

## PROSOPOGRAPHIA CLASSICA PETROPOLITANA (PCP) \*

*Repertorium of Classical Scholars in St. Petersburg, or Prosopographia classica Petropolitana* is the title of a new project by the *Bibliotheca classica Petropolitana*, planned for the end of 2006. The objective of the project is to compile and make publicly available a database of bio- and bibliographical entries on Classical scholars active in St. Petersburg in the last three centuries.

The database will consist of three parts. The first part would include personal data, whereas the second part would deal with collective and institutionalised forms of scholarly activity, such as libraries, schools, universities, scholarly societies and organisations. Further on, the database might be completed by an overview and comprehensive bibliography of the impact of Classical culture on Russian literature and art. In this proposal, we outline the structure and objectives of the first part, namely, prosopographical proper.

### BACKGROUND

Currently, bio- and bibliographical reference works of Russian and (or) Soviet scholars<sup>1</sup> are available for such fields as Oriental studies,<sup>2</sup> Slavonic and Russian studies.<sup>3</sup> Despite the availability of numerous surveys as well as detailed studies of the history of Classical scholarship, both old<sup>4</sup> and modern,

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\* The project proposal draws from the report presented during the last session of the conference by Natalia Serdjuk, assistant to the project; preliminary material was provided by A. Gavrilov. I. Jegorov is in charge of the electronic database, application development, and data entry, with assistance of N. Serdjuk, S. Andreeva, and E. Varganova. Participation of E. Basargina, O. Budaragina, N. Pavlichenko, A. Ruban, P. Shuvalov, S. Takhtajan, A. Verlinsky, and others, is anticipated for the final stages of the project.

<sup>1</sup> И. М. Кауфман, *Русские биографические и библиографические словари* [I. M. Kaufman, *Russian Biographic and Bibliographic Dictionaries*] (Moscow 1955).

<sup>2</sup> С. Д. Милибанд, *Библиографический словарь отечественных востоковедов* (S. D. Miliband, *Biobibliographic Dictionary of Russian Orientalists*), vol. 1–2 (Moscow 21995).

<sup>3</sup> *Славяноведение в дореволюционной России* [*Slavonic Studies in Pre-revolutionary Russia*] (Moscow 1979).

<sup>4</sup> В. Бузескул, *Всеобщая история и ее представители в России в XIX и начале XX века: Материалы* [V. Buseskul, *World History and Its Representatives in Russia in 19<sup>th</sup> and in the Beginning of 20<sup>th</sup> century*], vol. 1–2 (Leningrad 1929–1931).

extensive<sup>5</sup> and brief,<sup>6</sup> covering long and short periods of time,<sup>7</sup> the absence of major and comprehensive reference works for Classicists is a gap to be filled.

The privileged situation of Classical studies in the Tsarist Russia, where they were strongly cherished and supported by the state, meant that they were doomed after the 1917 revolution. Grammar schools with their system of Classical education were closed down, Classical philology at the universities was for the most part abolished, and Ancient history was taught in the style of an ideologically biased sociology rather than of a source-based discipline. Notwithstanding individual scholarly achievements, Classical philology was mostly struggling for its survival. It was definitely not the right time to study either personal or institutional history of Classical scholarship: many scholars were executed, imprisoned or exiled; many academic careers ruined or frustrated; many names banned.<sup>8</sup> For example, a biography of Salomo Luria (= S. Ja. Lurje, 1891–1964), written in the 1970s by his son, Jacov Lurje (himself an outstanding Slavonic scholar) was published under a pseudonym in Paris, because otherwise the author would not have been able to write freely. In the 1920s–1950s, there was a break of tradition leading to the misunderstanding and ignorance of persons and institutions even in such places as Leningrad, where Classical studies were never eradicated totally.

At the same time, regardless of all restrictions, there always has been an interest in the subject. The three volumes of the almanac *Древний мир*

<sup>5</sup> Э. Д. Фролов, *Русская наука об античности* [E. D. Frolov, *Classical Scholarship in Russia*] (St. Petersburg 1999), which is a considerably extended version of his earlier book: *Русская историография античности* [*Russian Historiography of Classical Antiquity*] (Leningrad 1967).

<sup>6</sup> An attempt to combine a brief outline of the history of Classical scholarship with a sketch of Classical influences on art and literature in Russia has been made by A. Gavrilov in: *DNP* 15/2 (2002) 1014–1030; idem, “Klassische Philologie in St. Petersburg”, *Das Altertum* 45 (1999) 155–168.

<sup>7</sup> И. В. Тункина, *Русская наука о классических древностях юга России: XVIII–XIX в.* [I. Tunkina, *Russian Scholarship of Classical Antiquities from Southern Russia in the 18<sup>th</sup>–19<sup>th</sup> centuries*] (St. Petersburg 2002). The book contains biographies of numerous Russian scholars of the period, especially those with historical and (or) archaeological interests. Nowadays there is a huge and varied literature on M. I. Rostovtzeff, first of all a rich volume of biographical materials by G. M. Bongard-Levin (ed.), *Скифский роман* [*Scythian Novel*] (Moscow 1997), and a sequel to it by G. M. Bongard-Levin and Yu. N. Litvinenko (eds.), *Парфянский выстрел* [*Parthian Shot*] (Moscow 2003). Both volumes provide broad background of Russian Classical studies at their prime, that is from 1870s until shortly after the 1917 revolution.

<sup>8</sup> Especially, though not exclusively, this concerns scholars who emigrated from Russia.

*и мы* (*Ancient World and Us*), published by the *Bibliotheca classica Petropolitana*<sup>9</sup> and containing materials on both the distant and recent history of Classics in St. Petersburg, bear witness to the current interest in this field. The book by E. D. Frolov on the history of Russian Classical scholarship, written with a special emphasis on studies of political and social history, was met with warm interest by its readers.

Yet, a history of Classics in Russia is too broad a field to be described and studied in one attempt: the sources and documents are extensive and available mostly regionally. On the other hand, the subject deserves investigation both in its national and cross-cultural aspects. Hence the limited scope of the current project: a database of Classical scholars active in or related to St. Petersburg.

#### SELECTION OF MATERIAL

As with many dictionaries, selecting material – that is, deciding on the comprehensive list of lemmata, is a crucial problem. In the case of the database of St. Petersburg Classicists, no exhaustive list is conveniently at hand at present. In addition, some names are half forgotten; some scholars were little known; others produced only few – albeit often seminal – works. Others still disappeared, were exiled or died young. German scholars who worked in Russia present a contentious issue: they are sometimes taken by Germans for Russians and by Russians for Germans and as a result excluded from national biographical reference works in both countries.<sup>10</sup> A further category is formed by academics, working in the Soviet time in any institution of higher education, whose main mission was ideological control. Should these ‘academics’ be mentioned in a work of scholarly reference?<sup>11</sup>

The method adopted by the project’s team is to generate a list of St. Petersburg’s Classicists from the general list of Russian scholars.<sup>12</sup> The latter,

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<sup>9</sup> Vol. 1 – 1997, vol. 2 – 2000, vol. 3 – 2003.

<sup>10</sup> The case of Alexander Enmann (1856–1903) is typical in this respect: the “Enmannsche Kaisergeschichte” is known to every student of *SHA*, but few habitués of the Library of the Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg know that Alexander Fedorovič Enmann for many years was a leading librarian there. See an obituary by M. Rostovtseff, in *ЖМНП* (ноябрь 1903) or, recently, A. Chastagnol, *Histoire Auguste: Les Empereurs Romains des II<sup>e</sup> et III<sup>e</sup> siècles* (Paris 1994) XVIII.

<sup>11</sup> A. Gavrilov, “Russian Classical Scholarship”, in: *The Classics in East Europe: Essays on the Survival of a Humanistic Tradition* (APA, Worchester, Mass.) 61 ff.

<sup>12</sup> The idea of using bibliography as an instrument for biography belongs to I. M. Jegorov.

arranged as a bibliography, contains several thousand names,<sup>13</sup> and as a consequence, the future compilers of the PCP will have to combine biography and bibliography. This presupposes the existence of the full national bibliography in Classics, which is not the case; therefore, the first step would be to set up a provisional large bibliographical database on Classicists that will pool together all the available resources on this topic and serve as a tool in creating the PCP database proper.

For the PCP, different forms and levels of lemmatization could be envisaged. Some names can be left out of the personal part of the database, being mentioned only in the second part, when referring to corresponding institutions.

#### STRUCTURE OF ENTRIES IN THE DATABASE

In the first part, the personal data will be arranged as follows:<sup>14</sup>

1. Personal names including pseudonyms; date and place of birth and death; family background;
2. Main scholarly interests and research areas;<sup>15</sup>
3. Education, secondary and higher; teachers and tutors; most important influences;
4. Academic career and brief employment history;
5. Select bibliography of the work;
6. Select bibliography of the secondary literature about a scholar and his work;
7. Archival material.

#### STAGES OF THE PROJECT

The first stage is to compile a preliminary inventory of scholars to be included in the database, complete with main personal details. The second stage will include matching this inventory with the bibliographical database, to prepare secure ground for systematic research on individual entries. This will be followed by organisation and elaboration of the lemmata,

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<sup>13</sup> The number of scholars mentioned in the *Philologisches Schriftsteller-Lexicon* (Leipzig 1882, <sup>2</sup>1966) is ca 3000. This lexicon exemplifies the manner in which a brief and neutral outline of a biography should be composed.

<sup>14</sup> The system to follow is adopted from an admirable work, still in progress: *Русские писатели 1800–1917: Биографический словарь* [*Russian Writers 1800–1917: Biographical Dictionary*] (Moscow 1989–). Vol. 4, published in 1999, contains on pp. 673–691 an *Appendix* with an overview of educational institutions in Russia in the period treated.

<sup>15</sup> It might not be easy to produce a brief definition in the case of scholars with broad or commonly unknown, or somewhat diffused interests.

deepening, enriching, and when necessary correcting the total of information about each scholar, with the help of biographical dictionaries, indexes,<sup>16</sup> and general studies in the history of Russian Classics. The final stage will entail archival research and work with literary sources, with the purpose to summarise in succinct form all the resources available.<sup>17</sup>

#### FURTHER WORK

Only a few words can be said about the second part of the PCP, which is envisaged as a reference work on the history of Classics in St. Petersburg, with a special emphasis on Classical institutions. It would include information about Classical (grammar) schools, learned societies, as well as libraries and the main collections of manuscripts, inscriptions, coins, and art objects.

An eventual third part will provide information on the St. Petersburg collections of Greek and Roman art and antiquities, and on the impact of Classics on the national tradition in arts and literature in general.<sup>18</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

The completed Database of St. Petersburg Classicists is intended primarily as concise, comprehensive, and user-friendly reference tool. It does not aim at giving detailed portraits of individual scholars or at providing all-inclusive information about the most famous figures. The same could be said about meticulously composed obituaries of old in the *Bursian*<sup>19</sup> and

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<sup>16</sup> The *Russian Biographical Index* published in Munich in 2002 under editorship of Axel Frey contains information about more than 85 000 persons who were active in Russia. The *Index*, however, is a tool to be used with caution, because the selection of its lemmata seems somewhat haphazard, as some renowned scholars are not included (e. g. S. A. Zhebelev is present in the *Index* both in vol. 3, p. 1120 and vol. 4, p. 1368 as *Zheb* (sic!); I. I. Tolstoj (sen.) the father (1858–1916), a politically engaged scholar of Russian antiquities, is lemmatized in vol. 3, p. 1007; vol. 4, p. 1696, whereas I. I. Tolstoj (jun.) the son (1880–1954), admittedly less significant as a public figure than his father, but instrumental in preservation of Classics in Soviet time, is not mentioned at all).

<sup>17</sup> A rich bibliography entitled: *История дореволюционной России в дневниках и воспоминаниях* [*The History of Russia in Diaries and Recollections*] vol. 1–5 (Moscow 1976–1989) will be of much use at more advanced stages of the project.

<sup>18</sup> Many elements of the structure of volumes 13–15 of *Der Neue Pauly*, dealing with 'Rezeption', can be happily adopted for this part of the database.

<sup>19</sup> *Jahresberichte über Fortschritte der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* begr. von K. Bursian. 4 Abt.: Nekrologe (since 1873). See index: A. Thierfelder, "Gesamtverzeichnis der Nekrologe des "Bursian" 1877–1943", *Lustrum* 3 (1959) 251–259.

*ŽMNP*, or vitae of prominent Classicists in the lexicon edited by W. W. Briggs and W. M. Calder III,<sup>20</sup> which draw vivid portraits, but encompass only a narrow circle of scholars.

Contrariwise, the PCP should contain exact and succinct information about academic careers of the majority of St. Petersburg scholars and list the main sources of information about every large scholarly community in the city over a period of 300 years of its existence. This database, once completed and running, could be used not only as a source of information about many hundreds of scholars, but also as a starting point for advanced and personally centred research.

*Bibliotheca classica* ставит перед собой задачу создания базы данных с краткими биографиями антиковедов, судьбы которых на протяжении трех последних столетий тесно связаны с Петербургом. Предполагается ради охвата большого круга лиц создать не столько обстоятельные и индивидуально написанные, сколько легко обозримые и надежно выверенные статьи, облегчающие дальнейшие биографические разыскания.

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<sup>20</sup> W. W. Briggs, W. M. Calder III (Eds.), *Classical Scholarship: A Biographical Encyclopedia* (New York – London 1990).

