



Knowledge of art vs. artistic knowledge. II. The GAKhN “Encyclopedia of Artistic Terminology”

Conceptions and the history of the project

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Abstract

In this second article, I look at the history of the creation of the “Encyclopedia of Artistic Terminology” within the State Academy of the Artistic Sciences. I analyze various versions of the encyclopedia’s conception proposed by Wassily Kandinsky and Gustav Shpet and also at the theoretical bases for these conceptions. I then show how the work on the Encyclopedia was connected with the institutional transformations in the Academy. A key factor in the work on the Encyclopedia was the extensive discussions of the fundamental aesthetic terms that took place in the Philosophy Department and in sections of GAKhN. As the dynamics of the discussions also determined changes in the conception of the Encyclopedia, so work on it shifted more and more from a project for creating a new system of aesthetic concepts to a reconstruction of the “history of concepts.” Such a transition marked the main vector of the development of European discussions about aesthetic concepts—from the creation of systems of aesthetic categories to historical reflection on the semantic transformations of categories. In conclusion, I investigate the cessation of work on the Encyclopedia in 1929 in response to the outside ideological pressure and the elimination of the possibility for autonomous theoretical work within the walls of the Academy.

Keywords Aesthetics · Theory of art · GAKhN · Encyclopedia of Artistic Terminology · Art studies · Aesthetic concepts · Art history

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The history of the State Academy of Artistic Sciences (GAKhN) is almost entirely connected with the history of the work on the “Encyclopedia of Artistic Terminology,” although of course it was more than just that. This project, under various names—“Encyclopedia of Art Studies,” “Encyclopedia of Artistic Terms,” “Dictionary of Artistic Terminology,” “Dictionary of Artistic Terms,” etc.—accumulated in the process of realization of all the greater theoretical resources of the Academy. At the same time, it revealed, as if under a magnifying glass, all the problems and difficulties that the theory of art faced in Soviet Russia in its search for a conceptual apparatus.¹

From the very start of the Academy’s activity, the task of investigating the basic “artistic terms” that relate both to the sphere of artistic technique and to the sphere of art analysis was associated with the creation of a “special dictionary” of terms (Kandinskii 2001, p. 73). Wassily Kandinsky, who presented this idea in a report entitled “The Plan of Work of the Fine Arts Section” at a meeting of the Scientific

¹We must address here the first reconstruction of the Encyclopedia project, which Igor Chubarov made (Chubarov 2005). Following the recommendation of the literary scholar Karlheinz Barck (Berlin) (cf. Chubarov 2005, p. 493), Chubarov undertook the editing of a bundle consisting of several articles of the Encyclopedia located in the RGALI archive (and discovered by Barck). He supplemented this bundle with finds of individual articles from the papers of other GAKhN members (Pavel Popov, Gustav Shpet, Alexander Achmanov, and others) and published them under the title *Slovar’ khudozhestvennykh terminov GAKhN 1923–1929*. The title suggests that it is a complete lexicon and not just an assembled fragment, which in fact is what it is. Nevertheless, this edition must be considered a pioneering achievement, the first to commemorate this GAKhN project, and was widely received, with excerpts translated into English and German (Chubarov 2017; Hennig 2010).

On close examination, however, this edition proves to be completely useless for scholarly purposes. It cannot be considered a totally reliable edition for the following reasons: 1. It contains articles arbitrarily drawn from other lexica published in the 1920s (the “*Granat*” *Encyclopedia* [contributions on “Fenomenologija,” “Tema,” “Temp”] or the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia*) and that do not belong to the project of the GAKhN Encyclopedia at all. 2. On the other hand, there are articles of the GAKhN Encyclopedia that were available in RGALI and other archives, but were not included in the edition (such as the articles “Iskusstvo” by A. Losev, “Burlesk” by B. Gornung, and others). 3. The authorship of several articles is given incorrectly (the article “Isoljacija” attributed to A. Gabrichevskij was actually written by V. Zubov; the article “Zhivopis” attributed to N. Tarabukin was actually written by A. Gabrichevskij, etc.). 4. Almost every page of the edition contains numerous deciphering errors, unmarked omissions, incorrect transcriptions, etc. 5. Information about the archival sources is missing or incorrect in most cases. 6. In the transcription of the minutes of the discussions on the articles in the appendix, omissions are also not indicated anywhere, and sources are omitted. Instead of an accurate publication of these minutes, Chubarov published only his own excerpts, which, moreover, are also not marked as such.

Moreover, Chubarov has fundamentally reconstructed the structure of the GAKhN Encyclopedia incorrectly. Instead of taking into account the plan for the different volumes that Shpet developed (see note 16), which explains the existence of several different articles on the same term, Chubarov published all of these articles together, so that in his edition several articles dealing with the same term are simply placed side by side.

As for the history of the Encyclopedia project, which he presents in his “Afterword” (Chubarov 2005, pp. 479–493), Chubarov relies essentially on the information published in the “GAKhN Bulletins” and on several archival sources. He apparently did not even recognize the conception of the Encyclopedia as reconstructed in his contribution on the basis of archival documents. His presentation contains incorrect dates concerning the start of the Encyclopedia project and also of its progress. He also confuses works on the different planned volumes (the philosophical section, the section devoted to spatial arts). There is no information about the work on the theater and music volume of the Encyclopedia. It is beyond the scope of the present article to deal with all the errors and misstatements in Chubarov’s publication. Instead, the following remarks are based on an analysis of the authentic archival sources without resorting to Chubarov’s edition.

and Artistic Commission of the People's Commissariat for Education (21 July 1921) meant by a "special dictionary" the product of a collaboration between representatives of the "positive sciences" (natural sciences and psychology) and artists with the goal of experimental verification and clarification of terminology related to both the material and the technique of art. He considered the compilation of such a dictionary as a necessary condition for a "new science of art," one that had yet to be created in the future (Kandinskii 2020, II, pp. 575–582). Sketches of the definition of various terms (color, form, pattern, etc.) were presented in many of his reports from the early 1920s on the "Basic Elements of Painting" (cf. Kandinskii 2020, II, pp. 543, 585–589), but no evidence of a detailed elaboration of the principles and composition of such a dictionary has survived. Later, already within the framework of his teaching at the Bauhaus, Kandinsky again proposed to create a "*terminologisches Wörterbuch*" ["terminological dictionary"] as a condition for the scientific analysis of painting,² which also remained unrealized.

Meanwhile, the idea of a terminological dictionary was further developed within the framework of the RAKhN/GAKhN, which took a completely different direction from what Kandinsky had envisioned. Already in the process of making decisions on the organization of the Academy during the summer and autumn of 1921, the Presidium of the RAKhN proposed to create a special "terminological commission."³ Then, the investigation of "artistic terminology" was included in the scope of tasks set in February 1922 for the Philosophy Department of the Academy (Kondrat'ev 1923, p. 419; Iakimenko 2017, pp. 333f.). However, at this initial stage (1921/22) there was still neither organizational nor conceptual clarity concerning the forms the study of artistic terminology should take, what would be the connection between the subdivisions of the Academy involved in this work (commissions, departments, sections, etc.), on what principles it would be built, and what the product of this investigation would be.⁴

While the Philosophy Department and the Fine Arts Section organized only a series of lectures devoted to specific terms,⁵ the Music Section was already launching a project for the creation of a "Musical Encyclopedia" (GAKhN 1926, pp. 39, 86), which, being focused on Hugo Riemann's *Musical Dictionary* (*Musiklexikon*, 10th edition: Berlin 1922), did not have a specific terminological direction. It planned instead to include both a biographical part as well as articles on musical instruments, techniques for creating music, and terms in musicology. The author of the project was

²"It is regrettable to note that painting has the least precise terminology at its disposal, which makes scientific work extremely difficult and sometimes directly impossible. Here, we have to start from the beginning, and a terminological dictionary is a prerequisite. Unfortunately, an attempt made in Moscow (around 1919) did not produce any results. Perhaps the time was not yet ripe then." (Kandinsky 1926, p. 52). Clearly, Kandinsky had in mind his own attempts to create an "Encyclopedia of Fine Arts" first at the INKhUK (Institute of Artistic Culture) and then RAKhN (Russian Academy of Artistic Sciences).

³Zasedanie prezidiuma RAKhN, 3.

⁴The present text takes up only the part of the history of the project that belongs to the "philosophy" volume of the Encyclopedia. The history of the preparation of dictionaries for the fine arts, theater, music, and decorative arts requires a separate study. For the first approaches to such a study, see Bobrik 2017, Gudkova 2017.

⁵For example, the reports of A.A. Sidorov "On the terms 'construction' and 'composition'" (Sidorov 1926/2017, p. 76) and "Modern artistic terminology" (Kondrat'ev 1923, p. 431).

the musicologist Yuly D. Engel, the editor of the prerevolutionary Russian translation of the Riemann *Dictionary*, which he supplemented with his own articles on Russian music. However, after Engel emigrated in 1922, the project remained unrealized (Borbrik 2017, pp. 291–292).

The first institutional decisions regarding the creation of a terminological dictionary, which can be considered the official start of the project, date back to the fall of 1922. On 6 November 1922, the Board of the Academy included in the plan of the Philosophy Department “work on compiling a dictionary of artistic terminology” and allocated a small budget for it in the amount of 40 000 rubles for the period from October to December 1922.⁶ This decision was preceded by a discussion of the working plan of the Philosophy Department at a meeting of the Board on 1 November, which for the first time included “work on the study and establishment of contemporary artistic terminology, with the ultimate goal of creating a dictionary of contemporary artistic terminology.”⁷ For this work, Gustav Shpet proposed to combine the activities of the Philosophy Department and the Fine Arts Section to create a working group for the preparation of the dictionary consisting of 7–8 persons.⁸ At the same time, a decision was made to start work in the Sculpture Section of the Academy on a “Dictionary of Sculptural Terminology” (“a concise definition of the basic concepts of sculptural creativity, expression, perception, and study”),⁹ and the head of the Literary Section, Nikolay K. Piskunov, expressed the wish “to participate in the development of the terminological dictionaries of all the interested sections of the Academy, in particular, the Literary.”¹⁰ A little later, the Board decided “to propose to the Music Section that it present and develop a plan for publishing a musical Encyclopedia by 1 January 1923.”¹¹

It is necessary to mention specifically the problem of the constant delaying of “deadlines,” which accompanied the Encyclopedia project throughout its history. The obligation to write regular semiannual and annual reports on the work done typified the character of GAKhN as a Soviet bureaucratic institution. Such reports constituted a significant part of the Academy’s publication activity (cf. GAKhN 1926 and the *Bulleteni GAKhN 1925–1928*) and consumed significant resources both in material and time. Moreover, the planning structure, the establishment of deadlines for work, and the reporting of results were correlated not with the real progress of the work or with the capabilities and resources that were at the disposal of the creators of the Encyclopedia (for example, the limited number of authors of articles, lack of a reference, and bibliographic infrastructure), but with an institutionally set horizon in the respective plan. This was limited to the “academic year” or even half a year

⁶Protokol zasedaniia No. 38 pravleniia, 47. In comparison, 150 000 rubles were allocated for the activities of the Theater Section alone for the same period.

⁷Pravleniiu Rossiiskoi akademii khudozhestvennykh nauk, 51 (the date “1 / X-22” [1 October 1922] was erroneously inserted into the document by hand. The correct date was established on the basis of other documents of the Board meeting No. 37 of 1 November 1922).

⁸Pravleniiu Rossiiskoi akademii khudozhestvennykh nauk, 51.

⁹Pravleniiu Rossiiskoi akademii khudozhestvennykh nauk, 59ob.

¹⁰Pravleniiu Rossiiskoi akademii khudozhestvennykh nauk, 44.

¹¹Protokol No. 39 Zasedaniia pravleniia, 61ob.

(the period for which the budget of the individual subdivisions was set). In addition, in parallel with the dictionary of artistic terminology, the fine-arts section and the literary section included in their plans the creation of biographical dictionaries of Russian artists and Russian writers.¹²

For this reason, in the course of work on the Encyclopedia, unrealizable tasks were chronically assigned with completion dates set in the shortest possible time. Hence, already at the first meeting of the Board of the RAKhN on 1 November, the confidence was expressed that “if all ranks of the Academy would participate in this work, several sections of the dictionary could be complete by the end of the academic year [i.e., May/June 1923].”¹³ Already after two meetings, the Board on 20 November decided: “To recognize the possibility of concluding in two months from this date an agreement for the publication of separate editions of the dictionary of artistic terminology edited by Alexander G. Gabrichevskii and Gustav G. Shpet.”¹⁴ However, in the future the deadlines for the delivery of individual volumes of the Encyclopedia were constantly shifted and postponed to the following academic year or by six months.

In fact, work on the Encyclopedia resumed only almost a year after the decision of the Board on 1 November 1922, since the first half of 1923 was occupied with an institutional reorganization, during which part of the Fine Arts Section became part of the Philosophy Department (Alexander G. Gabrichevskii, Boris V. Shaposhnikov) and was partially transformed into a new section of spatial arts (Sidorov 1926/2017, pp. 91–92). The result of this “incubation period” (Sidorov 1926/2017, p. 91) was the creation in June 1923 of a special “Commission for the Compilation of a Dictionary of Aesthetic and Artistic Terms” chaired by G. Shpet.¹⁵ As a result, an institutional platform was created on which systematic work on the preparation of the Encyclopedia could be launched. From that time on, the Encyclopedia was designated as the “principal work” of the Philosophy Department of GAKhN (GAKhN 1926, pp. 18–19).

On 25 September 1923, G. Shpet gave a presentation at a meeting of the Department in which he presented the basic outline of his conception for the “Encyclope-

¹²GAKhN 1926, pp. 26, 46–47. The project for a “Dictionary of Russian Artists” was never realized. Only the first volume of the dictionary *Contemporary Writers [Pisateli sovremennoj epokhi]* was published (Kos'min 1928), after which it was banned (the second volume was published only in 1995).

¹³Pravleniiu Rossiiskoi akademii khudozhestvennykh nauk, 51.

¹⁴Protokol No. 39 Zasedaniia pravleniia, 61 ob.

¹⁵Protokol No. 1 organizatsionnogo zasedaniia Komissii, 1. Boris V. Gornung was selected as secretary of the Commission. The 1926 “GAKhN Report” indicated the members of the commission to be: “Chairman G.G. Shpet, members: A.G. Gabricheskij, M.I. Kagan, and B.V. Shaposhnikov; representatives of the Sociology Department P.S. Kogan and L.I. Axelrod, representative of the Physico-Psychology Department and the Printing Arts Section A.A. Sidorov, representative of the Section of Spatial Arts B.R. Vipper, and M.A. Petrovskij is a representative of the Literary Section. Indispensable members of the Department N.N. Volkov, A.A. Guber, and P.S. Popov” (GAKhN 1926, p. 19). In the fall of 1924 (i.e., at the beginning of the 1924/25 academic year), the Commission was reorganized. An undated (but probably related to the same time) document names the new composition of the commission as: chairman A.G. Gabrichevskii, secretary A.G. Guber, and 13 members: G.G. Shpet, B.V. Shaposhnikov, P.S. Kogan, L.I. Axelrod, M.A. Petrovskii, A.A. Sidorov, M.I. Kagan, I.K. Lindeman, B.V. Gornung, V.P. Zubov, N.I. Zhinkin, A.F. Losev, and A.V. Bakushinskii (Sostav komissii, 1). In December 1925, when Gabrichevskii became the head of the Philosophy Department, P.S. Popov became chairman of the Commission (Iakimenko 2017, p. 377).

dia of Artistic Terminology.” According to this conception, the Encyclopedia should consist of a “dictionary of artistic terminology, uniting all theoretical and principled terminology, and dictionaries of artistic technology, which unite the terminology of the individual arts. The first dictionary was to be prepared by the Philosophy Department, and special dictionaries by the respective Academic sections (Literary, Musical, etc.)”¹⁶

The conception of several dictionaries, announced by Shpet, was opposed to the project of combining all artistic terminology in a single list of terms, which was previously put forward by Kandinsky and defended by Akim I. Kondrat’ev, who proposed the creation of “a single general encyclopedia of the arts” at a meeting on 25 September.¹⁷ In defense of the unified encyclopedia, the argument was advanced that many artistic terms (for example, “form”) acquired both a theoretical and a technical meaning in the course of their historical development, and “will inevitably be repeated in the dictionaries planned by the sections.”¹⁸ However, this argument was rejected by pointing out that in special dictionaries purely technical meanings of a term would be revealed, meanings containing not only a different conceptual apparatus, but also quite different bibliographic references. In addition, the need for separate theoretical and technical dictionaries is dictated by their different goals: “By its character, a dictionary of artistic terminology should be a work that illuminates the current state of the science of art and should be an independent work that cannot be included in some general reference-encyclopedia.”¹⁹

Clearly, Shpet conceived work on a “theoretical” dictionary to be not simply a systematization of the all available knowledge in the artistic sciences, but as a task to build the conceptual foundations on which to develop new criteria for scientificity and for determining the subject matter within the entire spectrum of the sciences of “art.” While working in the sphere of the theory of art, Shpet advanced the idea of creating a “fundamental science” as it emerged at the turn of the century in the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl and in the hermeneutics of Wilhelm Dilthey as a discipline grounding the “scientificity” of the human sciences.

Moreover, in the development of his plan for the Encyclopedia, Shpet relied on the conception of the “general theory of art” put forward by Max Dessoir and Emil Utitz, which in its essential theses continued the ideas of Husserl and Dilthey as applied to the sciences of art. At the same time, the idea of a “fundamental science” as a theoretical and methodological basis for the “special sciences” (human or artistic) could take on very different configurations and be associated with a different range of tasks. If, for Utitz, the discipline of the “general theory of art” coincided with the philosophy of art, which is delimited from the individual sciences of art, then Dessoir, in turn, rejected the idea of a hierarchy of the various disciplines, considering the “general theory of art” to be the discipline that synthesizes the theoretical

¹⁶Komissiiia po izucheniiu, 39. (The cited source gives an erroneous date [October 25], which was corrected in the minutes of the meeting [Protokol No. 13 Zasedaniia Filosofskogo otdeleniia, 5–6]. Other reports in GAKhN give both dates.)

¹⁷Protokol No. 13 Zasedaniia Filosofskogo otdeleniia, 5.

¹⁸Protokol No. 13 Zasedaniia Filosofskogo otdeleniia, 5ob. (A.S. Akhmanova’s reply).

¹⁹Protokol No. 13 Zasedaniia Filosofskogo otdeleniia, 5 (G.G. Shpet’s reply).

results of all the sciences of art. Shpet's conception, on the contrary, differentiated three levels in the disciplines: "philosophy of art" (phenomenological ontology) as the "fundamental science" contains the theory of the existence of an art object. It must be separated from the "general theory of art" as the "formal" methodology of the individual sciences of art. These sciences, in turn, are "material" disciplines dealing with the specifications of the subject matter in the various forms of art.²⁰

Echoes of these German discussions were clearly heard at the meetings of GAKhN dealing with the plan for the Encyclopedia, since the proposals for its structure were clearly based on different ideas about the order of organizing knowledge in the human sciences. Also, as a result of the discussion, Shpet's plan was supported not only by philosophers, but also by representatives of special artistic sciences who were members of the commission. This fact testified to their solidarity in understanding that theoretical work on defining concepts in the sphere of the theory of art should play a central role among the Academy's tasks. In the course of further work on the individual dictionaries in the Encyclopedia, however, it became clear that a rigorous division of terms into theoretical and technical was hardly feasible, and that even this division itself, as the debates in the Theater Section showed (see Gudkova 2017), depends on the theoretical position that determines the boundaries of art and, correspondingly, the scope of its techniques. In fact, already within the special dictionaries themselves, a field of theoretical reflection was formed, which sought expression in the concepts of the individual artistic sciences and was not satisfied with the level of "technical terminology," but required an appeal to philosophical concepts and generalizations.²¹ (This desire for such conceptual expression was most clearly manifested in the work of the Spatial Arts Section and the Theater Section.)

In addition to classifying the types of scientific knowledge and focusing on the German discussions concerning the foundations of the artistic sciences, the plan called for dividing the terms into theoretical and technological ones. In all likelihood, it also included another aspect, namely the formation of a critical attitude toward the constructions of the "Russian formalists," for whom the theory of art essentially amounted to an analysis of "technology."²² Highlighting an independent level of theoretical concepts about art, Shpet thereby emphasized that the investigation of art (and literature) is not limited to an analysis of the methods for creating works, but includes an understanding of the "sense" of art, expressed in the basic concepts of aesthetics and philosophy of culture. Indeed, it is only with the help of these concepts that a certain set of cultural techniques obtains the status of "art" in our body of knowledge.²³

²⁰For more information on the systematization of the sciences in the conceptions of a "general theory of art" and in GAKhN, see Shpet 1926, Plotnikov 2013, Collenberg-Plotnikov 2021, pp. 294–300.

²¹For example, most of the articles by Nikolay M. Tarabukin, written for the "technical" Dictionary of the Spatial Arts Section ("taste," "still life," "landscape," "artist," etc.) are rather small studies on the philosophy of art and were developed by their author into an (unpublished) book "Theory of Art" (Tarabukin, N.M. "Teoriia iskusstva").

²²Cf. B. Eichenbaum's remarks about the exaggerated interest of the formalists in literary "technology" (Eikhenbaum 1987, pp. 428–436).

²³"Starting with the questions: 'What is art in general?', 'What is each art separately?', 'What is style?', 'What are its features?', and ending with the last concrete dialectical and historical definitions, such

In specifying the tasks involved in preparing the Encyclopedia, the question of which concepts should be classified as fundamental “theoretical” ones and, accordingly, included in the dictionary of the Philosophy Department, began to acquire special poignancy. Moreover, this question had not only a conceptual, but also a purely pragmatic dimension, namely, it was associated with the size of the dictionary, which was supposed to be published in 20 printer’s sheets. Already in December 1923, Shpet proposed a list that included 586 terms. “This number could not be considered final,”²⁴ since it required agreement on which terms should be excluded from this list as technical terms and what to add with representatives of the individual sections working on their volumes of the Encyclopedia. This agreement dragged on for another year, partly due to the fact that individual sections seriously delayed starting to develop their dictionaries and to compile their vocabularies.

However, the more likely reason that the vocabulary compiled by Shpet was still being discussed by the Commission for the Compilation of the Dictionary in the fall of 1924 was the need to reconcile the length of individual articles with the total size of the volume. The new chairman of the Commission, Gabrichevskii, proposed to include three groups of terms in the Dictionary, scaling them by the length of the articles: “1) those requiring large articles, which will include: a) terms of aesthetics and the general theory of art, b) designations of the arts, 2) those requiring small articles, which will include: a) general philosophical terms, b) directions and schools, c) terms of individual arts, since they are included in general aesthetics; 3) terms requiring interpretation.”²⁵ During the discussion of these proposals, Shpet proposed a stricter limitation of this list, leaving in it the terms: “1) philosophy of arts and aesthetics, 2) the terms used in art theory, i.e., especially art studies, and 3) psychology of the arts.”²⁶ This proposal was accepted. According to the report of the last head of the Terminology Commission (and Cabinet) P.S. Popov, dated 2 April 1929, the number of terms was reduced to 300 and the size of the dictionary was increased to 25 sheets.²⁷ There is no final list of terms for the dictionary, but on the basis of working materials (in particular, the lists of individual finished articles) in the archival collection of Pavel S. Popov, we can conclude that the total number of vocabulary terms was about 530. The plan was to write independent articles for approximately

as naturalism, classicism, expressionism, and even technical nomenclature, such as light, shadow, contour, spot, rhythm, etc., etc.—everywhere, both experiment and explanation are preceded by the question: ‘What is it?’, i.e., the question of the nomenclature of things and differentiating terminology” (Shpet 1926, pp. 17–18).

²⁴Komissiiia po izucheniiu, 39. On 23 December 1923, “G. G. Shpet reported to the Commission that he had completed a preliminary editing of the list of words that would be included in the dictionary of artistic terminology. According to the previous resolution, this list should be copied and distributed among the sections <...> with a request to expand it, if necessary, and remove from it words that should properly be included in the special technical dictionaries of the sections.” (Protokol No. 7/17 Zasedaniia redaktsionnoi komissii, 3). The list of terms proposed by Shpet has not yet been found.

²⁵Protokol No. 2 Zasedaniia prezidiuma redaktsionnoi kolegii, 8.

²⁶Protokol No. 3 Zasedaniia prezidiuma redaktsionnoi kolegii, 9.

²⁷Popov, P.S. Materialy, 4.

380 of these terms, and the rest were to be contained only in the references to existing articles.²⁸

If we look at the surviving “Basic List of Words” in the archival collection and analyze the composition of the terms included in it, we can state that preference was given to the categories of *consciousness* as the means of the theoretical explication of art (as the terms of psychological and phenomenological aesthetics), as well as the methods of interpreting art and the concepts that characterize the historical development of art (epochs and styles). Practically all of the traditional terminology of aesthetics (tragic, comic, horrible, pathetic, majestic—20 categories in all) refer to a single(!) article “Modifications of the Beautiful” (Nikolay I. Zhinkin is indicated as the author, but it has not been found²⁹). This fact, on the one hand, emphasizes the desire of the creators of the “dictionary” to abandon old terminology, and, on the other hand, shows the strong influence of Hegelian aesthetics (Karl Rosenkranz, Friedrich T. Fischer), which sought to derive the entire systematization of aesthetic categories from the idea of the “beautiful.”³⁰ Also noteworthy is the presence in the “dictionary” of a significant number of aesthetic concepts that have completely gone out of scientific use, such as “callistics,” “kalokagathia,” “mania,” and “melos,” but that were included in the dictionary probably as “terms requiring interpretation.”³¹

In addition to suggestions for compiling the vocabulary and the definitions of covering the individual articles, Shpet also formulated at the meeting on 25 September the principles for writing and discussing the dictionary entries. He called the principle for the exposition of terms “evolutionary-dialectical.”³² This designation clearly indicates a connection with the “hermeneutic-dialectical” method that Shpet developed in his investigation of art. This method of the “immanent disclosure” (Shpet 2007, p. 47) of the sense of an object (its concept) has an undeniable kinship with the Hegelian dialectic, but, unlike the latter, it does not contain the “moment” of “abstract negation” (Shpet 2007, p. 112). Shpet’s hermeneutic-dialectic is aimed at knowledge of the “concrete structure” of reason (the word, *logos*) in its internal differentiation and systematic interconnections of the parts within the whole. This exposition of the “dialectical filiation” of ideas and concepts is similar to what Shpet used in the reconstruction of the ideas of W. von Humboldt, rather than to an analysis of their historical genesis (cf. Shpet 2007, p. 345). It can be concluded that the presentation of the dictionary entries appeared to Shpet to be, above all, a systematic statement of contemporary aesthetic terminology necessary for the organization of knowledge

²⁸See Osnovnoi spisok slov, 6, 12–17ob. We can say with a reasonable degree of certainty that more than half of the articles (out of 380) for the first (“theoretical”) volume of the Encyclopedia were not written. In Popov’s “Basic List,” a number of articles are marked with a tick, and in all likelihood we are talking about finished articles (a total of 142 articles are marked). All the articles of the first volume that have been found so far (about 130 articles) match the list of marked articles.

²⁹In the discussions of the articles, Zhinkin’s article “Categories of the Aesthetic” [*Kategorii esteticheskogo*] also appeared, the content of which is the same as that of the article “Modifications of the Beautiful” [*Modifikacii prekrasnogo*]. See Protokol No. 14/28 Zasedaniia Komissii 42–42ob.

³⁰The article “Beautiful” [*Prekrasnoe*] was itself written by Appolinaria K. Solovieva (Chubarov 2005, pp. 326–329), but does not contain references to the article “Modifications of the Beautiful” [*Modifikacii prekrasnogo*].

³¹A.F. Losev wrote most of these articles (Losev 2021).

³²Protokol No. 13 Zasedaniia Filosofskogo otdeleniia, 5ob.

in the artistic sciences. Accordingly, a presentation of the historical evolution of concepts had to be subordinated to this systematic task. Most likely, it was this principle that guided one of the first entries in the dictionary—"Idea," written by Alexey F. Losev in March 1925, but which has not survived: "The article was structured in such a way that at first the most general definition of the term was given, and all of the varieties of [its] interpretations over time were reduced to four basic types—the phenomenological-dialectical, the transcendental, the rationalistic, and the aesthetic. In addition, the presenter himself was inclined to believe that between these four types there are necessary dialectical transitions."³³

However, along with the principle of scientific systematization, the creators of the Encyclopedia were also faced with the task of a popular exposition, oriented toward a "broad spectrum" ("student level"³⁴) and required the inclusion of elementary information on aesthetics and the philosophy of art. This conflict of attitudes—on the one hand to prepare a dictionary "understandable to a wide range of readers," and, on the other, to carry out "the most rigorous scientific work on terms"³⁵—was one of the reasons for the ambiguities in the formulation of the goals and the work plan on the dictionary, which every now and then slowed down the activities of the Commission.

In addition, it was decided that the dialectical principle of presenting knowledge would best correspond to the debatable nature of the creation of articles. The consequence of this is that the composition of large articles should be undertaken not on a competitive basis, but as a collaboration "between two or more authors on each article. The reason for this is that the discussion, on the one hand, will be more academically rigorous and expedient, [and,] on the other hand, because a number of terms demand the opinion of experts in different fields."³⁶ Thus, regular discussions were to be held of the prepared articles in the commission.³⁷ The members of the commission agreed with the opinion of Gabrichevskii that "the concern of the dictionary of artistic terminology is something new and without discussion it would be impossible to find a common position."³⁸

However, another year passed before the work on the Encyclopedia could begin in earnest and take on regularity at the start of 1925. The external reasons cited were "the lack of credits of the Academy's own publishing house," which impeded the realization of the plan (GAKhN 1926, pp. 18–19). However, apparently, a not insignificant role was also played by both the uncertainty of the principles underlying the composition of the articles as well as the increasingly noticeable shortage of employees capable of skillful work on the dictionary. For these reasons, the idea of writing large articles by two or more authors was abandoned rather quickly. When in the fall–winter of 1924/25, work on the Encyclopedia continued, and the first articles were presented for discussion, the conflict between popularity and strict scientificity, as well as between the historical and systematic attitudes, only intensified.

³³Otchet o deiatel'nosti komissii po sostavleniiu slovaria, 40.

³⁴Protokol No. 13 Zasedaniia Filosofskogo otdeleniia, 5ob.

³⁵Otchet o deiatel'nosti komissii po izucheniiu khudozhestvennoi terminologii, 48ob.

³⁶Otchet o deiatel'nosti komissii po izucheniiu khudozhestvennoi terminologii, 48ob.

³⁷On the role of discussions in the process of creating the articles, see Khennig 2021.

³⁸Zasedanie redaktsionnoi komissii, 15–16.

When discussing the first articles, the heterogeneity of the origin of aesthetic concepts, as well as the functions that the concepts acquired in history—thereby procuring new semantic features—was ever more distinctly revealed: “A number of terms penetrated into art studies from everyday life, from philosophy, psychology, even from mathematics. These terms, however, are no longer employed in their original sense. In such cases, it is necessary to establish the distinction between one and the same term as applied to art from its first meaning. On the other hand, often one and the same term, with its own history, had its meaning changed, and in contemporary scientific works it has different meanings depending on the direction, school, or view of the author.”³⁹ In order to take into account these semantic differences, it was decided to take into consideration the genesis of aesthetic terminology to a large extent, and in the article “first give a brief definition of the term and then set out its history, as exhaustively as possible, noting its various understandings.”⁴⁰

Although the scheme of writing articles for the Encyclopedia seemed like a compromise between two opposing positions—the systematic as against the historico-conceptual—it meant, in fact, a gradual shift in the focus of the work toward greater popularity and a predominantly historical presentation. A striking example of the conflict of attitudes between the creation of a contemporary system of aesthetic terminology and a survey of the history of a concept can be found in the discussion of Alexander L. Sakketti’s article “Music.” During the discussion of the article, its second reviewer Losev “proposed the Commission resolve once and for all the dilemma: either the articles proposed to the Commission should be an independent scientific investigation, or they should provide information and guidance in current academic definitions. The article by Sakketti is not an independent investigation. Therefore, if the Presidium recognizes the possibility of taking the second point of view, then the article is fundamentally acceptable. It just needs a few clarifications.”⁴¹ Nevertheless, at a previous meeting, the first reviewer of an article by Sophia N. Beliaeva-Ekzempljarskaia pointed out that the article’s deficiencies lay not in its theoretical dependency, but in the absence of presenting a historical development of the concept.⁴² Thus, the very dynamics of the discussion, guided by the imperative of finding a compromise for the adoption of articles, persuaded the creators of the Encyclopedia to concentrate on the presentation of the historical evolution of concepts.

The movement toward a more thorough consideration of the history of terms in the articles required, however, a fundamental study of both Russian and Western European artistic terminology. Indeed, in most cases, the creators of the Encyclopedia had to carry out such investigations alone. These investigations were the first of their kind in Russian scholarship, since there was no such investigatory literature in the Russian language in this area. Therefore, the institutionalization of historical and terminological investigations was required for a deepening of the historical direction in preparing the Encyclopedia. Concerning this, Shpet wrote in his 1926 programmatic article that the Encyclopedia should become a true “terminological museum of the

³⁹Otchet o deiatel’nosti komissii po izucheniiu khudozhestvennoi terminologii, 48ob.

⁴⁰Otchet o deiatel’nosti komissii po izucheniiu khudozhestvennoi terminologii, 48ob.

⁴¹Protokol No. 11/25 Zasedaniia prezidiuma komissii, 29.

⁴²Protokol No. 7/21 Zasedaniia komissii, 18ob.

theory of art” (Shpet 1926, p. 18), meaning that the “museum” was to be both a collection of information on the history of terms and a work on the streamlining and classifying of terminology.

The first step towards the realization of this idea was the creation of the “Terminology Cabinet” under the Commission for the Study of Artistic Terminology (the word “cabinet” itself already referred to the practice of museum work and to the institutes of modern “cabinets” as the primary form of organizing museum collections). The decision to establish it was made on 3 December 1925. Within the framework of the “cabinet,” it was supposed to organize systematically all the activities involved with the collection and cataloging of historical material for the Encyclopedia. However, the tasks of the cabinet were defined more broadly and included the development of the terminological foundations of the theory of art on the whole:

The Cabinet pursues the following goals:

- a) The taking into account and summarizing of the terminology of aesthetics, philosophy and general theory of art, both in the historical development of these sciences and in their contemporary state.
- b) The preparation of historical and systematic terminological material for the Commission’s work (among other things, to facilitate and unify the work on the compilation of the Dictionary).
- c) The taking into account and summarizing of the terminological works of the Commission, as well as the terminological results of GAKhN as a whole, since these relate to general issues of philosophy, the theory of art and aesthetics.⁴³

The primary direction of the work in this case was to be the compilation of a “universal terminological card-index,”⁴⁴ which included subject and alphabetical catalogs as well as the compilation of a complete bibliography of reference publications in the field of the theory of art. Already two months later, on 12 February 1926, work on terminology was completely moved to the purview of the cabinet,⁴⁵ the leadership of which was assumed by the historian of logic and philosophy Pavel S. Popov. Popov coordinated all the work on the preparation of the dictionary, adherence to deadlines for the submission of articles, initial verification of the articles and the organization of the discussions. He also headed all activities on compiling the card-index of citations with examples of the use of terms in the history of aesthetic theories, compiled lists of the most important authors, from whose works the material on the history of aesthetic concepts was to be taken, as well as the lists of terms subject to historical analysis.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, the deadlines for completing the dictionary were once again shifted from the fall of 1925 to the spring and fall of 1926, and it was planned to publish the dictionary of the Philosophy Department with the total size being 25 printer’s

⁴³Protokol zasedaniia prezidiuma komissii, 17–17ob.

⁴⁴Protokol zasedaniia prezidiuma komissii, 17–17ob.

⁴⁵Cf. Protokol No. 11/25 Zasedaniia prezidiuma komissii, 29.

⁴⁶Materialy, 1. In this case, from the P.S. Popov fond, there are also lists of classics in art theory, from which the quotations should be taken using basic aesthetic terms.

pages already in two half-volumes (“A–K” and “L–Z”) (Biulleteni GAKhN 1927, Nr. 6–7, 36).

The investigatory work in the cabinet acquired a constant and systematic character thanks to the implementation of constant compensatory rates for the staff, viz., the head of the office P.S. Popov, and his two deputies: Alexey A. Guber and Vasily P. Zubov. The selection and cataloging of examples of the use of terms also involved, on a temporary basis, the young freelance employees of the Philosophy Department Appolinaria K. Solov’eva and Boris Ju. Ajkhenval’d. Their job was to compile a card-index of quotations with terms that had appeared in the texts of European philosophy of art and separately in Russian aesthetic text as well as to compile a bibliography of works on aesthetics and art theory, which, according to the plan, should be placed at the end of each volume of the Encyclopedia.

The concentration on the selection of citations led to the next change in the focus of the task in writing articles. Rudolf Eisler’s *Dictionary of Philosophical Concepts* (Eisler 1927),⁴⁷ which appeared in 1927 as the fourth, completely revised, edition in three volumes (the first edition in one volume “A–K” was published in 1899) was now taken as the model. The specific difference of this dictionary is that, by the author’s intention, it was entirely devoted to the “history of philosophical concepts” and included as much of their semantic diversity as possible in the history of science. At the same time, Eisler did not distinguish in general a systematic from a historical approach, but considered the use of concepts by contemporary authors on a par with historical examples. The author saw his main task as “yielding the floor to the philosophers themselves” as much as possible (Eisler 1927, Bd. 1, V). Each article, therefore contains not even the history of a concept (*Begriffsgeschichte*) in the contemporary sense as a presentation of the dynamics of semantic change, but only a complete, chronologically ordered collection of its various uses by individual philosophers.⁴⁸

In conformity with this new attitude toward the work on the philosophy volume of the GAKhN Encyclopedia, the focus of the articles was now not to be on the development of new terminology and not on the systematic definition of basic concepts, but on taking into account the various uses of concepts in the texts of relevant authors in history and in the present. Examples of such articles in the Encyclopedia are the majority of articles by Popov (“Apperception,” “Spirit,” “Memory,” “Creativity, etc.”), as well as by Solov’eva, who took an active part in the selection of the cited material for the articles, and who, in the end, independently wrote a number of articles that were listed as Shpet’s (“Hermeneutics,” “Truth,” “Beautiful”). In them, the formulation of one’s own philosophical and theoretical position in the definition of a concept recedes to the periphery, giving way to a maximum concern for the historical diversity of the definitions, and the contemporary development of the theory is presented in the form of an indication of the various definitions given by contemporary authors. As a result of this shift in focus, the creators of the Encyclopedia were increasingly looking at the genesis of philosophical and scientific terminology as well as the nature and

⁴⁷Materialy, 4ob.

⁴⁸Erich Rothacker criticized this approach, calling it not historical, but purely chronological (Rothacker 1927, pp. 767–768).

factors of its historical evolution. Therefore, Zubov and Solov'eva, the coworkers of the cabinet, devoted their special investigations to the issues of the historical genesis of terminology and the interconnection of the universal meaning of terms with the cultural and historical context of their formation and use.⁴⁹

However, along with the institutional decisions that entailed a change in the general vector of the work on the Encyclopedia, the pace of the work was determined to an even much greater extent by the practice of discussing individual articles. From 1925, discussions of completed articles were regularly held in the Terminology Commission, and then from the beginning of 1926 in the Historico-Terminology Cabinet. For practically all of the articles, a theoretical discussion flared up. The result was that in each case the finished text was not only supplemented and refined, but also served as a general theoretical horizon for the interpretation of individual terms and types of terms. This process of joint reflection on concepts in GAKhN was at the same time a *communicative practice* of the formation of the basic concepts in the theory of art in a continuous dialog between the disciplines and philosophical approaches (phenomenology, metaphysics, neo-Kantianism, etc.). At the same time, it was a “dialectical” technique for determining the basic indications of a concept, determining historical changes in its semantics and the establishment of systematic links between concepts.⁵⁰

However, the intensification of discussions that formed the general discursive space about art inevitably contradicted the logic of the production of the Encyclopedia as a completed text. The number of finished articles was constantly increasing, and the desire to subject each of them to a detailed discussion exceeded the personal and time capabilities of the Terminology Cabinet, which regularly devoted one, and sometimes several, hours of a meeting to the discussion of one (or two) articles. For this reason, plans for the completion of the philosophy volume of the Encyclopedia were postponed to the 1927–28 academic year.

However, in addition to the conceptual and institutional difficulties that arose with work on the GAKhN Encyclopedia project and that led to the constant postponement of its completion, the main reason for the termination of the entire project was its *ideological incompatibility* with the demands of the Soviet regime, which were imposed on scientific and cultural policy. Notwithstanding its involvement in Soviet cultural policy, GAKhN remained, thanks to the efforts of its creators and participants and, above all, its vice-president Shpet, an institution of autonomous scientific investigation and free scientific and artistic discussion, independent of any communist-party politics. In most philosophical and artistic discussions at GAKhN, there was an almost deliberate evasion of attending to the political “evil of the day.” This became the basis of the accusations of the “conservatism” and “reactionary character” of GAKhN from not only the adherents then of proletarian art and Marxist science, but even from contemporary admirers of the “Russian avant-garde.” GAKhN’s nonpartisanship was a consequence of its conscious intention to create a “rigorous science” of art. Even the presence in the Academy of a sociological department—the beloved

⁴⁹Zubov 1926/2004; Solov'eva 1929/2005.

⁵⁰Concerning the practice of the communicative production of knowledge in the GAKhN discussions, see Khennig 2021.

brainchild of the People's Commissar Anatoly V. Lunacharsky, who was called to play the role of the overseer of Marxist reliability, figured in the structure of GAKhN only as a representative of one of the three approaches to the study of art, along with the philosophical and psychological.

The fact that such an attitude toward ideological principles could not go on unpunished for a long time was also clear to the GAKhN participants themselves, who therefore strove in the Academy's official reports and presentations not only to emphasize its necessary role in Soviet cultural policy, but also to show the connection between the experimental synthesis of science and art with the processes of the revolutionary renewal of science, culture, and philosophy (cf. Sidorov 1926/2017). The situation was similar with the Encyclopedia project, and above all, with its "philosophy" volume. Already at an early stage, its creators intended to include terminology on the "sociology of art" in the volume and sought the support of the President of the Academy, Petr S. Kogan. In the fall of 1924, the secretary of the Commission for the creation of the dictionary, Guber, sent to Kogan a "list of words in the sociology of art" for examination.⁵¹ Obviously, the selected list of terms (to which Kogan added nothing, but only reduced the number of terms due to the fact that some were tautological) was intentionally limited to a presentation of a sociological approach to art and, in particular, to an analysis of the social function of art. There was no specifically "Marxist" terminology on this list.

However, it should be noted that in the mid-1920s, there was practically no "Marxist canon" in aesthetics and art theory. The only more or less clear reference point was the aesthetics of G.V. Plekhanov, which was studied by a special "Commission" of GAKhN under the leadership of Kogan and with the participation of Lubov I. Axelrod (Orthodox). The works of Marx and Engels or Hegel's aesthetics did not yet fall into the circle of sources of "Marxist aesthetics."⁵² The Sociology Department of GAKhN was called upon to develop the theory of art on a Marxist basis. However, the pluralism of approaches was already so great that within the bounds of the Department alone there were completely heterogeneous conceptions, such as the "vulgar" sociology of Vladimir M. Friche, the sociobiologically oriented aesthetics of Lunacharsky, the historico-sociological aesthetics of Pavel N. Sakulin and the emotivist aesthetics of Lia Ja. Zivel'chinskaia (Zivel'chinskaia 1928; see also Kornitskii 1925). The only common link between them was the abstract idea of the social nature and social determination of art. Due to this conceptual ambiguity, the involvement of Marxist aesthetics in the Encyclopedia was limited only to inviting GAKhN employees who had a reputation as Marxist art critics (such as Kogan and Axelrod) to participate in the project. Later, representatives of the Philosophy Department could already report in the GAKhN Bulletins about "the commencement of joint work with the sociology department <...> in the creation of a dictionary of artistic terminology" (Biulleteni GAKhN 10, 1928, 22).

⁵¹"Agitation art, everyday art, dialectical method, class art, Marxist method, folk art, proletarian culture, propaganda and art, religious art, revolutionary art, social moment in art, sociological criticism, sociological method, sociology of arts." (Spisok slov, 24). The document is not dated, but according to the location of the documents in the case, and according to the request contained in the accompanying letter to send clarifications of the list by 15 December, we can conclude that the document was from around October–November 1924.

⁵²Issues concerning art in the writings of Marx were still considered a topic to be studied (Denike 1923).

In fact with the exception of a single article by Axelrod, “Dialectical Materialism,” (which has not survived), no more articles were received from the Sociology Department until the spring of 1929, despite repeated requests from Popov, the head of the Terminology Cabinet, and despite the significant expansion and clarification of the list of terms dedicated to the sociology of art.⁵³ Considering the fact that by this time the conception of a terminological dictionary was focused on a presentation of the history of concepts in classical texts on the philosophy of art, it is logical to assume that due to the uncertainty of the canon, the Sociological Department lacked just such an expertise that would allow the singling out of a terminological framework of Marxist aesthetics and its presentation in the dynamics of historical change, which would be necessary for articles in the philosophy volume.

However, increasing ideological pressure inside and outside the Academy forced its leaders to make conceptual compromises, integrating Marxist vocabulary into the scientific and artistic terminology of the dictionary.⁵⁴ In an effort to please the dictates of the Marxist faction within the walls of the Academy and outside it, President Kogan, the scientific secretary Alexey A. Sidorov and the head of the sociology department Axelrod made administrative changes in the Academy, which step by step eliminated the chief basis of the institutional structure of GAKhN—the *existence of an autonomous theory of art*.

The first milestone on this path was the renaming of the “Philosophy Department” into the “Department of General Theory of Art and Aesthetics” in May 1928 (Iakimenko 2017, p. 408), in order to remove from the name the word “philosophy,” which was becoming more and more provocative for the ideological supporters of the regime, which would not tolerate the existence of any other “philosophy” alongside Marxism. The designation “general theory of art” could still look like a compromise formula, reminiscent of the German “*Allgemeine Kunstwissenschaft*” as one of the sources of the intellectual innovations of GAKhN and that suited both the supporters of scientific philosophy in the Academy and its administrators who were in a hurry to eliminate philosophy at GAKhN as a subject of constant ideological attacks.

However, the subsequent step already inflicted serious damage on the Encyclopedia project as a whole. In the fall of 1928, the “Committee for the Study of Artistic Agitation and Propaganda” was created at GAKhN under the chairmanship of the Marxist art critic Robert A. Pel’che, which immediately began to claim for itself the role of the central expert body of the Academy (Kolin 1929). This Committee (later, “cabinet”) also established its own terminological group, which carried out not only the task of preparing a separate dictionary for artistic agitation and propaganda, but

⁵³Popov, P.S. V Prezidium Sotsiologicheskogo razriada, 10–10ob. The extended list, attached to Popov’s request, included the terms: “Agitation and propaganda in art, anthropology, biography and biographism, everyday life in art, dialectics in art, spirit, ideology, art and society, art and economics, art studies (Marxist), historical materialism, class struggle in art, class art useful in art, fellow traveler, reception, industrial art, contradiction, professionalism in art, religious art, social environment, social order, sociological explanation of art, art market.”

⁵⁴Among the Academy’s leadership, Shpet was the only one who did not hide his negative attitude toward the increasing dominance of Marxism. According to the memoirs of P.S. Popov, “at an open meeting of GAKhN, he literally said the following: ‘I am talking to you about science, and you are talking about Marxism’” (Popov 2021, p. 118).

also claimed the role of inspector for checking the already prepared dictionary materials of all other departments of the Academy for the presence of terms in them related to the sphere of propaganda and agitation. The cabinet requested all of the prepared vocabularies of the sections, and during the winter–spring of 1929 it selected articles from all of the dictionaries in order to add them to a new dictionary by supplementing a number of articles of a set ideological character.⁵⁵ No evidence has survived of the development of a dictionary for agitation and propaganda. Moreover, it is unlikely that such a conception existed at all, since, by its very intension, such a dictionary completely rejected the scientifico-philosophical conception of an “Encyclopedia of Artistic Terminology” with its developed internal structure divided into types of art and levels of scientific generalization. Whereas here, by an arbitrary administrative decision, a completely alien element was introduced into the Encyclopedia that was in no way justified by the logic of science. The new dictionary was not limited to any one kind of art and did not contain any theoretical approach, but embraced the full scope of the arts from the point of view of its political utility. Therefore, the employees of the other dictionaries summoned to the meeting of the Committee on Agitation and Propaganda asked with bewilderment “what goals was the dictionary pursuing,”⁵⁶ and how it can be compatible in general with the structure of the Encyclopedia. In any case, the history of this dictionary of agitation and propaganda turned out to be extremely short-lived and ended just a few months later in the summer of 1929, together with the termination of the entire Encyclopedia project.

The end of the GAKhN “Encyclopedia of Artistic Terminology” dates to Glavlit’s decision on 22 April 1929. The chairman of the Soviet censorship committee Pavel I. Lebedev-Polianskii, in the form of an ultimatum, demanded that the Presidium of GAKhN “change the title of the publication so as to exclude the word ‘Encyclopedia,’ [and] also delete Shpet as the editor.”⁵⁷ The Presidium “took note” of the decision and sent formal objections to Glavlit,⁵⁸ which had no effect.

Glavlit’s decision came at a time when GAKhN became the object of public ideological harassment in the press and subject to attacks by the Communist Academy (Iakimenko 2017; Tikhanov 2008). The destructive work from outside and from within was directed primarily against the independent status of the theory of art and free discussion about it, which was declared reactionary and idealistic. Along with this there were attacks on the “‘Terminological Encyclopedia’ on art, densely stuffed with rotten idealism” (Bachelis 1929). However, the Encyclopedia became at the same time a victim of feverish attempts to internally reorganize GAKhN, which its leaders undertook, seeking to subordinate all of its activities to the “one true Marxist doctrine” (which did not even exist in the sphere of art). The reorganization plan proposed by Sidorov in March 1929 envisaged the elimination of the previous structure of the Academy (with its division into departments and sections) and the subordination of all scientific activities to the Central Section of the “general theory and methodology of Marxist theory of art,” along with which six sections on specific

⁵⁵Protokol No. 1 terminologicheskoi gruppy kabineta, 3; Slovniki seksii, 6–27.

⁵⁶Protokol No. 1 terminologicheskoi gruppy kabineta, 1.

⁵⁷V izdatel’stvo, 229.

⁵⁸V izdatel’stvo, 226.

types of art were preserved (Iakimenko 2017, p. 422). This plan was immediately supported by Kogan, who emphasized that all three theoretical departments (philosophy, physico-psychology and sociology) must be “destroyed,” since “the Marxist or sociological method <...> is not one method among others, but the only scientific method to which all others are subordinate” (Iakimenko 2017, p. 424). The new structure of GAKhN, partially implemented after the “purge” of the Academy in 1930, embodied *in nuce* the Soviet model of organizing the human sciences and later implemented in all academic institutions of the USSR, which assumed the exclusive monopoly of Marxism in any theoretical statement. For the special sciences, there remained only the sphere of a positivist description of facts.

Within the bounds of this new structure, there no longer remained room for the project of the Encyclopedia, which not only conceptually expressed the equal interaction of the individual disciplines of the theory of art with their various “hypostases” (psychological, philosophical, and sociological), but also embodied the organizational structure of GAKhN, which focused on the development of artistic theory not only in departments, but also in sections (with all the real difficulties and inadequacies of such a development). Judging by the surviving archival evidence, work on the “Encyclopedia” (preparation and discussion of articles) was discontinued in May–June 1929, although the “Historico-Terminological Cabinet,” which compiled a card-index on the history of concepts, continued its work until the final dismantling of GAKhN and its transformation into the State Academy of the Theory of Art (GAIS) by decree of the Council of People’s Commissars of the RSFSR No. 436 on 10 April 1931.⁵⁹

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⁵⁹Biulleten’ Narkomprosa RSFSR 1931. Nr. 18. St. 308. (cm. Iakimenko 2005).

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