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WHAT IS UKRAINIAN PHILOSOPHY?

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This article adds to the existing descriptive and generalizing studies of the specifics of Ukrainian philosophy an attempt to analyse it. This study examines in which aspects philosophy can be carried out as a national tradition of philosophizing. It is argued that the national peculiarities of philosophy can manifest themselves in the choice of (1) the topic of philosophizing, (2) the standards of logical rigor of philosophical thinking, and (3) certain philosophical methods and forms of thought development. Linguistic and geographical criteria for determining belonging of a philosopher to a national philosophical tradition are analysed and the heuristic limits of these criteria are shown. It is argued that not only personal, but also national peculiarities of this or that philosophizing may exist. These national peculiarities must be connected with the historically formed cultural traditions of this or that nation, in particular with the existing practices of the functioning of philosophy in the society and in its education system. It is also shown that the formation of national specificity of one or another philosophizing is caused by the challenges a given nation faced during its historical development. The study argues that there are two features, the combined presence of which is the sufficient condition for determining any philosophical thought as a Ukrainian philosophical thought. First, this thought must be created in the context of Ukrainian traditions of philosophizing, which manifests itself in using certain philosophical methods and forms of thought development. Second, this thought must be a response to the historical challenges the Ukrainian people faced. It is suggested that not all manifestations of philosophizing in Ukraine can be called Ukrainian philosophical thought. Those manifestations, which do not suffice both the first and the second of the mentioned features, are suggested to be labelled as "philosophy in Ukraine" and not as "Ukrainian philosophy". The study shows that the national specificity of philosophizing manifests itself most clearly in such philosophical areas as political philosophy, social philosophy, and ethics. This study also determines what unites Ukrainian philosophy with European philosophy.

Key words: Ukrainian philosophy, national philosophy, philosophy in Ukraine, philosophy, specifics of Ukrainian philosophy.

Ukrainian researchers have been working on identifying the national characteristics of Ukrainian philosophy for more than 150 years. Among the first authors, we can name Klymentii Hankevich, who raised this issue in his works of 1869 and 1881, Vasyl Shchurat, who wrote about it in 1908, and Dmytro Chyzhevsky, who published his works in 1926 and 1931. The issue of the peculiarities of Ukrainian philosophy was also touched upon by Soviet researchers. However, this topic is most actively raised in modern Ukraine [1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8].

Let us give a few insights about the characteristic features of Ukrainian philosophy, expressed by current Ukrainian researchers. Ivan Lysyi thinks that ‘Existential plots (from love to hatred, from the right to justice and truth to the permanence and justification of the moral canon) were always common motifs which go throughout any Ukrainian philosophising, in whatever forms and genres it was carried out.’ [7] Petro Hnatenko writes that ‘Since the birth of Ukrainian philosophy, a human has been at the centre of its research.’ [4] Ihor

Zakhara believes that 'The theory about a human and the ways of his spiritual improvement is the constant of Ukrainian philosophy.' [3] Of course, we have something to add to these descriptions.

Here, we offer to consider two points. The first point is the following: we can say that certain thinkers can have common ideas and approaches to philosophical issues. The second point is the following: we can say that some thinkers can be united by a common awareness of themselves as people of a certain nation and that they can be united by a relationship with certain cultural traditions. However, is the first point linked to the second point? If so, how exactly? It can be a linkage of correlation or one of causation. These are different types of linkage, and one must be very careful not to fall into the fallacy of *cum hoc ergo propter hoc*.

So which thoughts are Ukrainian ones, and which are not? This is not as simple a question as it may seem. The simplest answer could be the following: thoughts written in Ukrainian are Ukrainian, and thoughts written in other languages are not Ukrainian. Truth be told, many Ukrainian thoughts are really written in the Ukrainian language, but does this alone make them expressions of Ukrainian thought? On the other hand, is the Ukrainian language of the thought a sufficient or necessary condition for it to be a Ukrainian thought?

It seems to me that not only the language in which this or that thought is written but also the personality of the man or woman who formulated the thought is important. To consider some thoughts as Ukrainian ones, it is essential for their author to belong to Ukrainian culture. Otherwise, the Ukrainian translation of any foreign book would automatically make this book an expression of the Ukrainian spirit. However, Kant's text, translated into Ukrainian, is still an expression of German philosophy, not Ukrainian philosophy. On the contrary, some works of Ukrainian thinkers are written in English and other languages, but they are written by Ukrainian authors, and we believe that these works are part of Ukrainian thought.

Another possible simple answer regarding the criterion for determining Ukrainian thought concerns geography. Proponents of this approach could tell the following: if a thinker works in Ukrainian territory, he or she is automatically a Ukrainian thinker. Still, this is not a good criterion, in our opinion. Let's consider the biography of one famous logician. He was born in 1878 in one of the cities located in the territory of modern Ukraine – in Lviv, where he studied, defended his thesis, and taught at a local university. Then he lived in different cities and countries. From 1946 until his death in 1956, he worked in Ireland at University College Dublin. Can he be considered a Ukrainian researcher? No, Jan Łukasiewicz was a Polish thinker; he kept his Polish identity both in Lviv and in Dublin. The geographical criterion, to us, does not seem very successful in answering the question of belonging of a particular thinker to a certain tradition of philosophising.

Philosophy is being made by individuals with their life experience, a certain set of knowledge and skills developed by the educational systems of their countries. These individuals are influenced by certain cultural traditions of their people and time. Philosophy is universal at the level of its specificity as a type of intellectual activity, but at the same time, it is a manifestation of the individuals` potential in matters related to their personal abilities and preferences. A philosopher is a part of his or her people in matters of cultural traditions and certain historical challenges faced by these people.

Here, we need to analyse the difference between the terms 'philosophy in Ukraine' and 'Ukrainian philosophy'.

Of course, there is philosophy in Ukraine. Many Ukrainian universities have philosophy departments; there are students who study philosophy, and there are people who read philosophical books. However, there is more to this than that. There are also people who write philosophical

works, who express their own philosophical positions, and who philosophise, adding something to world philosophy.

If a person is not just a recipient of philosophy but also one who participates in the creation of philosophy, then it is worth paying attention to the fact that such a person brings something of his or her own to philosophy. This is not just some abstract person. These are people with their own life experience, who belong to one or another culture and communicative environments.

Here, we need to analyse what the flexible part in philosophy is as well as what is one and the same in any philosophy. If we look for possible differences among philosophies, we need to look where such differences are possible.

So what is philosophy? We will highlight some features. Philosophy is an activity of ordering our ideas about the most general and fundamental features of the world and our place in it. Any philosophy deals with the most general and fundamental features. However, we can find some flexibility in issues of areas where these features are explored. That is why we have some philosophers who work in the field of ethics, some philosophers who work in the field of epistemology, some thinkers who create theories in the field of political philosophy, etc. The depth of consideration of philosophical issues depends on the differences among philosophers' interests. Some philosophers put great effort into determining what freedom is, reaching considerable depth in understanding this issue; at the same time, they can leave unexamined the question 'What is space?'

Then, any philosopher is characterised by attention to the question of how his or her thinking unfolds, trying to develop the best way of thinking that does not contain prejudices and other distortions. In different philosophical traditions, there are various standards of rigor and consistency of philosophical thinking, but for each of them, the issue of seeking the correct way of thinking is one of the key questions. Philosophers use different philosophical methods as well as forms of thought development and their presentation. Some philosophers mainly use logical analysis, some are interested in dialectics, some continue the way of thinking of existentialists, some use the methodological ideas of postmodernists, and so on. Some philosophers offer a rigorous, structured, logical style of thought development. Others express their thoughts in forms of dialogues and novels, using allegories etc.

The method and style of philosophising depend on many factors. One of them is the traditions that have developed in the country. If we want to understand why a certain philosophy is dominated by proponents of this or that method and forms of thought development, it will be necessary to investigate the history of the development of philosophy in this country. Ukrainian philosophy develops in a certain communicative space which has its own features, rules, and institutions to practice philosophy. All of them were created in the process of Ukrainian culture development.

As for the question of choosing one or another topic for philosophising, we believe that in the areas of social philosophy, political philosophy, and ethics, it is often a question of the challenges that life poses to philosophers. We don't think that achievements in such philosophical disciplines as logic are influenced by the political development of the countries where philosophers live. However, we are sure that their ideas in the sphere of social philosophy, political philosophy, and ethics are connected with historical challenges that the peoples of these philosophers face.

In 1991, Ukraine faced the challenge of independent existence as a state. Since the beginning of the 21st century, political events in Ukraine have been directly related to the struggle for the European choice. In 2014, the Ukrainian people faced the fact of the occupation of a part of their territory by Russian troops. All this, of course, caused the need for Ukrainian philosophers to think about these challenges, and current Ukrainian thinkers deeply developed the relevant philosophical topics.

In 2022, the Russian Federation has moved to a full-fledged war against Ukraine, and Ukrainians as an independent nation are facing an existential threat. Here, it is appropriate to recall the German philosopher Karl Jaspers, who used the term *Grenzsituation* – that is, a limit situation. He mentioned that there are things we try not to think about in ordinary life, but when we face them, we can no longer ignore what is really there. In such limit situations, we are forced to rethink the way we have lived before, and we are forced to think about what is really significant in our life. It is the push to philosophising.

In his book *Psychologie der Weltanschauungen*, Karl Jaspers lists such types of limit situations as *kampf, tod, zufall, and schuld* – that is, battle, death, chance, and guilt [9]. In 2022 with their cities being bombed and their enemy wanting to deprive the Ukrainian people of their statehood, Ukrainian philosophers found themselves in a limit situation. This terrible situation, with the most obvious clarity, posed hard questions to the Ukrainian people and Ukrainian thinkers. What is worth living for? What can you give your life for? What does it mean to be a nation? These are, of course, philosophical questions, but they arose not in the silence of libraries but in a country where a real war is being waged for life and freedom.

Of course, philosophy is practiced by very different people in Ukraine, who often debate with one another. Within the framework of one or another national philosophy, there can be thinkers with very different views, but they face the same challenges that require their response. There is the challenge of military aggression, the challenge of the European choice, the challenge of Ukraine's colonial past, and other significant challenges, the understanding of which laid down certain common ideas in the current philosophy of Ukraine. All these challenges form some peculiarities of topics for philosophising. In modern Ukraine, many thinkers have engaged in the elaboration of their answers to these questions. They deeply study these relevant philosophical issues. If we interpret a philosophical judgement as a moment in the life of its author, then of course, what the philosopher faces in his or her life takes some reflection in his or her philosophy.

We want to emphasise that Ukrainian intellectual activity is a part of European intellectual activity. Of course, in Ukraine, no one created a philosophy based on other starting points than Plato and Aristotle had established. Ukrainian philosophers discuss the ideas of thinkers from other European countries, and they consider themselves proponents of one or another philosophical trend of European thought. In fact, it is impossible to study the history of Ukrainian philosophy without considering its interest in European philosophical traditions. At the same time, of course, we are not talking about the passive assimilation of European ideas but the selective and creative development of them. Ukrainian philosophy has always developed in the context of European philosophy. For example, Hryhorii Skovoroda developed Platonic theories in the 18th century; Dmytro Chyzhevsky developed the ideas of European romanticism in the beginning of the 20th century.

How are European and Ukrainian philosophy related? This is the relationship between the 'whole' and the 'part'. Of course, something distinguishes Ukrainian thought from other examples of thought of the peoples of Europe, but equally, a lot unites them. The differences are important, but the common ground is fundamental. To understand exactly what the 'part' is, it is necessary to keep in mind the 'whole' in relation to this 'part'.

Hryhoriy Skovoroda, in one of his works, gave an allegory of the pipe organ, the different pipes of which produce different sounds – some sounds are higher, some are lower, some are louder, and some are quieter, but the air that fills these pipes is one and the same [10]. In a similar way, we can say that European philosophy can manifest itself in different ways in different philosophical schools or national traditions – some sound louder and some quieter, but all of its manifestations are filled by the same essence – by the love of wisdom.

What is the difference between love and passion? Passion is a desire to master, to take advantage of something, but love is an attempt to become worthy of the object of one's love. Philosophers strive to become worthy of wisdom. Tradition tells us that the word '*φιλοσοφία*' was coined by the ancient Greek thinker Pythagoras from the words 'love' and 'wise'. Pythagoras said that no man is wise, but God alone is; however, a man can love wisdom, and that is what it means to be a philosopher. In the Greek language, at least four words are translated into modern languages as 'love': *ερος*, *φιλια*, *αγαπη*, and *στοργη*. All of them have semantic nuances. Pythagoras chose the word 'philia'. Why? Eros is love as passion. 'Storge' refers, for example, to the love of a child for his or her mother. The Greek word 'agape' was used by Christians to write the famous phrase 'God is love' from the Gospel. In Ancient Greek, the word 'philia' was used to refer to a dispassionate, virtuous love, for example, friendship. The intention to be a friend of wisdom, to value it, to try to be worthy of wisdom – this is what unites the philosophers of Europe as a whole and Ukrainian philosophers as a part of this whole. For this aim, philosophers think a lot about thinking, trying to elaborate perfect instruments for deep and truthful reasoning and understanding.

There is one more question that we arguably need to answer: does our interest in national features of this or that philosophy lead us away from purely philosophical issues, from, so to speak, the content of ideas? We think not. Moreover, this approach will allow us to more accurately evaluate the historical context of the ideas expressed by thinkers as well as to understand more deeply what exactly they meant in their philosophical texts. We will also add that distinguishing the characteristic features of certain ideas is a common historical-philosophical issue. Studying common features in theories of thinkers from a philosophical community in no way prevents us from studying the thoughts of these philosophers as such and philosophical ideas as such. This approach does not refute all other approaches but only complements them.

We want to sum up our thoughts about flexible aspects in philosophy. They are the following: (1) preferable topics of philosophical research; (2) preferable standards of rigor and consistency of philosophical thinking; and (3) preferable philosophical methods and forms of thought development. We have concluded that if peculiarities in the national traditions of philosophising exist, we can find them precisely in these three aspects.

Summarising, we are going also to specify our answer to the following question: what exactly do we call Ukrainian philosophical thought?

There are two features which, together, are sufficient to call a philosophical thought Ukrainian philosophical thought: (1) this thought is created in the context of Ukrainian traditions of philosophising, having the appropriate specificity in the methods and thought forms; and (2) this thought responds to those historical challenges that the Ukrainian people face. We distinguish all other manifestations of philosophising in the territory of Ukraine using the term 'philosophy in Ukraine' to refer to a philosophy that does not have Ukrainian national specificity.

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ЩО Є УКРАЇНСЬКОЮ ФІЛОСОФІЄЮ?

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Дана стаття додає до наявних дескриптивних та узагальнюючих досліджень специфіки української філософії спробу аналітичного розгляду даного питання. В даному дослідженні розглянуто в яких аспектах філософія може здійснюватися саме як національна традиція філософування. Аргументовано, що національні особливості філософії можуть проявляти себе у виборі, по-перше, тематики філософування, по-друге, стандартів логічної строгості філософського мислення, по-третє, тих чи інших філософських методів та форм розгортання філософських ідей. Проаналізовано мовний та географічний критерії визначення приналежності до національних філософських традицій та показано евристичні межі даних критеріїв. Аргументовано, що окрім індивідуальної специфіки того чи іншого філософування, може бути присутньою також і національна його специфіка. Дана національна специфіка має бути пов'язана з історично сформованими традиціями культури того чи іншого народу, зокрема з наявними практиками функціонування філософії в конкретному суспільстві та з присутньою в ньому системою освіти. Також показано, що до формування національної специфіки того чи іншого філософування докладаються виклики, які постають перед даним народом в ході його історичного розвитку. Встановлено, що є дві риси, сукупна наявність яких є достатньою умовою того, щоб називати ту чи іншу філософську думку саме українською філософською думкою. По-перше, дана думка має бути створена в контексті українських традицій філософування, що проявляє себе у специфіці використання певних філософських методів та форм розгортання філософської думки. По-друге, така думка має бути відповіддю на ті історичні виклики, які постали перед українським народом. Запропоновано називати українською філософською думкою далеко не всі прояви філософування в Україні. Ті з даних проявів, які не відповідають сукупно першій і другій з названих рис, запропоновано позначати як «філософію в Україні», а не як «українську філософську думку». В статті показано, що національна специфіка філософування найбільш яскраво проявляє себе у таких сферах філософських дисциплінах, як політична філософія, соціальна філософія та етика. Також дане дослідження визначає, що саме єднає українську філософію з європейською філософією.

Ключові слова: українська філософія, національна філософія, філософія в Україні, філософія, специфіка української філософії