let us express the following assumption. The unconditional significance and undoubted validity of the cultural philosophic conception of the Russian thinker is stipulated by the fact that philosophy, artistic creativity, as well as religious experience are all derivatives of language in both its verbality and non-verbality. In this case, the question is not about the type of language that has as its source the self-organizing scheme of nature called to provide the communication processes relevant to any living organism — here the human being essentially comes to resemble a natural creature, because such an act of speaking resembling the moo of a cow or the barking of a dog does not provide an individual with an instant leap

⁶ Zhukova O. A. *Filosofiya russkoi kul'tury...* [*The Philosophy of Russian Culture...*]. P. 132.

⁷ Ibid. P. 134.

⁸ Kireeva N. Yu. *Evolyutsiya muzykal'noi teatralizatsii: kommunikativno-aksiologicheskii rakurs: monografiya* [*The Evolution of Musical Theatricality: A Communicative-Axiological Perspective. Monograph*]. Saratov: Saratov L. V. Sobinov State Conservatory, 2023. 466 p.

from the world of nature to the world of society. On the contrary, we are discussing language as a source of thinking. Unlike the type of language initiating the process of communication called forth to create favorable conditions for accumulation, processing and storage of information with the aim of its subsequent transmission to other beings, which corresponds to the best adaptation of any creature to its surrounding environment, the type of language that is directly related to the experience of thought activity requires the direct participation of its bearer, the linguistic personality, for its best implementation. Its task is to carry out the *organization* of a self-organizing conveyance of nature in order to overcome natural automatism and release oneself from the oppression of a natural program that makes it difficult to form a property of speech affected by the individual *Self*.

In other words, while language as an informational system appears before us on the level of a ready-made product, language as a conceptual system appears to be only potentially possible, presenting in itself a continuous creation, or, equally, an actualization of the energy that has absorbed the spirit of the people. Because the word generated in the process of the formation of meaning of an individual person surpasses the framework of subjectivity, acquiring an intersubjective character, the activity of thought itself as an act of creativity performed by a linguistic personality diffuses the boundaries that divide religion, art and philosophy. [3]

From this point of view, it is impossible not to remember Marin Mersenne (1588–1648), the French mathematician, physicist, philosopher, theologian and music theorist who was aimed at finding the parallels between music and theology, which led him to discover the Triunity of God in

diatonicism (God the Father), chromaticism (God the Son) and enharmonics (the Holy Spirit). In the same way, Russian linguists are inclined to see in the language, as a system the embodiment of the Divine Trinity, under the sign of which the self-organizing scheme of nature becomes likened to God the Father, the experience of organizing this informational system becomes connected with God the Son and, finally, the Holy Spirit appears before us at the level of thought activity, the effectiveness of which becomes recognized in the actualization of meaning that focuses within itself the invisible unity of the past, the present and the future in their moral and ethical aspects. [4]

Finally, that circumstance that that the statement in the Gospel, “In the beginning was the Word” turns out to be in line with notions, according to which, “In the beginning was the Number”, “In the beginning was Music”, “In the beginning was Gesture”, “In the beginning was Emotion”, evidently convinces us that sound, just as emotion, are inherent features of musical speech, precisely as intonation actualized in verbal discourse holds in itself a certain gesture. No less remarkable in this context is that the Slavic Word finds its connection with sound and ability to hear. In a similar way, “Music as a deed” allows the sacred Word to be likened to thought.

It seems that all these connotations that are implicitly present in the designated lexemes found in the Russian language compel us to acknowledge the insights of certain representatives of Russian culture — contemporaries of the 20th century, who managed to obtain world recognition and have overcome time boundaries — as absolutely valuable for the art of music. Here appears the unity of philosophy and art, vindicated by Yakov Golosovker (1890–1967), albeit, with a slight reservation: while

philosophy deals with images of *meaning*, then art deals with *images* of meaning, as well as the position of Alexei Losev (1893–1988), according to which philosophy, mathematics and music are one and the same thing, and the inviolability of the position of Mikhail Bakhtin (1895–1975).

In a concise essay, titled *Art and Responsibility*, published in 1919, a little more than a hundred years ago, the Russian thinker emphasizes: regardless of the person able to bear responsibility for his words and actions, the integrity of scholarship, culture and life will always remain purely mechanical.

Answering a question, about what presents the guarantor of their internal communication, Mikhail Bakhtin writes: “Only the unity of responsibility. For all I have experienced and understood in art, I have to take responsibility with my life, so that all that has been experienced and understood by me would not remain inoperative in it. But guilt is also tied with responsibility. Not only must life and art bear mutual responsibility, but they must also share the blame for each other. The poet must remember that his poetry is to blame for the vulgar prose of life, while the man of life must know that the sterility of art is justified to blame his absence of discrimination and lack of seriousness of the issues of his life. Personality should become completely responsible: all its moments should not only fit together in the temporal series of its life, but also penetrate each other in the unity of guilt and responsibility.”⁹

While surreptitiously concurring with Bakhtin, Zhukova constructs a system

of argumentation basing herself on personalia represented by the names of Alexander Herzen, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, Mikhail Stakhovich, Vladimir Ern, Vasily Karaulov, Sofia Panina, Ariadna Tyrkova-Williams, Piotr Struve, Alexander Golovnin, Lev Tolstoy, Nikolai Berdyaev, Lev Karsavin, Boris Zaitsev, Osip Mandelstam, and Boris Pasternak. The authorial commentaries uttered about their lives, destinies, individual works, and specific actions, etc., based on the subtlest observations, non-trivial experience of perception of events standing apart from us at a distance of an entire epoch, a fundamental knowledge of Russian history, literature, and philosophy – all of this shows Olga Zhukova as a researcher of the highest caliber, endowed with powerful intuition and the ability to respond sometimes even to the most remotely perceptible vibrations of time.

The book comprises an introduction, two sections, a conclusion, a bibliography, an index, as well as a summary and information about the author. The first section, titled *The Historical Dynamics of Russian Culture: Religious Values, Social Ideals and Cultural-Political Practices* is presented in six chapters, each of which gradually resolves the questions of the axiological transformations of Russian culture in terms of the historical dynamics of sociocultural ideals and the typology of creative experience; the sociocultural dynamics of Russian religiosity: from the culture of medieval traditionalism to the modern post-secular society; the ideals of national literature and the mission of the Russian writer; the religious

⁹ Bakhtin M. M. *Iskusstvo i otvetstvennost'* [Art and Responsibility]. *Estetika slovesnogo tvorchestva* [Aesthetics of Verbal Creativity]. Ed. by S. Bocharov. Publ. 2. Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1986, pp. 7–8.

and creative principles of social life, examined in the aspect of Russian political thought; the values of the Russian Enlightenment and practice of social construction; the national ideal of culture and politics, implemented by Piotr Struve in keeping with Pushkin's Russia.

The second section, titled *The Self-consciousness of Russian Culture: Creativity and Religiosity in the Artistic and Philosophical Tradition* is comprised of seven chapters, in which artistic creativity and religiosity are consistently examined as an epistemic issue; the question is raised on the formation of a professional philosophical culture in Russia and Alexander Golovnin's role in this process; the ethical-religious concept of the creative self-consciousness of the artist Nikolai Berdyaev is revealed in the example of his reception of the heritage of Lev Tolstoy; an interpretation of the concept of perfection in the religious metaphysics of Lev Karsavin is provided; the artistic experience of the outstanding representatives of Russian literature, Boris Zaitsev, Osip Mandelstam, and Boris Pasternak, is comprehended as a philosophical issue.

Against the background of all of the above, it seems that the perspective of the study of the theme of creativity and religiosity in Russian culture, examined in the mainstream of philosophy, included in the title of the monograph, absorbs almost all of its themes and possibly turns into an entire problem range.

Let us express the assumption that the angle of research put forth in the title of the monograph: the theme of creativity and religiosity in Russian culture, examined in line with philosophy, exhausts almost all its themes and possible turns of thought.

Therefore, this book provides an obvious testimony of both the viability of the authorial concept and the emergence of

an independent direction within the framework of the development of philosophical theory of culture and historical-philosophical research. This state of affairs, in our view, is determined by the fact that the author is able to view at the events of her interest in both historical and philosophical retrospect and perspective, as well as the specificity of textual and contextual analysis, looking intently on the smallest details the neglect of which sometimes leads to inaccuracies and distortions in interpretations. The main merit of this peer-reviewed monograph, in our view, is the immersion into the world of insights and philosophical discoveries of the author and modern scholar gives hope that the dialogue of authors — the protagonists of the book and the researcher — is also akin to creativity. Such a creative rethinking of the heritage appears as a response of an intellectually honest scholar and citizen, who claims her own share of the responsibility for the current state of the national culture.

To what extent can the experience of a cultural philosopher be of interest to present-day musicians — theorists, practitioners and educators? It seems that, in addition to the universal character of the creative process, the facets of which are highlighted mainly on the example of literature, special attention is merited by the fact that the other representatives of Russian culture entering the problematic field of the Russian scholar are greatly represented by the names of artists who are either directly or indirectly related to music. Let us remind ourselves of the musical qualities inherent in the prose and poetry of Osip Mandelstam and Boris Pasternak, the latter of which transferred himself into the sphere literature from music, having acquired a sense of disbelief in his own skills as a composer, as well as the points of contact between Boris Zaitsev,

Paul Klee and Edison Denisov discovered by Anna Melnikova in her dissertation devoted to the synesthetic interpretation of the latter composer's instrumental works.¹⁰ We shall also not disregard the attempts of comprehending the essence of the musical element attempted by Lev Tolstoy in his *Kreutzerova sonata* [*Kreutzer Sonata*]. And we can hardly fail to remember here the thought arrived at by our contemporary, the original philosopher and musician Father Ioann Bogomil, that Piotr Tchaikovsky is a musical counterpart of Nikolay Berdyaev, being a musical poet and thinker, whose entry into national Russian archetype is phenomenal!

There is no doubt that, in this context, both notes and letters are merely sacred signs containing much more than sight and hearing are able to admit into themselves and what is seen exclusively by inner man. At the same time, the only key to entering this inner space is the “ethical register of personal self-understanding.” [5, p. 34] The actualization of the latter is solved in keeping with the rhetorical canon in the triune of Ethos, Logos and Paphos, in this context all participants involved in the process of creativity become connected with the creation “here and now” of a sounding work by the means of which the very *being* itself obtains its own sound.

References

1. Kireeva N. Yu. Communicative and Axiological Approach in the Implementation of Musical and Theater Creativity. *Izvestiya of the Samara Science Center of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Social, Humanitarian, Biomedical Sciences*. 2023. Vol. 25, No. 3, pp. 74–81. (In Russ.) <https://doi.org/10.37313/2413-9645-2023-25-90-74-81>
2. Kireeva N. Yu. Musical Theatricalization in the Aspect of Value Communication: on the Issue of Terminology. *PHILHARMONICA. International Music Journal*. 2022. No. 3, pp. 34–51. (In Russ.) <https://doi.org/10.7256/2453-613X.2022.3.38054>
3. Volkova P. S., Shakhovskiy V. I. Spirituality in the Aspect of Art. *Problemy muzykal'noi nauki / Music Scholarship*. 2020. No. 4, pp. 187–198. (In Russ.) <https://doi.org/10.33779/2587-6341.2020.4.187-198>
4. Shakhovskiy V. I., Volkova P. S. Language as a System: Meaning and Sense. *Linguistics and Polyglot Studies*. 2020. Vol. 23, No. 3, pp. 48–62. (In Russ.) <https://doi.org/10.24833/2410-2423-2020-3-23-48-62>
5. Zhukova O. A. The Philosophical Modus of Russian Literature: Boris Pasternak's Creative Experience. *Russian Journal of Philosophical Sciences*. 2020. Vol. 63, No. 7, pp. 21–38. (In Russ.) <https://doi.org/10.30727/0235-1188-2020-63-7-21-38>

¹⁰ Melnikova A. N. *Sinesteticheskaya interpretatsiya tvorchestva Edisona Denisova (na primere instrumental'nykh proizvedenii: dis. ... kand. iskusstvovedeniya* [*The Synesthetic Interpretation of Edison Denisov's Musical Legacy (on the Example of his Instrumental Works): Dissertation for the Degree of Candidate of Arts*]. Novosibirsk, 2011. 27 p.

СПИСОК ИСТОЧНИКОВ

1. Киреева Н. Ю. Коммуникативно-аксиологический подход в реализации музыкально-театрального творчества // Известия Самарского научного центра Российской академии наук. Социальные, гуманитарные, медико-биологические науки. 2023. Т. 25, № 3. С. 74–81. <https://doi.org/10.37313/2413-9645-2023-25-90-74-81>
2. Киреева Н. Ю. Музыкальная театрализация в аспекте ценностной коммуникации: к вопросу о терминологии // PHILHARMONICA. International Music Journal. 2022. № 3. С. 34–51. <https://doi.org/10.7256/2453-613X.2022.3.38054>
3. Волкова П. С., Шаховский В. И. Духовность в аспекте искусства // Проблемы музыкальной науки / Music Scholarship. 2020. № 4. С. 187–198. <https://doi.org/10.33779/2587-6341.2020.4.187-198>
4. Шаховский В. И., Волкова П. С. Язык как система: значение и смысл // Филологические науки в МГИМО. 2020. Т. 23, № 3. С. 48–62. <https://doi.org/10.24833/2410-2423-2020-3-23-48-62>
5. Жукова О. А. Философский модус русской литературы: творческий опыт Бориса Пастернака // Философские науки. 2020. Т. 63, № 7. С. 21–38. <https://doi.org/10.30727/0235-1188-2020-63-7-21-38>

Information about the author:

Polina S. Volkova — Dr.Sci. (Arts), Dr.Sci. (Philosophy), Cand.Sci. (Philology), Professor at the Department of Music Upbringing and Education.

Информация об авторе:

П. С. Волкова — доктор искусствоведения, доктор философских наук, кандидат филологических наук, профессор кафедры музыкального воспитания и образования.

Received / Поступила в редакцию: 22.01.2024

Revised / Одобрена после рецензирования: 06.02.2024

Accepted / Принята к публикации: 07.02.2024