

# Prolegomena to a new type of intellectual practice – “creativistics” (the study of creativity)

## Abstract

This article differentiates between the concept of art synthesis and a new intellectual practice, which the author calls “creativity.” This distinction is based on studies of works of art and dance by Aida Aylamazyan and the author. Using the works of Guzel Yakhina and Meir Shalev, the author analyzes the turn from art to life and creativity. The article consistently reveals the theoretical depth of this turn, substantiating its connection with the phenomenological turn in contemporary culture. The author demonstrates that phenomenological discourse (a rejection of Aristotelian poetics, a focus on the personality of the creator and their existential problems) becomes key to understanding creativity. It is within the framework of this turn that phenomenological discourse is realized, among other things. Shalev’s 1985 work “The Bible Today” is examined; it is a fascinating read, but it makes it virtually impossible to understand the type of creativity involved. Several sections of this work are written as fictional short stories, others refer to biblical commentaries and scientific research, others to the author’s reflections on life, others to the history of Israel, others to contemporary life, and others to various forms of creativity and knowledge. Nevertheless, this work is perceived as holistic and organic. All of this is characteristic of creative writing. The question arises: how does creative writing manage to create a coherent work, a truly new world, from completely different discourses and constructs (artistic, scientific, psychological, historical, etc.)? The author demonstrates that metaphors and other expressive devices are used here: drama, themes, rhythm, melody, images, meanings, speech and linguistic structures. The article concludes with a discussion of the characteristics of creative writing.

**Keywords:** work, art, creativistics, reconstruction, understanding, discourse, creativity, approach, reality, content

Volume 8 Issue 2 - 2026

**VM Rozin**

Professor, Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia

**Correspondence:** VM Rozin, Professor, Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Russia, Tel 89035444423

**Received:** May 30, 2026 | **Published:** June 12, 2026

## Introduction

On March 21, a regular meeting of the seminar “Psychology and Practice of Art” was held at the Federal Scientific Center for Psychological and Interdisciplinary Research. Aida Aylamazyan, Director of the S.D. Rudneva Center for Musical-Plastic Development «Heptachor,» gave a talk entitled «Personality Psychology: Cultural Practices for Developing Human Potential.» In particular, she contrasted the concept of the synthesis of the arts («the unification of the arts,» German Gesamtkunstwerk) with an approach within which new works are created, the status and character of which Aylamazyan found difficult to define. Whereas the concept of the synthesis of the arts assumes that individual art forms (e.g., music and dance) have already taken shape, and that works can be created in which the expressive means of these forms are jointly used by the artist to generate new content, in the second approach – for example, in «musical movement,» which traces back to Isadora Duncan’s free dance – the relationship between music and dance is different. Here, through dance movement, one «listens out» the music (often very serious music, such as Bach, Chopin, Scriabin), which results in the construction of works and improvisations that only partially resemble classical dance and music (the latter, for example, sounds completely new). Some features of both approaches (musical movement as a new kind of dance and music) are examined in articles by Aylamazyan and the author.<sup>1-5</sup>

## Research methodology

This study was conducted within the framework of a qualitative, interpretive paradigm. The main methods used were:

- Textual analysis of the works of A. Aylamazyan, G. Yakhina, and M. Shalev, aimed at identifying disparate discourses and the ways in which they are connected;
- Phenomenological reading, focused on reconstructing the consciousness and existential problems of the creators;
- Comparative analysis of examples, allowing us to capture the common features of the analyzed works, despite their genre and cultural differences.

The selection of materials (Aylamazyan - “musical movement,” Yakhina - the novel “My Children,” Shalev - “The Bible Today” and “The Dove and the Boy”) was carried out according to the following criteria:

- The presence in the work of an obvious mixture of discourses (artistic, scientific, historical, philosophical);
- Statements by the authors themselves about their creative method, allowing us to judge reflexivity;
- The accessibility of the texts for analysis and their representativeness for contemporary intellectual practice, going beyond the framework of classical art. The reproducible steps of analysis include: initial proofreading with the recording of heterogeneous fragments; semantic labeling of each fragment according to its discursive affiliation; identification of metaphors and schemas linking these fragments into a whole; and interpretation of the whole through a hypothesis about the author’s creative intent and existential context. The proposed approach is essayistic and qualitative in nature, corresponding to the developmental stage of the research subject itself—creative

studies as a new intellectual practice that does not yet have established procedures.

## Main body

Virtually everyone discussing the synthesis of the arts assumes that works created within this framework belong to art. And in the second approach, the position is almost the same. For example, musical movement is classified as «free dance,» emphasizing its opposition to classical ballet and the improvisational character of this type of dance art. But why then does «musical movement» – the very name seems to suggest a shift from art to non-art? And in the aforementioned lecture, Aida said that in creativity of the «musical movement» type, a shift occurs toward the life of the personality, which raises the problem of the boundaries of art and its transition into life events. Aylamazyan’s teacher, Olga Kondratyevna Popova, also effectively points to this turn from art to life. She writes: «We do not claim that I am dancing exactly Bach – that would never happen in life! I am dancing my own idea in Bach, yes? My own experience. And at that moment, it is evident that states and moods are realized which otherwise would have remained forever in my soul. And they would gradually kill me. So evidently this activity is some kind of powerful breakthrough and flow that I release from myself. Now I am deeply convinced of this. It is an opportunity to live».<sup>2</sup>

Then perhaps the works created in creativity of the «musical art» type no longer belong to art but to a new intellectual practice (let us call it «creativistics,» and if we confirm this hypothesis, we will keep the name)? I have previously arrived at a similar hypothesis while analyzing Guzel Yakhina’s novel “My Children,” Reza Negarestani’s cult work “Cyclonopedia,” and the poetics of Meir Shalev’s literary works.<sup>6</sup> But at that time I proceeded from the consciousness and creativity of the artist, contrasting the Aristotelian interpretation of art with the “phenomenological” artistic discourse.<sup>7,8</sup> I wrote that “dealing with several different discourses (the story of Bach’s life and his children, reconstructions of Stalin’s actions, the life of the German colony of Gnadenthal, socialist reforms and collectivization, German fairy tales), Yakhina attempted to link these discourses through certain devices. She has four such devices: the Volga; coincidences (for example, Stalin visits precisely the Volga German colonies or ponders what policy to adopt toward these colonies in light of Hitler’s policies)<sup>6</sup>; Bach, who crosses from one bank of the Volga to the other or visits children in an orphanage; and finally, literary devices, such as symbolization”.<sup>6</sup>

In an interview with Anastasia Skorondaeva, Guzel Yakhina says, among other things: «The idea was to create a fictional story that – like a mosaic – would consist entirely of pieces of truth (authentic descriptions of everyday life, authentic details, real facts and figures...). Therefore, even the smallest elements of the novel ‘My Children’ (quotations from Central Committee resolutions, folk medicine practices of the Volga Germans, culinary recipes, schwank texts, the curses used by the colonists) – all of this is truth, gathered from newspapers of the time, memoirs, scholarly works, books, museums.

The biography of a teacher of German literature, Schulmeister Bach, can be read both as a realistic novel about the Volga Germans and simultaneously as a mythological narrative. Within this narrative, the real history of the German Volga Republic is hidden – from its founding in 1918 to its disappearance in 1941...

The main characters – the Schulmeister himself, his mute daughter, and the Kyrgyz street child Vaska – are invented. The other characters are drawn from life: the film archives preserve a single film made at the ‘Nemkino’ studio; it is called ‘Martin Wagner,’ was released in

1927, and tells about collectivization in the German Volga Republic. The film features only three professional actors, while the secondary and crowd roles are played by residents of the Volga German colony of Marienfeld – Soviet Germans.

When I was preparing to write the novel, I watched the film many times – studying the faces of the colonists. Then I described those faces in the novel. So the hunchback communist from Germany, the fat chairman of the village soviet, the powerful bald landowner, his witch-like servant – all these images are inspired by the faces of real Soviet Germans. <...>

Now the first word of the novel – the main thing that united the German colonists with the other neighboring peoples: the Volga. Over a century and a half of living on the Volga, the Russian Germans came to love the Volga (as well as the steppe) – I made this unexpected discovery while studying their original fairy tales, novels, diaries, song lyrics. The Volga is always present in the action – visibly or invisibly. The Volga becomes a portal for switching between plot lines. Because for those living on it, the Volga is the main natural essence, an object of worship, a breadwinner, an eternal companion and friend. I could call the novel ‘My Children’ my declaration of love to the Volga, which is dear to me”.<sup>9</sup>

From the perspective of traditional literary poetics, including Aristotle’s «Poetics,» the artist should describe real life, not what is in his head... but I would note that... at the present time, alongside this tradition, a new one is emerging, which can be conditionally called «phenomenological»... As I wrote in *Voprosy Filosofii*, the phenomenologist (not only the scientist or philosopher, but also the artist) does not dance in response to a world that opposes him, but rather from his own personality. It is the personality that sets the whole, the course of thought. Various approaches and methods are for him only means of his work and movement. He certainly uses them, but they do not determine the whole. The whole is set by his existential problems, by the experience actualized to answer those problems, by the very work of thought<sup>10-15</sup>...

I may assume that if in her first novel Guzel Yakhina thought and worked within the classical paradigm of literary creativity, in her second she thinks phenomenologically – the author of «My Children» could not have realized her vision and resolved the existential problems that troubled her in any other way. Accordingly, we are faced with a new artistic reality...

The question of comprehensibility and the role of the reader in this process is not simple. A specific feature of the new, phenomenological artistic reality is the non-homogeneity of individual contents and themes, as well as the latent image of the author’s personality, which can be discerned behind this reality. Certainly, the author of a «phenomenological work» must help the reader see both. But often he himself does not know that he thinks and speaks as a phenomenologist, nor does he know what in his novel might cause misunderstanding and difficulty for the reader. Hence Guzel Yakhina says: “The reader must understand for himself what is actually happening and what is only in the hero’s imagination”.<sup>6,16</sup>

Thus, I proceeded from the creativity and consciousness of the author of works of art. But now I am charting a different course: to understand the works created in the second approach as belonging not to art but to a new intellectual practice – creativistics. It is within its framework that phenomenological discourse, among others, is realized.

The turn indicated here can be traced even better in the works of Meir Shalev. Take his 1985 work «The Bible Today.» It is read with

great enthusiasm, yet it is practically impossible to understand what kind of creativity one is dealing with. Some parts of this work are written as literary short stories; others refer to biblical commentaries and scholarly research; still others to the author’s reflections on life; yet others to the history of Israel; others to contemporary life; and various parts refer to different kinds of creativity and knowledge. Here are just three fragments to convince the reader.

«My Bible is different,» writes Shalev. «It was not written by God, and its characters are by no means saints. It is inhabited by men and women of flesh and blood with ambitious thoughts, cherished dreams, carrying on love affairs, weaving intrigues. The Bible is one of the most captivating books in any library, and no other has had an equal impact with its political, philosophical, and moral ideas. The Bible is undoubtedly contemporary, and this thought weighed on me when I wrote this book. <...>

Of all the biblical heroes, I envied only one – Jacob, and not because he owned so many sheep, nor because he became the father of the Twelve Tribes; no, I envy his first meeting with Rachel, his beloved, at the well in the land of the ‘sons of the East.’ Any man who has experienced difficulties on a first date will certainly understand my feelings. <...>

At that moment a charming shepherdess approached the well, and the shepherds pointed her out to Jacob, explaining that she was his cousin Rachel. Thus Jacob saw for the first time the young girl who became the great love of his life, and eventually his wife. (The story of Jacob and Rachel is undoubtedly one of the most touching love stories the world has ever known. By the way, Rachel is the only woman in the entire Bible whose beauty is described twice: ‘beautiful in form and beautiful in face.’) Be that as it may, as soon as this charming girl approached the well, Jacob, in bewilderment, did what one might expect from Samson but certainly not from him: ‘Then Jacob went over and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well and watered the sheep of Laban, his mother’s brother. And Jacob kissed Rachel, and lifted up his voice and wept.’

Where did Jacob get such strength? Among what we know about him, there is only one instance where he showed the power of his muscles – in the mysterious wrestling match with the angel of God at the Jabbok, but that happened many years later. Compared to his quarrelsome brother and his terrorist nephews, Jacob looks almost like a fragile creature, a peaceful antihero. And yet one look at his charming cousin was enough to turn him into the strongest of strongmen. He effortlessly rolled away the heaviest stone as if it were made of papier-mâché.

Jacob’s feat undoubtedly astonished all the onlookers, including Rachel. Of course, she did not yet know that this stunning stranger was the son of her aunt Rebekah from the Holy Land. Frozen in amazement, she saw only that an unknown handsome young man, without any difficulty, moved the stone by himself, watered all her sheep, and then – before she could catch her breath – bent down and kissed her in front of all the shepherds. What a stunning beginning!<sup>17</sup>

Those who have read the Bible probably remember that Rebekah, Jacob’s mother, deceived her husband Isaac by substituting the younger, beloved Jacob for the elder son Esau to receive the blessing. Hence the further misadventures and vicissitudes of Jacob’s life. Shalev has a remarkable novel «Esau,» written six years after «The Bible Today.» Its unspoken subtext – which Meir does not hide – is clearly the biblical story: again two brothers (though twins this time), again deception (one brother takes the beloved girl from the other), an important role played by the brothers’ mother Sarah, and many other

analogies (names, events, actions). However, «Esau» is still a work of fiction; the biblical subtext is just one aspect of Shalev’s creativity, not declared as a factor that determined the content of the novel’s characters. Those who have read the Bible may guess it, but those who have not still understand and perceive it, simply as a fine literary work.

«The Bible Today» is constructed quite differently: here the different discourses are presented precisely as different; they are not absorbed into the literary content and imagery. Moreover, Shalev plays on their differences, and surprisingly, this creates a coherence that is perceived not as a mosaic but as a unified reality. The question is: reality of what – art, thought, history, science? Both, and neither. It is the reality of the creativity and life of Meir Shalev and of those who like his works – and there are quite many. Incidentally, Wikipedia classifies «The Bible Today» not as a novel but under the rubric «non-fiction,» which I think is also not entirely accurate, since there is much fiction in Shalev’s work.

Shalev, like Guzel Yakhina, is quite understandable. They feel constrained within the genre of literature. They want to realize themselves; they are familiar with various interpretations of famous works of art; they have read scholarly and historical research; why, one might ask, should they limit themselves to the conventions and poetics of literary fiction? For instance, Shalev as a writer wants «to tell an interesting story, to write it well»; images and plots from the Bible knock at his consciousness; he is captivated by female beauty and images, «without ceasing to dream of the encounter»; he wants to understand the people who built Israel and to tell about them; he takes true delight in creating and revealing, like a demiurge, an entire world through words and language, expressing his thoughts and experiences in written form. In «Esau,» he accomplished all this while remaining within the sphere of art; but in «The Bible Today,» he allowed himself not to follow tradition and literary norms, and directly began to construct a new reality, one belonging to none of the existing intellectual practices. In essence, he created an example of a new practice, which I have called «creativistics.» He placed it alongside art, the humanities, hermeneutics, semiotics, psychology, and sociology.

Here a natural question arises: how do Shalev and Yakhina manage to create a coherent work, a genuine new world, from completely different discourses and constructions (artistic, scientific, psychological, historical, etc.)? Yet they do create it. To understand how, let us consider one example – Shalev’s novel «A Pigeon and a Boy.» Here we find a striking example of «creativistics»: a wholeness that includes the touching love of the main characters (the boy, «the Child» and «the Girl»), the history of Israel’s War of Independence, the New Testament legend of the Immaculate Conception, and the dove as a harbinger of salvation and life after the Flood. How did Shalev connect these outwardly incompatible plots? He constructed the following schema-metaphor. The boy participates in the War of Independence, using carrier pigeons to maintain communication between Jewish military units. The Girl he loves (and she loves him) breeds carrier pigeons and taught him all the subtleties of handling them. The boy falls into an ambush, is severely wounded, and is dying. At their last meeting, the boy and the Girl decide to take the final step to conceive a child. But then he dies. Gathering his last strength, the boy ejaculates his semen into a test tube, ties it to a pigeon’s leg, and sends it to his Girl. The pigeon delivers the sperm to the Girl; she understands everything and does what is necessary. As a result, the Girl becomes pregnant by the boy and gives birth to a child, who appears in the novel as another main character.

«So there they remained, the four of them: the wounded Child with his surviving last friend, and also the Girl's dove and death, waiting a little way off. The frightened dove and the bloody member lay motionless, while death stretched out a cool and gentle hand and touched the Child again, just as he stretched out his hand and touched his own bloody, naked flesh – and both hands did not merely touch and gently stroke, but also pressed and squeezed a little, checking: is the fruit already ripe? Has the time come?...

Death, which had waited patiently for him all this time, hissed furiously, realizing that it had been fooled. But the Child was in no mood for triumph. He turned slightly on his side to watch his last pigeon gain altitude... From now on nothing depended on him. Now he could only rely on her...

The dove landed on the shelf of the windmill and burst into the room beyond. The Girl met it with a gentle, practiced hand, offered fresh water and hemp seeds, stroked it and untied the string...

She pulled out the cork, sniffed, and – before surprise could replace her recent joy – her body suddenly understood everything and went rigid; her mouth opened in a scream, the name burst out like a gunshot.

Her knees trembled, but fear for the drops in the test tube gave her strength and determination. Do not fall! Do not drop! Forget death and grief. Pull yourself together. Do not relax!...

She opened the test tube. With a careful and gentle finger, she helped the cloudy-white liquid flow into a spoon and, with the same care, drawing back the plunger, sucked it into a syringe. How much is there? A few drops at most...

She took the syringe in her right hand, brought the fingers of her left to her mouth, moistened them with saliva, and inserted them inside herself. Then she moistened them again and carefully lubricated everything around and inside, to the very depths. She held her breath, inserted the syringe all the way, and pressed the plunger hard. She pressed her thighs tightly together, drew her knees up to her chest, and wrapped both arms around them. That was it. There was nothing more for her to do. Now she could only trust her body. And his seed – to find its way, to descend, to reach. So she lay, with closed eyes, listening to its flight – down, down, as it goes and sinks somewhere inside her.

And the seed, as if listening to her, hurried and descended. Home. Lower and lower. From the heavens of death into the abysses of life, from the cold outside to the warmth inside, after the whistling flight beneath the sun – into the silent darkness of the deep”.<sup>18</sup>

Reading the novel, it is sometimes hard to hold back tears, so wonderfully and masterfully is it written; yet at the same time, one realizes that everything is invented and all the coincidences and amazing events are skillfully constructed by Shalev. Moreover, one fully understands all the conventions and analogies: with the Bible, with the history of Israel, with the Immaculate Conception, with Shalev's desire to identify the construction and becoming of Israel with the creation of a new world. Understanding the artificiality of the constructed schema-metaphor, it turns out, does not in the least hinder the reader's natural emotions or belief in the possibility of all these amazing events. But of course, not only metaphors are at work, but all expressive means: dramaturgy, themes, rhythm, melody, images, meanings, speech and language constructions.

Now about the features of creativistics. First, the artist of creativistics does not conceal the different discourses and foundations he uses; moreover, he often points them out to the user, either in the

form of preliminary explanations or by characterizing the concept of the work. A necessary condition for such an approach is a more or less deep reflection on one's own creativity. This is why in the table of contents the work of creativistics was called “reflexive-synthetic.” The second feature stems from the difficulty for the user to grasp the reality of a work of creativistics: the user easily recognizes individual discourses, but because they are different, and often outwardly opposite, the user cannot grasp and assemble the whole, cannot understand what events he is facing and how they are connected to each other.

As I show in my work “From the Analysis of Works of Art to Understanding the Essence of Art,” resolving this difficulty may partly consist in the user trying to understand the creator of the work of creativistics – grasping what problems troubled him, and in what direction and how he set about solving them. Of course, this requires a higher level of culture and additional work from the user, but such is contemporary creativity. However, I understand that reconstructing the creator's consciousness alone is insufficient, for the user also wants to understand what the creator presents to him in terms of the external world – not just his own consciousness.

Here the situation is more complex, because creativistics is only just emerging, and the reality of its works has not yet been thought through by philosophers and the creators of these works. My preliminary thoughts on this matter are as follows. This reality is “populative” (multiple), which presupposes its interpretation by the user. It is anthropomorphic and humanitarian, as it is set by the attitudes and values of the creator of the work of creativistics. This reality is eventful and temporal. It is often culturally and socially conditioned (this is clearly seen in Shalev's work). Finally, the creativistic reality is characterized not only by a natural modality but also by an artificial one, i.e., it is constructive.<sup>19</sup>

## Conclusion

The conducted study allows us, in our view, to distinguish between the concept of the synthesis of the arts and the emergence of a new intellectual practice, “creativistics.” The latter is a natural result of the contemporary development of culture, which has brought to the fore, alongside thought, art, and science, the creativity of the personality. Within the framework of creativistics, the creator uses discourses and representations belonging to different approaches and discourses, openly and demonstratively, inviting the user to think and act polyphonically. Creativistics appeals both to the consciousness of the creator and user, and to a new reality that has features of populative multiplicity, eventfulness, and constructiveness.

## Acknowledgements

None.

## Conflict of interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

## Funding

None.

## References

1. Aylamazyan AM. Musical movement as a means of comprehension of the internal form of a musical work. *National Psychological Journal*. 2023;18(3):51.

2. Aylamazyan AM. Cultural practices: from free dance to free action. In: *Mobilis in Mobili: Personality in the Era of Changes*. Moscow, Russia: YASK Publishing House; 2021.
3. Aylamazyan AM, Tashkeeva EI. Musical movement: education, psychology and arts. *Culture and Art*. 2014;(2).
4. Rozin VM. The nature of free dance (based on the analysis of the dance performance *Poem of Ecstasy* by A. Scriabin). In: *The Nature and Genesis of European Art: Philosophical and Cultural-Historical Analysis*. Moscow, Russia: Golos; 2011.
5. Rozin VM. Comprehension of the internal form of a musical work or the constitution of a new melody by means of musical movement? *Culture and Art*. 2023;(11).
6. Rozin VM. *From Analysis of Works of Art to Understanding the Essence of Art*. Moscow, Russia: Golos; 2022.
7. Aristotle. *Poetics*. Gasparov ML, trans. Moscow, Russia: Nauka; 2008.
8. Shpet GG. *Internal Form of the Word*. Moscow, Russia: KomKniga; 2005.
9. Skorondaeva A. Guzel Yakhina: according to the rules of the “Dictator.” 2021.
10. Bergson H. *Creative Evolution*. Canon Press; 1992.
11. Heidegger M. The source of artistic creation. In: *Works and Reflections of Different Years*. Moscow, Russia: Gnosis; 1993:47–120.
12. Merleau-Ponty M. *Phenomenology of Perception*. St Petersburg, Russia: Juventa; Nauka; 1999.
13. Ricoeur P. *Time and Narrative*. Vol 1. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press; 1984.
14. Rozin VM. Phenomenology through the eyes of a methodologist. *Questions of Philosophy*. 2008;(5).
15. Vygotsky LS. *The Psychology of Art*. Moscow, Russia: Iskusstvo; 1925.
16. Yakhina G. About the second novel “My Children”: I started writing with chapters about Stalin. 2023.
17. Shalev M. *The Bible Today*. 2024.
18. Shalev M. *Dove and Boy*. 2024.
19. Rozin VM. Musical movement: lifestyle, reality of non-traditional art, space of learning and self-education (three comments on the concept of Aida Aylamazyan). *Culture and Art*. 2023;(4).