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TEPLOV AS A POPULARIZER OF PHILOSOPHY

Grigorii Teplov was an important figure in eighteenth century Russia, particularly as an advisor in economic affairs to Catherine II. Educated in the Academy of Sciences and abroad he held some important positions: he was an assessor to the Academy, an assistant of Kirill Razumovskii who was a hetman of the Ukraine, and a head of the Commission on Commerce. As an academic, in 1751, Teplov published his book, *Knowledge related in general to philosophy: for the benefit of those who cannot read foreign[-language] books on this subject*. Teplov intended to explain to a reader with little philosophical background what philosophy is and what purpose it may serve. It was not intended as a textbook to be used in schools (Z 59).¹ He intended to do it in two volumes. The first volume presents some philosophical terminology and a brief history of philosophy. The second volume was planned as a presentation of logic and logical reasoning, but it never appeared.

As Teplov stated in his philosophy book, people should not be disheartened by the fact that knowledge may appear to be of little, if any, use. All knowledge is useful. If it is not useful or applicable today, it will be in the future, just as

¹ References are made to the following works of Teplov: N – *Наставление сыну*, Санкт-петербург: При Императорской Академии наук 1768. R – *Разсуждение о врачебной науке*, Санкт-Петербург: [Типография Геннинга] 1784 [1774]. Z – *Знания касающиеся вообще до философии: для пользы тех, которые о сей материи чужестранных книг читать не могут*, Санктпетербург: При Императорской Академии наук 1751; most of the text is published in М. В. Безобразова, *Исследования, лекции, мелочи*, Санкт-Петербург 1914, pp. 110–143; most of the first and third part is published in Т. В. Артемьева, М. И. Микешин (eds.), *Философский век*, no. 3: *Христиан Вольф и русское вольфианство*, Санкт-Петербург: Санкт-Петербургский Центр Истории Идей 1998, pp. 207–289. A number after the slash, if used, is the page number from Artem'eva's anthology.

past investigations turned out to be useful today, like studies of magnetism and electricity (Z 38/214), which from being merely a curiosity and a subject of entertainment grew to something extremely useful. Second, although researchers investigate apparently useless phenomena, they discover along the way many useful things, as it was the case with many useful chemical compounds found when searching for the philosophical stone. Third, people can become famous because of their apparently useless discoveries (43/215). Moreover, some inventions are useless in separation, but become useful when they are put together (56/218). By disregarding the third reason that appealed to vanity rather than to usefulness, Teplov implicitly was a proponent of basic science which would not seek immediate applicability but would expand knowledge and, possibly in the long run, would lead to developments in technology.

The subject of philosophy

In the first part of his philosophy book Teplov wanted to introduce the reader to the subject of philosophy. To philosophize, according to Teplov, means 1. to know about the existence of things; 2. to know the causes of their existence; and 3. to know the amount and strength of these causes (Z 67/221). This corresponds to three levels of philosophical cognition, which Teplov adopted from the preface of Tschirnhaus' *Medicina mentis et corporis* (1695), where, for comparison, Tschirnhaus spoke about three levels of mathematics and philosophy. First level mathematicians know mathematical divisions, meanings of words, and learn by heart some main foundations of science, and philosophers of the first level know only philosophical divisions, the power of terms, and main philosophical rules (70/223). Second level mathematicians know theories of Euclid, Archimedes, and Apollonius, but they are not creative. Similarly, philosophers of the second kind only know views of ancient and contemporary philosophers (71/224). The third level mathematicians can solve some problems by the power of their reason; similarly, philosophers of the third kind are creative (72/224). Accordingly, following Christian Wolff's *Philosophia rationalis* (1728),² Teplov distinguished three types of cognition in philosophy: historical, philosophical, and mathematical (75/226). Historical cognition is simple information about things and events without knowing their causes. Philosophical cognition included the knowledge

² Wolff presented the three types of knowledge in the first chapter of the preliminary discourse of his *Philosophia rationalis sive logica* (1728) entitled: "De triplici cognitione humana, historica, philosophica et mathematica."

of causes. Mathematical cognition can quantify and measure causes (76/226). In this way, Teplov spoke about factual knowledge acquired by observation and experiments, the knowledge limited to gathering information possibly with specialized instruments (83/230); then there is qualitative, explanatory knowledge that determines causal chains, and finally, there is knowledge that can quantify causes thereby allowing us to apply mathematical tools in the explanatory process. The knowledge of facts is the starting point for science, but for many people it is also the end: they know facts without knowing their causes, whereby their knowledge is really a belief (102/238). Knowledge of causes is more useful and often gives people the upper hand over others; for instance, Columbus used the solar eclipse to elicit food from gullible natives and even in 1715 William Whiston had to explain to the superstitious English public that the solar eclipse is a natural phenomenon (97/236). Examples of mathematical, i.e., quantitative knowledge include determining the thickness of ice on a river to go across it (112/243), an estimation of the power of a canon-ball and of the power of water when building a fountain (116/245). One type of such knowledge shows the course or the trend of natural phenomena; another type determines the strength of causes (118/246).

In another definition, Teplov stated that “philosophy is a science in which we get to know unknown [things] through our reason and through conclusions [derived] from known things” (Z 122/248). It has two parts: 1. methods of deriving knowledge about what is unknown from what is known; and 2. the body of knowledge determined by these methods. Conclusions are derived with logic which is the key to philosophy (124/249). How can the known be derived from the unknown? Through an application of the rules of logic to observational data to establish causes of various phenomena. In this way, Teplov turned philosophy into the methodology of science and thus he could say that it is possible to philosophize about everything, i.e., to look for causes (132/252). For example, jurisprudence, medicine, and rhetoric should be filled with philosophical cognition (133/253); that is, they should base their specific body of knowledge on establishing causal relations between phenomena in their domain of interest. And so, “the first duty of Philosophy is to reason about what is and what can be. All this because of which something happens is the cause of existence” (126/250). However, because experiments or physical experience constitute the first and the best level of philosophy (149/260), Teplov seems to have limited philosophy to philosophy of science, to the method of searching for causes that, ideally, could be quantified. The human mind is not, however, all-powerful: there are causes that are inaccessible to human reason and God did not give humans the ability to know them rationally – they can be known only through revelation (107/241).

An extended example of Teplov’s belief in the superiority of causal knowledge is his attack on contemporary medicine, *A treatise on medical science*.

Russians until recently lived without educated doctors and yet they lived for 100 years (R 4). When I stop eating what I like, grumbled Teplov, because doctors prohibit it, I suffer from two illnesses instead of one (5). I better be eating what I like with moderation. The best medicine is letting an illness to take its natural course; nature will take care of it since “it better understands its duties than medical science. Nature knows itself and sees everything in itself; it does not slumber but is active; however, the learned healers know nothing, they only console a sick man with their talk” (6). If one doctor prohibits some drinks (10), the patient should call another doctor who will permit them. We believe doctors because of our suffering and our fear of death (11). Before a doctor tries to help a sick, he should know the sick’s kind of illness, anatomy, temperament, habits, inclinations, habits, thoughts, and imagination; then, all this should be connected to the nature of a particular place, air, season, configuration of celestial bodies and their influence on the body (12). Maybe Teplov went too far with calling on the knowledge of configuration of celestial bodies, but he surely advocated a holistic medicine: the more a doctor knows about a patient and his surroundings, the better medical help he can offer. The doctor should also know the development, i.e., stages of an illness, and power of herbs he wants to apply (13). Teplov said he was not criticizing doctors personally, but their craft (14), their craft, that is, which relied on anecdotal observations with very little, if any, insights into causes of medical predicaments of patients. Because of random, disconnected observations, the same thing is considered medicine by some doctors, poison by others (21). The same water which helps some patients can be bad for others; even for the same person it can be good at one time and bad at another time, as Teplov himself experienced with water from mineral springs in Wiesbaden. A success of a medicine in some cases does not guarantee that it will always be good for everyone (22).

History of philosophy

The second part of Teplov’s philosophy book, which is about a third of the text, is a brief history of philosophy that he divided into barbarian philosophy (philosophy of Asiatic nations and of the Jews), Greek philosophy, and Middle Age along with contemporary philosophy.

Most attention among barbarian philosophy Teplov devoted to the Jews. In his view, they were the first to occupy themselves with wise philosophy. The Bible does contain knowledge useful for daily life and for afterlife by teaching about the true God and God-pleasing morals, but not about physical, i.e., sci-

entific knowledge. Some scholars claimed that physical sciences were developed among the Jews and even that Moses espoused the Copernican system (Z 154), but, said Teplov, other nations held then Jewish physical knowledge in low esteem. Therefore, it should not be claimed that knowledge of Pythagoras and Plato had come from the Jews (155) and that physical knowledge was there before the fall of Jerusalem. However, when the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity, they were influenced by Greek philosophy. Josephus wrote that Pharisees were Stoics, Sadducees Epicureans, Essenes Pythagoreans (156). Teplov also discussed Kabbalah, really a Pythagorean and Platonic system with some superstition added to it (156, 159). Kabbalists make many claims that are contrary to Christianity, but this is “an absurd argument!” (157) and their games with words and numerical values of letters serve as an entertainment of only a few people (161). Jews got their knowledge from Egyptians, not vice versa, cf. Acts 7:22 (162) about Moses who learned from Egyptians. As the Scriptures testify, Jews had true knowledge about God and God-pleasing morality. Egyptians did not possess this knowledge; however, they knew mathematics and geometry (163).

Barbarian philosophy includes philosophy of the Chaldeans, whose major philosopher was Zoroaster (Z 165). In Teplov’s view, they believed that the world was eternal, that it was a god, and they believed in “other similar nonsense.” From Chaldeans, philosophy came to Persians; their major philosopher was Zoroaster claimed to be different from Chaldean Zoroaster (166). “On theology they did not say except for nonsense.” 300 years after Christ, in Persia emerged heretical Manicheism (167) originated by Mani; “it is frightful to even mention his heresies” (168). These are simply absurd teachings. The pope Leo said that the devil set his throne in Mani. In Teplov’s words, “all that is lawless among pagans, carnal among Jews, prohibited and mysterious among wizards, and blasphemous among heretics, stems from Mani like from a stinking vessel” (170). Then Teplov mentioned Arabs and the fact that their wizards were skilled in medicine (171). In Matt. 2:1, Arab wise men are mentioned, not Persian magi, since Jews called Arabs an Eastern nation (Judges 6:3 [actually, “the sons of the East,” οἱ υἱοὶ ἀνατολῶν]) (172). Then, Teplov mentioned Hindu Brahmins and their belief that they return after death to the whole, i.e., to the divinity. The Chinese had similar beliefs (175), but in morals they followed Confucius and even today many of his teachings have many “mindless followers” (176).

Greek philosophy in Teplov’s view was superior to any barbarian philosophy, and Greek philosophers always followed the truth or at least they tried to. Poetic philosophy is the oldest (Z 177). Among major Greek philosophers, Teplov mentioned Pythagoras (178), whom he commended for his scientific work, although Pythagoras “raved about Harmony” (181); “all that is incorporeal, he called in Latin *Ens*” [sic] (182). There are many other views ascribed to him, but “all of

them are even more filled with empty tales.” There is a mention of Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Anaxagoras, and Archelaus (183). They were not godless since they recognized a deity (184). Tales made “a laughable observation” that floods of the Nile are due to Ephesian winds. “Anaxagoras, although he was considered wiser than others, babbled so much that today a young man who has only some knowledge of Physics cannot without laughing read his Philosophical statements.” Then Socrates is mentioned (185) who spoke about providential God the Creator and the immortality of the soul. By saying that the soul exists before the existence of the body, he accepted the Pythagorean fable (187). About Plato the reader learns that he believed in the existence of *materia prima* that was molded by God (192). To that end, God created “first models for all things” (193), which is the only mention of the Platonic world of ideas/forms. About Aristotle’s philosophy Teplov only said that all knowledge comes from the senses; in reasoning, people go from a cause to an effect (198) and use syllogistic logic for proper reasoning (199). Some attention was devoted to the Cynics and Antisthenes, “a shameless and crude man” (206). They based their philosophy on freedom, but “this foundation is very weak since nothing else stems from freedom but vices. The more man acts according to his will, the more vices can be expected of him” (208). It follows a brief mention of the Stoics (209), Eleatics (212), Democritus, Epicurus, and their *philosophia corpuscularis* (213). Epicurus rejected immortality of the soul, divine providence, and the fear of God and so, “there is no encouragement [in his philosophy] for a virtuous life,” as testified by the life of pleasure of the Epicureans: “absurd and useless teaching!” (216). Then, there were the eclectics, by whom Teplov understood Neoplatonists and Neopythagoreans. Finally, “just as any fable is nothing without a laugh, so in Greek Philosophy ... there was a peculiar ridiculous sect called the Sceptics” (219). So, in Teplov’s mind, the, basically, laughable story of Greek philosophy ends on a particularly ridiculous note.

Medieval philosophy was influenced by Aristotle (Z 221), particularly scholasticism. By their “irrational curiosity and a method that was ridiculous to any rational man, [the scholastics] brought upon themselves extreme disdain and ridicule in [respect to their] learning and in teaching. In particular, because in all their stupidity their thought so highly about their teachings, they were not ashamed to consider themselves high-minded and marvelous.”³ They filled philosophy

³ In a similar vein, Teplov criticized some schools improperly, in his view, called academies because they teach Latin and “old scholastic Aristotelian traditions,” Григ[орий] Н. Теплов, Проект к учреждению университета Батурина, 1760 года, *Чтения в Императорском обществе истории и древностей российских при Московском университете* 1863, bk. 2, p. 67.

with “countless errors” (222). They used obscure terminology of which even today Jesuits are proud. Rejection of Aristotle’s philosophy was undertaken in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries by such writers as Valla (223), Ramus, and Gassendi (224). Development of science contributed to the decline of Aristotle, by which Teplov meant the work of Lullus, Ramus (225), Cardano, and Campanella (226). Then, only the names of Francis Bacon, Leibniz, and Newton were mentioned (228) followed by a discussion of Descartes (229). Descartes believed that one statement is without a doubt, “I am, I think” (230, 231), which is Teplov’s rather inadequate rendering of the famous *cogito ergo sum*. Teplov was apparently impressed by the Cartesian proof of the existence of God, basically, an ontological proof, which Teplov discussed in some detail (232–234). Descartes was the first to free philosophy from the Aristotelian yoke. Spinoza and his heresies are also mentioned, but nothing is said about his views (235). Among modern thinkers, Teplov only mentioned Paracelsus, Grotius, Hobbes, and Pufendorf and their social theories (236).

From about a hundred pages presenting the history of philosophy, the reader does not learn much from Teplov. He listed many names without discussing their views. His presentation is based on secondary sources, primarily, encyclopedia and lexica entries, with no references to original works of philosophers Teplov discussed indicating his at best superficial familiarity with the history of philosophy. And thus, his discussion is inadequate and sometimes even erroneous. The central point of Platonism, the existence of the world of ideas, is only tangentially mentioned. Also, Plato’s Demiurge did not create the models he used to mold the world; they were co-eternal with him. Teplov said much more about Aristotle’s life and about the fate of his books than about his philosophy. The concept of causality so important for Teplov is only mentioned and Aristotle’s four types of causes are not mentioned at all. Only mention is made about the Eleatics, with no discussion of their particularly interesting and paradoxical views. Also, they are mentioned after Aristotle, and so was Democritus, although they were Pre-socratic philosophers. Presentation is highly opinionated; views disagreeable to Teplov are described as irrational and absurd.⁴ Scholasticism was only berated, but the reader never learns what was so contemptible in this philosophy. In the mind of an Orthodox believer it was enough that it was a philosophy accepted in the Catholic church to reject it and the curious association of scholasticism with the Jesuits would make it in the mind of a likeminded Orthodox reader particularly off-putting.

⁴ Teplov “sometimes judges [views of philosophers] very harshly,” Безобразова, *op. cit.*, p. 118.

Philosophical concepts

In the first part of his philosophy book, Teplov concentrated on philosophy and methodology of science. In the second part, he showed a very casual acquaintance with the history of philosophy and what was important for particular philosophers brushing impatiently aside many philosophical issues with insults or simply not mentioning them at all. In the third, the shortest part, Teplov redeemed himself to a moderate extent as a philosopher briefly discussing some ontological and epistemological problems when presenting a series of philosophical concepts. Without acknowledging it, Teplov based his discussion on Wolff's *Philosophia prima sive ontologia* (1730); the titles of eight sections in this part largely repeat chapter titles from Wolff's book.

Teplov said that the essence makes a being what it is (Z 250/266). Essences of beings are immutable (251/266) and eternal (252/267). Each being has its specific perfections (254/268). Substance is when all parts together give an entity its full being (256/268). A property/attribute cannot be separated from a body (e.g., its weight); an accident (e.g., its position) can (258/269). Relation occurs when two thoughts are compared (260/270). The concept of nothingness is introduced (261/271) along with the concept of privation as an absence of a property needed for perfection of an object (263/272). Potential beings are mentioned (266/273) and so are impossible beings, e.g., a square with three angles, considered to be nothingness (267/273). An entity can be potential, but circumstances can make it impossible; there are physical impossibilities (269/274) and moral impossibilities, e.g., a man does not jump into fire, although this is physically possible (270/275). Many philosophers say that necessary is that of which a contrary is impossible (271/275). On the other hand, accidental is what can be and can not be (274/277). "What is morally possible, is accidental." If a person can do something, he does it according to his will. "If he did something, it was done by the determination of his reason and thus such accident should be called necessity since such an act [was] performed according to one's inclinations that stem solely from the will of a man corrupted by sin" (275/277). As to the concept of duration, the reader learns that everything comes to an end, except for the Creator. Duration is associated with the concept of time (277/278): there is a succession of states in man (279/279), but there is no succession in God's attributes, in whom "all that was, what is and what will be remains in its order without succession" (280/279). In God's mind all things are perfect and always the same. We only see temporal manifestation of these things and their temporal succession which in itself – presumably, in God's mind – is not a succession; we see a real thing only through changes in time (281/280). If an object changes, it is never the same (284/281). There is a difference between being the same (*mom*

же) and being similar (*такой же*) (287/282). God can annihilate an object and recreate it: it would be the same object since it is made out of the same particles configured in the same order (288/283). Identity can be preserved by retaining identity of structure; e.g., when all parts of a machine are replaced by new parts, it is the same machine if it works the same way (289/283). Similarly, the human body, “although it changes, it remains always the same, but according to Philosophy they cannot be called simply the same, since some of their properties changed from the previous [properties]” (290/284). As to the problem of cause and effect (292/285), Teplov took it for granted that by knowing God and His law we should accept the principle that there is no causal chain going infinitely into the past (297/287). Nature has a beginning in God as its first cause (298/288).

The third part of his philosophy book is the most philosophical and somewhat curiously creates a disharmony with the preceding parts. The first part focuses on science with its examples and narrow discussion of philosophy. The third part moves to the realm of ontology – if only following Wolff – which is rather unexpected after reading part one with its narrow understanding of philosophy and part two with its contemptuous attitude to large philosophical themes raised throughout the ages. This surely can leave the reader confused, particularly the one who is new to philosophy, the reader intended by Teplov.

Theology

The last remarks in the third part of Teplov’s philosophy book indicate that his presentation of philosophical issues was intertwined with theological observations. In his view, “natural theological cognition is no small part of science/teaching that belongs to Philosophy” (Z 248/265); in fact, “theology as its first part determines eternity and creates satisfaction for temporal happiness” (26/212). That is, theology lays solid foundations for philosophy by delineating the infinite properties of God the Creator of the universe. Theology also is a basis of human happiness by infusing meaningfulness into temporal earthly existence that is guided by the providential God.

God’s reason is infinite. “There is nothing past in Him, there is also nothing future in Him. Our Creator cannot be informed about anything, He knows and predicts what follows from what” (Z 280/280). God “is always one, always perfect, always satisfied of Himself and always the same” (281/280). God is His own cause; He is eternal, He guides the universe with His reason (259/270). All things that exist come from the Creator God who was not created and is eternal (247/250) and by creating the world, the Creator determined the laws of nature (118/246).

Nature “is created by God in such perfection that it does not need any correction from conjectural science. Its order with which it rules fleas or underground moles serves also humankind” (R 32).

Many theologians would agree with such representations of God, but Teplov was an Orthodox believer and did not doubt in the superiority of the Orthodox Christianity over any other religious faiths. Many pagans, he said, had other philosophical principles than people who knew God, His law and revelation. More specifically, “those who did not know God and Christian teaching always based their philosophy on other principles than we did” (240/263); as a wise man once said, “there is nothing that can be raved about in fever that Philosophers did say up until now” (241/263). This is a reason for which Teplov not only did not appreciate many philosophical views of the past but treated them with an open contempt.

The truths of theology are not only a matter of faith. There are some truths that are inaccessible to human reason and are known through revelation. However, human reason should also be applied in theology, if possible. In particular, although the Orthodox tradition is much less interested in proofs of the existence of God than the Western church, Teplov advocated the use of such proofs as a way of combatting atheism. In a conversation with Fonvizin who was at the height of his religious investigations, Teplov recommended one book, Samuel Clarke’s *A demonstration of the being and attributes of God* (1705) since “he wrote against Hobbes, Spinoza, and their followers. Clarke triumphed over them: by logically deriving one truth from another he created, so to speak, unbreakable chain of proofs of the existence of God and not one godless man will wriggle out by his arguments from his persuasive reasoning.”⁵ This persuasive reasoning was based on the assumption that the existence of “endless progression is so very absurd” (Clarke, proposition 2), which was a basic assumption in the scholastic proofs of the existence of God. In fact, Teplov’s concentration on God’s infinity and eternity bears marks of Clarke’s reasoning. Interestingly, Clarke spoke about God’s self-existence of the Original Independent Cause whose reason of existence comes “neither from within itself not from without,” and yet Teplov spoke about God being His own cause (Z 259/270), in which apparently he took a cue from the concept of *ens a se*, a concept used by the scholasticism he so berated.

Teplov spoke about God with reverence and sincere conviction; however, he spoke about Him in rather general terms. He never mentioned the Trinity and

⁵ Денис И. Фонвизин, *Собрание сочинений*, Москва: Государственное Издательство Художественной Литературы 1959, vol. 2, p. 103. Conversations took place in Tsarskoe Selo, possibly in 1766 or 1768, П.А. Ефремов, Примечания, in: Денис И. Фон-Визин, *Сочинения, письма и избранные переводы*, Санкт-Петербург: П.И. Глазунов 1866, p. 668.

Christ (except when saying that something took place in a particular year before Christ), and if occasionally he did not refer to Orthodoxy or to Christianity, it would not be easy to say whether he was an Orthodox believer.

How important religion was in his own life, may not be easy to assess. However, he was appointed a member of the Spiritual Committee (1762–1763) which worked on the problem of secularization of church property. Peter I abolished in the *Spiritual regulation* the patriarchate and replaced it by the Synod that was answering to him. Catherine II carried the submission of the church even further by taking away its property – and Teplov was in the midst of it. As a pupil of Prokopovich, an ecclesiastic who actually wrote the *Spiritual regulation*, Teplov sided with his former teacher in respect to submission of the church to the state authority. The fact that he believed in it can be seen in his proposal of the Baturin university (which was never implemented), in which he stated that the villages and property of the Baturin monastery could be used by the university.⁶ The church did not quite protest against Catherine's reforms. One exception was Arsenii Matseevich who paid for it with his imprisonment and death in prison. Interestingly, Matseevich is said to have made some prophecies about those involved in the demise of the church. It is said that one prophecy was about Teplov's death. As a newspaper reported after Teplov's death, "for three days he could not speak and suffered terribly, after which he started to speak opening [his heart] before the priest and before all [present people]: 'I didn't respect the Church, nor God and disrespected His temple, I perish here; but you, dear sirs listening [to me], seeing such agonizing end of mine, repent and be virtuous. I didn't do anything good to anyone in my life, for which I am getting a payment.'" ⁷ This confession would make credible a statement that Teplov's inclination was toward "evident deism." ⁸

Education

Both theology and philosophy has a direct influence on human life, in particular, on proper upbringing of children by parents and the pupils by teachers. "Christian theology is the best Philosophy for human education since basic

⁶ Теплов, Проект, p. 71.

⁷ *Санкт-Петербургские ведомости* 30 May 1779, quoted in Диомид (Дзюбан), *Митрополит Арсений (Мацеевич): историко-религиозный очерк*, Москва: Зеркало 2001, p. 132.

⁸ Светлана В. Шлейтере, *Философия Г.Н. Теплова*, Москва: Московский государственный университет имени М.В. Ломоносова 1996, p. 13.

(прямая) Philosophy teaches nothing else but how to lead from superstition reason imperfect by nature, [reason] frequently led away by upbringing to extreme error” (Z 25–26/211).

Teplov wrote a little book for his 14-year old son, Aleksei, from his second marriage, *Instruction for my son*. Not particularly trusting the human nature, Teplov opened his advices with a remark that his son stands before the door of error and all his impulses and inclination will lead him astray if he does not give his hand to his father to be guided (N 4/203). This hand will show him the straight path leading to the goal for which he had been born (4). “You are brought up in the ways of Orthodox faith, in which you were born and foundations of which were instilled in you from the early childhood. You’ll be more educated by it when the powers of your natural reason will solidify.” Thus, all the educational principles should be given under the overarching guidance of Orthodoxy. And so, Teplov intended to give his son some rules addressing the major powers of the inclinations of his soul (5), the rules which should lead him from boyhood to youth and then to old age (6). There are 21 rules and the rest of the book enumerates them with some accompanying comments. Here are these rules.

1. “Be goodhearted”: “the first and major happiness in the human life is *sincere heart*” (N 7/203). Such a person can empathize with someone’s misfortune. He sees goodness in people and passes over their faults and weaknesses (8/204). He reconciles people, wishes others well, does not envy anyone (9/204).
2. “Beware of taking advantage of someone’s misfortune” notwithstanding the sad fact that everyone seeks a benefit from his actions and if someone does not do it, he is considered a simpleton (11/204).
3. “Be economical/frugal, but not stingy” (15/204).
4. “Generosity without pride is a double gift”: the rich can give, but not everyone knows how to give; only grateful people do (21). Some give to express their pride; some are prompted to give by their position but exhibit their dissatisfaction (22). A pure and grateful soul does not give for show (23). True generosity occurs when the giver and the receiver experience full satisfaction (25).
5. “Overcome poverty with work and diligence” (27/205), as a Roman author said, as Teplov rendered it in rhyme, “the gods sell all for labor and help those who labor.”⁹
6. “In fortune and misfortune look to your future years” (30/206): remember that in good times misfortune can strike and in a misfortune can good times arrive (31/206).
7. “Be brave, but don’t be a bully” (32/206).
8. “Never allow for bad habits to settle” (35/206). People are not born with stinginess, greed, and cruelty, which are the results of upbringing, so suppress them when their signs appear in your life (39/207).
9. “Don’t be foolish in the passion of love”: love is

⁹ It was, in fact, a Greek author, Epicharmus, who said, the gods sell us all good things for our work (Xenophon, *Mem.*, 2.1.20).

the most pleasant and yet the most foolish passion to the extent that the ancient not being enlightened by faith made a divinity out of love (41). It often makes the impossible possible, makes a coward a brave man, a miser a generous man, a proud man humble, but it also makes a reasonable man a fool (42). 10. "You'll have reputation like those with whom you keep company" (43); therefore, seek the company of older, experienced people, but they will accept you only if you are virtuous and sincere (44). 11. "Consider your health to be your most important treasure" (48/207). People do their best to become ill: they eat when they are not hungry, they are up all night without any need, overheat themselves although it is not cold, sit without motion or exert themselves when moving (49/207). Therefore, moderation in life is necessary, which is helped by properly keeping a daily schedule (51/208). 12. "Do not play [cards], because you can lose or even destroy yourself" (53). 13. "What will become of you when you lose your possessions!" When being rich you'll lose your possessions, you'll become dead to people (58). Then you'll see who are your true friends and those whom you trusted too much (61). In such times you have to remember that God is your only helper and benefactor (64). 14. "Try to speak to the point and thoughtfully" (65/208). Don't say everything you know; say only what is fitting the subject at hand. "Reason without knowledge is nothing, but knowledge without judicious use is ridiculous" (68/208). 15. "Distinguish true friendship from familiarity" (69). "Sympathy creates friendship, honesty feeds it, and sincere heart (70) protects it forever, but familiarity quickly undermines all of it and friends do not recognize one another." Familiarity is a mother that brings along its (71) older daughter, contempt (72). 16. "Do not get used to mocking [people]"; "everything can be learned, but no one learns how to mock, one has to have for it a special natural talent" (73). If you want to joke about someone, do it judiciously, since a malicious joke causes enmity and revenge (75). 17. "Don't be capriciously stubborn, agree using reason" (77/209). 18. "Do not pass news [to others]," simply speaking, no gossiping (81). 19. "Don't get used to being a flatterer" (84). 20. "Desires and taste change with age" (88/209). 21. "Happy life": "who lives in the quietude of the soul, he lives peacefully and happily (92/210).

Teplov's rules are rather trite and not quite inspiring. It is almost impossible to see in them an application of his general principle that "Christian theology is the best Philosophy for human education." In fact, the rules are almost purged of religious references except for an isolated advice to consider God as the only helper. It is interesting and even puzzling that none of Teplov's rule recommends maintenance of religious duties: nothing about prayers, church-going, or using Christ as the ultimate model for human behavior.

Instructions to the son were fairly popular in the eighteenth century. Tatishchev wrote before his death (1750) *An admonition of the dying father to his*

son with strong religious accents; in 1719, Pososhkov wrote a detailed *Testament of the father*, a testament for his son in which he presented the ideal of Christian life; in 1761, appeared a Russian translation of Anne-Thérèse de Lambert, *Avis d'une mère à son fils et à sa fille*; and a translation of the first three conversations of a multivolume work, Eustache Le Noble, *École du monde, ou, Instruction d'un père à un fils*. Later in the century came out a translation of a French work, *A guide of the youth or an instruction of the father for the son* (1786), Chulkov wrote his *Instruction to my young son entering service* (1788), in 1789 appeared a Russian translation of Christian Fürchtegott Gellert, *Lehren eines Vaters für seinen Sohn, den er auf die Akademie schickt*, Zolotnitskii published his *Instruction to the son* (1796), and Bogdanov published his *Guide to happiness and well-being: an instruction of a father to the son an knowing God and himself* (1798). In comparison, Teplov's *Instruction* comes out rather bland. And sadly, they did not bear the fruit Teplov had wished for. There was a serious rift between him and his son, which only grew with years.¹⁰ There may be a good reason for it: Teplov himself did not seem to be too eager to follow his own precepts and thereby he was not exactly an exemplary model for his son. In view of one historian, "Gregory Teploff, the Secretary of the Empress, was a man of low origin, equally low cunning, unscrupulous, unprincipled, a fawning sycophant, of grossly immoral life, and no integrity, but considerable ability of a certain kind."¹¹ About his tenure in the Academy it is stated that "he was, as testified by testimonies that came to us about him, highly ambitious, had an inclination to despotism ... and besides he was generously endowed by nature with cunning and guile."¹² In fact, according to Teplov's contemporaries, "only his heart is settled and it is one of the most perverse that nature has created," an example of it being Teplov's participation of in Catherine II's coup: "it is not forgotten that he soaked his hands in the blood of unfortunate Peter III"¹³; he acted through "flattery and deceit" and "perhaps Nature never formed a more villainous countenance than that of Teplov or one whose character was more consonant to his appearance."¹⁴

¹⁰ In an unpublished letter to Catherine II, Teplov gave an account of his relations Aleksei, Wallace L. Daniel, *Grigorii Teplov: a statesman at the court of Catherine the Great*, Newtonville: Oriental Research Partners 1991, pp. 135–138.

¹¹ E. A. Brayley Hodgetts, *The life of Catherine the Great of Russia*, New York: Brentano's 1914, p. 183.

¹² Петр Пекарский, *История Императорской Академии наук в Петербурге*, Санкт Петербург: Императорская Академия наук 1873, vol. 2, p. xxi; multiple conflicts of Teplov with other members of the Academy are abundantly documented by Pekarskii in both volumes of his work.

¹³ Sabathier de Cabres, *Catherine II: sa court et la Russie en 1772*, Berlin: Asher 1862, p. 40.

¹⁴ Adelaide Collyer (ed.), *The despatches and correspondence of John, Second Earl of Buckinghamshire, Ambassador to the Court of Catherine II. of Russia 1762–1765*, New York: Longmans, Green and Co. 1900, vol. 1. 60, vol. 2, pp. 127–128.

Teplov can be commended for his attempt at writing an introductory book on philosophy, the first such attempt undertaken by a Russian author. However, the result is flat and uninspiring. Teplov's vision of philosophy is limited and very close to scientism. His presentation of the history of philosophy is amateurish, inadequate, and rather insensitive to philosophy as testified by his attitude to philosophers of the past. His concepts are unoriginal and discussion of some philosophical problems is subpar. Curiously, the book was published by the Academy of Sciences which indicates the level of influence Teplov had in this institution and rather low scholarly standards. Teplov's was an important project for the philosophically barren country; however, the execution of the project did not contribute much to a philosophical enrichment of the reader.

Summary

In 1751, Grigorii Teplov published his book that he considered to be an introduction to philosophy for the uninitiated. In the first part, Teplov introduced the reader to the subject of philosophy; however, Teplov concentrated on philosophy and methodology of science, thereby presenting a rather limited view of philosophy. In the second part, he presented the history of philosophy showing how inadequate his knowledge of the subject was. In the third part, he discussed some ontological and epistemological problems when in his presentation of several philosophical concepts basing his presentation largely on Wolff.

Key words: Grigorii Teplov, methodology of science, ontology, epistemology, Wolff

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