
Special Theme of the Issue.
Russian psychologists:
V.P. Zinchenko. Living memory

To the 85th anniversary of Vladimir Petrovich Zinchenko

EDITORIAL



V.P. Zinchenko

Quite recently (and the older generation knows time passes with break-neck speed) in a large auditorium of the Faculty we were celebrating the 80th

birthday of our professor, the Academician Vladimir Petrovich Zinchenko, the University's pride, the joy of the Russian school of psychology. Live and create! — that was the leitmotif of congratulations and wishes. Vladimir Petrovich is not on earth with us any longer. But his life continues. You will read his articles in this journal and perhaps once again feel his presence and his voice “directly heard.”

I remember that our colleagues from St. Petersburg while having deep feelings towards Zinchenko offered him the title of “Patriarch of Russian psychology.” Vladimir Petrovich was quite annoyed: “What sort of patriarch am I to them!” I still think, why? Either the comparison of science to “patriarchy” did not seem suitable to him (as an opponent of any hierarchy, he often spoke and wrote: “The psyche is not an administrative institution,” and he treated hierarchs with no special piety), or the word “patriarchy” had repelling socio-cultural associations, or he experienced a personal thrill (“the

excess of individuality”) which was difficult to combine in his “compassionate to existence” consciousness with the status of a patriarch.

I have written and spoken about Zinchenko more than once and I could say that Silentium!, Tyutchev’s warning, is fully justified here. “A thought once uttered is a lie”... Well, maybe not a lie, but a certain likeness to truth. And when talking about Zinchenko, a word master, no narrative “in the image and likeness” is acceptable.

Therefore, I would venture to suggest that any author putting pen to paper about any of V.P. Zinchenko’s works is taking a big risk. Figuratively speaking, “putting pen to paper,” as Zinchenko personally created his manuscripts exclusively by hand (“Am I a fly to crawl across the monitor?!”),

while those writing about him no doubt use keyboards. Perhaps this is the first fundamental difference between Zinchenko and his chroniclers. But the second and most important is: where on earth is a genre capable of expressing the unique character of Zinchenko’s texts? He himself is his genre!

Alexander Vladimirovich Zinchenko and I have selected a number of works by Vladimir Petrovich (that are memorable to us) to be published in this issue. Some readers may already be familiar with them, and perhaps some will see the texts for the first time. But we are confident that many — both who have read his works and who haven’t — will experience a sense of freshness while reading.

A. V. Petrovsky