

# Dmytro Čyževs'kyj and Prague: Perspectives of Intellectual Entanglement



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The thematic block 'Dmytro Čyževs'kyj and Prague: Perspectives of Intellectual Entanglement' goes back to a workshop with this title that took place at the Masaryk Institute and Archive of the CAS in Prague from 18–20 January 2024, organized by Galina Babak (Prague), Patrick Flack (Fribourg), Libuše Heczková (Prague), Jan Jakub Surman (Prague), and Irina Wutsdorff (Münster), funded by the DFG (German Research Foundation) as part of the latter's Heisenberg Professorship-programme.

The workshop focussed on Dmytro Čyževs'kyj and his stay in Prague (1924–1932) as an example of intellectual entanglement in 20th century Central Europe. When living in Prague, Čyževs'kyj was simultaneously involved in the Ukrainian and Russian émigré communities. He taught at the Mykhailo Drahomanov Ukrainian Pedagogical Institute as well as in the Ukrainian Free University and was a member of the Ukrainian Historical-Philological Society. At the same time, he participated in the work of the Prague Linguistic Circle and the Philosophical Society at the Russian Free University. Interwar Prague was a place of intercultural intellectual exchange and entanglement, where several traditions of thinking came together or were confronted with each other — a configuration which was true for differing political positions as well.

Čyževs'kyj's involvement with Slavic (including his too often neglected work on Ukrainian and Czech) literatures and cultures did not end when he left Prague for Germany (where he stayed in Halle, later Cologne and Heidelberg). Of special interest is his life-long focus on Baroque literature, and above all his studies on the Czech and Ukrainian Baroque (the latter being itself a phenomenon of entanglement). As an émigré scholar, he developed and spread his ideas within Slavic studies in Western Academia and supported his colleagues in Czechoslovakia, whose works could not be published under socialism.

Taking Čyževs'kyj's involvement in intersecting communities in interwar-Prague as a starting point, the workshop combined literary theoretical and literary-historical as well as philosophical and philosophical-historical approaches to this phenomenon of intellectual entanglement.

The six contributions published here cover this range: Renate Lachmann, who as a young scholar worked with Čyževs'kyj, elaborates her perspective on Čyževs'kyj's studies of Jan Amos Komenský/Comenius. Josef Vojvodík considers Čyževs'kyj's interest in the Baroque in the context of references to this period, as found in other



Prague and European thinkers of the time. Irina Wutsdorff compares Čyževs'kyj's contribution to the Mácha volume of the Prague Linguistic Circle with Mukařovský's approach in the same volume. Roman Mnich documents and comments on excerpts from Čyževs'kyj's previously unpublished letters to Ferdinande Homann, thus providing a contribution to the biography of the scholar during his — both privately and professionally — decisive time in Prague. Patrick Flack sets out from Čyževs'kyj's philosophical project 'On Formalism in Ethics', which was begun in Prague but not continued, and discusses Čyževs'kyj's approach in comparison with other scholars of the humanities of the time working at the intersection of literary studies and philosophy, Mikhail Bakhtin in particular. Finally, Maxim Demin devotes himself to Čyževs'kyj's view of Ukrainian philosophy and its contribution to European thinking.

The fact that Čyževs'kyj passed through so many stations in so many different countries with different languages in the course of his life is shown not least by the very different spellings of his name: In Ukrainian his name is Дмитро Чижевський, in the (Czech and German) scientific transliteration used here it is Dmytro Čyževs'kyj, whereas the surname was written in the volume *Torso a tajemství Máchova díla* published by the Prague Linguistic Circle in 1938 as Čyževskýj. The Russian form, which he also used frequently, was Дмитрий Чижевский, in transliteration Dmitrij Čyževskij. During his time in Halle, he himself opted for a spelling that largely corresponded to the German Duden transliteration, to which he added the ž — as there is no equivalent in the Duden transliteration: Tschizewskij. There are also the English transliterations of his surname in Ukrainian — Chyzhevskyi — and Russian — Chizhevskii. As our articles are written partly in English and partly in German and quote texts by the author from different phases and places of publication, (almost) all these spellings can be found, and in some cases more than one in a single article.