



Remapping Ukrainian Philosophy: Čyževs'kyj's Approach to the History of Philosophy in Eastern Europe*

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SYNOPSIS

Dmytro Čyževs'kyj's contributions to Eastern European thought have profoundly influenced the study of intellectual history, particularly through his pioneering efforts to produce a comprehensive history of Ukrainian philosophy from the early Middle Ages to the twentieth century. This paper examines the theoretical framework underpinning Čyževs'kyj's conceptualization of Ukrainian philosophy, tracing its roots to pre-World War I and interwar German-speaking intellectual contexts, particularly the works of Slavist Gustav Gesemann and Neo-Hegelian philosopher Richard Kroner. It explores how Čyževs'kyj redefined the narrative of Ukrainian philosophy, contrasting it with earlier approaches by Clemens Hankiewicz and Vasyl Shchurat, and offering new perspectives on the region's philosophical traditions. By analyzing Čyževs'kyj's proclaimed methodology alongside his practical strategies — such as canon formation and the selection and ranking of key figures — this study highlights his innovative integration of empirical research and abstract notions, emphasizing the enduring relevance of his work within the broader context of Eastern European intellectual history.

KEYWORDS

Canon formation in the history of philosophy; Ukrainian philosophy; characterology; history of German Slavistics; Hegelian renaissance; Neo-Hegelianism.

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INTRODUCTION

Dmytro Čyževs'kyj's work on Eastern European thought has had a profound impact on the study of intellectual history. This paper focuses on his contributions to the philosophy of Ukraine and his analysis of Hegel's influence in Russia. Čyževs'kyj was the first scholar to write a comprehensive history of Ukrainian philosophy, spanning from the early Middle Ages to his contemporaries. Written in the late 1920s and early 1930s, his work has been described as an emancipatory narrative (Gavrilyuk 2024), affirming and highlighting the richness of Ukraine's philosophical tradition.

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This paper aims to explore the theoretical framework underlying Čyževs'kyj's conceptualization of Ukrainian philosophy. It will analyze how Čyževs'kyj constructs his narrative, combining empirically grounded research with abstract notions that appear at times to be somewhat tendentious, such as 'national philosophy' and the 'Ukrainian soul'. First, I will demonstrate that these ideas emerged and gained prominence during the pre-World War I and interwar periods, particularly within German-speaking intellectual contexts. These contexts include the understanding of national philosophy as articulated during World War I and the development of characterology (*Charakterologie*) as a component of ethnology (*Völkerkunde*) and social anthropology. Secondly, I will examine how Čyževs'kyj changed the perspective on Ukrainian philosophy in comparison with earlier approaches by Clemens Hankiewicz (1842–1924) and Vasyl Shchurat (1871–1948). These authors, representing two successive generations, were both born in the Habsburg Monarchy, specifically in the historical region of Galicia. Next, I will focus not only on Čyževs'kyj's proclaimed methodology, but also on practical aspects of his scholarly work, such as canon formation, including the selection and framing of key figures. This approach can be described as a comprehensive account of Ukrainian philosophy. Finally, I will show how Čyževs'kyj positioned Ukrainian and Russian philosophy, and Eastern European philosophy more broadly, within the framework of the renewed interest in Hegel during the 1920s and 1930s.

Čyževs'kyj is a figure of intellectual entanglement, skilfully integrating and reinterpreting different traditions and ideological contexts. Writing in several languages — Ukrainian, German and Russian — he engaged deeply with primary sources and redefined the study of Eastern European philosophy. His approach to the intellectual history of this region reflects broader trends of the interwar period, offering a compelling case for shifting perspectives and the remapping of intellectual histories in response to the declining dominance of the long nineteenth-century imperial paradigms.

DIVERSITY AS A VALUE: ČYŽEVS'KYJ'S RETHINKING OF NATIONAL PHILOSOPHIES

Čyževs'kyj began his academic career in Prague in the 1920s, working as a philosopher at the Ukrainian Pedagogical Institute and as a private lecturer in the Department of Philosophy at the Ukrainian University in Prague.¹ During this time, he published a series of works devoted to Ukrainian philosophy, including 'Filosofia na Ukraini' (Philosophy in Ukraine) (Čyževs'kyj 1926) and 'Narysy z istorii filosofii na Ukraini' (Outlines of the History of Philosophy in Ukraine) (Čyževs'kyj 1931a). Both works are essentially expanded and more accessible versions of the same study. Each edition begins with a chapter addressing the problem of national philosophy. He distinguishes between two approaches to understanding the history of philosophy: the rationalist approach, which prioritizes universal truths over national characteristics, and the romantic approach, which highlights the uniqueness of national traditions. Čyževs'kyj regards the latter as more favorable.

1 For more details on this period, see Blashkiv 2010, pp. 19–47; for the philosophical context, see Plotnikov 2024, pp. 185–208.



Čyževs'kyj presents the influence of the nation as an unavoidable factor in the evolution of philosophy, identifying three key elements of national philosophy: the form of expression, method of inquiry, and system's 'architectonics', particularly the placement and role of values (Čyževs'kyj 1926, p. 11; Čyževs'kyj 1931a, pp. 11–12). Drawing on Hegel, he argues that no particular philosophy can claim absolute truth, as each nation provides only a partial expression of the human ideal.

Čyževs'kyj further likens philosophical diversity to biological diversity, asserting that philosophical thought, like nature, thrives on variety. He advocates for the coexistence of national philosophies, emphasizing mutual enrichment rather than competition or antagonism:

Even in organic life, we encounter such a richness of various forms and types that it shows us that it is hardly possible for life (not only organic but also human — both individual-psychological and social) to exist without embodying such diversity of forms and types. Can nature exist with only one type of plant or one species of animal? Would human life make sense if it unfolded among people who, though perhaps ideal, were completely identical to one another? (Čyževs'kyj 1931a, p. 8).

Čyževs'kyj's vision contrasted sharply with the prevailing views of his contemporaries, who often interpreted national philosophies through the lens of conflict. In the 1926 edition he acknowledges the growing body of literature on national dependencies in philosophy, recommending works by Hermann Cohen, Wilhelm Wundt, and Max Scheler. While acknowledging the importance of this perspective, he warns that it is often influenced by what he called 'war psychology' (ibid.).

By 'war psychology' Čyževs'kyj is referring to the mindset that emerged during and after World War I, which shaped intellectual discourse in terms of national antagonisms and competition. Martin Kusch's analysis of this literature sheds light on Čyževs'kyj's critique, showing that figures such as Wundt and Scheler use the concept of national philosophy to rationalize German militarism and assert claims to moral superiority (Kusch 1994, pp. 208–218). For example, Wundt's 'Die Nationen und ihre Philosophie' (The nations and their philosophy; 1915) examine French, British, and German national characters through war songs, behaviours, and philosophies, associating French materialism with 'refined egoism' and British thought with 'ruthless materialism'. In contrast, Čyževs'kyj rejects these militaristic frameworks and advocates the peaceful coexistence of national philosophies. His approach emphasizes cooperation, diversity, and the common pursuit of truth, offering a harmonious alternative to the competitive and antagonistic models of his time.²

2 Despite the generally peaceful and inclusive nature of Čyževs'kyj's framework, his book received sharply critical reviews in the official communist periodicals. In Soviet Ukraine, the journal *Prapor Marksizmu-Leninizmu* (Banner of Marxism-Leninism) published a Ukrainian-language review with the striking title 'Philosophy of Ukrainian Fascism' (Bilyk 1932). The author of the review attacks Čyževs'kyj as 'a philosopher of Ukrainian fascism', accusing him of 'falsifying [falsyfikatsiia] the historical process of the development of philosophical thought in Ukraine' (ibid., p. 196).

THE UKRAINIAN PSYCHE: TRACING THE ORIGINS OF THE CONCEPT



The second chapter of *Outlines of the History of Philosophy in Ukraine* (Čyževs'kyj 1931a) is dedicated to the Ukrainian national character and worldview. In the same year, Čyževs'kyj published an article in *Slavische Rundschau* (Slavic Review) titled 'Zur Charakterologie der Slaven: Ukrainer' (About the characterology of the Slavs: Ukrainians) (1931b), which provides an extended version of this chapter. *Slavische Rundschau* (1929–1940) was a German-language scholarly journal edited by the Slavists Franz Spina (1868–1938) and Gustav Gesemann (1888–1948) in Prague.

The concept of characterology used by Čyževs'kyj was part of a broader agenda developed by his German colleagues. As Ohnheiser (1997) notes, the study of national character was a recurring theme in the journal *Slavische Rundschau*. In addition to Čyževs'kyj, Stanisław Studencki (1883–1945), Emanuel Chalupný (1879–1958), and Gustav Gesemann published articles on the characterology of various Slavic nations.

Gustav Gesemann had a longstanding interest in characterology, which he fully articulates in his work 'Der montenegrinische Mensch. Zur Literaturgeschichte und Charakterologie der Patriarchalität' (The Montenegrin man: The history of literature and the characterology of patriarchy; 1934). His focus on characterology is closely connected to the approach of Emil Utitz (1883–1956), editor of the *Jahrbuch der Charakterologie* (Yearbook of characterology; Berlin, 1924–1929), who sought to bridge the empirical methods of psychology and pedagogy in his 'Charakterologie' (Characterology; 1925) with normative-practical philosophy. Adopting a teleological concept of self-formation, Utitz argues that character is not merely an empirical phenomenon but requires moral affirmation by individuals, positioning it as a normative and philosophical construct.³

Gesemann enthusiastically reviewed the first volume of *Yearbook of Characterology*, expressing optimism about the future of the field and anticipating that subsequent editions would incorporate contributions from historians, sociologists, anthropologists, and religious scholars, reflecting the growing interdisciplinary interest in characterological studies during a period of significant advancements in psychology, sociology, and the humanities. He writes:

Today, after the psychological renewal of medicine through modern psychiatry, after the gradual historical development of psychoanalytic schools, after the massive expansion of sociology, after methodological debates in the humanities, after the calming of minds through Nietzsche, who now speaks in Europe, and through the great Russian novel, the time is ripe for a yearbook of characterology (Gesemann 1926, p. 612).

This focus on characterology mirrored broader trends in national character studies during the interwar period, a time of significant political and cultural upheaval. As Ota Konrád notes, 'From the perspective of internal scholarly development, Slavic Studies

3 Čyževs'kyj likely had several opportunities to meet Emil Utitz, either in Halle or in Prague. Utitz worked at the Friedrich University of Halle until 1933. After being forced into retirement by the Nazis, he emigrated to Prague, where he held a chair in philosophy.



under Franz Spina and Gerhard Gesemann evolved from a focus on positivist philology to becoming an integrated cultural science addressing the Slavic world' (Konrád 2011, p. 29). In the 1930s, Gesemann became politically active, running as the lead candidate for the Sudetendeutsche Partei (SdP) in the 1935 elections in Prague. Despite being politically engaged, the National Socialist regime later regarded him as politically unreliable (Schaller 2012). Notwithstanding such deterministic perspectives, *Slavische Rundschau* avoided emphasizing points of conflict or promoting detailed strategies for resolving them, nor did it incite hostility between nations (Gasimov 2012, p. 253).

Reflections of this agenda are evident in Čyževs'kyj's conception of the Ukrainian national character and its philosophical implications. His work presents a nuanced approach to national psychological types, highlighting distinct psychological traits of Ukrainian philosophy, divided into three categories: 1) emotionalism, sentimentality, sensitivity, and lyricism, which he describes as 'the undeniable characteristics of the Ukrainian psyche'; 2) individualism and the striving for freedom; 3) restlessness [*neskokii / Ruhelosigkeit*] and motility [*rukhlivyst / Beweglichkeit*] (Čyževs'kyj 1931a, p. 17; Čyževs'kyj 1931b, p. 24). For Čyževs'kyj, philosophy manifests in peoples [*narod*], epochs, and 'great' representatives. He associates Ukrainian thought with the 'philosophy of the heart', particularly linked to Yurkevich, explaining that the 'heart' — the deepest part of a person — is 'the abyss that gives rise to and conditions the "surface" of our psyche' (Skovoroda, Gogol, Yurkevich, Kulish) (Čyževs'kyj 1931a, p. 19).

The traits of the 'Ukrainian psyche' that Čyževs'kyj proposes — emotionalism, lyricism, a yearning for freedom, and restlessness — may be seen to correspond to the views of Romantic primitivism, i.e. the myth of the 'noble savage', emphasizing exoticism, unrestrained youth, and untamed passions. Notably, Čyževs'kyj himself seems to be aware of this correspondence and to deliberately avoid its reductiveness, or indeed to stand expressly against it, given the tendency of his Ukrainian philosophy to embrace inclusivity rather than confining itself to a narrow set of traits. Later, we will examine how this approach influenced and shaped Čyževs'kyj's interpretation of Ukrainian thinkers. But let us first explore how he situates himself within the broader narrative of Ukrainian philosophy.

EARLY PERSPECTIVES ON UKRAINIAN PHILOSOPHY: STUDIES BY HANKIEWICZ AND SHCHURAT

While the study of Ukrainian philosophy as an academic field was practically impossible in the Russian Empire, this was not the case in Austria. Čyževs'kyj himself refers to two studies on Ukrainian philosophy that were predecessors to his own work: the German-language book *Grundzüge der slavischen Philosophie* (Outlines of Slavic philosophy) by Clemens Hankiewicz (1873) and Ukrainian-language *Ukrainski dzherela do istorii filosofii* (Ukrainian sources for the history of philosophy) by Vasyl Shchurat (1908). Both authors, representing two successive generations, were born in the Habsburg monarchy, in the historical region of Galicia (Höfinghoff 2014; Kadykalo — Kariwec 2019). To understand the innovative nature of Čyževs'kyj's approach, it is useful to first examine the views presented by these two earlier writers, and then trace the changes introduced by Čyževs'kyj.



Clemens Hankiewicz, a philosopher, linguist, and educator, studied at the seminary of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church in Lviv, as well as at the universities of Lviv and Vienna, before teaching at gymnasiums in Przemyśl, Stanislaviv (nowadays — Ivano-Frankivsk), and Chernivtsi. Following the establishment of Chernivtsi University, he became a docent and served as the university's secretary. In 1863, he was appointed head of the Department of Pedagogy (Wurzer 1909, p. 239). In his 'Outlines of Slavic Philosophy', Hankiewicz provides an overview of Polish, Ruthenian, Czech, Serbian, Croatian, and, finally, Russian philosophy. The term 'Ruthenian' can be understood as a common ethnonym for Ukrainians, although it did not fully reflect the historical and cultural realities of the time. Notably, in other works, Hankiewicz also uses the term 'Little Russians' (*Kleinrussen*) (Hankiewicz 1877a, 1877b, 1881).

In this account of philosophy in Eastern Europe, Hankiewicz explicitly references Hegel (Hankiewicz 1873, p. 11), emphasizing the manifestation of universal thought within a people whereby philosophical ideas arise from the collective character of a nation. He claims that although German philosophy did not have a significant direct influence on the Romance or Slavic peoples, it did have an indirect impact through the development of humanity as a whole (*ibid.*, p. 12).

Hankiewicz focuses on the significance of 'folk philosophy' (*Volkphilosophie*), as distinct from 'scholarly works' (*Wissenschaftliche Werke*) (*ibid.*, pp. 20–24), and portrays Slavic nations as full of exoticism, unspoiled youth, and uncultivated passions:

Many facts justify the conclusion that if the Slavs rise from a state of spiritual passivity to a life of world-historical significance and begin to contribute independently to the fields of arts and sciences, this new philosophical standpoint will develop among them. Even now, as rosy-fingered Eos has barely dawned on the intellectual horizon of the Slavic world, and as the Slavs have only just entered their youth, we already see fresh blossoms springing from their fertile native soil, and Castalian springs of imagination invigorating the Slavic national spirit (*ibid.*, p. 14).

Comparing the Slavic nations with the Germans, he claims that Slavs have a synthetic, flexible intellect that deals in feelings: the metaphorical heart of Europe, while Germans, with their abstract reasoning, represent the head:

In the intellectual realm, the Slavs are characterized by a synthetic quality that makes them less inclined toward abstract speculations and complete systems but, at the same time, preserves a certain elasticity and freshness of mind (Elasticität und Frische des Geistes) that easily transcends theoretical forms. If one imagines the intellectual life of Europe as a living organism, one can demonstrate from the facts of past and present times that, in this organism, the Slavs collectively play the role of the heart, while the Germanic peoples play that of the head, thus relating to each other as feeling and reason (Gemüth und Geist) (*ibid.*, p. 19).

Hankiewicz characterizes the Ruthenians by the rich tradition of 'folk philosophy'. He would later write a separate article on the philosophical significance of Ukrainian folklore (Hankiewicz 1881), which was published in St. Petersburg by Matviy Nomys (1823–1900). He discusses three philosophers in particular for the originality of their



contributions to the philosophy of science: Peter Lodij (1764–1829), Joseph Czackowski, author of ‘Versuch der Vereinigung der Wissenschaften’ (Attempt at the unification of the sciences; 1863), and Jan Fedorowicz (Ivan Fedorovych, 1811–1870). While Lodij, a professor at universities in Lviv, Krakow, and later St. Petersburg, published his works in Russian, the other two wrote primarily in German, as did Hankiewicz himself.

In contrast to the Ruthenians, Hankiewicz argues that Russian philosophy shows little originality and consists largely of translations of Western thought, a tendency he criticizes, particularly in the case of Russian translation of German philosophy: ‘Everyone is of the opinion that German philosophy in literal translation and in eclectic compilations will have no influence on the cultural and historical development of the people’ (Hankiewicz 1873, p. 92). This reflects a concern that mere translation, without original national philosophical contributions, cannot effectively shape the cultural or intellectual development of a society.

Hankiewicz, like Čyževs’kyj, portrays Ukrainian philosophy as a tradition rooted in folk traditions and characterized by sensitivity and emotionality, also associating it with the heart. However, his selection of key figures representing Ukrainian philosophy and the attention he devotes to specific philosophers differs significantly from Čyževs’kyj. Czackowski, for instance, who is a key figure for Hankiewicz, is covered by Čyževs’kyj in a single paragraph. Hankiewicz and Čyževs’kyj also have differing views on the role of German Idealism in the development of Ukrainian and Russian philosophy. Notably, Čyževs’kyj includes Hankiewicz himself in his account of Ukrainian philosophical history, devoting about half a page to him, which might seem too little given Hankiewicz’s clear engagement with Hegelian thought.

Vasyl Shchurat, from the generation of scholars in Galicia directly following that of Hankiewicz, is better known as a folklorist who also specialized in ethnography, literature, and art history, and for his Ukrainian translation of the anonymous 12th-century epic *Slovo pro pokhid Ihoria Sviatoslavycha* (*The Tale of Igor’s Campaign*; Shchurat 1907). He studied Slavic philology at the Universities of Vienna and Lviv, later becoming a full member and president (1915–1923) of the Shevchenko Scientific Society. During the brief period of Ukrainian independence that followed World War I, he played an active role in efforts to establish a Ukrainian university in Lviv. He continued his academic work and served as the director of the library during the Soviet regime’s consolidation of power in the region, returning to this position after the World War II.

Shchurat’s work in *Ukrainian Sources for the History of Philosophy* is closely related to his interest in *The Tale of Igor’s Campaign*, whose author, he claims, was inspired by Neoplatonic philosophy (Shchurat 1908, p. 14). Identifying certain Neoplatonic motifs, he proceeds to argue that medieval Ukrainian philosophy was inherently part of the Western philosophical tradition. Shchurat also claims that various thinkers may be associated with a ‘Ukrainian scholasticism’ that was widely developed until the 18th century. Whereas Hankiewicz regards the past of Ukrainian philosophy as underdeveloped and culturally youthful, Shchurat sees the history of medieval philosophy in Ukraine as part of the larger European philosophical landscape. Unlike Hankiewicz, Shchurat views Peter Lodij as a philosopher who ended the genuine scholastic tradition by introducing a philosophy rooted in Leibniz and Wolff (*ibid.*, p. 32).

REFRAMING THE ČYŽEVŠ'KYJ'S NOTION OF UKRAINIAN PHILOSOPHY

Besides the two studies already discussed, Čyževš'kyj published a paper in German titled 'Die abendländische Philosophie in der alten Ukraine' (Western Philosophy in the Old Ukraine; 1927), in which he traces certain philosophical trends in Ukraine from the 15th to 18th century, or indeed up to 1850. The title itself can be understood to announce the central claim of the study: that the history of philosophy in the region carries on the tradition of Western (*Abendland*) philosophy. He emphasizes the teacher-student relationship in these works, stating:

The area we are entering here is not a history of philosophy, but a history of philosophical instruction. We will not be dealing here with original, independent thought, but mostly with translations, compilations, textbooks ad usum scholasticum, and unfinished drafts of incomplete works. We will not encounter the rich creative force of a mature national spirit, but rather the labour and obligatory work (die Mühe und Pflichtarbeit) of an — often unqualified — teacher, a collector of unoriginal thoughts (unselbständigen Gedankensammlers) (Čyževš'kyj 1927, p. 71).

Čyževš'kyj advances the idea that the past development of philosophy can be seen as preparation for future achievements. This vision of prospective 'world significance', he argues, involves a reinterpretation of the past, an idea that applies not only to Ukrainian philosophy but to all Slavic nations:

We find ourselves in a rather difficult position when attempting to characterize Ukrainian philosophical thought because we can only say with confidence that what we have here is merely the beginning, a sketch of ideas that may be developed further in the philosophical creativity of future Ukrainian thinkers. The same situation holds for other Slavs. Neither the religious philosophy of the Russians nor the 'messianism' of the Poles has yet reached a level where we can speak of their global significance. Slavic (particularly Ukrainian) philosophy must still await its 'great philosopher'. Then, what is original, perhaps in embryonic form within the works of Slavic thinkers, will emerge fully, revealing the depths of the national spirit not only to the world but also to the people themselves (Čyževš'kyj 1931a, p. 13; slightly modified version of Čyževš'kyj 1926, pp. 15–16).

Notably, Hankiewicz and Shchurat are the only two scholars extensively cited by Čyževš'kyj in his discussion of Ukrainian philosophy, and he does not refer to other sources on Russian or Polish philosophical history that might be relevant to the topic (Čyževš'kyj 1931a, pp. 14, 20). However, in his German-language article, Čyževš'kyj expands the scope of his argument to include the Russian philosophers Ernest Radlov (1854–1928) and Gustav Shpet (1879–1937), in addition to Shchurat (Čyževš'kyj 1927, p. 72).

The idea that the past development of philosophy would serve as preparation for future achievements mirrors Hankiewicz's concept of the 'promising youth' of Slavic nations. At the same time, Čyževš'kyj's approach aligns in certain respects with the perspectives of Gustav Shpet (1922) and Boris Yakovenko (1915, 1922), who



characterized Russian philosophy as underdeveloped and unoriginal. Notably, both Shpet and Yakovenko, despite employing the term ‘Russian philosophy’, were sceptical about its national distinctiveness, emphasizing the need to interpret the uniqueness of national philosophies within a limited framework (Shpet [1922] 2008, p. 40).

In his work *Oчерk razvitiia russkoi filosofii* (Outlines of the Development of Russian Philosophy; [1922] 2008), Gustav Shpet structures his book according to the metaphor of a ‘teacher-student relationship’, with chapters corresponding to stages in the learning process, from learning through imitation to taking an exam, and eventually becoming an independent student.

Boris Yakovenko (1884–1949), who was also based in Prague, published his *Geschichte des Hegelianismus in Russland* (History of Hegelianism in Russia; Yakovenko 1938) four years after Čyževs’kyj’s work. Earlier, in 1915, Yakovenko had published his *O položanii i zadachakh filosofii v Rossii* (On the Situation and Tasks of Philosophy in Russia), which was later significantly expanded and republished in Berlin in 1922 (Yakovenko 2000). Interestingly, despite the Revolution, the subsequent Civil War, and his experience as a political émigré, he never changed his position. This position can be summarized in four key theses:

1. The ‘non-originality of Russian philosophy’ (Yakovenko [1915] 2000, p. 713; Yakovenko [1922] 2000, pp. 742–743).
2. Its ‘close dependence on the West’ (Yakovenko [1922] 2000, p. 745).
3. An assessment of the current state of philosophy as an upswing (Yakovenko [1915] 2000, pp. 719–736; Yakovenko [1922] 2000, p. 746). In his analysis, Yakovenko also highlights significant philosophical movements influencing Russian thought, such as Hegelianism, Kantianism, and Positivism (ibid., pp. 803–810).
4. Optimism regarding its future (Yakovenko [1915] 2000, pp. 736–739; Yakovenko [1922] 2000, pp. 841–842).

Nearly all of these points can be observed in Čyževs’kyj’s approach to Ukrainian philosophy, except for the satisfaction with the current state of affairs. As will be demonstrated, these points align closely with the core ideas underpinning Čyževs’kyj’s understanding of Hegel’s influence on Russian philosophy.

THE INCLUSIVE NARRATIVE AND CALL FOR A CANON OF UKRAINIAN PHILOSOPHY

Čyževs’kyj reshapes the intellectual landscape of Eastern European thought by reorganizing and subtly contributing to the recognition of figures who were in various ways connected to the geography and culture of Ukraine. In the process of canon formation, which includes the selection and ranking of various names, Čyževs’kyj employs several key ideas: 1) an inclusive narrative that brings together philosophers active or born in Ukraine; and 2) the identification and focus on a selection of the most prominent Ukrainian philosophers.

While Hankiewicz limits his study of Ukrainian (Ruthenian) scholarly philosophy to philosophers with links to Galicia, Čyževs’kyj adopts a broader and more inclusive



approach that incorporates all philosophers who, in his view, were linked to the geographic region of Ukraine.

His principle for selecting these figures highlights the emancipatory nature of his approach, shedding light on the significance of a tradition that had previously been marginalized or suppressed. Instead of drawing a strict distinction between Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian philosophers, Čyževs'kyj acknowledges that 'a significant part of the most prominent representatives of Ukrainian thought worked outside the borders of Ukraine, while, conversely, foreigners actively participated in the cultural life of Ukraine' (Čyževs'kyj 1931a, p. 14). This approach allows him to select from both categories of thinkers, though the vast majority of his selection did not write in the Ukrainian language.

Without providing a rigid definition of Ukrainian philosophy, Čyževs'kyj instead highlights intellectual and cultural networks, such as the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius, a liberal intellectual society in Kyiv during the Russian Empire. He also extends the scope of his study to philosophers educated or employed at institutions of higher education within Ukrainian territories that were part of Imperial Russia at the time.⁴ Čyževs'kyj's approach further emphasizes the unique qualities of certain philosophers who embodied the essence of a distinct national philosophy. In both editions of his work, he devotes three chapters to individual figures, reflecting his vision of a possible canon of major Ukrainian philosophers. In the first edition, these chapters focus on the 18th-century thinker Hryhorii Skovoroda (1722–1794), the German philosopher Johann Baptist Schad (1758–1834), who worked at the University of Kharkiv from 1804 to 1816, and Pamfil Yurkevich (1826–1874), a graduate and later professor at the Kiev Theological Academy who, in 1861, was appointed to a full professorship at Moscow University. In the 1931 edition, however, Schad's chapter is replaced by one on Gogol, authored by Leonid Mykolayenko (1899– after 1924).

Among the figures chosen by Čyževs'kyj, Skovoroda was the most renowned philosopher, while Gogol was better known as a writer. Čyževs'kyj's works on Skovoroda fit into the broader context of his interest in this philosopher (1934). It is noteworthy that Skovoroda became a significant trigger for discussions about his national identity.

Shortly before the turbulent period marking the late Russian Empire, Vladimir Ern (1882–1917) authored the first book-length study of Skovoroda. In this work, Ern not only identified Skovoroda as a Russian philosopher but also positioned him as the central foundational figure in the history of Russian philosophy (Ern 1912, p. 24).

4 This approach to emphasizing the significance of Ukrainian contributions to philosophy was endorsed by Yakov Kolubovskiy (1863–1929) in his review of Čyževs'kyj's first edition (Kolubovskiy 1928). Kolubovskiy, a distinguished scholar and author of a German-language study on Russian philosophy (1894), moved to the Ukrainian city of Hlukhiv after the collapse of the Russian Empire and became a devoted advocate for Ukrainian autonomy. In this review Kolubovskiy even created a table with the headings 'Ukrainians in Ukraine', 'Ukrainians Outside Ukraine', and 'Non-Ukrainians in Ukraine'. The table listed 33 authors referenced by Čyževs'kyj and proposed adding 12 more (Kolubovskiy 1928, pp. 5–6). However, Čyževs'kyj did not incorporate these recommendations into the second edition of his work.



Ern's interpretation fits seamlessly into the national chauvinistic narrative that was prevalent during the Empire's final years. According to Ern, Ukraine — or 'Little Russia' (*Malorossiiia*) — underwent a significant transformation upon its annexation by Russia, transitioning from its 'remote, wild, heroic past' to a more 'civilized state of being' (p. 44). In Ern's framework, Skovoroda represents the successful outcome of this transformation, and the shift from periphery to centre of historical development. Born on the edge of the Empire, Skovoroda became, in Ern's words, 'perhaps the most educated Russian of the eighteenth century', countering Western rationalism with 'the wisdom of antiquity and the contemplative traditions of Eastern Christianity' (*ibid.*, p. 48).

Although critical of Ern's work, Čyževs'kyj acknowledges its significance as a 'discovery' (*vidkryttia*) of this thinker. Ern's interpretation of Skovoroda's mysticism likely resonated with Čyževs'kyj, enabling him to emphasize the philosopher's relevance in the context of contemporary Western philosophy (Čyževs'kyj 1934a, p. 179). Čyževs'kyj wrote extensively on Skovoroda, publishing articles in Ukrainian, Russian, and German, including 'Skovoroda, a Ukrainian Philosopher' (1929), in which he advances his central thesis regarding the independent character of Ukrainian philosophy. His research culminated in a major monograph in 1934, in which he devotes an entire chapter to 'Skovoroda and Ukraine' (pp. 174–180), asserting that 'Skovoroda stands at the centre of Ukrainian intellectual history' (p. 179). While Čyževs'kyj's interpretation of Skovoroda has been the focus of considerable scholarly attention (e.g. Ushkalov 2004), I would like to focus on Čyževs'kyj's reading of the lesser-known Pamfil Yurkevich, a philosopher who was to be the subject of a full-length monograph conceived by Čyževs'kyj in 1931 — a project, however, that was never completed (Čyževs'kyj 1931a, p. 156).

Yurkevich is often regarded as a shallow and conservative thinker (Nemeth 2017, pp. 147–152, 208–212; Michelson 2017, pp. 110–135). Čyževs'kyj portrays Yurkevich, by contrast, as an innovative and forward-thinking philosopher whose 'philosophy of the heart' teachings strike him as characteristically Ukrainian (Čyževs'kyj 1931a, p. 18), emphasizing qualities integral to the Ukrainian worldview, such as emotionalism and the concept of the 'soul as a microcosm' (*ibid.*, p. 154).

Čyževs'kyj underscores the significance of Yurkevich's ideas, highlighting their originality and philosophical depth, and also praising Yurkevich for his precise critique of Kant's limitations, his anticipation of Husserl's interpretation of Plato (*ibid.*, p. 140), and his engagement with ideas comparable to those of Hermann Lotze (1817–1881), albeit with some inconsistency (*ibid.*). Furthermore, Čyževs'kyj identifies Yurkevich's work as a precursor to Max Scheler's critique of formal ethics (*ibid.*, p. 147) and an early exploration of concepts later central to the theory of emotional thought, as developed by thinkers like Théodule-Armand Ribot (1839–1916) (*ibid.*, p. 152).

Čyževs'kyj provides a contextualization and analysis of Yurkevich's major works, offering insightful and valuable commentary and conclusions. While a detailed discussion of Yurkevich's philosophy lies beyond the scope of this paper, it is worth noting that Čyževs'kyj particularly emphasizes the uniqueness of Yurkevich's 'philosophy of the heart' — a characterization that warrants some consideration in light of more recent studies. Čyževs'kyj refers here to Yurkevich's *Serdtsë i ego znachenie v du-*

khovnoi zhizni cheloveka po ucheniiu slova Bozhiia (The Heart and Its Significance in the Spiritual Life of Man According to the Teaching of the Word of God; Yurkevich 1860), which relies heavily on Biblical references to examine the nature and importance of the heart. The text reflects Yurkevich's profound spiritual engagement and commitment to ecclesiastical hermeneutics. However, as Roland Pietsch (1992, pp. 81–99) has shown, Yurkevich's text also closely paraphrases a chapter from Franz Delitzsch's *System der biblischen Psychologie* (System of Biblical Psychology; 1855). While this topic requires further investigation, it is reasonable to assume that the theory of the heart as a physiological organ involved in psychological processes, while not widely popular, was influential in the international context at the time and cannot be attributed solely to Yurkevich.

Čyževs'kyj's inclusive approach to the topic of Ukrainian philosophy and his call for the formation of a canon represent a reframing of the philosophical tradition. Rather than drawing strict boundaries between Ukrainian and Russian traditions, he highlights the significance of thinkers linked to Ukrainian intellectual life, situating their contributions within the broader context of philosophical development. Central to his approach was an emphasis on the influence of German Idealism, particularly the philosophies of Hegel and Schelling, which he sought to trace in Ukrainian thought. In the 1926 edition individual chapters are devoted to Schelling and Hegel, while in the 1931 edition, these discussions are expanded and organized under the broader heading of German Idealism. This theme connects to contemporary debates on Hegel's philosophy among German intellectuals and émigré philosophers from the former Russian Empire during the 1920s, making Čyževs'kyj's work an important bridge between these discussions.

THE HEGELIAN RENAISSANCE AND RUSSIAN PHILOSOPHY'S UNFULFILLED AMBITIONS

Čyževs'kyj's conviction that the future development of philosophy would be closely linked to Hegelianism frames his interest in Ukrainian philosophy, and in Eastern European philosophy generally. According to this perspective, Ukrainian philosophy, together with Russian and other philosophies shaped by the national characteristics of the Slavic peoples, had to be considered within the framework of the development of German Idealism. A major influence on Čyževs'kyj's approach to the philosophy of Slavic nations was the Hegelian renaissance, a movement associated with Richard Kroner (1884–1974), one of many notable philosophers under whom Čyževs'kyj studied in Freiburg from 1922 to 1924.

Kroner had longstanding connections with such Russian philosophers as Nicolai Bubnov (1880–1962), Sergei Hessen (1887–1950), and Fyodor Stepun (1884–1965). Before World War I, he worked together with some of these scholars to create the cultural-critical collection *Vom Messias* (On the Messiah; 1909), and he served as co-editor, later chief editor, of the German edition of the journal *Logos*. Kroner, a prominent German neo-Hegelian philosopher, is best known for his work *Von Kant bis Hegel* (From Kant to Hegel; 1921/24), a classic history of German Idealism from a neo-Hegelian perspective. Renewed interest in Hegel, which began in the early 20th century,





reached its peak in the 1920s, characterized by an underlying modesty, and grounding itself in historical inquiry rooted in empirical foundations. Its significance lies as much in those subjects it refrains from dealing with. This new era of Hegelian scholarship was positioned as an alternative to both Neo-Kantianism and *Lebensphilosophie* on one hand, and Marxism on the other (Helferich 1979, pp. 151–186; Grossmann 2013).

Kroner himself describes Hegel's method as a 'cultural-historical' (*kulturgeschichtliche*), biographical, and systematic (historical-critical) approach (Kroner 1921, p. 17–21). He explains the cultural-historical method as one that seeks to link philosophical systems with contemporary developments in specialized sciences, political structures, artistic expression, and religious life. It is an approach, he argues, that allows these systems to 'emerge once again, as if from the very soil from which they originally grew' (*ibid.*, p. 17).

Within this framework, Kroner also portrays Hegel as a Christian-mystical philosopher. Central to Kroner's methodology is a commitment to empirically grounded historical research. While maintaining that the ultimate philosophical framework had already been established in Hegel's system, advocates of this approach undertook significant efforts to reinterpret much of philosophy as polemically reliant on Hegel. A key feature of their agenda was the emphasis on Hegel's enduring role as a philosophical guide for all of Europe, as Kroner himself articulates:

*History proves that within the European collective spirit, the particular mission of the German people has been to draw all great movements into the inner depths of the human soul and allow them to resonate in the profoundest way. Thus, during the era of high scholasticism, Meister Eckhart embraced the intellectualism of Aristotelian-Thomistic philosophy with his deeply devout sentiment, transforming it into a mysticism that finds its source in the innermost depths of the soul — where God Himself enters — and simultaneously marks the point of contact between the human and the divine essence. At the core of our being, we find the foundation of all truth (*ibid.*, p. 10).*

Kroner organized the Hegel Congress in The Hague, where Čyževs'kyj, along with other philosophers who had emigrated from the Russian Empire — including Alexander Kojève (1902–1968) — delivered a presentation on Hegel's influence on the Slavs.⁵ This concept later evolved into a collaborative project.

In 1934, the same year Čyževs'kyj published his Ukrainian book on Skovoroda, he also contributed to a collective volume on Hegel's impact on Slavic nations. Within this collection, Čyževs'kyj authored a book-length paper titled *Hegel in Russia*, which was later published in Russian in 1939. Hegel's philosophy has often been regarded as a source of enlightenment for Slavic nations, as the German Slavic scholar Walter Kühne (1885–1970), who focused on Polish studies, observes:

Hegel's philosophy represents the climax of German idealism. This movement of the German spirit, from Lessing and Herder to Hegel, Schelling, and their students, marked a new stage in the development of European intellectual life and

⁵ Čyževs'kyj's works on Czechoslovak (Čyževs'kyj 1936) and Slovak philosophy (Čyževs'kyj 1961) could be considered as part of this project.

simultaneously a confrontation with the philosophical and cultural achievements that had emerged from the essential characteristics of Western peoples. The era of Goethe and Hegel signified a concentration of European spirit. This universality was also recognized as such by other nations (Kühne 1934, p. 7).



Čyževs'kyj emphasizes the significant role played by Ukrainian thinkers in disseminating philosophical ideas. While the initial fascination with the philosophies of Schelling and Hegel arose in Moscow and St. Petersburg, he notes that 'the first reports about Kant, Fichte, and Schelling were brought to the north precisely by Ukrainians' (Čyževs'kyj 1931a, p. 66). Reflecting on his approach, Čyževs'kyj writes:

In this work (unlike the tendency of my other writings), I have not treated the philosophical movement in Ukraine separately. I do this because the history of Ukrainian Hegelianism is closely intertwined with that of Russian Hegelianism. Thus, it is left to the reader to identify the Ukrainian elements (die Ukrainischen Elemente) within their internal context throughout the entire book (Čyževs'kyj 1934b, p. 388).

Like Yakovenko (Yakovenko [1915], [1922] 2000), Čyževs'kyj was highly optimistic about the future of Russian philosophy. This optimism is particularly evident in the Russian edition of *Hegel in Russia*, whose final section is titled 'Die Gegenwart' (The Present) in German and 'Nakanune' (On the eve) in Russian. This difference is reinforced by Čyževs'kyj in his conclusion to the Russian text: 'And I cannot speak in detail about the present here. I can only point out that the present promises the flourishing of Russian Hegelian traditions in the future' (Čyževs'kyj [1939] 2007, p. 383). In this section, he explores these traditions both within the country and among émigrés, addressing both mainstream and opposition trends. Despite the more critical tone of the Russian edition, this section is significantly shorter and notably excludes the chapter on Russian Marxism. By contrast, the German edition includes a critique of 'Marxist pseudo-Hegelianism', with a particular focus on Georgi Plekhanov and Vladimir Lenin.

Choosing to remain in the role of a historian and refraining from directly expressing his own opinions, Čyževs'kyj perceives the fascination with Hegelianism as a trend that would eventually lead to something significant. However, the second edition of his work, published 27 years later in 1961, remained largely unchanged, with much of its content reproduced verbatim. What initially appeared as an optimistic projection for the future development of philosophy in the region had, by then, transformed into a historical document, capturing the hopes and intellectual aspirations of the early 1930s.

CONCLUSION

Čyževs'kyj emerges as a key figure of intellectual entanglement, skilfully integrating and reinterpreting diverse traditions to position them within new ideological contexts. His efforts to redefine the intellectual landscape of Eastern Europe highlight the richness of traditions within the Ukrainian lands.



Čyževs'kyj's approach operates on two levels: the general framework of Ukrainian philosophy and the practical task of canon formation, including the selection and annotation of key figures. In framing Ukrainian philosophy, Čyževs'kyj employs several key strategies: 1) crafting an incisive narrative that incorporates philosophers active in or born in Ukrainian territories; 2) focusing on the most prominent Ukrainian thinkers; 3) emphasizing the influence of German Idealism, particularly Hegel and Schelling, a theme he applied more broadly to his study of Russian philosophy; and 4) presenting the established history of Ukrainian philosophy as a foundation for a more promising future. This final concept was first elaborated by Čyževs'kyj in his 1927 German-language text and later incorporated into his examination of Russian philosophy in 1934.

By revisiting Čyževs'kyj's contributions, this paper underscores the significance of his theoretical framework and methodology for understanding the evolution of Eastern European thought in the 20th century. His legacy continues to inspire further exploration of how intellectual histories are constructed, urging scholars to delve into the intersections of national identity, philosophical tradition, and intellectual exchange across Europe.

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