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DMYTRO IVANOVICH CHYZHEVŠKYI – UKRAINIAN-RUSSIAN SCHOLAR, PROFESSOR IN GERMANY

“All are strangers to me and I am a stranger to all”

N. Gogol wrote from Rome

This is an intellectual-biographical research essay on D. I. Chyzhevskyi (1894-1977), the internationally renowned Ukraine scholar, expert on the history of philosophy, on Russian and Ukrainian philology and Slavic-German intercultural relations. He studied at Saint Petersburg University 1911-1913 and at Kyiv University 1916-1919 where he graduated with distinction. His would have been a promising academic career, however, in 1921, for political reasons Chyzhevskyi felt compelled to leave Ukraine. He went to Germany, studied with E. Husserl in Freiburg/Breisgau, met M. Heidegger, H.-G. Gadamer and other young influential German philosophers. But political transformations again changed the course of his life. Despite the hardships he had to cope with in the following years he was incredibly productive in publishing, engaged actively in the famous Prague Linguistic Circle and in the first Conferences of the Hegel Association. He became Assistant Professor of Slavonic studies at Harvard University and from 1956 professor at Heidelberg University. Still, his success was not without a drop of bitterness. As an émigré Chyzhevskyi remained a foreigner in his adopted country. The essay is based on original documents from

German archives: institutional files and private letters, many of them yet unknown. Moreover, the article benefits from its author's personal acquaintance with Chyzhevskyi in his late Heidelberg years, 1960s and 1970s.

Keywords: *German philosophers in 1920s, Slavonic studies, intercultural relations, Germano-Slavica, E. Husserl, H.-G. Gadamer, R. Jakobson, studies on: G.W.F. Hegel, G. Skovoroda, J. A. Komenský.*

Dmytro Ivanovich Chyzhevskyi, son of a Ukrainian liberal gentry family, was born in Oleksandriya, 23 March 1894, and died, 18 April 1977, in Heidelberg, Germany, aged 83, without having seen his homeland again after he had left it in May 1921. It was a traumatic experience under threatening political circumstances at the end of the Russian Civil War that led him to his decision. This eminent and illustrious universal scholar of the history of philosophy, of Slavic cultures, religions, languages and literatures, Professor of philosophy in Prague and Professor of Slavonic studies in Germany, never saw an opportunity for a safe return, not even for a visit. This article – with some relation to the present – shall follow Chyzhevskyi's changeable course of life in the West during hard times. The capabilities he brought from home gave him the personal resilience to come through: his excellent knowledge of the cultural traditions of his guest country was a strong creative bridge. But there still is the question of why it did not lead to a satisfactory immigrant's life.

What was the point of departure? What happened in Kyiv? As a social democrat (Menshevik) Chyzhevskyi was arrested, together with others, by a Bolshevik unit in 1920. Only by chance, did he manage to escape before the group was led off to be shot (Berkefeld, 29 f.)¹. A few months later, he set out with his wife and comrade Lidiya Marshak to cross the Ukrainian-Polish border. They travelled through Poland heading for Heidelberg (Germany) as their further destination. Chyzhevskyi

¹ Berkefeld, W. (1966) *Ein kleiner Kreis in Halle, S. 27-33, in: Gerhardt, D. et al. Orbis Scriptus. Dmitrij Tschizewskij zum 70. Geburtstag. München: Wilhelm Fink.*

apparently carried with him the lesson that political engagement can be life-threatening and should be avoided. Of course, he could not know that this was the start of a lifelong journey into an almost as uncertain life in a dramatically transforming world. In Kyiv Chyzhevskyi had finished his candidate's dissertation on the philosophical development of Friedrich Schiller (Pritsak, 382) at Kyiv University of St. Volodymyr in 1919 and was already appointed to lecture at several Kyiv institutes of higher education. But the traumatic experience of political arbitrariness carried more weight at the time. So, he left behind his promising prospects for a straightforward academic career. He himself did not call it "emigration" when he decided to leave the country in Spring 1921. The journey was meant to be an improvement for his professional career. It seemed to be a good idea to add a few semesters in philosophy at a German university. Already in Kyiv he had studied Kant and Hegel and attended seminars on Slavic-German relations. His interests in religions and mysticism led him further to pietism and to the literature of the Baroque and Romanticism, fields that were strong in the German culture of the 18th and 19th century.

After the October Revolution and Civil War many educated people left Russia. During the following years humanities, philosophy as well as literary theory and literature itself, took different courses in the Soviet Union and in the West. Chyzhevskyi's wide range of scholarly work, which he published from 1924 in the West, was hardly received in Soviet Union, nor did he appreciate the politically-guided Soviet literature. As a result of this mutual lack of attention over a long time, the reading public, in Russia and Ukraine also lost sight of its creative thinker, lecturer and university teacher – although his publications still primarily dealt with Slavic cultures, with their history of ideas and literatures from the Old Church Slavonic times of the 11th century to his days in 20th century.

Only after Chyzhevskyi's death, strictly speaking from the 1990s, when the borders between East- and West-European countries became permeable, did interest arise in post-Soviet Ukraine and Russia for his huge, hitherto largely unknown work. The rediscovery of him in Ukraine owes a lot to Irina Valyavko who in 1997 wrote her PhD thesis

in Kyiv on “Dmytro Chyzhevskyi as an investigator of Ukrainian Philosophical Thought” focusing on his Skovoroda studies. Later she published several articles on him, also in Germany (Valyavko, 2009). Together with Wladimir Janzen, Valyavko started a large project in collecting and translating Chyzhevskyi’s “heritage” for a Russian publication in three volumes. The first volume *D. I. Chizhevskij. Materialy k biografii* was edited in Moscow 2007². Since then, the publication of more articles in Russian indicate the growing public interest in Chyzhevskyi’s work and person (among others Korthaase, 2003; Flickinger, 2021). Most recently A. Portnov referred on D. Chyzhevskyi in the online series “Entangled History of Ukraine” (2021), presumably based on already published material.

Outside the Soviet Union, especially in Germany among literary-interested people, Chyzhevskyi was well known early on for his articles, reviews, original public lectures – and for having a mind of his own. Some of his early students who later became university professors (Ernst Benz in Marburg, Dietrich Gerhardt in Hamburg, Ludolf Müller in Tübingen) enthusiastically described how stimulating it was to study with Chyzhevskyi and how much students gained from his teaching and

² Valyavko and Janzen made great effort to follow Chyzhevskyi’s traces through some Western archives and to have documents (mostly written in German), translated for Russian-language readers. Unfortunately, they missed in Heidelberg a substantial part of Chyzhevskyi’s “heritage”, which is stored (separately from the University Library) in the University Archive (UAH): Files of the Slavic Institute and of the Faculties of Philosophy and New Philology, Chyzhevskyi’s Personal Files, documents of his membership in the Heidelberg Academy of Science and a huge private correspondence. The University Library manuscript section (UB Heid.Hs. 3881), however, only archives what was left in Chyzhevskyi’s apartment, after his daughter Tat’yana had decided what she wanted to take with her to America. It was a bitter fate, as she later wrote to us, that what she sent off by ship to USA, never arrived at her address in Detroit. Among the losses was her father’s favorite collection of drawings by David and Vladimir Burlyuk. – Lidiya Marshak died in 1983; daughter Tat’yana (born 1924) outlived her mother by only three years; she died 1986.

their conversations with him (Gerhardt, 1966, 19-21, Müller, 1966, 559). Later, in Heidelberg, the philosopher H.-G. Gadamer wrote an extensive “Laudatio” in favor of the “Russian scholar”. It was read out by the dean in the Philosophical Faculty, agreed by the Senate and sent to the Ministry of Education and the Arts to emphasize Chyzhevskyi’s aptitude for the Personal Chair of Slavonic studies, the Faculty had applied for. In his statement Gadamer praised Chyzhevskyi’s qualities, “the universality, originality and profundity of his scholarly personality” and his “pioneering research” (UAH, PA 7252, 14 Jan. 1959).

I was invited to write an article on Chyzhevskyi because of my personal acquaintance with him in his later years. He was my professor at Heidelberg University in Cultural History and Slavonic studies through the mid-1960s and early 1970. More frequent communications we had during my PhD years when he was my supervisor (“Doktorvater”). Although he could be rather strict with young students, as soon as you were accepted as one of his candidates for PhD, he would treat you like a colleague. If asked he was very supportive, gave good advice or hints to literature and even lent books from his private library if necessary. In general, you were free to work on your own and to deliver your product as a whole when you thought it was finished.

As I realized only much later Chyzhevskyi’s influence was not at all limited to the matter-of-fact transmission of knowledge of his subjects in lectures and seminars. Many of his views and convictions secretly exerted their influence on us, or at least were a challenge to make us think about. He had a wonderful ability to arouse his students’ curiosity and interests for further explorations. On the other hand, he could be rather determined in his judgements on quality and on moral value. I remember a situation early in my studies, sitting in the library. Chyzhevskyi passed and, at a glance over my shoulder, said: “You shouldn’t read that book; it’s not a good book.” Without seeing the title, he recognized which book from the Institute library I was reading and did not hesitate to tell me not to waste my time with it. Indeed, his teaching was not very systematic because of all the extras he attached. So, students had to invest quite an effort after the lessons to find the missing links in their records and to put the puzzle pieces together. Of

course, at that time this had to be done without any Google-like search engine! But in any case, it was a productive way of really studying, not only a receptive memorizing process. May be, he even played a role in my decision to study philosophy as my third subject.

I am pleased to share some of my memories here. But surely the worm's eye perspective of the former young student would not be enough and hardly satisfying. I personally wanted to know – now from a distant view – what Chyzhevskyi's life in the West meant to himself. How did he cope with the difficulties he had to face in that extremely changing world? Therefore, I turned to the archives to get more first-hand information.

The most impressing and informative discovery was Chyzhevskyi's correspondence with a young Freiburg colleague and later friend over twenty years, from Spring 1924 to Spring 1944. It covers his years in Prague from 1924 until March 1932 and his years in Halle/Saale from 1932 until 1944. This bundle of 372 mostly handwritten letters and some post cards, was handed over to the University Archive Heidelberg (UAH) only late. It has not yet been taken into account by another researcher³. These letters, written in a politically as well as personally extremely difficult time, are particularly open and detailed. As historical sources they have the advantage to carry the momentum of the day and do not depend on the inaccuracies of memory or on later interpretations like several autobiographical records, which considerably differ from each other.

On the 20th anniversary of Chyzhevskyi's death one of his earliest students D. Gerhardt remembered: "In the core of his being Tsch-izewskij more or less always remained a mystery to those who met

³ *Chyzhevskyi sent these letters to the philosopher and socio-economist Ferdinande Homann (called Nanny), who lived in Freiburg. Later she had a job at the University of Münster. Only his part of the correspondence remained and is now kept in the University Archive Heidelberg: UAH, Rep. 133, no 1 – no. 372. Within my article I quote from these letters by their numbers, if necessary, also adding the date.*

him” (Gerhardt, 1997, 9)⁴. He was right. As I remember, our Professor never talked seriously about himself, about his needs or worries. He enjoyed to entertain his audience with anecdotes, but you never knew whether they were nicely invented or stemmed from his own life. He would have hated to be pitied. In fact, his sense of humor was of great help for him: to keep the horror he encountered at a distance and at the same time to avoid unwanted familiarity with people.

“My existence was never secure”, Chyzhevskyi admitted in 1964 looking back (Gerhardt, 1966, 25).

Only for the first three years in Germany this unusually frank remark about his life seems not to fit. When Chyzhevskyi came to Heidelberg for the first time in May 1921 he stayed with his former Menshevik comrade and then brother-in-law Yakov Marshak⁵ who already studied at Heidelberg University for two years. He lived rather comfortably in the middle-class suburb of Neuenheim⁶. According to his inten-

⁴ “Dmitrij Tschizewskij” was the transliteration of his name he throughout used in Germany. In America “Dmitry Čizevsky” was frequently applied.

⁵ Lidiya (1897–1983) and Yakov Marshak (1898–1977), were born into a Jewish family in Kyiv. Yakov like Chyzhevskyi committed himself to social democracy. Only 20 years old, Yakov became Labor Secretary in the Menshevik Cosack republic “Terek” in North Caucasus. Persecuted as well he emigrated to Berlin in 1919, got his Dr. in economy in Heidelberg in 1922, fled to England, made a brilliant career in Oxford and then at several American universities. In 1977, just having been elected president of the American Economic Association, he died of a heart attack. His name is still connected with the interdisciplinary colloquium on mathematics in the behavior sciences at the University of California.

⁶ The registration form of Heidelberg University gives us some information about Chyzhevskyi’s education: “classical gymnasium”, “4 semesters studies of Mathematics in Saint Petersburg” (without mentioning Astronomy) and “6 semesters Philosophy in Kyiv” (again without mentioning Slavic Philology). Religion: “Greek catholic”. Family address: “Alexandria, Ukraine, government Kherson, Boulevard N2/46”. As his Heidelberg address he gave Marshak’s: “Moltkestraße 10” (UAH, “Anmeldung zur Immatrikulation”, 19 October 1921).

tion to regard his journey to Germany not as a flight nor as emigration, but positively as a chance to complete his philosophical studies by adding some semesters abroad, “Tschizewski Dimitry” registered at Heidelberg University for the winter term 1921/22. He enrolled for the seminars on Kant’s ethics and Hegel’s Logic taught by the New-Kantian Professor H. Rickert and lectures on psychology of religion by the recently appointed philosopher of existentialism, Professor K. Jaspers (UAH Akademische Quästur). But in these days the German center of philosophy clearly was E. Husserl’s chair in Freiburg/Breisgau. After only one semester in Heidelberg Chyzhevskyi moved to the idyllic and most southern German spot near the Black Forest.

As we know from his private correspondence, it was in Freiburg where Chyzhevskyi spent his happiest time abroad.

He looked forward to meet Husserl personally. Already in his first semesters at Saint Petersburg University (1911 to 1913)⁷ he had come across Husserl’s philosophy, by his fellow student A. Losev (1893–1988). The first part of Husserl’s *Logical Investigations* was translated into Russian as early as 1909. Losev was in contact with Gustav Shpet who in 1912/13 had studied with Husserl in Göttingen. Husserl’s approach to philosophy via Astronomy and Mathematics seemed familiar to Chyzhevskyi, who also had started his studies in Saint Petersburg with these two subjects. After the debacle of the First World War philosophy was in need of a new epistemological foundation and it was Husserl who with his Phenomenology had created one. In 1922, the most promising young philosophers of the time were gathering at Husserl’s chair in Freiburg. With a little name dropping I want to give an impression of the philosophical capacity on the spot during Chyzhevskyi’s four Freiburg semesters. M. Heidegger was Husserl’s assistant, before he got his extra-chair at Marburg University in winter semester 1923–1924 and returned to Freiburg as Husserl’s successor in 1928. L. Landgrebe became Husserl’s assistant in 1923. He had to emi-

⁷ *Chyzhevskyi’s change of universities, from Saint Petersburg to Kyiv, was due to his first arrest in the capital by Tsarist police in 1913 because of “revolutionary activities” as a Social Democrat.*

grate from Germany during National Socialism. Chyzhevskyi met him again in the Prague Linguistic Circle. From 1939 Landgrebe was, together with Eugen Fink, curator of the Husserl Archive in Leuven. J. Ebbinghaus lecturer (Privatdozent) in Freiburg, was appointed to a chair there, later to Rostock and afterwards to Marburg. He and R. Kroner, from 1924 professor in Dresden, were among Chyzhevskyi's Freiburg friends. Kroner was in 1910, together with S. Hessen, F. Stepun and N. von Bubnoff (the Russian lecturer in Heidelberg), cofounder of *Logos*, the multilingual international journal for philosophy and culture. In 1930 Kroner, president of the International Hegel Association ("Internationaler Hegelbund"), invited Chyzhevsky to speak at the first "Hegel Congress" in Den Haag (Tschizewskij, 1930). From then Chyzhevsky was in the committee. F. Stepun, before the First World War one of the Russian philosophy students in Heidelberg, came 1922 to Freiburg after having been exiled from Russia. A few years later Kroner managed to arrange an extra chair for his friend Stepun at Dresden University. H.-G. Gadamer also has to be mentioned. He came to Freiburg in 1922 to get in contact with Heidegger. Thus, he also met Chyzhevskyi and became, like other "Freiburgers", his lifelong friend. No matter, that they stuck to the formal term of addressing each other as "Dear Gadamer" and "Dear Tschizewskij" with "Sie" and "Ihnen", there was a great confidence between them and Gadamer was of great help for Chyzhevskyi's later appointment to Heidelberg, as I shall show below.

In these early years there was a friendly and intellectually creative atmosphere among university students, teachers and guests in Freiburg at the Institute of Philosophy. Academic life in such a small town was not confined to the university buildings. Invitations to people's homes, meetings in wine taverns or joint excursions to the Black Forest belonged to academic social life. Chyzhevskyi participated in all of that and enjoyed the intellectual community. For him, moreover, the mild climate in Germany's South-West was a healing pleasure. Coming from a South-Ukraine rural area he loved the warm climate and fresh air and, being an asthmatic, he desperately needed them.

Unfortunately, this carefree life ended in Spring 1924. Without an income Chyzhevskyi could not afford staying in Freiburg any longer.

He tried to find a job in philosophy, but without having a German doctorate it was impossible to get a teaching position at a German University. In March 1924 Chyzhevskyi, now aged 30, got a lectureship for philosophy at the Ukrajinskij Vysokij Pedagogichnyj Instytut in Prague. On 18th June 1924 Lidiya in Paris gave birth to their daughter Tat'yana. She also moved with the baby to Prague to study medicine. The family did not live together.

The multinational Prague, in the 1920s under the liberal government of T. Masaryk, was besides Vienna and Berlin, the third central meeting point for East European émigrés. They all left their homeland out of a necessity but for very different political reasons. So, arguing and hostility between political groups often continued beyond the border. Chyzhevskyi, who hated any nationalist chauvinism, immediately wanted to leave Prague when he became involved in such an awkward political discussion (no 9, 27th June 1925). The years in Freiburg had made him all the more determined not to return to politics with its drive to power, but to stay with culture and science, which could lead to peaceful mutual recognition and respect between people. In contrast to his own conviction, he found at the Ukrainian Institute of Education a predominant anti-Russian attitude. In addition, teaching at this Institute was less satisfactory, because the students of education were not very interested in their minor subject Philosophy. His salary was low – too low to support his family – and the Institute did not give a perspective for an academic career. It did not belong to the well-known Ukrainian Free University and also lacked contacts to other Prague universities like the Czech University or the German Charles University in Prague. Chyzhevskyi felt himself intellectually isolated in Prague. In the beginning his social contacts were limited to the already mentioned older Russian philosophers: S. Hessen (1887–1950) and F. Stepun (1884–1965). In his private letters his critic culminates in complaints about the climate. Compared with Freiburg the industrial metropolis Prague for him was “terribly cold, humid, foggy and, of course, awfully dirty” (no 3). Everything there seemed to be black. But without having an alternative, he of course, could not give up his job.

Chyzhevskyi's letters impressively show how he tries to overcome his multi-depressing personal situation and fights against frustration with amazing energy. Writing masses of reviews (published in Russian, Ukrainian, Czech and German journals) provides him with an additional income. In addition, it enlarges his library with free copies. Reading the newest books ensures him an up-to-date level of knowledge, that he can also use for his lectures at the Institute and in public. He becomes better-known in the intellectual community and is invited to give more and well-paid lectures. The main fields of his own research in Prague are Hegel and Skovoroda. The list of his publications in eight Prague years (1924 to 1932) is impressive: about 100 reviews, 86 articles, 6 books (Gerhardt (1954, 1–12), – not to forget the uncountable number of letters to colleagues and friends he wrote in the same period. In between, whenever possible he travelled to meet his correspondence partners: “Dresden (Stepun) – Berlin (Vasmer) – via Frankfurt to – Heidelberg (Marshak) – Freiburg (Husserl, Ebbinghaus, Heidegger)” (no 9).

In 1926 he started to improve his intellectual communicative situation in Prague. With his former teachers of philosophy from Saint Petersburg University, N. O. Losskyi (1870–1965) who earlier had also studied in Freiburg, and I. I. Lapshin (1870–1952), being exiled from Russia, they founded a circle called “Russian Philosophical Society”. There they in turn gave talks and afterwards published them in several journals. In 1927 for his book *Philosophy in the Ukraine* (Chyzhevskyi, 1926) Chyzhevskyi was awarded the title “Professor” at the Ukraine Institute of education – though “without any material advantage” (no 35). He did not stop trying to get a better job, preferably in Germany. In 1929 he joined the – soon worldwide famous – “Prague Linguistic Circle”, organized by Roman Jakobson (Tschizewskij, 1975). The lectures given in the Circle should play a decisive role in theory building not only in linguistics but also in literary criticism. It was there that Chyzhevskyi found his own way to combine his two main subjects, Philosophy and Philology, in his concept of Cultural History. He became one of the few permanent members of the Prague Linguistic Circle. He attended its meetings until 1935.

In 1932 Chyzhevskyi for the first time was offered a job at a German university: not in Freiburg but at the Saxonian University of Halle/Saale, not for philosophy but for Slavistics, and not a chair, but only a lectureship. Meanwhile the political and economic situation in Germany was critical. One year before Hitler's take-over of power the rate of unemployment came to 30%. In Prague the Ukrainian Institute of Education was about to decline. So Chyzhevskyi agreed for the contract in Halle.

May be, it was just because of the paradox of this unexpected offer from Halle University that – during the next horrible twelve years of National Socialism and Second World War – not only Chyzhevskyi's life was miraculously saved but he also became famous. Being stateless and married to a Jewish woman as he was, could be regarded as an offence in Hitlerian terms. But, while professors had officially to declare their agreement with the new political system, lecturers had not. Being employees, not civil servants, they were not asked for such a declaration. For the stateless Russian it was most important that the liberal minded Halle-university administration as well as Chyzhevskyi's colleagues in the faculty backed their highly estimated new Slavic lecturer. For his students, Chyzhevskyi was "our Professor". Soon his teaching covered "the whole history of literature, ideas and religions of the Slavic peoples" (Berkefeld, 29) and he was in charge of some doctorate students – even before he himself had passed his own German doctorate. In July 1933 he submitted his work *Hegel in Russia* as dissertation and was examined in three subjects: Philosophy, Indo-Germanic languages and church history. With pleasure he wrote about this event and his preparations in a letter to his friend (no 164): "I had my suit pressed, drank mocha and ate ice-cream". The result was with distinction: "summa cum laude". His dissertation was first published in 1934 and became a great success (Tschizewskij, 1961). A second, expanded edition in 1961 enclosed articles on Hegel in other Slavic countries. In 1935/36 he also gave courses at the University of Jena.

Among his "students" of Russian language was the philosopher and historian of church and religious studies Dr. habil. Ernst Benz (1907–1978). Having many interests in common they travelled together

on the Balkan visiting orthodox churches and cloisters and enjoyed conversations on German mysticism, especially Jacob Böhme (no 175). They became lifelong friends and worked together at publications like Benz' German edition *Legends of Russian Saints* (Benz, 1953).

The years in Halle would have been a “normal” professorial life with lectures and seminars at the university, good professional and private contacts to colleagues, students and friends, with urban cultural events, in Händel's native town especially concerts, and with frequent travelling to give guest lectures at other universities – if there would not have been in the background constant political danger. A highly recognized classicist and good friend, Professor Stenzel, also married to a Jewish wife, suddenly died, aged 52. Two years before he had been compulsory transferred to Halle from Kiel, where Nazi-students massively campaigned. Chyzhevskyi who had taken part in Stenzel's private philosophical reading group continued the meetings in his own apartment – a gesture of solidarity and probably the most he could politically risk. From then on, he spent even more time in the seclusion of libraries, above all in the traditional “Francke-Foundations” in Halle, one of the most famous libraries of Pietism and cultural history of the Baroque period. There he discovered in 1934 the long-lost main pedagogical work *Pampaedia* by Johann Amos Comenius (1592–1670), the outstanding philosopher, theologian and pedagogue from the German-speaking Moravia. Chyzhevskyi's finding became a sensation in humanities and social studies and made him well-known in more fields of the scholarly community. But for the time being he published only a small brochure on his discovery in 1936 in Moravia, where his wife and daughter lived (Číževskyj, 1936). More “Comeniana” in Czech language followed during the next years; some of them under his pseudonym F. Erlenbusch (See: Golz, 39, 92–99, 100–112). From then on Comenius belonged to Chyzhevskyi's favorite topics. He represented in a special way the German-Slavic connection.

Luckily Halle was not heavily damaged during Second World War. But for Chyzhevskyi the war ended with great losses. In March 1944 his early Freiburg friend and selfless helper over two decades suddenly died. When in June 1945, according to the resolution of Yalta,

Saxony should become part of the Soviet occupied zone Chyzhevskyi left Halle in panic. He fled to Marburg, in his luggage only his book *Hegel in Russia*, the yet unpublished Comenius manuscripts and a few other books, “which could possibly be of further use”⁸. Having survived National Socialism and the Second World War, 24 years after having escaped from Soviet Russia, he was still horrified by the idea, he could get caught by Stalin’s troops. Indeed, his feeling to live under threat never ended. Even in his latest years in Heidelberg, he still insisted never to sit in a restaurant with his back to the room. He always looked for a seat at the wall to avoid “being shot” as he usually commented.

From Marburg, which belonged to the American zone, Chyzhevskyi tried, to get back at least his private library of “4000 to 6000” items and have it transferred from Halle to Marburg (Richter, 2003). No chance. It was said that his apartment and library were confiscated by the mayor of Halle and the classics of Russian literature were given to Soviet soldiers⁹.

In October 1945, a few months after the war and the Hitler regime had ended, Chyzhevskyi for the first time took part in an inner-German political debate. He did it not publicly, but wrote a letter to the famous writer Thomas Mann who 1933 had managed to leave Germany with his family and lived a luxurious life in USA. Chyzhevskyi wrote on behalf of those who could not leave the country during twelve horrible Nazi years as Mann did, but still behaved, in “inner emigration”, with full moral integrity. He asked Thomas Mann now to take responsibility, to return from USA and to mentally support the post-war reconstruction¹⁰.

⁸ UB Heid. Hs 3881, *Chyzhevskyi’s letters to W. Hennemann, 29 June 1945 and 22 Sept. 1945.*

⁹ UB Heid. Hs 3881, *Chyzhevskyi’s letter to “Lida and Topsy”, 1 April 1946.*

¹⁰ *A carbon copy of this letter is in UB Heid.Hs 3881. I shall report on this politically and ethically interesting document within its historical context, more detailed in a separate article. W. Janzen has printed Chyzhevskyi’s letter with a short commentary in: Bielfeldt, S. (2015, 125-152). Číževsky D. (1960)*

For Chyzhevskýi Marburg seemed to be a chance. The Marburg University was going to reopen in November 1945 and a chair for Slavonic Philology was founded. J. Ebbinghaus, his Freiburg friend, now was Professor of Philosophy at Marburg University and soon was elected Rector. The faculty voted for Chyzhevskýi “unico loco”, as the only desirable candidate on the list for the new chair. An intrigue, however, a smear campaign defamed him at the ministry to be a Soviet spy. Neither Rector Ebbinghaus nor Gadamer, then Professor of Philosophy in Frankfurt (under the same Hessian Ministry of Education), could solve the problem. For four years Chyzhevskýi remained “temporarily” Director of the Slavic Institute with all tasks and duties of a professor but without adequate salary and professorial rights.

The years after Second World War were for everybody years of hunger and poverty. Without the “care-parcels” from USA, sent by his wife and daughter, Chyzhevskýi would hardly have survived. Lidiya had fled with their daughter from Moravia to America in 1939, immediately before Hitler’s invasion into Czechoslovakia. She got a job as a doctor in a hospital in Chicago. After finishing school Tat’yana studied Slavonic philology at Columbia University in New York. As her letters to her father show she would have loved to have him nearby (UB Heid.Hs 3881, Číževskaja, T.D.). She tried to persuade him to come to USA and started a tour to her father’s former acquaintances who now taught at American universities, in order to find a job for him. Roman Jakobson, who as well had left Prague in 1939, now was professor at Columbia University in New York and willing to help. He offered a visiting lectureship to his old companion of the Prague Linguistic Circle. But Chyzhevskýi hesitated. For him America was not very attractive. There he would be cut off from his main field of research, the Germano-Slavic cultural relations. In Marburg he was writing (in German) his *History of Old-Russian Literature in the 11th, 12th and 13th centuries*¹¹, the first volume of a planned comprehensive history of Russian Literature. When he published the volume in 1948, the personal con-

¹¹ *The German manuscript he finished in Marburg 1948. It was translated into English and published much later. See: Číževsky D. (1960).*

flicts in Marburg had increased in a way, that Chyzhevskyi agreed to move to America.

He was 56 years of age when he started anew in autumn 1949 with giving seminars at the Slavic Department of the Harvard University. Again, Roman Jakobson, now professor in Cambridge/MA, had arranged a visiting lectureship for him, this time with the perspective of a later professorship at the chair of M. M. Karpovich, historic, co-founder of American Slavistics and editor of the New York quarterly *Novyj zhurnal*. Chyzhevskyi who did not speak English could teach in Russian or Ukrainian. For his publications he had translators at his disposal. As Marc Raeff, Bakhmetev Professor at Columbia University, told me much later that there was a good, creative atmosphere at the Harvard Slavic Department when he himself studied there with Karpovich and Chyzhevskyi. Both Slavists edited together *Russkij literaturnyj archiv*. Chyzhevskyi also published, in 1953, Pushkin's Evgenij Onegin, the Russian text with an introduction and over hundred pages commentary to "the numerous personal, literary, political, and historico-cultural allusions" in the poem. It was "designed to meet the requirements of university courses in Russian literature for non-Russians"¹².

¹² Čiževsky D. published in 1953 A. S. Pushkin. *Evgenij Onegin*. Much later, in 1964, V. Nabokov published a three times more voluminous commentary on Pushkin's Poem, where he rather offensively criticized Chyzhevskyi's earlier work. The two emigrants probably met in early 1950s. No doubt, there was not much sympathy between these very differently socialized mentalities. Nabokov, who lived with his family in Cambridge/MA 1942-48, never had a chance to teach at Harvard University. He only curated the butterfly collection of the Harvard Museum, while teaching Russian language and literature at Wellesley College, a women's College in Norfolk County. He might have regarded Chyzhevskyi as his rival for the Russian lectureship at Harvard. At that time, he was not yet the successful writer he became after publishing *Lolita* (1955) and *Pnin* (1957). In 1948 Nabokov moved to Ithaca/NY. Chyzhevskyi arrived in Cambridge not earlier than 1949. Against all historical factuality and evidence of contemporaries, a maliciously rumour was spread in the 1970s, saying Nabokov had depicted his failure-character "Pnin", according to Chyzhevskyi. Although this claim has been proved wrong also in research (Diment, G.

However, after only three years Chyzhevskyi wanted to return to Europe. He was extremely worried about the anti-communist mania of the “McCarthy-era”. A “Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations” had started with purging in 1952. For the third time Chyzhevskyi faced the threat of political persecution, again his statelessness put him at an even greater risk. “Dear Gadamer”, he wrote on 30 January 1956 in a long letter from Harvard, “the USA for me is a dangerous country” (UAH, H IV-582/1). The university granted him a one-year sabbatical leave, that Chyzhevskyi had officially applied for preparing a Comenius edition in Germany. Actually, he intended to definitively return to Europe. Gadamer, since 1949 successor on Jaspers’ Philosophy Chair in Heidelberg, was determined to help his old friend. Within a few months he arranged the approval of a chair of Slavonic Philology at Heidelberg University, he convinced the commission and the ministry about the extraordinary qualities of the candidate from Harvard and the unique chance to appoint this scholar to Heidelberg University. Again, Chyzhevskyi was set “unico loco”, as the one and only person on the list. On 7 April 1956 he arrived in Heidelberg, on 11 May 1956 he already started lecturing, even before the chair was officially bestowed on him (UAH, H-IV-582/1).

What finally sounds like the happy end of a modern fairy tale was nothing of the sort. The ministry accepted the decision of the faculty, but arguing the 62-year-old candidate was beyond the age limit for appointments as full professor with civil-servant rights (“Ordinarius”), it reduced the offer to a Guest Professorship with a salary for an employee and limited to the years of his teaching and leading the Institute as director. No pension after retiring. Chyzhevskyi did not have a choice than to accept these conditions. Going back to America was no option nor was, in his view, Gadamer’s advice to take legal action¹³.

(1997) Piniad: Vladimir Nabokov and Marc Szeftel. Washington UP, it came up again in 2020 without any piece of evidence. How long can envy or jealousy last?

¹³ UAH, PA 8829. In two letters (13 July and 25 September 1956) Gadamer, then dean of Philosophical Faculty, urgently advised Chyzhevskyi to apply for “compensation of disadvantage by NS”, according to the Federal Law. Since 1

Chyzhevśkyi did what he always had done: he took the chance to resume his academic work. With admirable energy he built up “his” Institute and its library, fought for rooms and additional posts to make sure that the students get proper education and his staff an adequate salary (UAH Rep. 164/4). In 1962 he initiated the founding of a professional association of Slavonic-studies professors in Germany (“Verband der Hochschullehrer für Slavistik”) and became its elected chairman (UAH Rep. 164/6. Kasack W. in: Harder, 7). The first two assemblies of the Association were held by him in Heidelberg. More and more students chose Slavonic studies.

Chyzhevśkyi began his own work in Heidelberg with high demands and an immense output of publications. Before his arrival he let an anthology be published to introduce himself to Heidelberg: *From Two Worlds. Contributions to the history of the literary relations between Slaves and the West* (Čiževskij, 1956). The collection of 21 essays shows the wide variety of his fields of research. There occur Old Slavonic, Baroque and modern Futurist literature; Plato, Comenius and the German mystic Jakob Böhme. Methodological questions of the comparative approach in literary history are discussed and the shortcomings in ideologically biased Soviet-Russian literary critique are mentioned. He compares literary motives in different cultural contexts (Mayakovski and Calderon). Some of the articles were specially written for this edition, others taken from earlier editions. They all give an idea of Chyzhevśkyi’s originality, his humor and his great pleasure in wandering through the well-known world of literatures and ideas in search of new discoveries on their interrelations.

April Chyzhevśkyi was Guest Professor and, after the resignation of Prof. von Bubnoff, from 1 August 1956 also director of the Slavic Institute. Only his application for compensation would possibly have altered the decision of the ministry. He did not apply. During the next years the faculty continued its efforts to achieve a betterment for the Slavonic Professor. Gadamer’s special “Laudatio” supported by the Philosophical Faculty (Dean E. Otto) was sent to the Ministry of Education and Arts applying for a “Personal Professorship” for Chyzhevśkyi (letters 4 Dec 1958, 14 Jan and 18 Feb 1959). In vain.

Many important books he published in his Heidelberg years (not to speak here of his innumerable articles, reviews and editions). His *Russian History of Ideas* came out in two volumes, I. *Holy Russia. 10th to 17th century* in 1959, II. *Between East and West 18th-20th century* in 1961 (Tschizewskij, 1959, 1961a). In the same year he reedited his Halle dissertation *Hegel in Russia* in the already mentioned enlarged edition which now included articles of colleagues on Hegel in other Slavic countries and his own supplement, dealing with Hegel in Slovakia (Tschizewskij, Hegel, 1961b). As “a masterpiece, a mature work and at the same time eminently modern in its style and view” the journal *Die Welt der Literatur* (1964) praised Tschizewskij’s *History of nineteenth-century Russian Literature* (Tschizewskij, D., 1964, 1967). This was the beginning of his productive cooperation with the publisher Wilhelm Fink in Munich and his founding of the series: “Slavische Propyläen” and “Forum Slavicum”. His *History of nineteenth-century Russian Literature* was the first volume of “Forum Slavicum”. Until 1977 the series grew to 50 volumes. It became a desirable place for publishing the dissertations of many of his 28 doctorate candidates in Heidelberg. The second volume of the *History of nineteenth-century Russian Literature on Realism* was launched in 1967. In 1968 in the same series came out *Outline of Old Russian Literature* (Tschizewskij, 1968a) and, at another publishing house *Comparative History of Slavic literatures* in two volumes (Tschizewskij, 1968b). Thirty years later, in 2019, the publisher of the latter considered this work worth to be reprinted and also released online. A German version of *Skovoroda. Poet, thinker, mystic* was one of Chyzhevskyi’s last monographies (Číževskij, 1974). The Ukraine philosopher of the Baroque period, dialectic, mystic and ethical thinker was one of his constant companions¹⁴. Like Comenius Skovoroda represented much of Chyzhevskyi’s own convictions and ethical principles.

Chyzhevskyi’s writing is especially remarkable for his concise and clear style, his original and substantial information and the shortest possible diction. He was a universal scholar in a period of hopeless spe-

¹⁴ Chyzhevskyi in 1929 dedicated his article on the dialectic of Skovoroda to E. Husserl for his 70th birthday.

cialization, a man of knowledge with comprehensive memory for details and with the ability to draw synoptic views. His critique and judgments were reasonable and well-founded, but, especially in his late years, if verbally uttered sometimes surly. – Life time is too short to be wasted.

Regardless of his productivity and academic success and of the faculty's continuous applications¹⁵ trying to achieve an improvement for the acknowledged colleague, nothing changed. The year 1959 passed without his retirement; the ministry had generally postponed the age limit from 65 to 66. Also in the following years, still no adequate successor for the Slavonic chair was in sight. In 1962 Chyzhevskyi became elected member of the Heidelberg Academy of Sciences, philosophical-historical class. From 1963 he belonged to the interdisciplinary research group "Poetic and Hermeneutic" founded by H. Blumenberg. In the Slavic Institute the staff prepared for Chyzhevskyi's 70th birthday in 1964.

Perhaps these were the second happiest and secure years of the scholar who was still in office in Heidelberg, moreover he stood in as Honorary Professor for the chair of Slavic literature at the University Köln 1964–1969 (Bräuer, 170) and could look back on a unique life-work of publications. For the first time Chyzhevskyi agreed in the Institute to talk about his childhood and youth in South Ukraine and have his memories tape-recorded. Thanks to our careful librarian of these days, at least one of the tapes was saved and she gave me a digital copy of it. It is touching to hear the well-known voice in his characteristic way of speaking German. Partly he talks about his family: his mother, who as a painter, taught children in the village free lessons in painting; his ancestor, Petro Lazarevich, who as a singer at the court of Tsar Elisabeth in 1743 was rewarded with hereditary peerage; about rural life of the land-owner community (after the 1861-liberation of the slaves); about nature, fruit trees, on which one could lie and read, flowers, butterflies and the

¹⁵ UAH, PA 7252, 18 Feb 1959 (Dean), 19 Feb 1959 (Rector), 8 Jan 1963 (Dean). On 4 March 1977, six weeks before Chyzhevskyi's death, the Rector, in a letter to the president of Baden-Württemberg Hans Filbinger, once more expressed "the university's deep concern for one of its most commendable members".

gras of the steppe with its white hair; lively impressions of a lovely world he left half a century ago.

I wonder whether Dmytro Chyzhevskyi could have missed the news about Skovoroda. It is said that he as well was one of the Ukrainian singers at Tsar Elisabeth's court at about the same time when Petro Lazarevich Chyzhevskyi was in Saint Petersburg. Dmytro Chyzhevskyi surely would have mentioned it.

Chyzhevskyi's 70th birthday was celebrated on 5 April 1964 in Heidelberg with speeches and the Festschrift *Orbis Scriptus* of almost 1000 pages (Gerhardt, 1966), containing 100 articles by renowned academics from all over the world, handed over to the still "temporary director" of the Heidelberg Slavic Institute.

Three years later, in 1967, under pressure of the ministry, the chair and the directorship were transferred to the Institute's previous lecturer of Polish language. He did not have any of the German qualifications for becoming a professor nor any publications that could qualify him for the chair of Slavistics. Chyzhevskyi must have felt deeply insulted by this decision. Even more so, when his successor on the chair began to ruin¹⁶, what had been built up in twelve years' time. On worse conditions – now as Honorary professor – Chyzhevskyi continued teaching, examining and advising his doctoral students until 1976. For the winter term 1976/77 he still announced to give a lecture on "Symbolism and Futurism"

He died on 18 April 1977, shortly after his 83rd birthday.

Heidelberg University Library informed the public about taking over the private library of the "great scholar and internationally acknowledged academic Tschizewskij". With its 14 000 volumes being "the largest scholarly library ever integrated". And later noticed: It "can be regarded the scholarly library which is used most of all" (Lapp, 1984). Curiously, in Heidelberg University's proudly presented *Lexicon of Heidelberg scholars 1933–1986* (Drüll, 2009), the scholar D. Chyzhevskyi is missing. In contrast to the title of this reference series it

¹⁶ UAH, PA 7252, letters to the Dean of the Faculty of New Philology, 25 Jan 1971-27 Jan 1972.

does not list Heidelberg scholars, but professors with civil service status. That might not in any case be the same.

May be Gogol was right, “All are strangers to me and I am a stranger to all”.

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АНОТАЦІЯ

Дана стаття являє собою інтелектуально-біографічний дослідницький нарис про Д. І. Чижевського (1894–1977) – всесвітньо відомого українського науковця, знавця історії філософії, російської та української філології та слов'яно-німецьких міжкультурних відносин. Він навчався у

Санкт-Петербурзькому університеті (1911–1913), а також у Київському університеті (1916–1919), який закінчив з відзнакою. Академічна кар'єра Д. Чижевського була багатообіцяючою, однак у 1921 р. з політичних міркувань він був змушений покинути Україну і емігрувати до Німеччини. Там він навчався в Е. Гуссерля у Фрайбурзі/Брайсгау, познайомився з М. Гайдеггером, Г.-Г. Гадамером та іншими впливовими німецькими філософами. Але політичні перетворення знов змінили його життя. Незважаючи на труднощі, з якими Д. Чижевському довелося зіткнутися в наступні роки, він неймовірно продуктивно працював у видавничій справі, активно брав участь у відомому Празькому лінгвістичному гуртку та у перших конференціях Асоціації Гегеля. Згодом Чижевський посів посаду асистента професора славістики Гарвардського університету, а з 1956 р. – професора Гейдельберзького університету. Проте його успіх обійшовся гіркою ціною, оскільки, будучи емігрантом, Чижевський тим не менш, залишився іноземцем у країні, де жив та працював. Дане дослідження ґрунтується на оригінальних документах з німецьких архівів, зокрема інституційних справах та приватних листах, чимало з яких є ще невідомими широкому загалу. Крім того, оскільки автор був особисто знайомим з Д. І. Чижевським, у статті описано враження від особистості цього видатного дослідника та його діяльності у пізні гейдельберзькі роки (1960–1970).

Ключові слова: німецькі філософи 1920-х років, славістика, міжкультурні відносини, германо-слов'яністика, Е. Гуссерль, Г.-Г. Гадамер, Р. Якобсон, студії за: G.W.F. Гегель, Г. Сковорода, Й. А. Коменський.