

THE ENCYCLOPEDISM OF THE RUSSIAN ENLIGHTENMENT IN THE HISTORY OF IDEAS

Tatiana Artemyeva¹

Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia

I. Introduction

The history of encyclopedism is an important part of intellectual history and helps to understand basic principles of research and thinking. The encyclopedic look at the world was an outcome of new epistemological principles and the separation of science into a specific sphere of knowledge. Initial attempts to systemize knowledge in Russia were represented through linguistic dictionaries which acted as a substitute for universal encyclopedias in the period of Enlightenment. Russian scholars however, did not follow famous examples like Zedler's Universal-Lexicon, Encyclopaedia Britannica and even Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonne des sciences, des arts et des métiers despite the fact that many texts from the Encyclopédie were translated into Russian and the authors were supported by many outstanding Russian aristocrats, including Empress Catherine the Great herself. French philosophers like Voltaire, Diderot, D'Alembert, Rousseau, Montesquieu, were never studied systematically in connection with the specificity of the encyclopedic discourse. The birth of the phenomena of encyclopedism as an epistemological ideal or form of universal knowledge in the epoch of Enlightenment signaled the emergence of an encyclopedic thinker like Christian Wolff. Wolff's philosophical method was adequately grasped by Russian thinkers and used by them in the process of assimilation and classification of new knowledge. His method proved to be most valuable for natural sciences, because it allowed the segregation of physical, chemical, mathematical and other researches from socio-political and ideological problems, thus separating philosophy and science. His method formed a whole generation of Russian scholars and formulated scientific thinking in Russia creating a system of encyclopedia principles which developed later into a new type of rationality that gradually seized science, philosophy, history, philology, political and economic theories. This 'encyclopedic' look at the world emphasised the universality of method that permitted to work out new knowledge when required and to bring it into correlation with other branches of knowledge. However, Wolffianism was interpreted and modified to fit the requirements of the Russian Enlightenment.

II. Dictionaries as encyclopaedias. A Way to the universal knowledge.

The quest for universality and systematization of accumulated knowledge has been

¹ tatart@mail.ru

typical for all stages of human development. Most actively this desire manifested itself at the points of 'cultural bifurcations', language and epistemological displacements. Various types of knowledge were presented there with their specific forms of encyclopedic generalizations. Mainly these forms were dictionaries, especially dictionaries of foreign terms, which fixed the paradigm shift and tried to relate it to the logic of language development.

The first dictionaries of "un-understandable words" appeared in Russia in the 13th century. They were named Azbukovnik (ABC-dictionary). Essentially explanatory dictionaries, they explained fragments from the Holy Scripture. In 1627 the famous lexicographer Pamva Berynda (1550-70s – 1632) issued the Lexicon slavenorossky (The Slavonic-Russian Lexicon) along similar lines and it was only in the 18th century that encyclopedic publishing more generally became systematic. The characteristic feature of Russian encyclopedism of that time was the absence of universal encyclopedias, but the plurality of special ones: geographical, mineralogical, historical, linguistic, etc. One could argue that linguistic dictionaries, first of all dictionaries of foreign words, were a kind of substitute for universal encyclopedias, because they contained detailed entries about various subjects.

In 1700 in Amsterdam Ilia Kopievskij (1651–1714) published Nomenklator (later reissued in Russia in 1718 and 1720 under the names Vocables or speech of Slavonic, German and Latin languages [Vokabuly ili rechi na slavenskom, nemeckom i latinskom yazykah] and Latin-Russian and German verbal book [Latinorossiiskaya i nemeckaya slovesnaya kniga])². Nomenklator was modeled after European educational dictionaries. Words were divided into thematic groups. The first group contained general philosophical and theological concepts (God, the Virgin, an angel, the heaven, the soul), the second, 'About the World, elements and heaven', was ontologico-cosmological, the third, 'About times and holidays', was temporal and socio-cultural. There were additional sections 'About waters', 'About earth and lands', 'About man and parts of his body', 'About illnesses and ailments'. Some sections were devoted to the concept of life in villages and town, of school, boating, war, arts, politics, etc.³

In 1704 the Lexicon of three Languages [Leksikon treyazychnyi]⁴ by Fedor Polikarpov-Orlov (d. 1731) was published. This dictionary also had a systemic character. The section titled 'About Science' included theology, philosophy, grammar, poetics, rhetoric, logic, physics, geometry, and music. Sometimes words were interconnected (bird, wing, feather, beak, tail, nail). The reason for this construction was very practical. Memorizing words with close meanings (and not in alphabetical order) was easier for students who had to learn 10–15 words in Latin and Greek in every class⁵.

² I. Kopievskij Latina grammatica in usum scholarum celeberrimae gentis Sclavonico-Rosseanae adornata (Amsterdam, 1700); I. Kopievskij Vokabuly ili rechi na slavenskom, nemeckom i latinskom yazykah, (Sankt-Peterburg, 1718); I. Kopievskij Latinorossiiskaya i nemeckaya slovesnaya kniga, (Sankt-Peterburg, 1732).

³ Yu.N. Yakimovich Deyateli russkoi kul'tury i slovarnoe delo (Moskva: Nauka, 1985), I. E. Kuznetsova 'Ob istochnike Nomenklatora na russkom, latinskom i nemeckom yazyke II'i Kopievskogo', in Materialy chtenii, posvyashennyh pa-myati professora Iosifa Moiseevicha Tronskogo. (Sankt-Peterburg: Nauka, 2009), 319-325.

⁴ Fedor Polikarpov-Orlov Leksikon treyazychnyi, sirech' rechenii slavenskih, ellinogrechskih i latinskikh sokrovishe (Moskva, 1704).

⁵ I. E. Kuznetsova 'Ob istochnike Nomenklatora na russkom, latinskom i nemeckom yazyke II'i Kopievskogo', in Materialy chtenii, posvyashennyh pamyati professora Iosifa Moiseevicha Tronskogo. (Sankt-Peterburg:

In the Petrine time special attention was paid to technical dictionaries that included naval terms. According to Peter the Great's personal instructions a handwritten *Lexicon of new words* [Leksikon vokabulam novym po alfavitu] had been drafted and corrected by Peter himself⁶.

In 1769 the 'Multilingual Dictionary, or an interpretation of Jewish, Greek, Latin, French, German and other foreign words in the Russian and some Slavonic languages' [Slovar' raznoyazychnyi, ili tolkovanie evreiskih, grecheskih, latinskih, francuzskih, nemeckih i prochih inozemskih upotrebyaemyh v russkom yazyke i nekotoryh slavyanskih yazykah slov] written by Nikolai Kurganov⁷ helped to understand and use such foreign words to people who 'does not know their meaning and use them wrong'⁸. The dictionary was reprinted 5 times and was followed by Vasilii Tatishchev's small Lexicon of Russia: historical, geographical, political and civil [Leksikon Rossiiskii istoricheskii, geograficheskii, politicheskii i grazhdanskii]⁹.

Classifications were oriented to external, not internal characteristics. In the Mineralogical Dictionary [Slovar' mineralogicheskii]¹⁰ one could find such 'minerals' as bricks, stones 'moss from trees', 'roots', 'bones, nails, nests of birds', 'painted stones', 'stones representing town ruins', etc. Such a 'liberal' approach to the classification could be explained by the closeness of notions of 'sciences' and 'arts'. Both were included into a sort of 'the artificial', i.e. created by man, contrary to 'the natural', created by God. 'Sciences and arts' were believed to be synonymous to 'civilization' and 'culture', and to be the criterion of social development and enlightenment.

For example, the Dictionary reflects theories that prevailed in the Age of Enlightenment, of the origin of various fossils found during mining. The first theory suggests that they had been created together with the earth, and the second one states that they were formed in the bowels of the earth gradually, as crystals. Proponents of the second theory see in nature a force that 'for amusement' can create prints of plants, shells, animals or even quaint ruins of towns. This phenomenon is called 'nature's funs'. Nature pursues a whim to create various forms arbitrarily and accidentally. An educated scientist should understand it and know that it is not possible to find prints of shells on the top of a mountain. Therefore this 'strange' classification of the 18th century actually does not reflect the 'poetic license of the originator', but the historical type of rationality of that epoch.

The entry of Russia into the European intellectual space made the need of various types of dictionaries urgent. Even authors of scholarly books tried to explain the epistemological status of their research with the help of micro-dictionaries as it was done in the first Russian manual on philosophy published in 1751 General Philosophical Knowledge for Those Who Cannot Read Foreign Books on This Subject [Znaniya,

Nauka. 2009).

⁶ V.V. Dubichinskii *Leksikografiya russkogo yazyka*. (M.: Nauka, Flinta, 2008), 21-28.

⁷ N.G. Kurganov 'Slovar' raznoyazychnyi, ili tolkovanie evreiskih, grecheskih, latinskih, francuzskih, nemeckih i prochih inozemskih upotrebyaemyh v russkom yazyke i nekotoryh slavyanskih yazykah slov (Russkii slovotolk)', *Rossiiskaya universal'naya grammatika, ili vseobshee pis'moslovie*, (Sankt-Peterburg: Morskoi kadetskii korpus, 1769), 381-416

⁸ *Ibid.*, 381.

⁹ V.N. Tatischev *Leksikon rossiiskoi istoricheskoi, geograficheskoi, politicheskoi i grazhdanskoi*. (Sankt-Peterburg: Tipografiya Gornogo uchilisha, 1793)

¹⁰ *Slovar' mineralogicheskii*, (Sankt-Peterburg: Imperatorskaya akademiya nauk, 1790)

kasayushiesya voobshe do filosofii, dlya pol'zy teh, kotorye o sei materii chuzhestrannykh knig chitat' ne mogut]¹¹ written by Grigorii Teplov, where he explained principal terms in accordance with Christian Wolff's system.

Linguistic dictionaries were, therefore, very important in Russia in the Enlightenment and sometimes played the role of universal encyclopedias due to the following reasons:

1. The Russian Empire was a multinational and multilingual country, during the 18th century many areas were incorporated into it (on a voluntary and involuntary basis).

2. The Russian intellectual and political elite used French as a language of international as well as of internal communications.

3. The Russian intellectual (academic) elite, including representatives of church schools, used Latin (sometimes German) because their representatives were mostly from various German universities or influenced by German authors.

Next, Catherine II's project, a dictionary of 'all languages and dialects' with the ambitious sub-title Linguarum totius Orbis vocabularia comparativa was published in 1787–1789 in 500 copies¹². The method of compiling the dictionary was worked out by an academician of the St. Petersburg Academy of Science, Peter Simon Pallas (1741–1811). A questionnaire was published as Modèle du vocabulaire qui doit servir à la comparaison de toutes les langues¹³ and sent to Europe, Brazil, China and Northern America. Many eminent intellectuals were involved in the project. The dictionary was based on the materials received from governors of Russian regions, ambassadors, and foreign scholars.

This project was to emphasize the idea that there had existed only one primordial language. Special attention was paid to languages of Inner Asia. Pallas thought that it was the cradle of humankind. Regarding this project, John Walter (1738/9–1812), the founder of The Times newspaper, wrote to Benjamin Franklin from London in May, 1784: 'I have corrected the Outlines of a grammatical Dictionary for a universal Language, so digested, that the same Writing and Character, shall be perfectly understood in the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, English, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, German, Russian, Swedish, Danish, and Turkish Languages; with Blank Columns for the Inserting of any other Language, and that each may be alternately translated into the other, by being acquainted with one Language only'¹⁴. Marquis de la Fayette wrote to Benjamin Franklin from Paris on February the 10th, 1786: 'Inclosed, My dear Sir, I send You a Vocabulary which the Empress of Russia Requests May Be filled up with indian Words. You Know Her plans of an Universal dictionary. I Have thought You Might Send me the delaware and languages with some others. Your Commissioners for indian affairs, Col Harmar, or Gnl. Butler will Be able to superintend the Business Which it is important to Have Well done as the Empress, altho I think to very little purpose, sets a Great Value By it'¹⁵.

¹¹ G.N. Teplov 'Znaniia, kasaiushchiesia voobshche do filosofii, dlia pol'zy tekhn, kotorye o sei materii chuzhestrannykh knig chitat' ne mogut, sobrany i iz'iasneny Grigoriem Teplovym'. Filosofskii vek, Al'manakh 3 (1998), 207-289

¹² Linguarum totius orbis vocabularia comparativa : augustissimae cura collecta. Sectionis primae, linguas Europae et Asiae. (Petropoli, 1786-1789)

¹³ Modèle du vocabulaire qui doit servir à la comparaison de toutes les langues. (St. Pétersbourg, 1785).

¹⁴ The Papers of Benjamin Franklin
<http://www.franklinpapers.org/franklin/framedVolumes.jsp?vol=43&%20page=891>

¹⁵ *ibid.*

The project of the dictionary had more ideological than linguistic significance. Foreign words were written in Cyrillic letters, far from the real pronunciation (the phonetic transcription was not created yet at that time), data collection was conducted hastily and often by non-specialists, had many errors and distortions in the transmission of sound words. Mention something about how significant the project was obviously considered as these people are writing about it.¹⁶

The project united languages of Russia (including those of illiterate peoples who had no written language) and languages of other nations of the world, proclaiming that the 'residence' and the 'capital' of Russia were part of the enlightenment along with the entire country. It also proclaimed the cultural mission of the Russian Empire as one among 'natural' nations and became an indirect example of the legitimate policy of 'internal colonization'. Catherine the Great was very sensitive to the status of the Empress of a big multicultural empire. Her visit to Kazan in 1769 was accompanied by a solemn celebration with rhymes dedicated to her in various languages including languages of the Russian Empire: Russian, Latin, Greek, Mari, Chuvash, Udmurt, Tatar and Mordovian¹⁷.

A principal role in Russian encyclopedic discourse was played by the publication of the Dictionary of the Russian Academy¹⁸. The Russian Academy was a special research center for Russian language and literature separate from the Academy of Sciences and was established in 1783 following the example of the Académie française¹⁹. Princess Catherine Dashkova (1743-1810) was the organizer and the President of the Russian Academy. Whereas the French Academy took more than fifty years to compile their Dictionary, Catherine Dashkova and Catherine the Great facilitated the production of the Russian Dictionary by their involvement. Russian language became an object of careful studies for the first time with many eminent scholars, writers, representatives of the political elite, theologians taking part in it; it became much more than a simple linguistic dictionary. Analytical explanations of linguistic meanings with a lexical and etymological analysis made the edition especially important for research in physics as well as metaphysics. Every entry had plenty of examples from literature, official documents, folklore, philosophical, religious or scientific texts. It became not only a Dictionary of Russian Language, but a 'Dictionary of Russian discourses'.

A special place among dictionaries was taken by the three-volume New explanatory dictionary [Novyi slovotolkovatel']²⁰ by Nikolai Yanovsky (d. 1826) which contained more than ten thousand entries on astronomy, mathematics, medicine, anatomy, physics, chemistry, jurisprudence, commerce, mining, music, military arts like artillery, fortifications, marine, and many others.

Foreign words (terms) had a special significance in the Enlightenment in Russia and

¹⁶ Anna Muradova 'Slovar' vsekh yazykov', Puteshestviya vokrug sveta, 33, (2003). <http://archive.li/I9hc#selection-163.0-165>

¹⁷ Duhovnaya ceremoniya proizvodivshayasya vo vremya vsevozhdenneishago prisudstviya eya imperatorskago velichestva velikiya gosudaryni premudreishiya monarhini i popechitel'neishiya materi Ekateriny Vtoryyya v Kazane, (Sankt-Peterburg: Pri Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk, 1769)

¹⁸ Slovar' Akademii Rossiiskoi, (Sankt-Peterburg: Imperatorskaya akademiya nauk, 1789-17940).

¹⁹ M. Sh. Fainshtein 'I slavu Francii v Rossii prevzoiiti': Rossiiskaya. akademiya (1783-1841) i razvitie kul'tury i gumanitarnykh nauk (St.Petersburg: Dmitrii Bulanin 2002).

²⁰ Yanovskii N.M. Novyi slovotolkovatel', raspolozhennyi po alfavitu (Sankt-Peterburg: Imperatorskaja akademiya nauk, 1803-1806).

ideas were borrowed together with their linguistic forms. Thus the Russian vocabulary was oversaturated with foreign terminology. Naval and military terms came from Dutch, physical, metaphysical and loyal from German and French. Many words came from Latin and Greek. The New explanatory dictionary became a model for future dictionaries of foreign words and encyclopedias, because it contained a lot of informative entries, analysed scholarly approaches under a categorical system of sciences and humanities and in this sense was a real encyclopedia.

Ideology played an important part in the development of encyclopedism in the Enlightenment, and Russia was no exception. The formation of state identity in the 18th century associated Russia with the system of cosmological and geographical coordinates related its spatial uniqueness and the magnitude of the Russian Empire was an object of pride for the Russian rulers.

This was clearly expressed in the literature of the period. An Atlas of the Russian Empire [Atlas Vserossiiskoi imperii]²¹ fixed with a conscious superiority that “the Russian Empire has more than 130 degrees, but the terrestrial globe contains 360”. A New and the Complete Geographical Dictionary of the Russian State²² noted that ‘Russia occupies more than one seventh of the known dry land, or nearly one 26th of the entire surface of the globe’, and further: ‘there is no, and even in ancient times there had never been any state under one rule, which could be compared with Russia in its extensiveness’²³.

The Instruction for a New Law Code [Nakaz o sochinenii proekta novogo Ulozheniya] (1767), a principal political document of the epoch written by Catherine II, noted: ‘The Possessions of the Russian Empire extend upon the terrestrial Globe to 32 Degrees of Latitude, and to 165 of Longitude’²⁴. It validated the form of government because ‘the Extent of the Dominion requires an absolute Power to be vested in that Person who rules over it. It is expedient so to be, that the quick Dispatch of Affairs, sent from distant Parts, might make ample Amends for the Delay occasioned by the great Distance of the Places’²⁵.

These kinds of ideas were also reflected in the Geographical Lexicon of Russian State by Feodor Polunin²⁶, where the information was collated about the latest Russian conquests during the Russo-Turkish Wars of 1735–1739 and 1768–1774. Dictionnaire géographique des Gaules et de la France was used here as a pattern²⁷. The editor of the publication, academician Gerhard Friedrich Müller (1705–1783) wrote in his preface that the next editions of a Dictionary of history, policy, and geography of Russian State should surpass its incompleteness. He discussed an alphabetic system of encyclopedic entries that was good for history, because it ‘consisted of names’, but was bad for science because it disrupted the logic of theoretical description. The edition was organized alphabetically, but every entry had detailed accounts of history and

²¹ I.K. Kirilov Atlas Vserossiiskoi imperii (Sankt-Peterburg, 1731).

²² Novyi i polnyi geograficheskii slovar’ Rossiiskogo gosudarstva (Chast’ III. Moskva: N.I. Novikov, 1788)

²³ Ibid, 173

²⁴ W.F. Reddaway, trans. Documents of Catherine the Great: The Correspondence with Voltaire and the Instruction of 1767 in the English, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1931), 216.

²⁵ Ibid, 217.

²⁶ F.A. Polunin Geograficheskii leksikon Rossiiskogo gosudarstva. Moskva: Napechatano pri Imperatorskom Moskovskom universitete 1773).

²⁷ Dictionnaire géographique des Gaules et de la France. 6 vol. (Paris: Desaint et Saillant 1762–1770).

economics of places and of personal roles of various important historical persons like apostle Andrei, Peter I or Catherine II.²⁷

The next edition of the New and Complete Geographical dictionary of Russian State, or Lexicon, expanded by Lev Maksimovich in 6 volumes included the newest conquests of the Russian Crown²⁸. The Geographical dictionary of the Russian State was represented as an ambitious plan to demonstrate encyclopedic descriptions of the Russian Empire, including its geography, hydrography, history with genealogy and heraldry, social structure, education, policy, agriculture, domestic industry, population, ethnology, religious situation and church life, it also contained entries about peoples from the Russian Empire according to their social-political status ('Zaporozhian Cossacks'), ethnicity ('Kalmyks', 'Samoyedic peoples'), religion ('Uniat'), as well as monasteries, churches, palaces, fortresses, etc. All kinds of historical events, including historical myths, were included in these entries. The Geographical dictionary made Russian history a history of the regions of Russia. Again, this example shows how dictionaries and lexicons of the Russian Enlightenment are clearly not only records of lexical meanings of concepts and terms, but also an important source for studying the history of ideas of the epoch.

III. Encyclopedism as a form of universal knowledge

In spite of the absence of universal encyclopedias, Russian learned society was very sensitive to the way of thinking developed by them. Encyclopedism as a form of universal knowledge or a universal epistemological approach was a result of a new type of rational vision. Thinkers were sure that the right method gave them comprehensive knowledge and, as a consequence, understanding of the absolute truth, so they tried to find a universal method to study sciences and humanities. Systematization of the already accumulated knowledge was appreciated as the next step for that.²⁷

Principal lessons of the encyclopedic way of thinking were taught by German intellectuals Leibniz and Christian Wolff who were very popular in Russia in the Enlightenment. Peter I met Leibniz several times while travelling, abroad (Leibniz never visited Russia), and in 1712 he took Leibniz into Russian service and paid him one thousand talers per year. Presumably, it was Leibniz who prompted Peter with the idea of a 'cultural cycle'. In a letter to the Russian emperor he wrote: "Apparently, according to its divine destiny, science has to go round the world and now come also into Scythia, and so it has chosen Your Majesty to be its instrument, because You can [...] acquire the best and improve in right way what was created in both parts of the world"²⁹. Leibniz proposed to Peter projects to transform Russia and 'to be from outside a Solon of Russia'³⁰. Leibniz believed that Russia could avoid mistakes made by the West and create the ideal society ruled by the wisest, like Bacon's New Atlantis. In an essay written for Peter, he recommended the handing over of the administration of education, industry, and economy to the learned. Leibniz advised Peter to establish the 'Collegium of popular education and social prosperity'. The Academy of Sciences, in his opinion,

²⁸ L.M. Maksimovich *Novyi i polnyi geograficheskii slovar' Rossiiskago gosudarstva*. (Sankt-Peterburgb 1788-1789).

²⁹ V. I. Chuchmarev, Leibnits i russkaia kul'tura: Iz istorii mezhdunarodnykh nauchnykh i kul'turnykh svyazei. (Moskva: Vysshaya shkola. 1968), 41.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 19-20.

should have more power and be independent of the state. Peter listened cautiously to Leibniz. There is no doubt that the tsar was not going to bring into life in Russia a Baconian epistemological utopia and to share his power with anybody. Besides, Leibniz died in 1716 at the height of the Petrine educational reforms. From that moment on Christian Wolff became for Peter the main Western authority to advise him in the sphere of science and education.

The first serious steps began with the studying of the Western experience. In 1721 Johann Daniel Schumacher, a librarian and councilor of the academic office, one of the first organizers of Russian scientific institutions, was sent abroad. Peter wrote an instruction for him titled 'Points of what the librarian Schumacher while traveling through Germany, France, England, and Holland should do'³¹.

He was ordered to study the organization of science in other countries, their museums and libraries, to buy books, various devices, and instruments for scientific researches. Schumacher had also to invite 'a mathematician' from Halle, Ch. Wolff to work in Russia. On the 10th July 1722, Schumacher wrote to Wolff that Peter was inclined to establish in Petersburg a society of scholars who would work to develop arts and sciences, and Wolff was proposed as the organizer and vice-president of this society. Wolff did not give his direct consent to move to Russia, but took a very active part in the creation of the Petersburg Academy of Sciences. Wolff, in his letter of the 26th June 1723, doubted that it was possible to create the academy straight away and recommended they begin with some 'usual universities' to educate personnel.

Peter I valued Wolff quite highly and asked for his recommendations in various scholarly problems. For instance, wishing to buy a 'perpetuum mobile' invented by Orffyraeus (whose real name was Johann Ernst Elias Bessler, 1680-1745) and to be assured of its authenticity the Tsar appealed to Wolff's expertise. President of the Academy, Laurentius Blumentrost was asked by Peter to correspond with Wolff about this issue. Wolff answered that there was no fraud in Orffyraeus's invention because he had received a certificate from 'mister landgraf', however, the engine did not have enough power, so it had no practical value³².

Insistent invitations to Wolff to come to Russia came to nothing. In 1725 the management of the Academy thought of a compromise. In Minutes of the Academy on 19 March 1725 there was mention of the following: 'L. Blumentrost wrote to A. Golovkin that the Empress ordered to establish for eminent scholars the title of honorary member of the Academy. Wolff was proposed to become an honorary member and a representative of the Academy in Germany with a salary of three hundred rubles per year. On 26 April Wolff informed the Academy of his approval'³³.

Wolff's support to the organization of Russian science was great and many projects were accomplished due to his professional competence and participation. He sent his books to Petersburg and discussed various theoretical problems, at meetings of the Academy his opinions about problems of natural law, botany, cosmology, etc. were discussed. Thus the universal, encyclopedic character of the thinker's knowledge was often referred to by Russian academics.

³¹ Ed. Nina Nevskaja, Letopis' Rossijskoi Akademii nauk (Sankt-Peterburg: Nauka, 2000, 34.

³² A.I. Timofeev 'Khr.Vol'f i sozdanie rossijskoi Akademii nauk' in Peterburgskaia Akademiia nauk v istorii akademij mira. Materialy Mezhdunarodnoi konferentsii. T.IV (Sankt-Peterburg: Nauka, 1999), 85.

³³ Ed. Nina Nevskaja, Letopis' Rossijskoi Akademii nauk (Sankt-Peterburg: Nauka, 2000, 38-39.

Wolff's help in collecting personnel for the Academy was invaluable. In 1725-26 he wrote about 30 letters invitation letters to foreign scholars. Some of them, for example, Leonard Euler, Jacob Hermann, Georg Bernhardt Bülfinger and others, he recommended personally. In the Academy archives there is a note preserved that testifies that Bülfinger was invited as a philosopher rather than as a mathematician, Bülfinger was summoned as a philosopher-Wolffianist as was Christian Martini from Wittenberg President L. Blumentrost was himself Wolff's student and attended his lectures in Halle in 1706.

The 'state-bound' character of the science organization had certain merits. In a very short time, a major scientific center was created with an observatory, a physical cabinet, a botanic garden, an anatomy theater, a printing press, a library, a chemical laboratory and tool-making shops. When young Euler, also recommended by Wolff, was invited to enter Petersburg Academy, Wolff wrote him: 'You are going to a paradise of scholars, and I wish most of all that you would preserve your good health in this voyage, and would be satisfied as long as possible by your stay in Petersburg'³⁴.

Some promising Russian students M. Lomonosov, D. Vinogradov and G. Raizer were sent to Marburg University to Wolff in September 1736, to be educated in chemistry and mining and taught sixteen subjects: logic, philosophy, natural and national law, politics, geography, chronology, astronomy, mathematics, theoretical physics, mechanics, optics, hydraulics, military and civil architecture, pyrotechnics. Thus the Russian students could learn from the eminent scholar's erudition to take an encyclopedic look at the world.

Being an experienced teacher, Wolff appreciated the talent of young Lomonosov straight away. It was Wolffian training that, in my view, formed the genius of Lomonosov who became equally conversant in physics, chemistry, philology, and history. In a letter to the president of the Academy Johann Albrecht von Korff in September 1737, Wolff wrote: "Mr. Lomonosov, it seems, has the smartest head among them"³⁵. Lomonosov promoted Wolff's doctrine in Russia, recommended his books for reading at Russian schools, considering them to be the last word of European science. He highly praised Wolff for his ability in clear and accurate thinking and underlined the main merit of Wolff's doctrine in its method, pointing out that the most important thing for Russia was a Wolffian combination of scientific thinking with teleology and a Wolffian strong belief that scientific cognition did not contradict the truths of the Holy Scripture, but supported them and allowed man to serve God by making science. This conviction made Lomonosov an outstanding scientist and he made many interesting theological propositions in his spiritual odes.

A researcher of the German Enlightenment V.A. Zhuchkov remarked that 'Wolffian philosophy was special in its underlined orientation to enlightenment, this trend contrasted with a rather elite character of the 17th-century philosophical thought or the so-called 'age of geniuses''³⁶. Wolff's use of his national language also shared affinities with similar thought processes in Russia during this period. I dare propose that teaching

³⁴ R.Tile Leonard Euler (Kiev: Vishha shkola 1983), 26.

³⁵ A.I. Timofeev 'Khr.Vol'f i sozdanie rossiiskoi Akademii nauk' in Peterburgskaia Akademiia nauk v istorii akademij mira. Materialy Mezhdunarodnoi konferentsii. T.IV (Sankt-Peterburg: Nauka, 1999), 86.

³⁶ V.A. Zhuchkov Metafizika Vol'fa i ee mesto v istorii filosofii Novogo vremeni. In Khristian Vol'f i filosofiiia v Rossii (Sankt-Peterburg: Russkaya hristianskaya gumanitarnaya akademiya, 2001), 11.

of philosophy at Moscow University in Russian was at least in part a follow-up of Wolff's example. Leibniz, who preferred to use Latin and French in his works, thought that German was 'non-philosophical' while Wolff clearly showed in his writings that German could finely deal with all shades of metaphysical discourses.

Wolff's example inspired many Russian thinkers to create philosophical terminology in their native language. Grigory Teplov, a Russian Wolffianist, wrote: 'Cicero was a man of great eloquence, but he was ashamed of his Latin words, when he translated them from Greek for the first time, and some of them he could not transfer and left them in philosophy in Greek. The same happened in our time with French and especially with German. Professor Wolff for his translated words was ridiculed by many, especially from those at Leipzig University, but now nowhere as much as in Leipzig at the university the words of his translation are used. The same is happening also in Russian language'³⁷.

Wolff and his works were really very well-known in Russia. Translations of his works into Russian and a great number of copies of his books in Russian libraries testify this. The Department of Rare Books of the Library of Academy of Sciences alone now preserves more than a hundred volumes of Wolff's works (about fifty titles) published in the 18th century. The St. Petersburg Branch of the Academy Archives owns many documents on Wolff. The main part of them consists of his letters to Schumacher and Blumentrost. The information about Wolff can be found also in Euler's correspondence. The Archives also keep Wolff's manuscript *Philosophia moralis dire Ethica* (B/d. R. III. Op. 3. D. 12). It is interesting to note that the translated works were not 'philosophical'. The only philosophical work translated was Wolff's *Deutsche Metaphysik*³⁸. Other editions were about fortification, mathematics and physics.

Philosophy was studied rather with Friedrich-Christian Baumeister, whose works *Logic*, *Metaphysics* and *Moral Philosophy* were many times translated and printed in Russia. This fact was connected with a popular character of the books of this thinker and with his use of "Wolffianism". An example will illustrate the ambiguous usage of Wolff's doctrine, it is well-known that Wolff was a supporter of pre-established harmony, and in corresponding parts of his works he used just this model to explain the connection of mind and body. In Baumeister's *Metaphysics*³⁹, however, one could find mention of the traditional models: the Ancient (Aristotelian) theory of 'physical influx', the system of occasional causes by Descartes and Malebranche, as well as the model of pre-established harmony by Leibniz and Wolff. Baumeister remarked: 'Which of these opinions is closer to the truth, I do not know what to say, and even if I know, I would not dare to define this. Every reader can without any obstacle make his own judgment. Our duty consists only in proposing of philosophical opinions, but not to tell how they should think'⁴⁰.

The system of occasional causes and pre-established harmony were not accepted by

³⁷ G.N. Teplov 'Znaniia, kasaiushchiesia voobshche do filosofii, dlia pol'zy tekhn, kotorye o sei materii chuzhestrannykh knig chitat' ne mogut, sobrany i iz'iasneny Grigoriem Teplovym'. *Filosofskii vek, Al'manakh* 3 (1998), 219.

³⁸ Christian Wolff *Razumnye mysli o silah chelovecheskago razuma*, (Sankt-Peterburg, 1765).

³⁹ F. C. Baumeister, *Khristiana Baumeistera Metafizika/ Pervod s latinskago [Aleksandra Pavlova] vnov' vysmotren i na mnogikh mestakh ispravlen professorom Dmitriem Sin'kovskim*, (Moskva: Universitetskaya tipografiya u Novikova. 1789).

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 206.

Russian thinkers. They were rejected first of all because of moral reasons. The main shortcoming of all these systems was a peculiar justification of evil that became objective and inevitable. Mechanism, a consequence of the Cartesian-Leibnizian pneumatological scheme, led the thought out of morality, and Russian philosophy refused to go there. A Wolffianist, D.S. Anichkov (1733-1788) who was Professor of Logic, Metaphysics and Mathematics at the University, became critical of these doctrines. In his works, in A Discourse on Human Understanding and the Measures which Preserve the Mind of a Mortal from Various Errors and in A Discourse on Various Ways to Explain the Union between Body and Soul⁴¹ he analyzed in detail both methodological and ethical bases of the problem. Placing itself between logic and morals, Russian metaphysics chose the latter, contrasting a kind of dualism with monistic mechanism and deism. The most appropriate way to explain the mind-body problem was the peripatetic theory of 'physical influx' rejected in Europe, which did not counterpoise but joined them together. The Leibnizian-Wolffian doctrine of theodicy and freedom of will, very actively discussed in Russia after the famous earthquake in Lisbon in 1755, was rejected.

In the first Russian manual in philosophy, G. Teplov's General Philosophical Knowledge for Those Who Cannot Read Foreign Books on This Subject written as a presentation of the Wolffian system, the main point of emphasis was on problems of epistemology and a classification of various ways of cognition. Teplov paid considerable attention to the Wolffian differentiation of cognition into historical, philosophical and mathematical ones. In his book he interpreted and cleared out the entity and the nature of cognitive processes, explaining how fruitful the right method could be. However, he fully ignored the concepts of pre-established harmony and monadology, taking just what he thought useful for him and his compatriots.

Philosophy taught at Russian schools was also positioned as Wolffianism. Wolffianism became the official system taught at Moscow University founded in 1755. The Manifest 'About the Foundation of Moscow University' clearly said: 'Nobody of the professors should of his own free will choose a system or an author to teach his discipline to his students, but everybody should follow to the order and the authors prescribed by the assembly of professors and curators'⁴².

This rule was strictly observed and opinions that differed from the officially approved were mercilessly banned. Even in the beginning of the 19th century, Wolffianism was set off against both French and German philosophy, the last in persons of Kant, Schelling, and Fichte. In the manuscript of his 'Opinion about Teaching of Philosophy' a member of the General School Administration, I.M. Murav'ev-Apostol remarked that he preferred the Wolffian system to any other. Wolffianism was for him an example of a didactic and systematic discourse spared from the destructive freethinking of French authors⁴³. The same situation prevailed at church schools where

⁴¹ D.S. Anichkov Slovo o raznyh sposobah, tesneishii soyuz dushi s telom iz' yasnyayushih, (Moskva: V Universitetskoi tipografii u N. Novikova, 1783); D.S. Anichkov Slovo o svoistvah poznaniya chelovecheskago i o sredstvah predohranayushih um smertnago ot raznyh zabluzhdenii, (Moskva: Pechatano pri Imperatorskom Moskovskom universitete, 1770).

⁴² Polnoe Sobranie Zakonov Rossiiskoi Imperii. T. XIV. (Sankt-Peterburg, 1830), 290.

⁴³ Tatiana Artemyeva, 'Kak prepodavat' filosofiyu? Mnenie universitetskogo chinovnika' ('How to teach' philosophy? The opinion of a university official), Filosofskii vek, al'manakh, 30 (2005), 67-80.

Wolffianism replaced scholasticism and Aristotelianism in the second half of the 18th century. The interest towards Wolffianism resulted from the general academic tradition of attention to German philosophy and in part from a certain impact of Protestantism upon Orthodox hierarchs. Many of them were influenced by German philosophy, and Wolffianism, in particular. For example, Bishop Damaskin (D. Semenov-Rudnev), was a publisher of Lomonosov's works and one of the first Russian bibliographers who was educated in Göttingen University. In the seminary in Nizhny Novgorod, Damaskin sponsored theological debates using his experience acquired in Göttingen. The bishop of Byelorussia, Georgy Konissky, who had graduated from Kievo-Mogilianskaia Academy and was its rector, wrote to Timofey, the metropolitan of Kiev, that he regretted that he had lost much time reading Aristotle and had not studied and taught Wolff's philosophy, which he found to be 'well-grounded, sound, clear'⁴⁴.

The organizers of spiritual education were most of all afraid of the anti-clerical tendencies of the French Enlightenment, so they found that solid German systems of Leibniz and Wolff were the best to philosophically support religious truths. The ontological notions of Wolffianism seemed to provide the general foundation for all rational arguments used to confirm key theses of any dogmatic religious system. Thus, Wolffianism was in quite a natural way included in the system of Orthodox theology. Wolffianism studied at church schools, however, differed from Wolff's philosophy, being more inclined to Baumeister's variant in certain interpretations.

The tendency was clearly stated by the archimandrite Gavriil in his history of philosophy. In the article about Wolff which was titled 'An Editor of Leibniz', Gavriil criticized Wolff not only for monadology and pre-established harmony, but also for his mathematical method fully 'subjected to the cobweb of formalism'⁴⁵. Besides, Wolff's maxim 'do the good and avoid the evil'⁴⁶, Gavriil believed, 'breathes with vanity, and thus is hostile to the nature of human reason that obliges us to strive for the improvement of others, sometimes even to our own detriment'⁴⁷. Wolff's system was approved by the officials also because he never linked his method with any possibility to rearrange society, but only with its cognition. Social problems he treated from the point of view of ethics (the science of will, as logic, was the science of reason) and Wolffian ethics had 'natural' rules that had, in turn, the status of general principles. Thus the social problems were treated as secondary, of minor importance, in contrast to doctrines of French 18th-century philosophers who always pushed social problems and their attitude to the church to the foreground.

Hence, Wolffianism was being interpreted, modified, distorted to fit the requirements of various figures of the Russian Enlightenment. Wolff became an official philosopher in Russia. At the same time, not his entire legacy was being used, but those parts that corresponded to the logic of the Russian Enlightenment processes.

However, Wolff's method proved to be the most valuable for natural sciences, because it allowed making the objects of physical, chemical, mathematical and other researches independent of socio-political and ideological problems. Thus it helped to separate

⁴⁴ P.V. Znamenskii *Dukhovnye shkoly v Rossii do reformy 1808 goda*. (Sankt-Peterburg: Letnii Sad. 2001), 748.

⁴⁵ Arkhimandrit Gavriil, *Istoriia filosofii v 6 chchastiakh*. Ch.III. (Kazan': V Universitetskoi tipografii. 1839).

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 190.

⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 190.

philosophy and science. This secularization promoted natural sciences and met the needs of newly founded scientific institutions, like the Academy of Sciences and Moscow University.

It is evident that the didactic potential of Wolff's system, his rigid methodology and the strictness of his deductive reasoning made his doctrine attractive for Russians. Just these very qualities later provoked Heinrich Heine's romantic irony reproaching Wolff for having built a system that looked like a wardrobe where the shelves were well-situated, well-filled and well-inscribed. Russian thinkers of the Enlightenment saw nothing nasty in ordering systems. 'Poetical disorder' may be attractive only for poets, not for scholars.

It is unlikely that this striving to classify, to order, to systematize, to complete, to scrupulously calculate phenomenological and speculative entities was accidental or senseless. For example, a Wolffianist A. Baumgarten studied a special sphere of philosophical cognition, namely aesthetics, which he clearly recognized, and which later overgrew its Wolffian frames. The 'encyclopedic look at the world' was an outcome of new epistemological principles and the separation of science into a specific sphere of knowledge and this was attractive to Russian scholars who considered Wolff to be their instructor. Thus it was not the metaphysical content of Wolff's doctrine, but his philosophical method that was adequately grasped by Russian thinkers and used by them in the process of making, assimilation and classification of new knowledge.

The idea to create a universal system of scientific knowledge, 'scientia generalis', based upon strict logical laws had already been expressed by Descartes and Leibniz. Wolff brought it to life.

It may be said that this method formed a whole generation of Russian scholars and influenced the formulation of scientific thinking in Russia and created the system of encyclopedic principles developed later into a new type of rationality that gradually seized the sciences, philosophy, history, philology, political and economic theories. The main feature of the "encyclopedic look at the world" was not the plenitude of knowledge, but rather the universality of method that permitted to work out new knowledge, when required, and to bring it into correlation with other branches of knowledge. Wolff called this method mathematical (as distinct from historical and philosophical). Now we would call it scientific. It was much later, in the twentieth century, when scientism was criticized, that its universality was called into question, and the groundlessness of its claims to be universal was proved. In the epoch of Enlightenment it was an epistemological breakthrough based on a belief in human reason.

In various epochs, the idea of entire and final knowledge was based upon the belief in the boundless abilities of reasoning (divine or human) that possessed the universal cognitive method equally applicable in various spheres of being. Thus a phenomenon of encyclopedism was born as an epistemological ideal or a form of universal knowledge in the epoch of Enlightenment. Thus a type of the encyclopedic thinker emerged, and Christian Wolff undoubtedly belonged to this type.☐

Why then did the Wolffian model of encyclopedic discourse that consisted in his ordering method become the dominating one in Russia? In that epoch, there were also two other excellent models, namely, the French and the British ones.

The French encyclopedia⁴⁸ collected around itself the whole constellation of French philosophers and scientists. Besides Diderot and D'Alembert also Holbach, Voltaire, Marmontel, Rousseau, Turgot, Montesquieu, and others took part in the edition.

The Encyclopédie (at first it was planned just as a translation from English Ephraim Chambers' Cyclopaedia⁴⁹) aimed to throw new light upon all possible tendencies and manifestations of 'sciences, arts and crafts'. It has become now a historical monument of the past. The Encyclopaedia Britannica intended by Edinburgh publishers Andrew Bell and Colin Macquhar as a national and commercial edition, on the contrary, turned into an international reference edition, one of the most authoritative in the modern world. The Encyclopédie formed the epoch, but went down in history, the Encyclopaedia Britannica had a modest start, but gradually created a stable and leading position for itself in the learned world. The Britannica incorporated with ease borrowed and translated articles, aiming at fundamentality, not originality. These principles defined its success⁵⁰.

This historical example confirmed the main principle of the encyclopedic approach: not to invent the new, rather to regulate the old. At a certain stage of scientific development, ordering and systematization are essential to move on. Moreover, in any epoch, this principle is a significant component of science.☐

However, both French and British types of encyclopedism were never accepted in Russia. This statement may seem paradoxical, especially where French encyclopedism is concerned. Texts from the Encyclopédie were translated into Russian, the authors were supported by many outstanding Russian aristocrats, including the Empress Catherine the Great herself (she even proposed transferring the publication into the Russian Empire, to Riga).

Though many French philosophers, Voltaire, Diderot, D'Alembert, Rousseau, Montesquieu, were very popular among the noble intellectual elite in Russia, these thinkers have never been studied systematically and were interesting as persons, social philosophers, anti-clerics and political thinkers, but not in connection with the specificity of encyclopedic discourse. Russian readers paid much more attention to the ideas expressed by the philosophers than to the ways their texts were organized. Thus the very type of encyclopedic discourse proposed by Diderot and D'Alembert was a secondary, optional one for the Russian reader.

The ideas of the Encyclopaedia Britannica were scarcely known in Europe. The reception of British, in particular, Scottish philosophy in Russia was implicit, non-demonstrative and mostly restricted to the social philosophy of Adam Smith, David Hume (who was known in 18th-century Russia first of all as a historian) and Adam Ferguson. Besides, up to its third edition (1788-1797) the Britannica had been a modest compilation that could fascinate its reader neither by a large-scale plan nor by a high level of performance.

Encyclopedism as a form of universal knowledge was mainly connected with natural sciences and their strict methodology, and in this sphere, the influence of German scholars was beyond comparison. By turning to Wolffianism, one of the most developed

⁴⁸ Encyclopédie, ou Dictionnaire raisonne des sciences, des arts et des métiers, volumes 1-35 (Paris, 1751-80)

⁴⁹ Chambers, Ephraim Cyclopædia, (London : Printed for D. Midwinter, W. Innys, 1741).

⁵⁰ Tatiana Artemyeva, 'Nauki o cheloveke v pervyh izdaniyah Britanskoi enciklopedii (The human sciences in the first editions of the Encyclopaedia Britannica)', Chelovek, 6 (2003), 670-85.

and advanced systems of that time, the Russian Enlightenment showed that it thoroughly selected the authorities it was going to make its teachers. Possibly it was the Wolffian model of encyclopedism as the use of the universal method that led to the situation when in Russia there were many scholars-encyclopedists, but no serious attempt to create an encyclopedic edition emulating the famous European patterns.