

## CASE STUDY

### M.I. Volovikova's Contribution to Global Psychology: A Case Study of a Distinct Russian School of Moral Psychology

K. B. Zuev\*

*Institute of Psychology of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia*

**Abstract.** *Background.* The study of scientific legacy is essential for understanding disciplinary development, yet comprehensive analyses of influential scholars' integrated contributions remain rare. Margarita Iosifovna Volovikova (1947–2021) was a prolific Russian psychologist whose 200+ publications spanned multiple subfields, but her unified scientific legacy and its place in global psychological discourse have not been systematically examined. *Objective.* This case study examines Volovikova's scientific legacy as an integrated whole, tracing the evolution of her research program from cognitive psychology to moral and spiritual-moral psychology, and evaluating her contributions to establishing a distinct Russian school of moral psychology within the global scientific context. *Methods.* We conducted a comprehensive chronological analysis of Volovikova's major research directions across four decades, complemented by a bibliometric assessment of her most cited publications (N = 404 citing publications) using the Russian Science Citation Index. Thematic analysis of citing works was performed to map the dissemination of her ideas across psychological subfields. *Results.* Volovikova's scientific trajectory reveals a coherent intellectual evolution from cognitive forecasting and anticipation (Volovikova & Brushlinskii, 1976) through the study of moral-intellectual development in children (Volovikova, 1988; Volovikova & RebeKo, 1990), to the foundational works on representations of the moral ideal in Russian mentality (Volovikova, 2004a, 2004b), and finally to the establishment of spiritual-moral psychology as a fundamental direction in psychological science (Volovikova, 2018a). Her central works received 404 citations from 331 distinct authors, with 26 citations in Web of Science or Scopus-indexed journals. Thematic analysis revealed three primary clusters of influence: spiritual-moral psychology, social psychology, and personality psychology. The construct of the "moral elite" (Volovikova & Zhuravlev, 2016, 2018), which the Institute of Psychology RAS holds priority in developing, provides a distinctive psychosocial model of moral exemplarity rooted in Russian cultural and intellectual traditions. *Conclusions.* Volovikova's legacy constitutes not merely a collection of individual contributions but a coherent scientific school that integrates cognitive, developmental, social, and historical psychology into a unified framework. Her work is characterized by four enduring dominants: interdisciplinary orientation, high societal relevance, person-centered methodology, and the timeless nature of her research questions. While Western frameworks (Kohlberg, 1981, 1984; Gilligan, 1982) sought universal stages or voices of moral reasoning, Volovikova explored the culturally and historically contingent content of the moral ideal, offering a holistic alternative that integrates cognition, emotion, spirituality, and social context. Her legacy enriches global psychological discourse by demonstrating how culturally grounded, qualitatively rich research can address universal human questions while respecting the specificity of intellectual traditions.

**Keywords:** Volovikova, moral psychology, spiritual-moral psychology, history of psychology, bibliometric analysis, Russian psychology, interdisciplinary research, moral elite, microsemantic analysis

## 1. Introduction

The study of scientific legacy serves both commemorative and epistemological functions within academic disciplines. By examining the intellectual trajectories of influential scholars, we gain insight not only into the development of specific research programs but also into broader patterns of scientific inquiry, methodological innovation, and disciplinary boundary

formation. This case study examines the scientific career of Margarita Iosifovna Volovikova (1947-2021), a Russian psychologist whose work spanned multiple subfields and whose influence continues to shape contemporary psychological research.

Volovikova's career, based primarily at the Institute of Psychology of the Russian Academy

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\* Corresponding author: Zuev K.B., E-mail address: zuevkb@ipran.ru  
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of Sciences (IP RAS), exemplifies a particular style of psychological inquiry that is deeply rooted in Russian intellectual traditions while engaging with international scientific discourse. Her training in philosophy (Moscow State University, 1971) and subsequent mentorship under A.V. Brushlinskii shaped a research approach characterized by methodological sophistication, theoretical depth, and sustained attention to the person as an integrated whole. The 1976 publication with Brushlinskii on thinking as forecasting (Volovikova & Brushlinskii, 1976) established the foundation for her subsequent investigations into the relationship between cognitive and moral development.

Despite her productivity and influence, Volovikova's scientific legacy has not been systematically analyzed as an integrated whole. Previous treatments have tended to focus on specific research domains, particularly her contributions to spiritual-moral psychology, without examining the connections between her diverse research interests or assessing the broader impact of her work. The present case study addresses this gap through a comprehensive examination of Volovikova's research program, combined with bibliometric analysis of her most influential publications.

Volovikova's contributions to world science are most accurately understood not as a direct challenge to established Western paradigms, but as the creation of a distinct, deeply integrated intellectual tradition that addresses universal psychological questions through a unique cultural and methodological lens. Her work establishes a comprehensive Russian school of moral psychology, offering a holistic and culturally grounded alternative to the more fragmented and often universalist approaches prevalent in the West. She is recognized as a key figure in establishing moral psychology (*nравstvennaya psikhologiya*) as a new, fundamental direction of psychological science. As she and her colleagues articulated, this direction has a rich prehistory in both Russian and world humanitarian tradition, yet constitutes a distinct field of inquiry that examines psychological processes in the moral sphere (personal, public, professional) while simultaneously rethinking the prospects of psychological science from the perspective of moral law (Volovikova, 2018a). The term itself emerged in the late 1990s, and Volovikova played a central role in its conceptual elaboration.

Central to this new direction is the construct of the "moral elite," individuals whose lives embody the moral values they profess. The

Institute of Psychology RAS holds priority in developing this concept, and Volovikova clearly established authorship of the term itself (Volovikova & Zhuravlev, 2016; Volovikova & Zhuravlev, 2018). Empirical research on implicit concepts of a decent person confirmed that characteristics corresponding to belonging to the moral elite are fully represented in the views of people who can be attributed to the creative and scientific elite, while only partially present in student samples (Volovikova & Zhuravlev, 2018). The priority of moral mentality over everyday success, characteristic of the Russian mentality, distinguishes the ideas of successful people who have achieved much in scientific and creative work.

Volovikova's work is marked by several original contributions that challenged existing frameworks and opened new avenues of inquiry. Beyond the "moral elite" construct, she proposed a new typology of moral-intellectual development that critiqued the linear, stage-based models of Piaget and Kohlberg. Her empirical research identified four distinct patterns of interaction between cognitive and moral development, including the counter-intuitive finding that high moral rigidity can, under certain conditions, foster creative intellectual development in individuals with lower cognitive abilities (Volovikova, 1988; Volovikova & RebeKo, 1990). This challenged the assumption that moral and intellectual growth are always correlated. Methodologically, she significantly expanded the application of microsemantic analysis, a qualitative method for the detailed examination of reasoning processes. Originally used in cognitive psychology, she adapted it to study moral reasoning and personality, capturing the "micodynamics of meaning" in moral choice and providing insights that quantitative methods alone could not (Volovikova, 2008). Researchers have subsequently applied microsemantic analysis to clinical interviews for studying cultural-specific psychological constructs, including research on the mentality of the Sakha people, which belongs to the "silence culture." Volovikova even proposed its application to the analysis of literary texts, bridging psychology and the humanities.

Since 2010, the direction of spiritual-moral psychology she helped establish has found expression in the preparation and publication of seven collections, monographs, and a significant volume of scientific articles (Zhuravlev et al., 2014; Volovikova, 2018a). The term "moral psychology" contains a double meaning: it is both psychological research of processes in the moral sphere and a reconsideration of the

prospects of psychological science from the perspective of moral law, which presupposes the inclusion of new topics, directions, methods, and perhaps a revision of attitudes toward some existing ones (Volovikova, 2018a).

While Volovikova's work engages with universal questions, her approach and conclusions offer a distinct counterpoint to dominant Western frameworks. Where Kohlberg (1981, 1984) sought universal stages of justice reasoning, Volovikova explored the culturally and historically contingent content of the moral ideal. Where Gilligan (1982) highlighted a different "voice" of care, Volovikova's framework provides a more comprehensive integration of cognition, emotion, spirituality, and social context, offering a holistic model that is both deeply personal and profoundly social. The construct of "moral elite" has no direct parallel in Western moral psychology, which tends to focus on moral identity, moral exemplarity, or character strengths without the specific cultural and historical grounding that Volovikova's concept embodies. Similarly, her vision of moral psychology as a fundamental reorientation of psychological science itself, rather than merely a subfield, represents a more ambitious and integrative vision than is typically found in Western moral psychology.

This case study addresses three primary questions. First, what were the major research directions in Volovikova's scientific career, and how did they evolve chronologically and conceptually? Second, what is the contemporary impact of her central works, as measured by bibliometric indicators and thematic analysis of citing publications? Third, what enduring scientific principles characterize Volovikova's approach to psychological research? Understanding her legacy is significant for several reasons: her career spans a transformative period in Russian psychology from the Soviet era through the post-Soviet transition; her interdisciplinary approach anticipates contemporary interest in character development, values, and well-being; her methodological innovations offer alternatives to purely quantitative approaches; and her historiographic work documents the development of personality psychology within the Russian academic tradition.

## 2. Methods

This case study employed a mixed-methods approach combining qualitative content analysis of Volovikova's major publications across her career, chronological mapping of research

directions, and quantitative bibliometric analysis of citation patterns for her central works.

*Data sources.* Volovikova's publications were accessed through the Russian Science Citation Index (RSCI) database ([elibrary.ru](http://elibrary.ru)), which indexes 212 of her publications. For qualitative analysis, a purposive sample was selected including early works on thinking processes (1976-1981), studies on moral and intellectual development in children (1987-1990), monographs on representations of the moral ideal (2004, 2005), works on legal consciousness (2004), studies on the psychology of celebration (2003, 2006), historical-psychological works (2002-2021), and her doctoral dissertation (2005) and its abstract. For bibliometric analysis, we focused on Volovikova's most cited works: two editions of her monograph *Representations of Russians about the Moral Ideal* (2004, 2005), her doctoral dissertation *Social Representations of the Moral Ideal in Russian Mentality* (2005), and the dissertation abstract. These works were selected because they represent the culmination of her long-term research program, constitute her most cited publications, and embody the themes that characterized her mature scientific thinking.

*Analytical procedures.* Content analysis followed a chronological framework with thematic identification. Publications were categorized by research domain: psychology of thinking, moral and intellectual development, spiritual-moral psychology, legal consciousness, ethnopsychology, psychology of celebration, and historical psychology. Within each category, key theoretical propositions, methodological approaches, and empirical findings were extracted. Citation data for the selected works were extracted from the RSCI. We analyzed total number of citing publications, types of citing publications (journal articles vs. other formats), representation in international databases (Web of Science/Scopus), number of distinct citing authors, and total citations of citing publications (indicating the broader network of influence). Thematic analysis of citing publications was conducted through keyword frequency analysis, with keywords appearing  $\geq 10$  times visualized to identify conceptual clusters.

*Limitations.* This analysis has several limitations. The bibliometric data are restricted to publications indexed in the RSCI, which may underrepresent international citations. The focus on Volovikova's most cited works may overlook contributions that are substantively important but less frequently cited. The

qualitative analysis, while comprehensive, inevitably reflects interpretive choices regarding which publications and themes to emphasize.

### 3. Results

Volovikova's scientific career can be characterized as a progressive expansion from cognitive-psychological foundations to increasingly integrated socio-moral and historical analyses, while maintaining consistent methodological and theoretical commitments.

*Phase 1: Psychology of Thinking (1976-1981).* Volovikova's early research, conducted under Brushlinskii's supervision, examined cognitive processes through the lens of forecasting and anticipation. The 1976 study on thinking about candle burning in space, though conducted on a modest sample ( $N = 66$ ), employed microsemantic analysis, a detailed qualitative examination of participants' reasoning processes. This methodology proved central to her subsequent work. The research identified a fundamental limitation of cybernetic models in explaining thinking processes: "mental anticipation of the sought-after [solution] occurs without a standard. This constitutes one of the main features of self-regulation (particularly self-forecasting) of thinking, in contrast to the determination of less complex processes regulated only through feedback" (Volovikova & Brushlinskii, 1976, p. 38). This finding established the distinctive character of human cognition, which Volovikova would later connect to moral reasoning. Microsemantic analysis, which involved detailed examination of reasoning protocols, was developed and refined during this phase. Key analytical dimensions included degree of reliance on hints, non-instantaneous insights, confidence levels in proposed solutions, and the transformation of intermediate into final solutions.

*Phase 2: Moral and Intellectual Development (1987-1990).* This period marked Volovikova's emergence as an independent investigator, conducting empirical research on the relationship between moral judgment and intellectual development in primary school children. Her work engaged critically with Piagetian and Kohlbergian frameworks, proposing a more complex, non-unitary relationship between cognitive and moral development. Volovikova (1988) argued that "moral development" as a concept embodies a fundamental contradiction, since moral judgments are inherently conservative, with "development" and "activity" being more appropriate terms for describing the maintenance of moral norms than their

dynamics. Through qualitative analysis of children's moral reasoning, Volovikova identified four distinct patterns of relationship between intellectual and moral development. The first pattern involved high intelligence with flexible moral standards, where participants generated multiple solutions including some that violated moral norms. The second pattern comprised high intelligence with rigid moral standards, where intellectual analysis alone could not resolve moral contradictions because only one solution satisfied the participant's moral framework. The third pattern showed low intelligence with absent moral standards, where participants failed to perceive the problematic character of moral dilemmas. The fourth and most theoretically significant pattern involved low intelligence with rigid moral standards, where participants consistently rejected immoral solutions without providing elaborate cognitive justifications. This combination proved most significant, revealing that "rigidity, inflexibility, and non-creative behavior following templates in one sphere, the sphere of morality, can produce maximally creative, developmental effects in another, the intellectual sphere" (Volovikova & Rebeko, 1990, p. 86). A cross-cultural extension comparing Yakut and Moscow children revealed that traditional family structures (maintained in the Yakut community) facilitated direct moral norm acquisition that did not depend on intellectual processing. Yakut children found standard moral development tasks confusing; helping one's mother "because she is tired" was foreign to their experience because household responsibilities were distributed as a matter of course (Volovikova, 1988). Subsequent researchers have applied microsemantic analysis to clinical interviews for studying the mentality of the Sakha people, demonstrating the enduring value of this methodological approach.

*Phase 3: Spiritual-Moral Psychology and the Moral Ideal (1990s-2010s).* This phase constitutes Volovikova's most extensive and impactful research program, examining social representations of the moral ideal in Russian mentality. The work integrated historical analysis, cultural studies, and empirical investigation of value orientations across post-Soviet transition periods. Volovikova (2004a) conceptualized the "moral ideal" as a culturally transmitted mental construct that guides moral evaluation and behavior. Her analysis distinguished between socially shared ideals (collective representations), individual moral beliefs, and the function of "moral elites," individuals whose lives embodied declared values. In later works, Volovikova (2016;

Volovikova & Zhuravlev, 2016; Volovikova, 2018b) developed the construct of "moral elite" as distinct from "intelligentsia." The moral elite were characterized by alignment between declared values and lived practice, a criterion not necessarily met by the intelligentsia, who might articulate values they did not embody. Empirical research confirmed that the priority of moral mentality over everyday success, characteristic of the Russian mentality, distinguishes the ideas of successful people who have achieved much in scientific and creative work.

The research on legal consciousness was particularly noteworthy for its longitudinal design, involving three waves of data collection in 1989, 1993-1994, and 2001-2002. This permitted examination of value transformations during the collapse of the Soviet Union. The late Soviet period (1989) was characterized by strong emphasis on law's educational function, discourse dominated by linguistic stereotypes of the era, and emphasis on equality before the law. The transition period (1993-1994) showed a shift from conformity and fear of punishment as reasons for legal compliance toward rational considerations. The post-transition period (2001-2002) revealed improved legal knowledge combined with a stable minority (10-15%) maintaining the position that laws should never be violated. Volovikova (2004b) identified distinctive features of Russian legal consciousness: prioritization of moral law over juridical law, and reference to conscience as a regulatory mechanism. She noted that the "norm of non-revenge" represented a spiritual-moral rather than purely legal approach to conflict resolution.

Volovikova also examined the psychological significance of annual and life-cycle celebrations, emphasizing their function in maintaining social bonds and transmitting cultural values (Volovikova et al., 2003; Volovikova et al., 2006). A comparative analysis of Russian Orthodox celebrations (Christmas, Easter) revealed both continuity and change in ritual preparation practices across generations. The wedding ceremony was analyzed for its transformative function, creating "a unified person" from bride and groom while providing structured roles for all participants (Volovikova et al., 2006, p. 210).

*Phase 4: Historical Psychology (2000-2021).* Throughout her career, Volovikova maintained interest in historical dimensions of psychological inquiry. This took two forms. First, she documented the development of microsemantic analysis from its origins in cognitive psychology to its application in personality and moral psychology (Volovikova,

2002, 2008). She noted that while originally developed for analyzing oral protocols, the method was extended to written responses, incorporating personality as a "psychological variable" (Volovikova, 2008, p. 65). She suggested Russian classical literature, as heir to patristic tradition, as a potential subject for microsemantic analysis, an original proposal connecting literary studies, moral theology, and psychology. Second, she produced extensive historical documentation of her research unit at IP RAS. Works on L.I. Antsyferova (Volovikova, 2014; Volovikova & Kharlamenkova, 2017, 2020) traced the laboratory's development under Antsyferova's direction, emphasizing her intellectual independence, linguistic competence, and theoretical creativity. Volovikova argued that Antsyferova's most productive period occurred after 1991, when freedom to pursue long-suppressed research interests became possible (Volovikova, 2014). Volovikova's posthumous (2021) article on the Laboratory of Personality Psychology in the 1990s represents the culmination of her historical work. Through analysis of staffing patterns and publication output in historical context, she documented the "personnel gap" in the generation of scholars who might have reached maturity during the 1990s, attributing this to the "inter-time" of socio-economic crisis and subsequent educational decline. Her bibliometric approach to institutional history, mapping publications in chronological rather than thematic arrangement and analyzing each in sociocultural context, represents an innovative contribution to the history of psychology.

*Bibliometric analysis* of citation patterns for Volovikova's works on the moral ideal revealed substantial and sustained scholarly impact (Table 1). The citation data demonstrate that Volovikova's work on the moral ideal has been widely incorporated into ongoing research across multiple psychological subfields. Several features deserve emphasis. First, 404 citing publications indicate sustained engagement with her work. The ratio of journal articles (191) to total citing publications suggests that approximately half of citations appear in peer-reviewed journal articles, which constitute the primary channel for contemporary scientific communication. Second, twenty-six citations in Web of Science or Scopus-indexed journals demonstrate international scholarly interest in Volovikova's work. This is notable given the language barrier (primarily Russian-language publication) and suggests that the content of her work transcends linguistic limitations in its relevance. Third, 331 distinct authors citing

Volovikova's works indicate a diverse range of scholars incorporating her ideas into their own research, representing an extensive network of intellectual influence. Fourth, the total of 4,961 citations of citing publications illustrates the multiplicative effect of Volovikova's work: the ideas in her publications have not only been directly cited but have subsequently been integrated into networks of citations that themselves have been widely cited.

**Table 1.** Bibliometric characteristics of publications citing Volovikova's monograph *Representations of Russians about the Moral Ideal* (1st and 2nd editions), doctoral dissertation, and dissertation abstract

| Characteristic                         | Count |
|----------------------------------------|-------|
| Total citing publications              | 404   |
| Journal articles                       | 191   |
| Articles in Web of Science/Scopus      | 26    |
| Distinct citing authors                | 331   |
| Total citations of citing publications | 4,961 |

*Thematic analysis* of publications citing Volovikova's central works revealed three primary clusters. The dominant cluster comprised spiritual-moral psychology keywords including "spiritual-moral values," "moral consciousness," "moral ideals," "spiritual development," and "moral norms," confirming the primary identity of Volovikova's work as establishing a foundation for spiritual-moral psychology as a recognized research domain. A second cluster encompassed social psychology and personality, with keywords including "personality," "value orientations," "social psychology," and "mentality," indicating that Volovikova's work has been incorporated into broader personality and social psychological research beyond the specific spiritual-moral domain. A third cluster related to methodological and historical references, indicating attention to Volovikova's methodological innovations and historical grounding.

#### 4. Discussion

Volovikova's scientific trajectory demonstrates how apparently diverse research interests can constitute a coherent intellectual program when examined for underlying

commitments. The transition from cognitive psychology to moral development to spiritual-moral psychology represents not abandonment of earlier interests but their expansion and deepening. Throughout these transitions, Volovikova maintained methodological commitment to qualitative, process-oriented analysis; theoretical attention to the person as an integrated whole; and philosophical engagement with fundamental psychological questions. The chronologically organized presentation of her work, while useful for mapping developmental trajectory, may obscure these integrative features. Her work on microsemantic analysis, for instance, was not simply a methodological technicality but reflected fundamental assumptions about human cognition: that thought processes are inherently temporal, creative, and self-developing. When extended to moral reasoning, this method yielded insights that cognitive-developmental frameworks could not provide, precisely because it attended to the process rather than merely outcomes.

Several of Volovikova's theoretical contributions anticipate or resonate with contemporary concerns in psychological science. Her finding that high moral rigidity can promote intellectual development in the absence of high cognitive ability challenges deficit models that conceptualize moral and intellectual development as covarying. This has implications for educational psychology, suggesting that moral education and cognitive education operate through distinct mechanisms that can, under certain conditions, support each other in unexpected ways. Her cross-cultural comparison of moral reasoning (Yakut vs. Moscow children) demonstrated that cultural context fundamentally shapes the meaning and manifestation of moral development, aligning with contemporary critiques of universalist frameworks in moral psychology and supporting context-sensitive approaches. Subsequent research has applied microsemantic analysis to clinical interviews for studying cultural-specific psychological constructs, including the mentality of the Sakha people belonging to the "silence culture."

Volovikova's concept of "moral elite" as individuals whose lives embody their values is distinct from both sociological and psychological conceptualizations of moral exemplarity. It emphasizes not just reasoning but practice, and not just individual development but social function, with implications for understanding social capital and community resilience. The Institute of Psychology RAS holds priority in developing this concept, with the term's authorship clearly established. Her work in

establishing moral psychology as a new, fundamental direction of psychological science has had lasting impact. The term contains a double meaning: psychological research of processes in the moral sphere and a reconsideration of the prospects of psychological science from the perspective of moral law. This reorientation has generated constant and increasing interest in moral problematics, with seven collections and monographs published since 2010.

The methodological contribution of microsemantic analysis deserves particular attention. Volovikova's application of this method to moral and personality psychology demonstrates an alternative to the psychometric and experimental paradigms that dominate modern psychology. By attending to reasoning processes in their full complexity, including contradictions, self-corrections, and qualitative transformations, microsemantic analysis provides access to dimensions of psychological functioning that standardized measures cannot capture. The extension of microsemantic analysis to written protocols and, potentially, literary texts suggests broader applications in qualitative psychology. Volovikova's (2008) proposal that Russian classical literature might serve as subject for microsemantic analysis represents an innovative bridge between

psychology and literary studies, grounded in the recognition that literary texts embody psychological insights that are continuous with empirical observations.

Volovikova's historical-psychological works make multiple contributions to understanding Russian psychology. Her works on Antsyferova, Brushlinskii, and the Laboratory of Personality Psychology preserve institutional memory that might otherwise be lost, particularly given the disruptions of the post-Soviet transition. Her analysis of research output in sociopolitical context demonstrates that psychological knowledge production is always situated within larger cultural and institutional conditions. Her documentation of how post-Soviet conditions affected research priorities and personnel development provides case material for understanding science policy. Her documentation of microsemantic analysis's development provides a counterweight to "presentism" in psychology, demonstrating continuity in research traditions that might otherwise appear as disconnected innovations.

To systematically compare Volovikova's approach with analogous international research, we can examine key dimensions of theoretical foundation, methodology, view of morality, and central concepts. The table 2 presents this comparison.

**Table 2.** Comparative Analysis of Volovikova's Approach and Western Frameworks in Moral Psychology

| Feature                | Volovikova's Approach                                                                                                                                          | Western Counterparts                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Theoretical Foundation | Rooted in Russian philosophical, literary, and religious traditions (Rubinstein, 1957; Dostoevsky, 1866/2002). Emphasizes the "whole person" and spirituality. | Largely based on cognitive-developmental frameworks (Piaget, 1932/1965; Kohlberg, 1981, 1984) or care-ethics (Gilligan, 1982).                                                       |
| Methodology            | Prioritizes qualitative, idiographic methods like microsemantic analysis to understand the unique individual and the process of reasoning.                     | Often relies on quantitative, nomothetic methods (e.g., standardized dilemmas, statistical analysis) to identify generalizable stages or traits (Kohlberg, 1984; Rest et al., 1999). |
| View of Morality       | Views morality as an inherent, spiritually-grounded aspect of the person, inseparable from cultural and historical context.                                    | Often treats morality as a set of cognitive schemas or principles that develop in a universal, stage-like sequence (Kohlberg, 1981; Piaget, 1932/1965).                              |
| Key Concepts           | Moral Elite, Spiritual-Moral Psychology, <i>Nravstvennost'</i> (a deeply internalized, personal morality).                                                     | Justice (Kohlberg, 1981), Care (Gilligan, 1982), Moral Stages (Piaget, 1932/1965; Kohlberg, 1984), Moral Identity (Blasi, 1984; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004).                            |

This comparison reveals that Volovikova's framework offers a distinctive contribution to global psychological discourse. Where Kohlberg (1981, 1984) and Piaget (1932/1965) sought universal stages of justice reasoning, Volovikova explored the culturally and historically contingent content of the moral ideal. Where Gilligan (1982) highlighted a different "voice" of care, Volovikova's framework provides a more comprehensive integration of cognition, emotion, spirituality, and social context. The construct of "moral elite" has no direct parallel in Western moral psychology, which tends to focus on moral identity (Blasi, 1984; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004) or moral exemplarity (Colby & Damon, 1992; Walker & Frimer, 2007) without the specific cultural and historical grounding that Volovikova's concept embodies.

Through qualitative analysis of Volovikova's entire research corpus, we identified four enduring characteristics (dominants) that permeated her work across all research phases. First, interdisciplinarity characterized her consistent integration of insights from multiple disciplines beyond psychology, including philosophy, literary studies, art history, anthropology, ethnography, and sociology. This reflected a conviction that psychological phenomena require multiple frames of reference for adequate understanding. Second, societal relevance was evident throughout her work, from early research on moral development to later analyses of legal consciousness and moral ideals. She emphasized the "non-advantageousness" of truly moral behavior for the individual (Volovikova & RebeKo, 1990), directly connecting personal morality with social health. Third, a person-centered approach characterized her methodological commitments, reflecting deep respect for individual persons as subjects of psychological inquiry. Microsemantic analysis required careful attention to each participant's reasoning, avoiding reduction to statistical patterns. This "dominant on the other person's face" (Ukhtomskii, 1927) characterized both her research practice and her historical writing. Fourth, timeless relevance was evident in her avoidance of transient research questions, engaging instead with issues that transcend historical periods. Even her work on historically specific conditions was framed within broader contexts that ensure continuing relevance.

Several aspects of Volovikova's legacy warrant further investigation. While bibliometric data show some international presence (26 citations in Web of Science or Scopus-indexed journals), the nature and depth of reception outside Russian-language scholarship remains unexplored. Translation

and dissemination of her work could potentially broaden its influence. Some concepts, particularly "moral elite" and the application of microsemantic analysis to literary texts, remain underdeveloped and could be elaborated and tested in diverse contexts. The concept of moral psychology as a fundamental reorientation of psychological science also deserves further theoretical and empirical development. Comparing Volovikova's work with that of other scholars addressing similar questions could illuminate both her distinctive contributions and common themes in moral psychology research.

Volovikova's work offers several implications for contemporary psychological research. In an era of large-scale quantitative research, her careful qualitative analysis demonstrates that important insights require attending to individual reasoning processes in their specificity. Her work emphasizes that psychological constructs, even those appearing universal, are shaped by cultural and historical contexts that cannot be merely controlled for but must be understood. Her consistent attention to societal relevance suggests that psychological research need not choose between scientific rigor and social significance, modeling how empirically grounded research can address questions of broad human concern. Her research program demonstrates that psychological subfields need not be isolated, as cognitive, developmental, personality, social, and historical psychology can inform each other when research questions are formulated broadly enough to require multiple perspectives. Finally, her success in founding moral psychology as a fundamental direction of psychological science demonstrates the possibility of reorienting psychological inquiry from the perspective of moral law, suggesting new topics, directions, methods, and perhaps a revision of attitudes toward some existing ones.

## 5. Conclusion

This case study has examined Margarita Iosifovna Volovikova's scientific legacy, tracing the evolution of her research program across four decades, documenting the impact of her central works through bibliometric analysis, and identifying enduring dominants that characterized her approach to psychological inquiry.

Volovikova's research progressed from cognitive psychology to moral development to spiritual-moral psychology, while maintaining consistent methodological commitments (microsemantic analysis) and theoretical orientations (attention to the person as an integrated whole). Her most influential works,

addressing representations of the moral ideal in Russian mentality, have been extensively cited (404 citing publications from 331 distinct authors) and have influenced research in spiritual-moral psychology, social psychology, and personality psychology. Four dominants characterized her work throughout its development: interdisciplinarity, societal relevance, person-centered methodology, and timelessness of research questions.

Volovikova's contributions establish a distinct Russian school of moral psychology that offers a holistic, culturally grounded alternative to more fragmented universalist approaches prevalent in Western psychology. She is recognized as a key figure in establishing moral psychology as a new, fundamental direction of psychological science. Her development of the "moral elite" construct, with the Institute of Psychology RAS holding priority in this concept, provides a tangible psychosocial model for understanding moral exemplarity that is distinct from Western traditions. Her work is marked by several original contributions: the "moral elite" construct emphasizing lived practice over mere intellectual articulation; a new typology of moral-intellectual development challenging linear stage-based models; the extension of microsemantic analysis to moral reasoning and personality; and the founding of moral psychology as a fundamental reorientation of psychological science from the perspective of moral law.

As the comparison with Western frameworks demonstrates, where Kohlberg (1981, 1984) sought universal stages of justice reasoning, Volovikova explored the culturally and historically contingent content of the moral ideal. Where Gilligan (1982) highlighted a different "voice" of care, Volovikova's framework provides a more comprehensive integration of cognition, emotion, spirituality, and social context, offering a holistic model that is both deeply personal and profoundly social. Her theoretical contributions, particularly regarding the non-unitary relationship between cognition and morality, the cultural specificity of moral reasoning, and the construct of moral elite, provide alternatives to dominant frameworks in moral psychology while maintaining empirical grounding. Her application of microsemantic analysis to moral and personality psychology demonstrates the value of qualitative, process-oriented methods for addressing complex psychological questions. Her historical-psychological works preserve institutional memory and contextualize psychological research in socio-political conditions,

contributing to understanding of science development in Russia.

Volovikova's scientific career exemplifies the integration of rigorous psychological research with humanistic concern for the person as a moral being. Her work addressed not merely psychological phenomena but the conditions for meaningful human life in changing social contexts. The continuing reception of her work, demonstrated by 404 citations, 331 distinct authors, and the publication of seven collections and monographs since 2010, suggests that these concerns transcend their historical origins and remain relevant for contemporary psychological science. In essence, Volovikova's legacy is not in supplanting Western theories but in enriching the global psychological discourse with a profound, integrated, and culturally grounded perspective on morality, the person, and the purpose of psychological science itself.

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**Institutional Review:** This study did not require ethical approval as it does not involve human participants, animal subjects, or sensitive personal data.

### **Highlights:**

- *Interdisciplinary pioneer:* Volovikova's research bridged cognitive, developmental, social, and historical psychology through consistent methodological innovation.

- *Moral psychology contributions*: Her work on the non-unitary relationship between intellectual and moral development challenged Piagetian (Piaget, 1932/1965) and Kohlbergian (Kohlberg, 1981, 1984) frameworks.
- *Bibliometric impact*: Central publications on Russian moral ideals received 404 citations from 331 unique authors, demonstrating sustained scholarly influence.
- *Methodological innovation*: Microsemantic analysis, adapted from cognitive psychology, was extended to moral reasoning and personality research.

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### Вклад М.И. Воловиковой в мировую психологию: кейс-стади самобытной российской школы нравственной психологии

К. Б. Зув

Институт психологии Российской академии наук, Москва, Россия

**Резюме.** *Актуальность.* Изучение научного наследия выдающихся учёных необходимо для понимания развития дисциплин, однако комплексные анализы целостного вклада таких исследователей остаются редкими. Маргарита Иосифовна Воловикова (1947–2021) была плодотворным российским психологом, опубликовавшим более 200 работ в различных областях, однако её единое научное наследие и его место в глобальном психологическом дискурсе до сих пор не были систематически рассмотрены. *Цель.* Данное кейс-стади рассматривает научное наследие М.И. Воловиковой как целостную систему, прослеживая эволюцию её исследовательской программы от когнитивной психологии к нравственной и духовно-нравственной психологии, а также оценивая её вклад в становление самобытной российской школы нравственной психологии в глобальном научном контексте. *Методы.* Проведён комплексный хронологический анализ основных направлений исследований М.И. Воловиковой на протяжении четырёх десятилетий, дополненный наукометрической оценкой её наиболее цитируемых публикаций (N = 404 цитирующие работы) с использованием Российского индекса научного цитирования. Выполнен тематический анализ цитирующих работ для картирования распространения её идей в различных областях психологии. *Результаты.* Научная траектория М.И. Воловиковой обнаруживает последовательную интеллектуальную эволюцию: от когнитивного прогнозирования и антиципации (Volovikova & Brushlinskii, 1976) через исследование нравственно-интеллектуального развития детей (Volovikova, 1988; Volovikova & RebeKo, 1990) к фундаментальным работам о представлениях о нравственном идеале в российском менталитете (Volovikova, 2004a, 2004b) и, наконец, к утверждению духовно-нравственной психологии как фундаментального направления психологической науки

(Volovikova, 2018a). Её центральные работы получили 404 цитирования от 331 автора, при этом 26 цитирований появились в журналах, индексируемых Web of Science или Scopus. Тематический анализ выявил три основных кластера влияния: духовно-нравственная психология, социальная психология и психология личности. Конструкт «нравственной элиты» (Volovikova & Zhuravlev, 2016, 2018), приоритет в разработке которого принадлежит Институту психологии РАН, представляет собой самобытную психосоциальную модель нравственного образца, укоренённую в российских культурных и интеллектуальных традициях. *Заключение.* Наследие М. И. Воловиковой представляет собой не просто совокупность отдельных трудов, а целостную научную школу, интегрирующую когнитивную, возрастную, социальную и историческую психологию в единую систему. Её работы характеризуются четырьмя устойчивыми доминантами: междисциплинарная направленность, высокая общественная значимость, человекоцентричная методология и вневременной характер исследовательских вопросов. Если западные подходы (Kohlberg, 1981, 1984; Gilligan, 1982) стремились к выделению универсальных стадий или «голосов» нравственного развития, то Воловикова исследовала культурно и исторически обусловленное содержание нравственного идеала, предлагая целостную альтернативу, интегрирующую познание, эмоции, духовность и социальный контекст. Её наследие обогащает глобальный психологический дискурс, демонстрируя, как культурно укоренённые, качественно насыщенные исследования могут обращаться к универсальным человеческим вопросам, сохраняя уважение к специфике интеллектуальных традиций.

**Ключевые слова:** Воловикова, нравственная психология, духовно-нравственная психология, история психологии, наукометрический анализ, российская психология, междисциплинарные исследования, нравственная элита, микросемантический анализ

### Информация об авторе

**Константин Борисович Зуев**, руководитель центра научных коммуникаций, Институт психологии Российской академии наук; Москва, Россия; <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3633-2926>; zuevkb@ipran.ru

### Author information

**Konstantin B. Zuev**, Head of the Center for Scientific Communications, Institute of Psychology of the Russian Academy of Sciences; Moscow, Russia; ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3633-2926>; zuevkb@ipran.ru

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