

METAPHYSICS, AESTHETICS, OR EPISTEMOLOGY? A CONCEPTUAL HISTORY OF *TVORCHESTVO* IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY RUSSIAN THOUGHT

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In the novel *Fathers and Children* (*Ottsy i deti*, 1862), Turgenev lets Bazarov describe the not-so-good old days as follows: “[W]e were busy talking a lot of nonsense, fussing about this and that kind of art and unconscious creativity and parliamentarianism and a legal profession and devil knows what, when the real business of life was about one’s daily bread” (52). The vocabulary cited by Bazarov is presented as talk of the past, in which the idea of “unconscious creativity” (“bessoznatel’noe tvorchestvo”) was prominent (Sorokin 397). Identifying this terminology with the generation of the 1840s, Turgenev’s Bazarov subjects it to critique and mockery.

This suggests that in the mid-nineteenth century, the notion of *tvorchestvo* (creation, creativity) was not only in frequent use in Russian thought, but even considered, at least by its most radical wing, old-fashioned and outdated. This contrasts markedly with the early twentieth century, when it reemerged as a key concept for instance in the famous 1909 collection *Landmarks* (*Vekhi*) (Aizlewood and Coates 30). For one of its contributors, Nikolai Berdiaev, it was a fundamental philosophical problem, which he sought to define in what is considered by many his most important book: *The Meaning of Creativity* (*Smysl tvorchestva*, 1916). The aim of this article is to account for the key moments in the history of this concept before Berdiaev and other Silver Age philosophers. It analyzes its origins and subsequent semantic transformations in nineteenth-century Russian philosophical discourse—up to and including the philosophy of Vladimir Solov’ev. In addition, the article makes the claim that this story of the concept’s development will enable a deeper understanding of the formation of Russian philosophical discourse as it took place in the nineteenth century and the role played by cultural transfer in this process. By

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focusing on the discontinuities and semantic shifts of conceptual history, it shows that what is often regarded as key topics of Russian thought are neither specifically national traits nor imported ideas exclusively, but rather the product of conceptual transmission itself, i.e., new meanings and hybrid forms arising from the transformation and refraction of ideas (Evtuhov 1; Aust, Vulpius, and Miller 9). That translation of this type means gain as well as loss may be self-evident at this stage of the discussion of cultural transfer, but the implication of this insight for Russian intellectual history and its intercultural character, I would argue, still needs to be explored in greater detail.

Vinogradov's History of the Word and Concept "Tvorchestvo"

In the 1940s, the linguist Viktor Vinogradov wrote a short overview of the history of the word *tvorchestvo* in nineteenth-century Russian, a relatively short research paper that has been included in his posthumous book *History of Words (Istoriia slov)* (680–82). Vinogradov suggested that the term was coined at the turn of the nineteenth century, while the first occurrence that he pointed to is from Admiral Shishkov; this Archaist (*arkhaist*),¹ while not using it directly himself, characteristically complained in 1815 about the flourishing of neologisms in Russian, among which he included the term *tvorchestvo*. However, the term did not appear in a Russian dictionary until that of Vladimir Dal' (early 1860s). Dal' defined it as "creation [...] as an active quality" ("kak deiatel'noe svoistvo") (4: 405). *Tvorchestvo* is here understood not so much as the creation of something, but rather as the ability to create. By contrast, the historical definition of Vinogradov—"the process of creation or production of any cultural, historical value, and also the result of this process"—does not accentuate to the same extent creation and production as a specific ability. As will become clear below, creativity as a precondition for creation was central to the understanding of *tvorchestvo* among Russian thinkers of the first half of the nineteenth century.

Moreover, Vinogradov was inaccurate when he suggested that this neologism was a translation of the German notion of *Schöpfung* ("creation"). This may seem self-evident, but it was not something that Vinogradov was able to demonstrate, and, as discussed below, *tvorchestvo* was not a word coined in order to translate the notion of *Schöpfung*, but had other sources.² However, he was correct in saying that it was "coined on a German pattern" ("na nemetskii lad").

In light of Shishkov's criticism, one might expect that the notion of *tvorchestvo* would figure prominently in the writings of his antagonist Nikolai Karamzin and his followers, but that does not appear to be the case. Vino-

1. For the term, see Tynianov's *Arkhaisty i novatory*.

2. The notion of *Schöpfung* does play a role in the late Schelling (Hüntelmann), but this was a philosophical problem different from those that the early Russian Schellingians were preoccupied with.

gradov suggests that it came into active use in the writings of the Wisdom Lovers circle of the 1820s and 1830s only, and he goes on to quote a 1833 letter from Nikolai Stankevich, a text also known as “My Metaphysics” (“Moia metafizika”), which is, apart from Shishkov’s polemics, the earliest concrete reference provided by Vinogradov. In Stankevich’s text we read that “the life of nature is uninterrupted productivity [*tvorchestvo*]. [...] Nature is Energy, Life, Production [*tvorchestvo*]” (Stankevich, *Proza* 149). This quote is an important indication as to the origin of this concept. *Tvorchestvo* as used by Stankevich here corresponds to Schelling’s notions of *Produktion* and *produktive Tätigkeit* (productive activity), as characteristic of both nature and human activity, art included (Schelling, *Werke* 36–40 [§3], 312–29). In his text, Stankevich emphasizes both the self-productivity of nature and its basic identity with humankind, an identity that constitutes an organic whole of consciousness and unconsciousness.

This suggests that the origin of the Russian notion of *tvorchestvo* is Schelling’s ideas and their transfer to Russia and the Russian language. However, by the time Stankevich wrote his text Schelling had been influential in Russian intellectual life for nearly three decades, and this means that the concept of *tvorchestvo* was the result of a relatively long process of coining the equivalents of foreign concepts and not a term that was immediately available. At the same time, the history of this concept demonstrates that it was not what Goethe in his famous description of the translation process called the final, “perfect identity with the original” (qtd. Deane-Cox 2–5). Instead of perfection through retranslation, retranslation may generate new meanings and even new philosophical problems. Meanwhile, the history of *tvorchestvo* illustrates another of Goethe’s ideas, namely that of world literature as a network made up of the “traffic in ideas between peoples” (qtd. Damrosch 3) and that Russian thought inevitably seems to involve more than just one context (Baer and Witt 5).

Russian Schellingianism (Vellanskii, Pavlov, Galich)

“Russian Schellingianism,” which I define here as the reception of, transfer to Russian culture, and adaptation of central, but selective aspects of Schelling’s philosophy in Russia,³ was in the early nineteenth century an important current at Russian universities, despite the increasingly hostile attitude of the authorities to German philosophy, in particular in the 1820s. The first significant Schellingians were Danilo Vellanskii and Mikhail Pavlov, who both were natural scientists. It was above all Schelling’s *Naturphiloso-*

3. The inevitable selectivity of cultural transfer has traditionally not been emphasized in studies of “Schelling in Russia” (Setschkareff; Pustarnakov). A Russian expert on the issue, Zakhar Kamenskii (in Pustarnakov 209–365), conceptualizes Russian Schellingianism as a “school” that is “congruent” with the young Schelling (354). The 1995 *Russian Philosophy: A Dictionary* is more to the point when it defines Russian Schellingianism as not a repetition of Schelling but a “creative interpretation” of his views (Maslin 614).

phie with its organic perspective on nature that attracted them. Aesthetic issues became more prominent among Russian Schellingians of the 1820s only, in particular among the members of the Wisdom Lovers circle, most notably Vladimir Odoevskii and Dmitrii Venevitinov (Karenovics 154, 186).

Having studied with Schelling in Würzburg, the biologist Vellanskii published his first work in 1805, *Introduction to Medicine as a Foundational Science* (*Proliuziia k meditsine kak osnovatel'noi nauke*). The text is not so much about medicine as it is about medicine's philosophical foundations. Marking the beginning of Schellingianism in Russia, Vellanskii outlines an idealistic system of knowledge intended to provide the ground for all kinds of scientific pursuit (Kamenskii in Pustarnakov 209). He proclaims the unity of nature and reason, as manifesting itself in an organism that is both cause and effect, producer and product. Of particular interest for our purposes here are the terms with which Vellanskii rendered the ideas of Schelling (and Spinoza): *tvoriashchee* (creative or productive) and *tvorimoe* (created, produced) (Vellanskii 11, 23, 40, 49).⁴

The physicist Pavlov was more interested in aesthetics than was Vellanskii, and was therefore arguably more important in spreading Schellingian ideas to a broader field of non-academics, not least because of his journal *Athenaeum* (*Atenei*), which came out in the years 1828–1830 (Bach 27). Before this, in 1825, he had published in Odoevskii's journal *Mnemosyne* (*Mnemoszina*) a text called “On the Means for Examining Nature,” which explored the concept of nature in thoroughly Schellingian terms. He defined nature as “uninterrupted productivity” (“nepreryvnaia proizvodimost'”) (Pavlov, “O sposobakh” 5). Three years later, he published another shorter article on aesthetics in his own *Athenaeum*. Still in full accordance with Schelling, he conceived here of nature and art as analogous products. He defined art as “new nature” created by human beings. Human beings become thereby analogous to God as the creator of nature. The “new nature” of art is achieved by means of “elements” of productive nature (*priroda tvorcheskaiia*). Notably, Pavlov reserved the latter term—*tvorcheskaiia*—for nature, while defining works of art as either *tvoreniia* or *proizvedeniia* (Pavlov, “Razlichie” 365–66).

The professor of philosophy at St. Petersburg University, Aleksandr Galich, who also had met with Schelling in Germany, made use of the same terms, and yet differently. In his *Attempts at a Science of the Beautiful* (*Opyt nauki iziashchnogo*, 1824), Galich discusses the creation (*tvorenie*) of art in general, or of specific species of art such as music (§6, §59). As typical of this period, Galich did not use *tvorenie* as an independent noun, except for when referring to (God's) Creation, or “visible creation.” Otherwise, he wrote of the “cre-

4. Alternative terms in Vellanskii's book are the participles *proizvodiashchee* (“producing”) and *sozidaemoe* (“created”). See also the German translation with key Russian concepts included in Bielfeldt 364–99 (369, 374, 382, 386). For the main points of her analysis of Vellanskii as referred to above, see in particular 49, 57, 245–53, 265. Another German translation can be found in Bach 83–143.

ation of human hands" (§33), or the artist's "creations" in the plural (§60). In addition, however, we encounter the adjective *tvorcheskii* in phrases not only related to nature (as in Pavlov), but also to art and in particular the artist: "creative talent," "creative fantasy," the "artists' creative power." This creative human being is a genius, a notion that likewise figures prominently in Galich's treatise. The "genius of the artist" is "part of that great divine spirit that produces everything, penetrates everything and operates in everything according to the same law, though in different degrees of strength and clarity" (§59). The genius is a "free and creative force" ("svobodnaia tvorcheskaiia sila") (§69).

It should be noted here that idea of the genius, the exceptional artist, was not entirely new, but had been disseminated by Russian authors and critics since the late eighteenth century. We encounter it in Nikolai Karamzin's *Letters of a Russian Traveller* (*Pis'ma russkogo puteshestvennika*, 1789–90); in treatises by Gavriila Derzhavin and in essays by Vasilii Zhukovskii (1800s). Zhukovskii explicitly emphasized the significance in art of the "creative spirit" of the "creative genius" (Kahn; Neuhauser 147; Zhukovskii 82). It was this usage that Galich incorporated into his Schellingian aesthetics, which accords art a central position in the overall system of *Naturphilosophie*, but puts actually less emphasis on the activity of the artist as such. Despite Galich's references to the genius in his 1824 treatise and elsewhere, it was art and the identity of mind and nature that above all were central to both the young Schelling and in Russian Schellingianism of the 1820s, while the activity of the human artist as such was more peripheral.⁵ This tendency corresponded to Schelling's own philosophy, where the notion of genius, while prominent, was in general subordinated to art itself, famously defined by Schelling in *System of Transcendental Idealism* (*System des transscendentalen Idealismus*) as "the only true and eternal organ and document of philosophy, which always and continuously documents what philosophy cannot represent externally" (qtd. Bowie, *Schelling* 53). Thus, what first and foremost mattered to Schelling was the cognitive function of art and its ability to display "the absolute" (Guyer 38–56; Schmidt 390). Odoevskii likewise emphasized above all the identity of human productivity with the "products of nature" ("proizvedeniia prirody") (Odoevskii 179).

Thus, we have so far encountered a series of terms for Schelling's idea of productivity, which point towards Stankevich's use of *tvorchestvo* in the early 1830s. While the writings discussed above contain several aesthetic ideas, these are part of an overall metaphysics, a philosophy of nature. Stankevich's letter was likewise an exposition of "his metaphysics" rather than his aesthetics. In spite of the metaphysical usage by Stankevich, however, *tvorchestvo*

5. I take as a confirmation of this claim Karenovics's clear overview of the philosophy and aesthetics of the Wisdom Lovers, where the notion of the genius is not a central issue (185–219).

would gradually become above all an aesthetic concept. A seminal contribution in this respect was made by the literary critic and later professor of aesthetics in Moscow, Nikolai Nadezhdin.

From Schelling to Kant (Nadezhdin)

Nadezhdin's writings on literature and aesthetics from the late 1820s on represent a new and seminal phase in the history of the concept of *tvorchestvo*. In one of his earliest texts, "Literary Anxieties for the Upcoming Year" ("Literaturnye opaseniia za budushchii god," 1828), published in *The Messenger of Europe* under the pseudonym of Nikodim Nadoumko, we encounter a fictionalized author ("I") who is critical of the romantic tendencies of his contemporaries. He is soon visited by his friend, the poet Tlenskii, who represents the opposite view:

At present, when the genius is shedding off its rusty shoes of scholastic slavery and classical pedantism, hovering triumphantly like an eagle about the mountain lands of eternal ideals; when poetry, this daughter of unconditional freedom and independent inspiration, has ceased to confine itself to the imposed duty of providing poor copies of nature, but rather competes or even rivals it, fully justifying the name carried by it—*tvorchestvo*; [...]. (Nadezhdin, *Kritika* 50)⁶

Nadezhdin's Tlenskii makes use here of the neologism *tvorchestvo* in order to describe original, non-imitative art as equal to nature and the activity of the genius that brings it about. A work of art obeys only the "laws of the highest freedom and self-defining creativity" ("samoobraztsovoe tvorchestvo") (Nadezhdin, *Kritika* 51). Nadoumko, however, remains skeptical, and he quotes Horace and other classical authorities as a defense against Tlenskii. Nevertheless, even he evokes both Kant's and Schelling's definitions of a genius, though in support for his own case. According to Schelling's *System of Transcendental Idealism* as rendered here, the genius is the "harmonious merging in the human being of the endless with the final, freedom with necessity," while Kant's idea of the genius is taken to mean the "natural gift of the soul, through which nature provides art with rules" (Nadezhdin 54, 63). Nature, as referred to by both Schelling and Kant, is essential to the classicist in this conversation.

In this dialogue, *tvorchestvo* is associated with a (too) romantic stance, toward which Nadezhdin is apparently critical, judging by the name of Tlenskii (Decay) that he gave to the defender of this term. In this context, *tvorchestvo* is a polemical concept applied in a struggle for aesthetic doctrines. At the same time, the classicist Nadoumko clearly endorses both Kant's and Schelling's

6. I will not make the claim here that it was Nadezhdin who invented this concept, but he was indeed one of the first to use it in a historically significant way. Another example of the 1820s might be its occurrence in a text by Aleksandr Bestuzhev-Marlinskii entitled "On Romanticism," where he opposed it to imitation, stating that "without creativity there is no poetry" (Bestuzhev in Shchipanov 484). However, Soviet scholars' dating of this text in its entirety to 1826 is questionable (Shchipanov 707).

notion of the genius. Having proposed a synthesis of classicism and romanticism in his 1830 doctoral dissertation on the concept of Romanticism, Nadezhdin returned to the genius in his *Lectures on the Theory of the Fine Arts* (*Lektsii po teorii iziashchnykh iskusstv*) of the first half of the 1830s. Here he asserted, without referring to any particular philosopher, “The work of a genius is new, original; consequently, it is the force of creativity [*on sila tvorchestva*], and creativity presupposes the energy of ideas and of images: reason and fantasy” (Nadezhdin, “Lektsii” 504). Creativity enables the combination of freedom and necessity, an idea that Nadezhdin explicitly attributes to Schelling. However, that a work of art involves both reason and imagination testifies also to a strong impact from Kant, to whom Nadezhdin now proceeds: “According to Kant, nature gives art rules through the creativity of the genius” (Nadezhdin, “Lektsii” 505). What Nadezhdin does here is to paraphrase § 46 of Kant’s *Critique of Judgment* (*Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 1790), which means that *tvorchestvo* as he uses it is a rendering of *Gemüthsanlage*, which in turn is Kant’s German equivalent for *ingenium*.⁷ To be a genius thus means the ability to create according to one’s own rules. Today, *tvorchestvo* would hardly be regarded an accurate rendering of *Gemüthsanlagel/ingenium*, but this makes it all the more clear what was meant by the concept of *tvorchestvo* in this context. It refers to the artistic genius who creates according his/her own rules as if they were of nature. The genius does not imitate.

In contrast to the German and Latin terms, which describe a quality and faculty of the exceptional mind, *tvorchestvo* adds the dimension of creation and creativity. Art for Nadezhdin consists of both “intentional inspiration” (“myshlennoe odushevlenie”) and “active work” (“deiatel’naia rabota”) (Nadezhdin, *Kritika* 313). It combines ability with activity, or, in Aristotelian terms, potentiality with actuality. In addition, Nadezhdin suggests a parallel between art and divine creation, a meaning that seems to be inherent in the notion itself, since “creator” (*tvorets*) is a central concept. In his 1836 article “Europeanism and Nationality in Relation to Russian *Belles Lettres*,” the activity of the creative artist is defined in explicitly religious terms as the “living energy of the [human] spirit” that penetrates the “dead sound of the word,” a spirit that in turn testifies to its “purest image and nearly-identical likeness to the creator” (Nadezhdin 399). According to Nadezhdin, the Creator created us creative. A central issue in this article was that creativity was at the same time individual and national: the implied conclusion was that Russia should not imitate the literature of other nations.

Through the notion of *tvorchestvo*, Nadezhdin, I would argue, created a synthesis of selected aspects of the aesthetic doctrines of Kant and Schelling,

7. “*Genie* ist die angeborne Gemüthsanlage (*ingenium*), *durch welche* die Natur der Kunst die Regel gibt” (Kant, *Kritik* 241–42; emphasis in original); “*Genius* is the inborn predisposition of the mind (*ingenium*) *through which* nature gives the rule to art” (Kant, *Critique* 186).

by virtue of which the activity of the artist gained a more prominent place than it had in the earlier writings of Russian Schellingianism, as well as even in Schelling himself. While Schelling also saw genius as that which is not bound by rules, art as produced by a genius was for him first and foremost an “emanation of the absolute” (Schelling, *Art* 19; see also 84–85, 93). The creative principle for Schelling was nature itself, while according to Kant the incarnation of genius, the artist, creates according to rules *as if* they were of nature. Kant emphasized the free play between reason and imagination, while for Schelling, the subject was more decentered (Ostarcic 89; Yates 60; Bowie, *Aesthetics* 111; Guyer 51).

The notion of *tvorchestvo* as we come across it in Russian aesthetic writings of the 1830s belongs to the vocabulary of what Charles Taylor (368–93) has termed “expressivism,” a key feature of modern European thought from Herder onward. Expressivism means that what you manifestly see is an instance of an underlying entity, be it nature, the human being, or the nation. Meanwhile, the Russian term emphasizes not only (great) art as such, but also how it is made possible by the activity and not least the originality of the artist via freedom from inherited rules.

As noted above, Russian literature had been familiar with the notion of genius and its carrier, the genius, at least since the turn of the nineteenth century. Like their colleagues in Western Europe, Russian Romantic writers increasingly contrasted the imagination of the genius with the law-bound rules of classicism. The literary critic and poet Petr Viazemskii wrote in 1827 about Pushkin as a “creator [*tvorets*]” and his work as “creation [*tvoreniie*],” both distinguished by “talent,” “exceptionalism,” “originality,” “absence of imitation,” and both constantly evolving in response to their times. By 1830 Viazemskii had begun to use *tvorchestvo*, too, for instance when criticizing the French poet Alphonse de Lamartine for not displaying any “imagination and creativity” (111–12, 145). Galich, the proponent of the genius idea, likewise began making use of this neologism in his later writings, as we can see in his final work, *Lexicon of Philosophical Issues* (*Leksikon filosofskikh predmetov*, 1845), in the entry for “Artist”: “The original character of a work of art presupposes natural creativity [*samorodnoe tvorchestvo*] in the Artist—the quality in a genius [*genial'nost'*] which is inherent in him as a disposition and to which freedom gives development and growth” (Galich, *Leksikon* 35–36). Galich’s *Lexicon* remained unfinished, and his list of entries reached neither “Genius” nor *tvorchestvo*.

In examples like these, the neologism of *tvorchestvo* represents the emergence of what Reinhart Koselleck has called a “collective singular” (76). This new term is never used in the plural (as *tvoreniia* often was) and it is not dependent on a qualification (“whose?”). Rather, it is an independent noun that refers to a manifold of practices and phenomena by having several potential references: production, creation, creativity, work, art in all its varieties. More-

over, *tvorchestvo* emphasizes originality as a precondition for great art and thus for historical development, implying the importance of continually new original creations, as we saw in Viazemskii's description of Pushkin's oeuvre. Creativity was an imperative, and the notion itself carried hereby metahistorical meanings by implicitly referring to the future. In this way *tvorchestvo* is part of the vocabulary of modernity.

The Creative Personality (Belinskii)

In the 1820s, the Wisdom Lovers had been instrumental in disseminating Schelling in Russia and promoting philosophy more generally. In the subsequent decade a new center emerged in Moscow around Nikolai Stankevich. Stankevich, whose literary and philosophical output would remain modest, came to Schelling via cultural figures such as Pavlov and Nadezhdin. His own circle included, among others, Vissarion Belinskii, Konstantin Aksakov, Mikhail Bakunin, Timofei Granovskii, Mikhail Katkov, and Ivan Turgenev, as well as several women, such as the Bakunin sisters (Brown 8–9).

Initially, Stankevich defined nature as “uninterrupted productivity [*tvorchestvo*]” (Stankevich, *Proza* 149). In addition, he also used the notion of *tvorchestvo* to describe art. In one of his letters to Bakunin from 1835 Stankevich proclaims, still clearly inspired by Schelling, “History is a second nature [*vtoraia priroda*], created by the human being [*tvorimaia chelovekom*]. In art, in artistic creativity [*iziashchnoe tvorchestvo*], the human being is equalized with the absolute; it returns to the primordial identity, a conscious creature creates without consciousness” (*Perepiska* 585). Thus, *tvorchestvo* as used by Stankevich refers on the one hand to the productivity of nature; on the other to human productivity, be it in art or history. Nature, history, art are analogous activities that make up “the absolute,” or what Stankevich calls *vse* (*das All*) (*Proza* 150).

Whereas the enthusiasm for Schelling, in contrast to Germany, did not fade in Russia, the interest in the system of *Naturphilosophie* and the absolute was gradually replaced by a focus on the subject and its self-consciousness. Nature, while still important, became rather the arena for developing subjectivity and personality (Städtke 36–37, 43). “Nature is the stairs that the self climbs toward full human reason,” as Stankevich puts it in the letter referred to above. The same holds true not least for the literary critic Belinskii. He would remain indebted to Schelling's organicist ideas throughout his life, while from early on emphasizing above all the creativity (*tvorchestvo*) of the human being. This interest survived his transition from Schellingianism to Hegelianism in the mid 1830s to early forms of French socialism in the 1840s (Offord).

The central text for examining Belinskii's contribution to the development of the concept of *tvorchestvo* is his 1835 review of Gogol's short stories and novellas (*O russkoi povesti i povestiakh Gogolia*). Here he distinguished between “ideal” and “real poetry,” a pair of terms clearly inspired by Schiller's

“naive” and “sentimental poetry.” While ideal poetry “recreates” (*peresozdaet*) the poet’s own ideas and ideals, real poetry “reproduces” (*vosproizvodit*) reality in a more truthful way. Moreover, they succeeded one another historically, so that Belinskii’s own age is the age of “real poetry.” While Belinskii appears to have a preference for the latter type, both types are also said to “reproduce life” (Belinskii 1: 262; Terras 139–42). The idea of art as “reproduction” (*vosproizvedenie*) would remain crucial to Belinskii across the periods mentioned above (Offord).

Moreover, when Belinskii proceeds to the notion of *tvorchestvo* we see that in any case ideas play a seminal role—also in “real poetry.” Reality must be perceived through ideas. Thus, both ideal and real poetry presuppose the creativity of the artist. Belinskii goes on to provide an explicit outline of the nature of genuine *tvorchestvo*, which is without any clear precedent in Russian thought. Literary creativity, according to Belinskii, consists of three stages or “acts.” The first act is made up of what he describes by the French, allegedly untranslatable term *concevoir*, “to imagine” or “conceive of.” At first, the artist senses ideas, without “seeing” them distinctly in his mind. Gradually, they become clearer and more concrete, and evolve into an ideal or image. In the case of Shakespeare, for instance, an initially vague vision of the idea of jealousy takes the form of the image and character of Othello. We have now reached the second act of *tvorchestvo*. The final act occurs when this concrete idea is given a specific aesthetic form, though Belinskii is soon to add that this third act is not as important as the first two, since it is an inevitable consequence of the two. Thus, creativity is first and foremost about imagination. It originates in the “mystic clairvoyance” of a “somnambulant” state. Here, the artist does not merely “copy” the literary characters from reality, but “perceives” them—they are created in the artist’s soul “by means, as it were, of inspiration [*naitie*] from some sort of higher, mysterious energy” (Belinskii 1: 285–87).

For Belinskii, the creative act is a “gift of nature,” a “great mystery” and a moment of “great sacred action.” This led him to explicate what he held to be the “main laws of creativity”: it is “purposeless with a purpose, unconscious but with consciousness, free but bound by necessity” (Belinskii 1: 288–89). These “laws” combine the aesthetics of Schelling (art being both conscious and unconscious) with Kant (purposiveness without a purpose) (Fasting 131). While the unconscious does play a significant role in Belinskii’s conception of the initial stage, as we have seen above, artistic creativity also involves a conscious, active dimension in the reworking of the initial “mystic clairvoyance,” which testifies to the impact of Kant’s idea of the free play of reason with imagination. As in Nadezhdin, this activity is presented in a religiously colored language. Artistic creation is “sacred action” and a “poetic revelation,” while poetic ideas and ideals are “heavenly mysteries” (Belinskii 1: 285–88).

In Belinskii’s essay on Gogol’, *tvorchestvo* refers to an activity that enables

literary output of high value. In his Pushkin articles written a decade later (*Sochineniia Aleksandra Pushkina*, 11 articles), Belinskii likewise emphasized “those works of Pushkin that bear the imprint of his own unique creativity [*samobytnoe tvorchestvo*],” i.e., the process preceding his manifest works. This creativity is what literary criticism should focus on. It should aim at entering the world of the author’s *tvorchestvo* by means of empathy, which in turn will lead him or her to the artist’s personality (*lichnost'*). And this truly individual, unique personality becomes in turn an expression of something common or general (*obshchee*). *Tvorchestvo* as grounded in *lichnost'* ultimately is the “source” of the universal (Belinskii 7: 305–11).

Belinskii’s literary criticism represents a key event in the emergence of a Russian philosophical discourse centered on personality and creativity. According to Nikolai Plotnikov, Belinskii’s notion of *lichnost'* was limited to historical personalities and their aesthetic production. This was in contrast to Hegel, to whom this discourse was otherwise indebted, where “personality” was discussed in relation to a broader range of fields (phenomenology, justice, religion, etc.). For Belinskii *lichnost'* was an imperative and ideal—something that one had to become (Plotnikov 73–74). Although he also saw artistic creativity as an expression of nationality, it was a fundamentally aristocratic notion. Progress was enabled by literary innovation and originality by the select few, by those in possession of “enthusiasm” (*paφος*), which Belinskii described in his Pushkin articles as an energy stemming from a poetic idea that in turn enables the creative reproduction of that idea and the expression of the artist’s personality (Belinskii 7:132; Smith, “Anagogical” 209).

Belinskii’s philosophy of creativity and creation is a vision of a synthesis of ideas with reality through the originality or original efforts of the artist, the genius. While indebted to the organicist thought of Schelling, it emphasizes the artistic process, too, and not just the work of art itself, an aspect that I would argue is inherent in the notion of *tvorchestvo* and its emphasis on activity, as it had been previously used by Nadezhdin under the impact of Kant. To conceptualize the artistic process was crucial for Belinskii, who saw literature as a vehicle for developing society further. Herein was the true significance of Pushkin and Gogol' for Belinskii: by providing Russia with an original literature, they provided it also with a history. In Belinskii’s writings, the acceleration of time so characteristic of modernity is clearly present—both as an experience and as an imperative (Koselleck 19). Since literature plays a pivotal role in bringing history forward, art must be innovatory and never imitate inherited rules. Imitation and copying prevent progress. In his review of *Russian literature for 1843* (*Russkaia literatura v 1843 godu*), *tvorchestvo* as founded on both fantasy and mind (*um*) is contrasted with imitation (Belinskii 7: 77–78). Creativity for Belinskii was an original and yet truthful representation of reality according to a set of ideas. Thus, it represented a classic aesthetic problem: how to make ideas concrete, sensible and trustworthy.

Creativity as Perception (Solov'ev)

The period between Belinskii and Vladimir Solov'ev (the 1850s and 60s) provides no significant examples, to this author's knowledge, of new meanings attributed to the concept of *tvorchestvo*, seemingly leaving this conceptual history with a gap. As indicated by the reference to Turgenev's Bazarov at the beginning of the article, the realist aesthetics of the radicals of the 1860s focused on other aspects than the genius creating it. For Nikolai Dobroliubov, the idea of "creativity" in terms of "imagination" was merely a relic of Romanticism. From a different angle, the journalist Mikhail Katkov likewise wrote in 1856 that "we use the very word *tvorchestvo* merely habitually without attributing any significance to it" (qtd. Sorokin 397).

A new significant way of using *tvorchestvo* emerged in Vladimir Solov'ev's writings. True, *tvorchestvo* is at first sight not among the most important concepts in the philosophy of Vladimir Solov'ev either, and the scholarly literature has, for obvious reasons, to date, focused mainly on other concepts, be it "Divine Humanity," "All-Unity," or "Sophia."⁸ I am not making the claim here that *tvorchestvo* is of equal importance, but an analysis of the meanings Solov'ev attributed to it and purposes for which he used it will give us a broader understanding of his philosophy. It will also show that Solov'ev does not merely represent some (missing) link in the "history of concepts" (*Begriffsgeschichte*) between, say, Belinskii and Berdiaev. This is also a history of conceptual discontinuities, since Solov'ev used the concept in quite idiosyncratic ways that were seemingly not taken over by subsequent thinkers.

The first text by Solov'ev in which *tvorchestvo* plays a central role is *Philosophical Principles of Integral Knowledge* (*Filosofskie nachala tsel'nogo znaniia*, 1877). The work, which remained unfinished, opens by foreshadowing a three-fold study on knowledge, ethics and aesthetics as the three "main forms of the all-human organism." By implication, Solov'ev took over the three-fold division of philosophy known from Kant as the starting point of this discipline, schematizing the three "forms" or "spheres" as follows (1: 264):

1: The sphere of creation (<i>tvorchestvo</i>)	2: The sphere of knowledge	3: The sphere of practical activity
Subject/foundation: feeling	Subject/foundation: thinking	Subject/foundation: will
Object/principle: beauty	Object/principle: truth	Object/principle: common good
The first, absolute level: Mysticism	The first, absolute level: Theology	The first, absolute level: Spiritual community, church
The second, formal level: Fine arts	The second, formal level: Abstract philosophy	The second, formal level: Political community, state
The third, material level: Technical art	The third, material level: Positive science	The third, material level: Economic community

8. Recent exceptions include Smith, *Soloviev* 215–20 and Coates 141–42. On the theme of creativity in Solov'ev's later writings, see Crone 16–54.

According to this Kantian-Solov'evian scheme, knowledge is based on thinking and aims at truth. Practical activity is grounded in will and aims at the common good. Finally, creation (*tvorchestvo*) is grounded in feeling and aims at beauty.

Within each “sphere of human life,” moreover, Solov'ev distinguishes among three different levels: the material, the formal and the absolute. In the sphere of practical activity, the material level is the economic unity of production and reproduction; the formal one is the political society or the state; the absolute level is the spiritual community, or the church. Their synthesis makes up “free theocracy.” In the field of knowledge, the material level is made up of science; the formal level of philosophy; the absolute of theology. Altogether, this is “free theosophy.” And in artistic creation, the material domain consists of “technical art” (for instance architecture) and the formal domain of “fine art” (painting, sculpture, literature, music). So far, *tvorchestvo* as used by Solov'ev seemingly means “artistic creation,” or aesthetics in a traditional sense. Several formulations and examples likewise suggest that Solov'ev is primarily thinking of art. As for the third, absolute level of creation, however, Solov'ev goes beyond the domain of what is traditionally understood as art, defining the absolute level of creation as *mysticism*—the mystic contemplation of the transcendental world of beauty. This represents the ultimate task of “free theurgy,” i.e., what the entire sphere of creativity aims at. The concept of theurgy was adopted from Neoplatonist thought, where it refers to the kinds of human activity that establish contact with the divine, but Solov'ev gave it new and idiosyncratic meanings by connecting it to artistic creativity.

Thus, mysticism is an activity described by Solov'ev as *creative*, as creativity. It possesses a “creative character” (Solov'ev 1: 264). At the same time, by initiating us into the transcendental world, it inevitably represents also a form of knowledge, provided by our active, creative perception of it. This suggests, in turn, that aesthetics for Solov'ev is not necessarily confined to the domain of art in a traditional sense. It is rooted in feeling, and is therefore, in keeping with the original meaning of the concept of aesthetics (from Greek: *aisthetikos*), first and foremost about sensation and perception. That this was how Solov'ev understood aesthetics is confirmed by his later article on the “General Meaning of Art” (“Obshchii smysl iskusstva,” 1890), according to which beauty is the “embodiment in sensible forms of the same ideal content,” i.e., the good and the true (6: 76). It should be mentioned that Solov'ev in this statement did not refer to Alexander Baumgarten, who is often considered the “founder” of the discipline of aesthetics, and who defined it as the “science of sensual cognition” (qtd. Hammermeister 7).

Solov'ev goes on to proclaim that of the three general spheres of philosophy the leading significance (*pervenstvuiushchee znachenie*) belongs to the sphere of *tvorchestvo*, within which, as noted, mysticism is the most impor-

tant, the “absolute” level. Solov'ev does not directly explain why this sphere is more significant than the other ones, but he makes the suggestion that mysticism is more fundamental since it stands in “direct, close connection with the reality of the absolute primary ground [*pervonachalo*], with divine life” (1: 265). And yet Solov'ev does not categorize this as knowledge, but as creativity. Why? In my interpretation, it is not because it is not knowledge—it is knowledge, too, but it is not the traditional, scientific kind of knowledge. It is knowledge acquired by different means.

The notion of mysticism reoccurs in the first chapter of *Philosophical Principles*, though here not as the absolute level of creation (*tvorchestvo*), but as a kind of transcendental philosophy that opens up the absolute to us, or “that which absolutely is” (“*istinno-sushchee*”) and which enables philosophical thought. The absolute for Solov'ev means the existent, and the existent is accessed through mysticism. Mysticism here is defined as intuition—not in an unreflective, spontaneous or esoteric sense, but in the form of intellectual contemplation or *intellektuelle Anschauung* (*umstvennoe sozertsanie*).⁹ Drawing on empirical input and concepts, intellectual contemplation initiates us into the absolute. This is also what art does, and this means that mysticism in the form of intellectual contemplation transgresses the border between the spheres of creation and knowledge, art and philosophy, and unites or merges the two.

By emphasizing the complementary roles of philosophy and art, Solov'ev clearly follows Schelling. However, that also our philosophical contemplation of the absolute is “creative” is, to my knowledge, his own, idiosyncratic way of framing it. I should point out here that Solov'ev does not say explicitly that (transcendental) philosophy in terms of intellectual contemplation is creative (art remains his main example), but it is suggested by the parallel he establishes between philosophy and art through his notion of mysticism, which Solov'ev defined as creative at the outset.

Intellectual contemplation is also contemplation of ideas, the universal forms of that which is empirically observable. This is the “material of true philosophy” (Solov'ev 1: 316). The implication of Solov'ev's terminology appears to be that we are not passive recipients of ideas; in the process of intellectual contemplation (in art or thought) we co-create them, so to speak. This means, in turn, that creativity is not only an aesthetic issue (however broadly defined), but also an epistemological one. Solov'ev's terminology, as drawn from his aesthetic discourse, suggests that our perceptions are constitutive of

9. *Sozertsanie* (*Anschauung*) is rendered in this article as “contemplation” rather than “intuition,” since the cognitive processes described by Solov'ev are precisely processes. While intuition is indeed an aspect of what Solov'ev writes about, in particular in the domain of art, the term evokes associations to something immediate. When it comes to philosophical *sozertsanie*, therefore, I find that contemplation better captures what Solov'ev writes about than the term “intuition.” I am grateful to one of the anonymous reviewers for drawing my attention to the translation of this term.

the transcendental world, or the world as such. It points to the complementary character of aesthetics and epistemology.

In Solov'ev's subsequent work *Lectures on Divine Humanity* (*Chteniia o bogochelovechestve*, 1878), the notion of *tvorchestvo* plays a marginal role. However, it adds to our understanding of Solov'ev's vision of human creativity in that it elaborates on intellectual contemplation as the knowledge of ideas. The moment when Solov'ev brings up the notion of intellectual contemplation in this work is itself important: it is in his account of the history of world religions. Solov'ev defines "religion," or "the religious," as the human encounter with, and experience of, the absolute, which in this text—in contrast to the more secularized language of the other texts by Solov'ev discussed in this part—is explicitly identified with God. Solov'ev sees the divine principle as having been gradually discovered by human beings in the course of history. The first chapter of this history, which was the first step forward from the naïve religion of nature, was Buddhism and its rejection of the world, seen as purposeless and evil. It was dialectically succeeded by the Greek worldview and its positive celebration of cosmos, including its discovery of the creation of ideas in art and philosophy, and it is here that Solov'ev introduces the notion of intellectual contemplation, both as a theoretical framework and as a human achievement at a certain historical stage. There followed the monotheism of Judaism, which approached God as a living, unconditioned, but also undifferentiated, personality—a God of pure will. Via Neo-Platonism, there finally emerged Christianity, which sublated the Jewish and Greek worldviews, the abstract personality and abstract ideas, through the concept of Logos, as embodied by Christ. From this moment on, history becomes the process of Divine Humanity, the interaction between and unification of God and humanity.

Religious development for Solov'ev was "a positive and objective process, a real interaction between God and humanity—a divine-human process" (Solovyov 34). In the historical scheme drawn up by Solov'ev we see that the human contribution to the gradual discovery of the divine truth is, to a certain extent, constitutive of this truth. It hereby finds a parallel in art. Art is neither reproduction of reality (i.e., "observed phenomena"), nor concepts abstracted from this reality. Rather, it puts on display ideas and images that are the intuitions of the artist, and therefore also the artist's own creations. A work of art depicts an "existent idea," as revealed in the act of intellectual contemplation (Solovyov 62).

However, while *tvorchestvo* in art and thought consists of both ideas and their representation (realization), it is not so clear from Solov'ev's lectures whether the concept also applies to human action more generally. The task of humanity as presented by Solov'ev is interaction with God. In *Lectures on Divine Humanity*, this is conceived in ecclesiological terms as the foundation of a new Christian culture within the church. While Solov'ev actually did use

tvorchestvo in order to describe God as an “active creative force” (3: 146, 165)—the traditional term for God’s creation in Russian being *tvorenie* or *sotvorenie*—he refrained from describing the human response or participation by means of the same term. Although we may interpret his vision of a Christian culture, whereby humanity attains its divine likeness, as part of *tvorchestvo*, I would argue instead that Solov’ev saw in creativity first and foremost a question of contemplating ideas. The history of religious consciousness is the key example here. In our active contemplation of ideas we already take part in creation and in the universal divine plan. Divine humanity is likewise an idea that has been gradually discovered by human beings, a historical process that began with Buddhism. Through intellectual contemplation of ideas humanity becomes aware of its own tasks. Herein lies the significance of human creativity in world history.

A more explicit formulation of the importance of *tvorchestvo* appears at the end of the *magnum opus* of the early Solov’ev: *Critique of Abstract Principles* (*Kritika otvlechennykh nachal*, 1880). In its penultimate chapter (XLV), Solov’ev analyzes the “main elements of all kinds of knowledge of things,” focusing specifically on faith, imagination and creativity (*tvorchestvo*). At this point, Solov’ev had accomplished a broad and thorough discussion of “abstract principles” in ethics and epistemology, which brought him to confirming, as he previously had in *Philosophical Principles of Integral Knowledge*, the absolute as the ultimate precondition for knowledge. According to Solov’ev, our knowledge is dependent on both empirical input and concepts, but this is not enough. Knowledge requires also *faith (vera)*, i.e., confidence in the very existence of what we perceive. Without faith, objective knowledge of truth is impossible. Empirical data and our concepts give us access to the level of *being (bytie)*; faith initiates us, in addition, into the domain of the existent (*sushchee*). Knowledge of the absolute, of the unconditioned, is also defined in *Critique of Abstract Principles* as “mystic,” and forms the basis for our knowledge of the outside world. Mystic knowledge has, in turn, faith as its precondition—faith “in the narrow sense of the word,” as he puts it (Solov’ev 2: 333), i.e., faith in “that which is.”

However, for a true understanding of the absolute (“that which is”), faith is not sufficient. In order to infer from a multitude of appearances the “ideal essence,” or simply the idea, of the unconditioned object, we need *imagination (voobrazhenie)*. By means of imagination the human being creates an idea of the object on the basis of sense data or impressions. The notion of imagination as used in *Critique* seems to correspond to intellectual contemplation as encountered above.

From this follows the task of relating our impressions to the ideas we have created on the basis of these impressions. This might seem to be the same thing, but for Solov’ev it represents a third level of ascendancy. As we are continually confronted with the chaos of immediate impressions, the images

we keep in our minds enable us to make sense of them. For Solov'ev these images are both innate and actively brought forth by the imagination. The organization of our impressions in accordance with our images of objects, in turn, is the “creative act of our mind” (2: 339). It is a kind of *tvorchestvo* that is comparable to the work of the poet. Creativity means to recognize ideas in the world around us, ideas that we at the preceding stage actively imagined on the basis of our perceptions. By implication, the meaning of *tvorchestvo* as used by Solov'ev in *Critique* goes even beyond the contemplation of ideas as such; he emphasizes that knowledge of ideas brings to bear upon our active being in the world.

Thus, knowledge requires first faith, or confidence, in that the object actually exists. Second, we produce an idea of this object, of its essence, by means of our imagination. Third, we have to make sense of the actual appearance, or being, of the object. This final stage, then, Solov'ev defines as “psychic creation” (*psikhicheskoe tvorchestvo*) (2: 342). The appearance of objects is not merely the input in our minds of brute sense data, but (also) an active creation by our minds. The concept of *tvorchestvo* here refers to our ability to create order out of a chaos of impressions, and the active role we play in this process. “This is knowledge based on faith, determined by ideal contemplation [*sozertsanie*] or imagination and completed by the act of natural creation [*estestvennoe tvorchestvo*]” (Solov'ev 2: 343). According to Solov'ev, this threefold process gives us knowledge of the absolute, beyond the level of mere faith in the absolute.

As suggested, this road to knowledge of the absolute has clear parallels in how Solov'ev described intellectual contemplation in his earlier works, but *Critique* focuses more explicitly on the meaning and importance of the intellectual and philosophical contemplation of ideas. In the Conclusion, Solov'ev stresses that in order for the human being to attain truth it needs to actively organize reality. This is the “task of knowledge not as receptive thought [*mysl' vosprinimaiushchaia*], but as formative thought [*mysl' sozidaiushchaia*], or creation [*tvorchestvo*]” (Solov'ev 2: 352). This conclusion also brings him back to the notion of the “free theurgy” found in *Philosophical Principles*, which, while still exemplified by “great art,” no doubt goes beyond art in the narrow sense of the word and refers to the multitude of ways in which humanity may contribute to the realization of the “divine principle” and “divine energies” in the “empirical natural reality” and in the “real being of nature” (Solov'ev 2: 352).

Solov'ev never wrote the work on aesthetics that was foreshadowed by both *Critique of Abstract Principles* and *Philosophical Principles of Integral Knowledge*. Nevertheless, his use of the concept of *tvorchestvo* in these works suggests an understanding of human creation and creativity as first and foremost the recreation (*peresozdanie*) of reality, and not merely its reproduction (*vosproizvedenie*). We see here that Solov'ev makes use of the same terms as

Belinskii did, but reverses the hierarchy between them. Although Belinskii saw both forms as creative, he celebrated art as a reproduction of reality. For Solov'ev, creativity in art and thought is rather the recreation of reality, its active shaping by our minds (theurgy). For Solov'ev, this was a task that would contribute to the historical process, to the realization of the divine principle in nature and humanity (2: 352).

To sum up: *Tvorchestvo* according to Solov'ev is not only to be found in art, but also in knowledge, in the intellectual contemplation of ideas. He saw this form of intellectual activity as a precondition for human participation in the realization of world history as envisioned by God in his divine plan. This means that *tvorchestvo* for Solov'ev was not so much the full accomplishment of this divine plan as its key requirement. It was knowledge rather than action. This distinction is important in view of how this concept was developed further later on, for instance in the philosophy of Sergei Bulgakov and Nikolai Berdiaev, where *tvorchestvo* is understood exactly as creation in the sense of action. While Solov'ev continued to see *tvorchestvo* as the domain of art, he expanded the notion to include also active perception as leading to specific forms of (“mystical”) knowledge. This enabled him to emphasize the active, constitutive role of the subject as a “legislator” (in keeping with Kant), something that in turn enables us to grasp the essence of things or ideas (in contrast to Kant), precisely due the active role of the subject as the provider of form and order. Thus, Solov'ev grounded his metaphysics in epistemology: His starting point was the human being and its active being in and perception of the world, from which he deduced his metaphysical postulates.¹⁰

Conclusion

Tvorchestvo was initially coined as a metaphysical concept, corresponding to Schelling's “productivity” and “activity” (Stankevich). However, its etymological relationship in Russian to the words for “creator” and “create” enabled it to be used also as an aesthetic concept that could define the precondition for the production of (significant) art (Nadezhdin, Belinskii). Meanwhile, aesthetics means perception and involves thereby an epistemological dimension as well. For Solov'ev, creativity was not only an aesthetic problem but also an epistemological one, which in turn became the foundation for his metaphysics. After Solov'ev, *tvorchestvo* would again become a metaphysical concept, referring to the essential character and ground of the human condition. This is particularly evident in Nikolai Berdiaev's philosophy that drew the full implication of the inherent religious meaning of this concept in Russian to its logical conclusion, basing it on previous suggestions by Nadezhdin. Accepting the

10. For similar suggestions, see Smith, *Soloviev* 47; Nemeth 159–91. By “metaphysics” I refer here to the part of Solov'ev's philosophy devoted to ideas, and not to the immediate experience of the absolute, which formed a starting point for Solov'ev.

Orthodox anthropology about the human being as created in God's image and likeness, Berdiaev saw creation and creativity as having been made possible through the incarnation of God in Christ and hence also as an imperative to imitate divine creation (Berdiaev, in particular, Chapter Two).

Having accounted for the key moments of the conceptual history of *tvorchestvo* in nineteenth-century Russian thought, I would like to conclude by emphasizing three important aspects of it. First, this history enables us to reflect upon the traditional subdivisions of philosophy (epistemology, metaphysics, aesthetics), since it illustrates how intertwined and mutually constitutive they are. Second, it contributes to a broader understanding of the formation of a modern Russian philosophical discourse, with which Russian intellectuals of the early nineteenth century were so concerned (Clowes 17–43), and the role played by conceptual transfer, translation and adaptation in this process. Third and by implication, it demonstrates the vicissitudes of transfer and adaptation processes, questioning hereby the traditional ways of studying impact in the history of ideas in terms of “schools” in the style of “Kant in Russia” or “Schelling in Russia,” which are typically seen as evolving from “familiarity” via “thorough study and dissemination” to “confrontation” (Gromov 74). By contrast, the productive way of studying transfer is not only to look for references to or discussions of Kant or Schelling, but to explore how selective aspects of their systems are foregrounded in the receiving culture (e.g., Kruglov 490) and how philosophical issues originating in other cultures are reformulated in the target culture. This is particularly important in relation to Russia, where the source culture (the West) has had such a hegemonic and yet contested position, one which, in any case, testifies to the asymmetric relationship between source and target (Baer and Witt 2). The outcomes of such processes tend to be hybrids of different ideas, which may in turn produce new philosophical issues. Although we may discern it as an underlying theme in European Romanticism, creativity was not, I would claim, an explicit, significant philosophical problem in West-European philosophy in the nineteenth century—at least not until Nietzsche. In Russia, however, a country continually confronted with and comparing itself to the West, creativity and the question of imitation had already become in the first half of the century a fundamental issue—with respect to the individual artist as well as the nation.

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Тезисы

Коре Йохан Мьёр

Метафизика, эстетика или эпистемология? История понятия «творчество» в русской мысли XIX века

В данной статье анализируется история русского понятия «творчество», начиная с его возникновения и раннего употребления в начале 19-го века, прежде всего в работах Николая Надеждина, Николая Станкевича и Виссариона Белинского, и вплоть до философии Владимира Соловьева. Это понятие позднее стало основным термином и ведущей философской проблемой для таких мыслителей, как Николай Бердяев и Сергей Булгаков. Тем не менее предлагаемая статья сосредоточивается на его ранней истории, а именно на его формировании при переводе на русский язык идей Шеллинга. Постепенно, однако, понятие «творчество» стало употребляться независимо от своих истоков. Хотя оно в начале было метафизическим понятием, соответствующим идее Шеллинга о «продуктивности» (как природы, так и человека), такие мыслители, как Надеждин и Белинский употребляли его прежде всего как эстетическое понятие, выделяя при этом основополагающую роль «творческого» гения. Соловьев, в свою очередь, использовал «творчество» как эпистемологическое понятие, подчеркивая активную роль человека в мышлении и восприятии мира. В статье демонстрируется ключевая роль культурного трансфера при формировании русского философского дискурса в XIX веке и выясняется, каким образом процессы трансфера и перевода могли породить новые философские темы.