



MYKOLA FEDIAI

## From “Aristotelian Rubbish” to Christian Wolff: The Turn toward German Philosophy at the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy in the Mid-18th Century\*

**ABSTRACT:** This article explores the educational transformation of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, characterized by its gradual shift from the Catholic model rooted in the Jesuit colleges of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth—dominant from the time of the Academy’s founding—toward German sources of learning. The study begins with the student journey of Simon Todorskyi, who, on completing his studies in Halle, returned to Kyiv in 1738 in order to teach German and promote German scholarship. His efforts initiated a long-term reorientation of the Academy’s intellectual outlook, supported by ties with German educational centers, the purchase and publication of books, and student mobility. These changes soon influenced higher disciplines: in 1743, the theology professor abandoned the Jesuit-based tradition in favor of Protestant sources. The shift saw its culmination in 1753, when philosophy professor Davyd Nashchynskyi rejected scholastic Aristotelianism, which was based on the Catholic *cursus philosophicus*, and adopted textbooks by followers of the German philosopher Christian Wolff. This decision marked the end of the scholastic tradition in Kyiv and the beginning of a period of Wolffian philosophy, which remained dominant until the Academy’s closure in 1817.

**KEY WORDS:** Kyiv-Mohyla Academy • Christian Wolff • Wolffian philosophy • Scholastic Aristotelianism • Friedrich Christian Baumeister • Simon Todorskyi • Ukrainian philosophy

### Introduction

In the early 17th century, Kyiv, located in the eastern part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, was not regarded as a center of learning. To compete with Catholic and Protestant educational institutions, the Orthodox Metropolitan, Petro Mohyla, founded a Collegium in 1632, later

\* This research has been made possible thanks to ERC Consolidator Grant n. 864542, “From East to West, and Back Again: Student Travel and Transcultural Knowledge Production in Renaissance Europe (c. 1470–c. 1620).”

known as the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy. Philosophy, taught in Latin, initially held pride of place among the disciplines, later followed by a four-year course in theology. From the late 17th century, Kyiv became part of the Tsardom of Moscow, and the Academy became the only institution of higher learning across the vast territories of Muscovy. This was a seat of learning where most of the Ukrainian clergy and political elites received their education.

From the time of its foundation, the Academy based its curriculum on Western Latin educational sources. Throughout the 17th century, its professors of philosophy were exclusively those who had studied at Catholic institutions. These same professors repurposed the Catholic textbooks, adapting them to the needs of the Orthodox academy. Jesuit lecture materials, recorded by students and brought to Kyiv, as well as textbooks by 17th-century Sorbonne authors, were especially popular.<sup>1</sup> This dominance of Catholic philosophy led some contemporaries to accuse its professors of merely aping the Jesuit curricula.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, German observers would express disappointment that Kyiv graduates of Jesuit colleges could offer their students nothing other than what they themselves had learned in those institutions.<sup>3</sup>

Alongside the dominance of Catholic education, Orthodox professors showed little interest in German scholarship and sought to distance themselves from all Protestant influences. Although Kyiv scholars diligently studied Latin, Church Slavonic, and Polish, they were never known for their knowledge of German. For example, when Czech Jesuits opened a school in Moscow in 1701, they feared that professors from Kyiv might lure their students away. To prevent this, they introduced instruction in German, which the Kyivans did not know.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, in 1724, when the Hetman government sought people fluent in Latin, Polish, and German, the rector responded that while there were enough experts in Latin and Polish, “we are

<sup>1</sup> M. Symchych, *Wpływ jezuitów na wykładanie filozofii w Akademii Kijowsko-Mohylańskiej w XVII i XVIII w.*, in: *Filozofowie Rzeczypospolitej w kulturach Polski, Litwy, Białorusi i Ukrainy. Konteksty geograficzne i koncepcyjne*, eds. D. Viliūnas, S. Huber, Warszawa 2025, pp. 363–392; М. Федяй, *Формування філософських традицій Києво-Могилянської академії 1632–1753 років крізь призму освітніх траєкторій її професорів*, PhD dissertation, Київ 2025.

<sup>2</sup> T. Rutka, *Herby abo znaki kościoła prawdziwego, katolikom dla pociechy duchowney y podziękowania Panu Bogu, a adwersarzom dla nauki y szukania prawdy*, Lublin 1696, pp. 205–206.

<sup>3</sup> J. G. Vockerodt and O. Pleyer, *Russland Unter Peter Dem Grossen*, Leipzig 1872, pp. 5, 15–16.

<sup>4</sup> *Письма и донесения иезуитов о России конца XVII и начала XVIII века*, Санкт-Петербург 1904, pp. 258, 260.

utterly unable to find anyone here not only proficient in, but even somewhat familiar with German, as it is not taught among us.”<sup>5</sup>

Over time, both external observers and the Kyivans themselves came to view the existing Catholic-oriented model of education as outdated. In the 1740s, professors of philosophy abandoned the structure of the courses based on those of the Polish Jesuits, and in the early 1750s, they experimented with the Cartesian model of the French author Edme Pourchot (1651–1734). However, neither the revised Aristotelianism nor Cartesianism took root in Kyiv. The Academy ultimately found renewal in German scholarship, particularly in the philosophical system of Christian Wolff (1679–1754), one of the most influential German philosophers of his time; and, as Kant would later call him, “the greatest of all dogmatic philosophers.”

This article will explore why and how German intellectual influences began to emerge and eventually dominate in Kyiv. Furthermore, it will examine how student mobility facilitated the spread of books, educational practices, and knowledge. Finally, it will show how these gradual changes led to a “philosophical revolt,” when professors rejected Aristotelian scholasticism and embraced Christian Wolff’s philosophical system, which prevailed in Kyiv until the Academy’s closure in 1817.

### The student journey of Simon Todorskyi

Simon Todorskyi was one of the earliest exponents of German scholarship in Kyiv, who initiated a seemingly modest but profound educational transformation, one that also foregrounded the acquisition of the German language. As a student, he found himself dissatisfied with the Academy’s Jesuit orientation, so he set out on a journey that would take him to Halle. There he mastered classical languages, German, and theology before returning home to teach what he had learned abroad.

Todorskyi’s educational journey forms the starting point of this account. His biography is known mainly from the note *Einige Nachricht von Herrn Simeon Todorski*, compiled in Halle in 1735 by an unknown author who knew Todorskyi personally,<sup>6</sup> as well as from his own brief autobiographical

<sup>5</sup> “[...] отнюдь такового челоѡѡка изобрѣсти въ насѣ не возмогаемъ, наиборзѣй же бы кто нѣмецкаго языка къ переводу не толко былъ искусенъ, но ниже и отчасти свѣдомъ, понеже въ насѣ языка нѣмецкаго не учать [...]” Е. Барсов, *Описание актов архива Маркевича, относящихся к истории южно-русских монастырей*, “Чтения в Императорском обществе истории и древностей российских при Московском университете,” 1884, No. 2, p. 29.

<sup>6</sup> E. Winter, *Lebensbeschreibung Todorskijs*, “Zeitschrift für Slawistik,” 1956, Vol. 1, No. 1–4. See commentary on this biography: E. Winter, “*Einige Nachricht von Herrn Simeon*

record.<sup>7</sup> Born in 1701 in the town of Zolotonosha into a Cossack family. His father or grandfather was a Jewish convert to Christianity. This may explain Todorskyi's interest in Hebrew and Oriental languages. From 1718 to 1727, he studied at the Kyiv Academy but did not complete the theology course taught by Ilarion Levytskyi. According to *Einige Nachricht*, Todorskyi left the Academy because of its Jesuit orientation:

He learned the foundations of Latin at the Kyiv Collegium, organized according to the Jesuit method, and passed through the classes of that Collegium, acquiring a considerable proficiency in the Latin language. He studied theology under teachers who had been educated by Jesuits in Poland and absorbed it as they taught it [...] Yet he found no peace or satisfaction in his heart with the poor teaching of theology, which largely consisted of curious and controversial questions and the condemnation of those who dissented from the Greek Church. Therefore, he wished for an opportunity to study God's Word properly.<sup>8</sup>

Choosing not to continue his studies at Catholic colleges in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, like many of his predecessors, Todorskyi set out for St. Petersburg in 1727, making his journey as a tutor for the children of a general, who, traveling from Kyiv to St. Petersburg, took Simon along with his sons. On August 21, Todorskyi enrolled at St. Petersburg's newly founded Academy of Sciences with a penned registration that stated the following, *Simeon Todorsky; pater eius miles fuit. In Ukrain Solotonosche*, 24; accompanied by the additional note that he had come to study German.<sup>9</sup>

In St. Petersburg, Todorskyi studied at the academy, whilst tutoring the general's children, and establishing contacts within the court clergy; but he "did not find there what he was seeking" (*das aber daselbst nicht gefunden*,

*Todorski*" *Ein Denkmal der deutsch-slavischen Freundschaft im 18. Jahrhundert*, "Zeitschrift für Slawistik," 1956, Vol. 1, No. 1–4, <https://doi.org/10.1524/slkw.1956.1.14.73>.

<sup>7</sup> Д. Вишневский, *Киевская академия в первой половине XVIII столетия*, Киев 1903, pp. 348–349.

<sup>8</sup> "Die Fundamenta in der Lateinischen Sprache hat er in dem Collegio zu Kiew geleyet, und ist durch die Classen desselbigen Collegii, welches nach der Jesuiten Methode eingerichtet ist, passiret, und hat sich eine ziemliche Fertigkeit in der Lateinischen Sprache acquiriret. Die Theologie hat er von seinen Præceptoribus, welche bey den Jesuïtern in Polen erzogen, so, wie sie es dociret worden, wohl gefasset [...]. Da er aber in seinem Gemüthe bey dem schlechten Vortrag der Theologie, welcher mehrentheils auf corieuse und Streitfragen und Verketzerung der von der griechischen Kirche Dissendirenden hinausgelaufen, keine Ruhe und Vergnügen gefunden, so hat er gewünschet, Gelegenheit zu haben, da er in Gottes Wort möchte recht studiren können." E. Winter, *Lebensbeschreibung Todorskijs...*, p. 93.

<sup>9</sup> *Материалы для истории Императорской академии наук*, Vol. 1 (1716–1730), Санкт-Петербург 1885, p. 342.

*was er gesucht*). Following the general and his children, his journey brought him to Reval (now Tallinn), where he met Bernhard and the Pietist pastor Vierordt. They advised him to continue his studies in Halle. With their support and the general's backing, Todorskyi obtained a travel passport and sailed to Lübeck, from where he made his way to Hamburg. Although he was left penurious in Hamburg, the locals, upon learning the purpose of his journey, helped him reach Halle, where he arrived in June 1729.<sup>10</sup>

At that time, Halle was the center of Pietism, a Lutheran movement that had emerged in the late 17th century, largely due to the educational and missionary efforts of August Hermann Francke (1663–1727). As a university professor, Francke established the Collegium Orientale Theologicum for the study of Hebrew, Greek, and other Oriental languages, and founded the renowned Waisenhaus (orphanage), where poor students were accommodated. Over time, a full educational and institutional infrastructure developed—*Franckesche Stiftungen*—which included dormitories, a school for girls, a printing house, and a bookstore. Through education, Pietists sought to spread their ideas beyond Germany, particularly to Slavic lands and the Orthodox Church. They attempted to establish relations with St. Petersburg, for example through the prominent Kyiv professor and later Archbishop of Novgorod, Theophan Prokopovych, to enlighten the *terribles ténèbres de Moscovie*.<sup>11</sup>

Simon Todorskyi arrived in Halle after the death of August Hermann Francke, when his son, Gotthilf August Francke (1696–1769), took over the leadership. Thanks to letters of recommendation, Todorskyi was admitted to the university and housed in the orphanage. At the time of his arrival, his German was poor, and he had no knowledge of Greek or Hebrew, so he began studying them at the Collegium Orientale while taking private lessons in German. According to *Einige Nachricht*, he studied diligently and did not miss a single class, even when seriously ill. Later, once he had mastered Greek and Hebrew—and occasionally even taught them himself—he began to study Arabic and Syriac: he needed all these languages to read and understand the Holy Scriptures; and Arabic to read the Quran.<sup>12</sup>

During his time in Halle, Todorskyi compiled a vocabulary notebook titled *Harmonia vocum Hebraeicum cum Sclavonicis, Rutenicis et Polonicis*,

<sup>10</sup> E. Winter, *Lebensbeschreibung Todorskijs...*, p. 94.

<sup>11</sup> D. Haas, E. Lyutko, and S. Rimestad, "God Prepares the Way for His Light to Enter Into the Terrible Darkness of Muscovy." *Exchange and Mobility Between Halle Pietism and Russian Orthodox Clergy in the 18th Century*, "Studia Universitatis Babeş-Bolyai Theologia Orthodoxa," 2023, Vol. 68, No. 1, pp. 201–204.

<sup>12</sup> E. Winter, *Lebensbeschreibung Todorskijs...*, p. 95.

providing Latin, Ukrainian, Polish, and Church Slavonic equivalents for Hebrew words.<sup>13</sup> Todorskyi would write of his activities at the university in the following terms, “engaging in studies suited to my purpose and the proper completion of my theological education, especially for the study of the Hebrew, Greek, and other Oriental languages.”<sup>14</sup> All the sources describe Todorskyi as an outstanding linguist. Gotthilf Francke wrote that Todorskyi had mastered Greek, Hebrew, Chaldean, Syriac, Arabic, and German during his time in Halle, while Slavic languages and Latin he had learned in Kyiv.<sup>15</sup>

During the course of his six years in Halle, Todorskyi translated and edited six books. The most notable was the over one-thousand-page *Vier Bücher vom wahren Christentum* by the German Lutheran theologian Johann Arndt (1555–1621), published in 1735.<sup>16</sup> He also translated Arndt’s *Informatorium biblicum* and August Francke’s *Die Lehre vom Anfang Christlichen Lebens*, along with several other works.<sup>17</sup>

Simon Todorskyi saw an enlightening mission in his educational journey, much like his 17th-century predecessors who had brought knowledge acquired in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth back to Kyiv. This time, however, the knowledge came not from Jesuit colleges but from Protestant Halle. Although he had the chance to remain or move to St. Petersburg for a church career, Todorskyi chose to return to his homeland. The author of *Einige Nachricht* records what seems to be his direct speech:

What should I do in St. Petersburg? There is nothing to accomplish there. If I sought a good life, honor, and money, I could have them in St. Petersburg. But I desire none of these. I hope God will allow me to gain access to the young students in Kyiv so that they may grow to love God’s Word, especially in the original languages. If that happens, other blessings will surely follow. I know well that there will be no escape

<sup>13</sup> S. Mengel and S. Schorch, *Die “Harmonia vocum hebraearum cum Slavonicis rutenicis et polonicis” von Simon Todorski: Ein neuer Archivfund zu vergleichenden Sprach- und Bibelstudien an der Universität Halle im frühen 18. Jahrhundert*, in *Logos Im Dialogos. Auf der Suche nach der Orthodoxie. Gedenkschrift für Hermann Goltz (1946–2010)*, Berlin 2011.

<sup>14</sup> “[...] проходячи ученія къ моему намѣренію и совершенію ученія богословскаго надлежащія, наипаче же ради обученія языковъ Еврейскаго и Греческаго и протчихъ нѣкихъ восточныхъ языковъ [...]” Д. Вишневский, *Киевская академия...*, p. 349.

<sup>15</sup> E. Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt der deutschen Russlandkunde im 18. Jahrhundert*, Berlin 1953, p. 406.

<sup>16</sup> І. Арнд, *Чотири книги ѿ истинномъ христїанствѣ*, Въ Галѣ 1735.

<sup>17</sup> Д. Чижевський, *Українські друки в Галле, Краків–Львів 1943*; С. Менгел, *О русских переводах из Халле и их издании. Новая интерпретация имеющихся исторических свидетельств и фактов*, “Palaeobulgarica,” 2023, Vol. 47, No. 3.

from persecution and suffering, but I am not afraid. If they put me in prison, oh! There I will be able to study theology all the better. If they exile me to Siberia or Astrakhan (a punishment that terrifies some so much they would rather die), I will gladly go, hoping that in two or three years a desert will become a pleasant forest. Yes, if they hang me on the gallows (he said this with great joy), what would it be other than that I would reach Christ sooner! My only sorrow would be that, from a human point of view, God's work would be destroyed and left in ruins.<sup>18</sup>

Todorskyi considered it his duty to return to Kyiv to teach his fellow citizens the sacred languages and true theology, so writing:

He believed that now was the time for God to begin something good in theology in Kyiv through him, just as He had done not long ago (1632) when He used Petro Mohyla (a man greatly esteemed among the Ruthenians) to give new impetus to the *studia humaniora* and philosophy (by founding the Kyiv Academy), which had previously been greatly lacking and had been severely hindered by the intrigues of the Jesuits in the neighboring lands.<sup>19</sup>

On 8 July 1735, after six years in Halle, Todorskyi departed for Kyiv, his *lieben Vaterland*. On 25 July Gotthilf Francke sent a letter to Theophan Prokopovych praising Todorskyi for his profound knowledge of Oriental

<sup>18</sup> "Was soll ich in Petersburg machen, da ist nichts auszurichten. Wenn ich gute Tage, Ehre und Geld suchte, so könnte ich solches in Petersburg haben. Aber das alles verlange ich nicht. Ich hoffe, Gott werde in Kiew mich lassen einen Eingang finden bey der studirenden Jugend, daß sie eine Liebe zu Gottes Wort, sonderlich in denen Grundsprachen gewinnen. Geschiehet dieses, so wird der Segen sich auch in andern Stücken zeigen. Ich weiß wohl, daß es ohne Verfolgung und Creutz nicht abgehen werde; aber davor fürchte ich mich nicht. Stecken sie mich in ein Carcer, o! Da werde ich erst recht Theologiam studiren können. Relegiret man mich nach Sibirien oder Astrachan, (über welche Strafe manche so erschrecken, daß sie des Todes seyn möchten,) so will ich mit Freuden dahin gehen, und hoffe, daß in zwey oder drey Jahren aus der Wüst ein lustiger Wald werden soll. Ja, wenn sie mich (dieses sagte er mit großer Freudigkeit) an den Galgen hängen, was ist es mehr, als daß ich desto eher zu Christo komme! Nur würde mich in solchem Fall das allein betrüben, daß menschlichem Ansehen nach das Werk Gottes auf einmal würde zerstöret werden und liegen bleiben." E. Winter, *Lebensbeschreibung Todorskijs...*, p. 98.

<sup>19</sup> "[...] sondern glaube vielmehr, daß es ietzt Zeit sey, da er Gott etwas Gutes in der Theologie zu Kiew durch ihn anfangen würde, gleichwie er vor nicht langen Jahren (1632) den Petrum Mohila (einen unter den Russen sehr beliebten Mann) gebraucht, die *Studia humaniora* und *philosophica* besser in den Schwung zu bringen (durch Gründung der Kiewer Akademie); woran sie vorher großen Mangel gehabt, und durch die Intriguen der Jesuiten in der Nachbarschaft sehr gehindert worden." *Ibidem*.

languages and German.<sup>20</sup> Todorskyi would spend a year and a half with the Jesuits, followed by another year and a half assisting the Greek population with church and pastoral affairs in the Hungarian territories.<sup>21</sup> In 1737/38, Todorskyi was to be found teaching Greek in Belgrade.<sup>22</sup>

### Todorskyi's Educational Shift

In August 1738, Todorskyi finally arrived in Kyiv, where he was warmly welcomed by Archbishop Rafail Zaborovskyi, and, as planned, began teaching Greek, Hebrew, and German at his alma mater.<sup>23</sup> However, behind these seemingly neutral actions was a serious attempt to change the direction of education at the Kyiv Academy. Indeed, he sought to turn the Academy away from Catholic Jesuit teaching, which he considered hostile. In a letter to Inspector Johann Heinrich Grischow (1678–1754) dated 14 August, Todorskyi divulged these plans. Here he recalled spending a year and a half among the “enemies of Jesus,” namely the Jesuits in Poland. He bitterly noted that in Kyiv “everything is bad, poor, and miserable” (*so ist alles schlimm, schlecht und miserabel*), that Theophan Prokopovych, who had some knowledge of theology, had died, and that the clergy, though pretending to be wise, are full of “terrible Jesuit principles.”<sup>24</sup> It is worth noting that he was in fact correct with regard to the last complaint, as Hieronym Mytkevych, then professor of theology, taught in accordance with Jesuit treatises.<sup>25</sup>

In his letter, Todorskyi noted that the archbishop had invited him to teach Greek at the Academy. However, he complained that the Kyivans were less interested in using Greek to understand the New Testament than to interpret Aristotle and the Church Fathers. He also expressed dissatisfaction with the translators of the Bible into Church Slavonic (some of whom were former Kyiv professors), stating that they were proponents of “Aristotelian philosophy and scholastic theology, or rather anthropology,” and had only a poor knowledge of Greek.<sup>26</sup>

Todorskyi's efforts extended beyond language instruction to a broader attempt to reshape the intellectual landscape of the Academy. German pastor

<sup>20</sup> *Idem*, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt...*, pp. 405–407.

<sup>21</sup> Д. Вишневский, *Киевская академия...*, p. 349.

<sup>22</sup> М. Костић, *Тодорски као учитељ међу србима године 1737/8*, Београд 1951.

<sup>23</sup> Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и документы, относящиеся к истории Киевской академии*, Vol. 1, Part 1, Киев 1904, pp. 231–232.

<sup>24</sup> E. Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt...*, p. 417.

<sup>25</sup> К. Суториус, *Нравственное богословие в Киево-Могилянской академии по материалам рукописных источников*, “Вестник Санкт-Петербургского Университета,” 2018, Vol. 63, No. 1, pp. 23–26.

<sup>26</sup> E. Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt...*, pp. 417–418.



Christoph Wilhelm Hegelmeier (1713–1743), describing the state of learning at the Kyiv Academy in 1739, understood this all too well:

The office he holds at the Academy can rightly be called a key to open the door to the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ in many souls. He will undoubtedly try to do so with the help of the Most High, for he is a faithful and zealous lover and confessor of his Savior. He brought with him various books from Halle by our theologians, which will surely not remain without fruit and benefit.<sup>27</sup>

Indeed, in his letter to Grischow, Todorskyi wrote that he had brought his large library; although he complained that many colleagues considered his books heretical. He noted that most of them did not know German and were unlikely to read them. He was also concerned about his Halle translations, especially Arndt's *Vier Bücher vom wahren Christentum*, fearing that if it became known in Kyiv that he was the translator (not mentioned in the publication), it could cause him serious trouble.<sup>28</sup> This library likely helped spread Protestant ideas, as Arndt's translations remained popular even after being banned by the Most Holy Synod of the Russian Church in 1743.

At the same time, Hegelmeier advised Todorskyi to be cautious with his words and actions, as religious changes were difficult to accept for the Orthodox people of Kyiv and superstitions remained strong. He concluded:

This ridiculous prejudice will soon come to an end when Mr. Todorskyi leads his students to the reading of the Holy Scriptures, which he has firmly resolved to do with God's help. This should be the duty of the ordinary professor of theology at the university [Hieronym Mytkevych – M. F.], but his head is so full of scholastic nonsense that there is no room left for profound and edifying matters.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> "Das Amt, welches er bey der Academie bekleidet, heißt mit recht ein Schlüssel dem reinen Evangelio Jesu Christi in manche Seele eine Thüre zu öffnen. Er wird es auch ohne Zweifel unter dem Beystand des Höchsten zu thun versuchen, weil er ein treuer und eyfferiger Liebhaber und Bekenner seines Heylands ist. Er hat aus Halle unterschiedene Bücher von unsern Gottes-Gelehrten mit sich gebracht, die gewiss auch nicht ohne Frucht und Nutzen bleiben werden." Ch. W. Hegelmayer, *Nachrichten von Dem Zustande Der Gelehrsamkeit Zu Kiov in Der Rußischen Ukraine*, in *Unpartheyische Nachrichten von unterschiedenen Merckwürdigkeiten des Rußischen Reichs*, Esslingen 1739, p. 19.

<sup>28</sup> E. Winter, *Halle als Ausgangspunkt...*, p. 417.

<sup>29</sup> "Es wird aber dieses lächerliche Vor-Urtheil bald seine Endschaft erreichen, wann der Herr Theodorsky seine Schüler auf die Lesung der heiligen Schrift führen wird, welches zu thun er sich mit Gott vest vorgenommen. Dieses wäre zwar das Amt des ordentlichen Professoris Theologiae von der Universitaet: er hat aber den Kopf mit scholastischen Grillen so voll, dass gründliche und erbauliche Sachen keinen Platz mehr darinnen finden können." Ch. W. Hegelmayer, *Nachrichten...*, p. 19.

Todorskyi taught at the Kyiv Academy until 1742, when he was summoned to St. Petersburg, where became tutor to the future Empress Catherine II and later served as Bishop of Kostroma and Archbishop of Pskov. Although his time in Kyiv lasted only a few years, he managed to cautiously redirect the Academy's educational focus. These changes first appeared in language instruction but later, as it will be seen, also influenced the teaching of theology and philosophy.

### German influences at the Kyiv Academy

After 1738, the Academy, where previously no one had been even slightly familiar with the German language, began to gain a reputation as a center of German learning. Initially, Simon Todorskyi taught his students, who later continued his work by establishing new teaching practices.

This educational transformation is evident in contemporary sources, which show how philosophers and others responded to these innovations. In the preface to his *Cursus philosophicus entis naturalis* (1739–41), Professor Mykhailo Kozachynskyi noted how, thanks to Archbishop Rafail Zaborovskyi, “the most excellent studies entered our Kyiv Academy, namely sacred Hebrew, Greek, and the foreign German languages, which are actively taught at regular hours to select and learned young men, grammatically instructed, and explained according to a set method each day.”<sup>30</sup> In his course *Philosophia Aristotelica* (1743–45), Kozachynskyi even mentioned in the title that the archbishop had “introduced the teaching of Greek, Hebrew, and German in the Academy from the year 1738, where they are still properly taught at regular hours under his most benevolent care.”<sup>31</sup> For Kozachynskyi, the introduction of these languages into the curriculum was as significant as the construction of the famous Academy's stone building.

<sup>30</sup> “[...] intraverunt in Academiam nostram Kiioviensem excellentissima studia sacrae, nempe quia Hebraicae sapientiae, quia Graecae, et peregrinae Germanicae lingaurum, quae ordinariis horis inter selectos doctosque iuvenes actualiter traduntur, grammaticaliter erudiuntur, et certa methodo qualibet die explicantur.” M. Kozaczynski, *Cursus Philosophicus entis naturalis, per quaestiones philosophicas controvertens, ad sequens consuetumque biennii tempus, iuxta usum in scholis Peripatheticorum praeceptum, ingenuo auditori Roxolano in alma ac orthodoxa Academia Mohylo-Zaborowsciana...* Kyiv, Institute of Manuscript of Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, fonds 306, 126, fol. 7.

<sup>31</sup> “[...] idioma Graecum, Hebraicum, Germanicum hac in academia ab anno 1738, quae usque huc certis horis rite docetur, doceri sua benevolentissima cura induxit.” M. Kozaczynski, *Philosophia Aristotelica, ordine scholae Peripateticae ex consuetis in alma ac orthodoxa academia Kiiovo-Mohilo-Zaborowsciana per biennium dictata...* Kyiv, Institute of Manuscript of Vernadsky National Library of Ukraine, fonds 305, 171, fol. 1.

The study of new languages became prestigious among the students. For example, on the title page of the 1745 philosophical theses, Hryhorii Shcherbatskyi was listed not only as a student of philosophy (as was customary before) but also as a "student of Greek, Hebrew, and the German dialects."<sup>32</sup> Another student, Hryhorii Poletyka, after many years of study in Kyiv, decided to transfer to the St. Petersburg Academy as a translator. For this, he obtained a letter of recommendation that barely mentioned his studies in rhetoric and philosophy but emphasized his thorough knowledge of Greek and Hebrew, as well as German, which he had studied "under the great teacher Simon Todorskyi."<sup>33</sup> Many professors of philosophy learned German as students and some even taught it later. Among them were Hedeon Slomynskyi, Heorhii Shcherbatskyi, Davyd Nashchynskyi, Samuil Myslavskyi, and others.

The intellectual orientation of the Academy also shifted. Whereas previously, Kyivans had revered the Catholic colleges of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, now German universities were regarded as the leading centers of learning, with Varlaam Liashchevskyi writing in the 1745 preface to a Greek textbook, "Italy once had that praise; now Germany retains it." He also recalled how his teacher, "the father of the sacred languages," Todorskyi, brought the knowledge he had gained in Germany to Kyiv and shared it with Ruthenian youth.<sup>34</sup>

### Ties with German educational centers

From the 1740s, authors associated with the Kyiv Academy began to actively publish their works in German printing houses, primarily in Breslau (now Wrocław) at the press of Johann Jakob Korn (1702–56). Later, Leipzig also became a favored location for printing among Kyiv authors.

In 1743, Korn published a collection of texts by Theophan Prokopovych, *Lucubrationes*,<sup>35</sup> followed the next year by *Miscellanea sacra*. In the preface, Korn mentioned that he had received the texts of the late archbishop through the assistance of a "most honorable and learned friend from Kyiv"

<sup>32</sup> М. Козачинский, *Філософія Арістотелева по умствованію періпатетиковъ*, Kyiv 1745, p. 1.

<sup>33</sup> *Материалы для истории Императорской академии наук*, vol. 8 (1746–1747), Санкт-Петербург 1895, p. 150.

<sup>34</sup> "*Habebat id laudis olim Italia; retinet etiamnum Germania.*" *Institutionum linguae Graecae liber, utilissimis regulis, cum aliis ad solidiorem huius sacri idiomatis cognitionem observationibus...* Vratislaviae 1746, pp. X, XIV–XV.

<sup>35</sup> T. Prokopowicz, *Lucubrationes illustrissimi ac reverendissimi Theophanis Prokopowicz*, Vratislaviae 1743.

(*Honoratissimi atque Doctissimi Kiioviensis amici*).<sup>36</sup> In 1744, Korn also published a short poem, *De advertu in Ukrainiam Elisabethae Petrownae*, dedicated to the official visit of Empress Elizabeth Petrovna to the Kyiv Academy.<sup>37</sup> In 1746, Liashchevskyi's Greek textbook, *Institutionum linguae Graecae liber*, was printed.<sup>38</sup> In 1751, Korn issued the *Orthodox Confession of Faith* by Petro Mohyla in Greek, Latin, and German, with a preface by Wittenberg professor Karl Gottlob Hofmann (1703–74) and a dedication to Archbishop Tymofii Shcherbatskyi, referred to as “the greatest patron of religion and learning,” suggesting his financial support.<sup>39</sup> In 1753, Korn published a Latin translation of the treatise *Πέτρα σκανδάλου* by Greek theologian Elias Miniatis (1669–1714). The translation was produced by two Kyiv Academy graduates, Mykola Motonis and Hryhorii Kozytskyi, who had studied in Breslau and at the University of Leipzig. In their preface, they gratefully acknowledged their esteemed teacher, Varlaam Liashchevskyi.<sup>40</sup>

Such active publishing was accompanied by ongoing contacts, mainly related to the purchase of books. The librarian of the Academy was responsible for maintaining regular correspondence with Silesian dealers to supply books in demand among both teachers and students.<sup>41</sup> In 1753, Heorhii Shcherbatskyi purchased books from Johann Jakob Korn for the considerable sum of 1,000 rubles.<sup>42</sup> The following year, Professor Kryzhanovskiy proposed the idea of teaching with printed textbooks which would be procured from Breslau.<sup>43</sup> In 1763, Samuil Myslavskiy even proposed opening a bookstore at the Academy and “as before” filling it with prints from Breslau and Leipzig, by signing contracts with merchants for their delivery. He also advised ordering essential textbooks for the Academy directly from German printers.<sup>44</sup>

When discussing intellectual ties between Kyiv and German academic centers, student travel must be mentioned as a key factor in the transfer of knowledge. Simon Todorskyi encouraged students to travel to Halle instead

<sup>36</sup> *Idem, Illustrissimi ac reverendissimi Theophan. Prokopowicz miscellanea sacra*, Wratislaviae 1744, p. II.

<sup>37</sup> С. Потапенко (ed.), *Віденський архів гетьманського роду Розумовських*, Vol. 2, Київ 2020, pp. 256–264.

<sup>38</sup> *Institutionum linguae Graecae liber...*

<sup>39</sup> P. Mogilas, C. G. Hofmannus, *Orthodoxa Confessio Catholicae atque Apostolicae Ecclesiae Orientalis cum interpretatione Latina et versione Germanica*, Wratislaviae 1751.

<sup>40</sup> Η. Μηνιάτης, *Πέτρα σκανδάλου, ήτοι διασάφησης της αρχής και αιτίας του σχίσματος των δύο Εκκλησιών Ανατολικής*, trans. G. Kositzki, N. Mothonis, Wrocław 1752.

<sup>41</sup> Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и документы...*, Vol. 1, Part 1, Киев 1904, pp. 398–399.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibidem*, p. XXVIII.

<sup>43</sup> Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и документы...*, Vol. 2, Киев 1905, p. 134.

<sup>44</sup> Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и документы...*, Vol. 3, Киев 1906, p. 67.

of attending Jesuit colleges. In 1745, the arrival of his student from Kyiv was expected, and two Orthodox Serbian priests had already been admitted on his recommendation.<sup>45</sup> Records from Halle in the 1740s and 1750s list Ukrainian students, including *Michael Trebuchowsky*, *Gaspar Dorumin*, *Petr Simonowskj*, *Maxim Koretzki*, *Joh. Hudowycz*, *Paulus de Kotczubey*, *Joh. Grann*, *Sabbas Gorgolius*, and others.<sup>46</sup>

Breslau was also a popular destination for Kyiv students. Among the first were Hryhorii Kozytyskyi and Mykola Motonis, who, after completing their logic course in 1747, continued their studies at the Elisabeth-Gymnasium. Other students from the Kyiv Academy followed, including *Paul Florinsky*, who arrived *ex Studio Kyoviensi*, and *Basilius Skovoroda*, brother of the well-known philosopher Hryhorii Skovoroda.<sup>47</sup>

From the 1740s, sons of the Ukrainian Cossack elite increasingly studied at German universities. The future Hetman Kyrylo Rozumovskiy was educated in Königsberg. Ivan Poletyka, son of a Cossack officer, and Vasyl Khanenko, son of a General Standard-bearer, studied medicine in Kiel. Vasyl Hudovych, the general treasurer, sent his sons Andrii and Ivan to Königsberg. The entire Kuliabka family, younger relatives of Rector Sylvester Kuliabka, also studied at German universities.<sup>48</sup>

## The Spread of German Education

The academic regulations of the 1720s and 1730s, such as the *Leges Academicae* of Rafail Zaborovskiy and the rules of Hedeon Vyshnevskiy, contained direct parallels with the Jesuit *Ratio studiorum*.<sup>49</sup> However, the situation changed in the mid-18th century. In 1763, when addressing a conflict be-

<sup>45</sup> Z. Csepregi (ed.), *Pietas Danubiana / Pietismus im Donautal (1693–1755): 437 Schreiben zum Pietismus in Wien, Preßburg und Oberungarn*, Budapest 2013, pp. 530, 534.

<sup>46</sup> D. Oljančyn, *Aus dem Kultur- und Geistesleben der Ukraine. II. Schule und Bildung. Anhang. Reußisch-ukrainische Studenten im Abendlande. (Verzeichnisse aus dem 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert.)*, "Kyrios. Vierteljahresschrift für Kirchen und Geistesgeschichte Osteuropas," 1937, Vol. 2, No. 1, p. 277.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 271.

<sup>48</sup> D. Oljančyn, *Aus dem Kultur- und Geistesleben der Ukraine. II. Schule und Bildung. Anhang. (Schluß.) Reußisch-ukrainische Studenten im Abendlande. (Verzeichnisse aus dem 16. bis 18. Jahrhundert.)*, "Kyrios. Vierteljahresschrift für Kirchen und Geistesgeschichte Osteuropas," 1937, Vol. 2, No. 2, pp. 351–366; A. Андреев, *Киевскими шляхами, in Русские студенты в немецких университетах XVIII – первой половины XIX века*, Москва 2005, pp. 161–172.

<sup>49</sup> К. Суториус, *Источники по истории преподавания православного латиноязычного богословия в России в первой половине XVIII века*, PhD dissertation, Санкт-Петербург 2008, p. 50.

tween students and the prefect, Samuil Myslavskyi referred not to Catholic prescriptions but to the *Spiritual Regulation* of Theophan Prokopovych and the rules of the universities of Wittenberg and Halle,<sup>50</sup> quoting paragraphs from the *Statuten der Friedrichs-Universität in Halle und ihrer Fakultäten vom 1. Juli 1694*.<sup>51</sup>

A key figure in the theological shift was Professor Sylvester Kuliabka, whose career reflected this transformation. Between 1735 and 1739, he taught philosophy following the traditional scholastic Aristotelian model; whereas from 1739 to 1745, he taught theology. Initially, he followed the established course model based on Jesuit examples. However, starting in 1743, he departed from this approach and began using German Lutheran authors, particularly *Loci theologici* by Matthias Hafenreffer (1561–1619). This change is visible even in the external structure of his course, where the traditional scholastic *disputationes* were replaced by *loci*.<sup>52</sup> This marked the first time (since Theophan Prokopovych) that a professor at the Kyiv Academy had taught theology using a Protestant author rather than following the Jesuit tradition.

Hegelmeier described how in 1739, he had persuaded Kuliabka to abandon scholasticism and turn to German authors. While in Kyiv, he tried to introduce a better system of philosophy and praised the German approach so enthusiastically that Kuliabka became eager to find out more. Hegelmeier sent him the works of Jean Le Clerc (1657–1736) and Johann Franz Buddeus (1667–1729), whose clarity and depth impressed Kuliabka so much that he insisted on keeping the books.<sup>53</sup> It seems that Kuliabka was ultimately convinced of the superiority of German theology over the Jesuit model, a result that would have pleased both Hegelmeier and Todorskyi, who may also have contributed to this transformation.

German influences reached the philosophy class at a later stage. Hedeon Slomynskyi, a student of Todorskyi, stated in the title of his *Cursus philosophicus* (1745–47) that the course had been enriched by the commentaries of leading authors, especially *clarissimus logicus* Bartholomäus Keckermann<sup>54</sup> († 1609);

<sup>50</sup> Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и документы...*, Vol. 3, Киев 1906, pp. 30–32.

<sup>51</sup> W. Schrader, *Geschichte der Friedrichs-Universität zu Halle*, Vol. 2, Berlin 1894, pp. 381–398.

<sup>52</sup> К. Суторис, *Богословский курс Сильвестра Кулябки в Киево-Могилянской академии (1741–1745) и влияние на него лютеранской схоластики*, “Религия. Церковь. Общество,” 2018, Vol. 7, pp. 288–310.

<sup>53</sup> Ch. W. Hegelmayer, *Nachrichten...*, p. 9.

<sup>54</sup> “[...] *doctis celeberrimorum authorum commentationibus, imprimis clarissimi logici Bartholomaei Keckermani [...] tritus*.” G. Slominski, *Cursus philosophicus ad rerum divinarum et humanarum cognitionem contendentibus in academia Mohylo-Zaborowsciana institutus...* Kazan, N. Lobachevsky Scientific Library, Department of Manuscripts, No 1569, fol. 1.

albeit with no actual use Keckermann's works. Instead, Slomynskyi used a textbook by the Parisian Aristotelian Pierre Barbay († 1664).<sup>55</sup> It cannot be ruled out that some fragments of Keckermann's works remain undetected. In any case, Slomynskyi expressed the intention to teach based on a German author, even though his course appeared outwardly Aristotelian.

The professor of philosophy who finally broke with scholastic Aristotelianism and introduced the German system was Davyd Nashchynskyi, a highly unconventional intellectual and educational reformer in Kyiv.

### The Philosophical Revolt of Davyd Nashchynskyi

Some scholars suggest that the young Davyd Nashchynskyi studied in Halle, Königsberg, Magdeburg, Görlitz, or Saxony. Such circumstances could explain why Nashchynskyi chose to cut ties with tradition and introduce a new philosophical system; especially if he had been a student of Friedrich Christian Baumeister (1709–85).<sup>56</sup> However, there is no evidence that Nashchynskyi ever studied abroad in German lands. On the contrary, records show that he remained in Kyiv for nearly the entire period of his studies and teaching.

Danylo Nashchynskyi was born in 1721 in Poltava into a Cossack family. From an early age, he was sent to study in Kyiv, where in April 1737 he was enrolled in the grammar class and the following year in the syntax class.<sup>57</sup> A biographical note compiled later in his life recorded that he had studied Latin, Greek, and German, as well as grammar, poetics, rhetoric, philosophy, and theology at the Kyiv Academy.<sup>58</sup>

Nashchynskyi also did not make the hypothetical trip abroad after completing his studies, as records consistently show him remaining in Kyiv as a teacher. In 1747/48, he taught grammar, and from 1748 to 1751, he taught syntax for three consecutive years.<sup>59</sup> In 1750, he took monastic vows at the St. Sophia Monastery, adopting the name Davyd.<sup>60</sup> In the 1751/52 academic

<sup>55</sup> М. Федяй, *Формування філософських традицій...*, p. 255.

<sup>56</sup> І. Мірчук, *Християн Вольф та його школа на Україні*, "Analecta Ordinis S. Basilii Magni," 1935, Vol. 6, p. 239; В. Козловський, *Вольф'янська система філософської освіти та її рецепція викладачами Києво-Могилянської академії*, in *Філософська освіта в Україні: Історія і сучасність*, ed. М. Ткачук, Київ 2011, p. 55.

<sup>57</sup> Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и документы...*, Vol. 1, Part 2, Киев 1904, pp. 52, 73.

<sup>58</sup> Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и документы...*, Vol. 3, Киев 1906, p. 368.

<sup>59</sup> Д. Вишневский, *Киевская академия...*, pp. 103, 118; Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и документы...*, Vol. 1, Part 1, Киев 1904, p. 409.

<sup>60</sup> Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и документы...*, Vol. 3, Киев 1906, p. 368.

year, he taught poetics and German, and the following year, rhetoric and German.<sup>61</sup> In the summer of 1753, Nashchynskyi was appointed prefect and professor of philosophy at the Kyiv Academy.<sup>62</sup>

This philosophy course of 1753–55 became a landmark for the Academy, as Davyd Nashchynskyi broke with several traditions that had been followed by Kyiv professors since the time of Petro Mohyla. Firstly, no manuscript notes of this course are known to researchers, which may indicate a renouncement of the traditional practice of note-taking—most likely, the professor and students relied exclusively on printed editions. Secondly, Nashchynskyi abolished disputations, which had been an essential part of the educational process in the early modern period. Thirdly, he rejected scholastic textbooks, both Aristotelian and Cartesian, structured around the *methodus disputationis*, and instead adopted *Institutiones Philosophiae Universae* by the German author Johann Heinrich Winkler (1703–70). This textbook, based on the *methodus mathematicus*, presented the philosophical system of Christian Wolff. Although it covered similar philosophical problems and was also written in Latin, this textbook differed significantly in its style, resembling modern educational manuals rather than medieval summae based on the syllogistic method.

These changes, especially the abolition of disputations, were evidently too radical for the Academy and prompted an intervention from the immediate authority—the Kyiv Metropolitan, Tymofii Shcherbatskyi. In May 1755, Shcherbatskyi asked Nashchynskyi why for the past two years he had not been invited to attend public disputations, which had always been an essential tradition of the Academy. Nashchynskyi replied that he taught philosophy using Winkler's *Institutiones Philosophiae Universae* and that “according to this author, it is in no way possible to conduct disputations.”<sup>63</sup> The Metropolitan allowed Nashchynskyi to complete the course with Winkler's textbook. However, for the following academic year, when Nashchynskyi was again scheduled to teach philosophy, Shcherbatskyi ordered that philosophy should be taught using Edme Pourchot's *Institutiones philosophiae*, which was clear and suitable for student exercises.<sup>64</sup>

The professor did not agree with the Metropolitan's decision. He argued that “now throughout Europe, the Wolffian philosophy is accepted and explained,” because it is “more solid, clearer, and more convincing” than Edme Pourchot's Cartesian system, not to mention the “old Jesuit systems.”

<sup>61</sup> Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и документы...*, Vol. 2, Киев 1905, pp. 30, 74.

<sup>62</sup> Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и документы...*, Vol. 1, Part 2, Киев 1904, pp. 95, 97–98.

<sup>63</sup> Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и документы...*, Vol. 2, Киев 1905, p. 151.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibidem*, p. 174.



He insisted that this philosophy was clear and understandable, well suited for teaching theology, and even cited a German scholar who on discovering Wolff's philosophy called for a rejection of obscure scholasticism: "the former darkness has been dispelled, light has appeared, everything is clear, and I see most things distinctly."<sup>65</sup> He proposed using the textbook of another follower of Wolff—Friedrich Christian Baumeister. To persuade the Metropolitan, Nashchynskyi recommended consulting the opinion of the Bishop of Mahiliou, Hryhorii Konyskyi, a former professor and rector of the Academy.

Indeed, the Metropolitan consulted Konyskyi on what he thought of the textbooks by Pourchot and Baumeister and whether the new Wolffian philosophical system should be allowed for teaching at the Academy. Konyskyi, who had once based his own teaching on the Aristotelian scholastic course of Theophan Prokopovych, ended up giving a response that determined the future direction of the Academy's philosophical tradition. He regretted not having these textbooks when he had taught philosophy himself; as he said, "I would not have wasted time on the rubbish of Aristotelian commentators."<sup>66</sup> In his view, Baumaister's textbook presented everything "thoroughly, firmly, and clearly." The logic was much clearer than the "rubbish of the scholastics," (*смѣттыя схолястиковѣ*)<sup>67</sup> the metaphysics was reliable, and the ethics opened the eyes to self-knowledge and the understanding of human's purpose. Although it lacked physics, this could be supplemented from other textbooks. In contrast, Pourchot's Cartesian textbook was, in his opinion, less practical and better suited for school than for real life. Furthermore, Descartes' philosophy, as Konyskyi and his Orthodox colleagues believed, was less compatible with Christian doctrine.<sup>68</sup>

Thus, it was decided that the Metropolitan would allow Nashchynskyi to teach using the Baumeister's textbook; but required him to conduct public disputations periodically and to supplement the sections on physics with other textbooks.

The following question arises—why did Nashchynskyi choose to abandon scholastic Aristotelianism, cultivated for over a century, or Cartesianism, which had been taught immediately before him, and instead turn to textbooks by German authors who were followers of Christian Wolff?

<sup>65</sup> "[...] *discussa est pristina illa caligo, diluxit, patet, video pleraque distincte* [...]." *Ibidem*, p. 176.

<sup>66</sup> "[...] на смѣттыхъ интерпретовѣхъ Аристотелевихъ времени всуе не потерялъ бы было [...]." *Ibidem*, p. 179.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 179–181.

The commonly accepted explanation—that he had studied in Germany or directly under Baumeister—has been shown to be incorrect.

Several factors help explain the situation. According to Nashchynskyi, Konyskyi, and other contemporaries, scholastic Aristotelianism was seen as outdated, prompting a search for alternatives. One possible candidate was Cartesianism, but it generally failed to gain acceptance among the Orthodox clergy, possibly because they favored dogmatism over the skepticism they often criticized. The philosophy of Christian Wolff offered a potential solution. It was dogmatic and thus resembled Aristotelianism and—importantly—it did not openly conflict with Christian doctrine. These qualities contributed to the growing influence of Wolffian philosophy at that time in the Catholic educational institutions of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.<sup>69</sup>

However, the main reason for choosing textbooks by German authors seems to have been the general dominance of the German language at the Academy during that period. Davyd Nashchynskyi studied in Kyiv at a time when, thanks to Simon Todorskyi and his students, German influence was becoming increasingly visible. He learned German; taught it for several years, and showed a keen interest in German intellectual trends. Although he did not study abroad, he had the opportunity to communicate with German colleagues and obtain German texts. For example, Nashchynskyi owned textbooks by Baumeister and Winkler in his personal library.

He proposed reforming the teaching of grammar. In his 1755 report to the Metropolitan, he noted that the lower classes were still using the already old-fashioned grammar textbook by Manuel Álvares (1526–82), while the more recent textbooks were being ignored. Nashchynskyi argued that Álvares's work was outdated because it was obscure for students, poorly structured, overly complex, and explained *obscurum per obscurum*. Later, he translated from German the grammar of Johannes Langius.<sup>70</sup>

Nashchynskyi applied a similar approach to the teaching of philosophy. As an opponent of scholasticism and a dogged advocate of German scholarship, he shifted away from the Academy's tradition of lectures and disputations, rejected Aristotelian *cursus philosophicus*, and adopted textbooks by Wolffian authors, thus initiating the most significant change in philosophy teaching since the founding of the Academy.

<sup>69</sup> S. Janeczek, *Spór o rolę wolffianizmu w polskim Oświeceniu*. Antoni Wisniewski SP a Christian Wolff, "Roczniki Filozoficzne," 1994, Vol. 42, No. 1, pp. 81–120; I. Stasiewicz-Jasiukowa, *Recepcja poglądów Christiana Wolffa w środowiskach katolickich polskiego Oświecenia*, "Analecta," 1998, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp. 53–69.

<sup>70</sup> Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и документы...*, Vol. 2, Киев 1905, p. 154; *Idem*, *Акты и документы...*, Vol. 3, Киев 1906, p. 59.

## The Establishment of Wolffian Philosophy

After receiving permission to use Friedrich Christian Baumeister's textbook, Davyd Nashchynskyi taught philosophy for only a short time. Against his will, he was appointed archimandrite of the Trinity Monastery in Slutsk and had to leave Kyiv.<sup>71</sup>

Nashchynskyi's successor was Avraam Florynskyi, who was not allowed to choose his own textbook and was instructed to continue teaching as Nashchynskyi had done so: "to present to the students the part of philosophy by Baumeister, begun by the former highly esteemed prefect hieromonk Davyd."<sup>72</sup> Thus, thanks to Nashchynskyi, Florynskyi had to maintain this tradition in his 1755–57 course.

The next professor of philosophy, Samuil Myslavskyi, played a key role in firmly establishing Wolffian philosophy in Kyiv. He taught his course in 1757–59; a time when professors had begun submitting annual reports on their courses. In such a report, Myslavskyi wrote: "In the philosophy class, over the past two years, the philosophy of the most modern author, renowned throughout Europe, the most famous disciple of Wolff, Friedrich Christian Baumeister, was taught to the students."<sup>73</sup> He further stated: "All parts of this philosophy, with their prefaces and prolegomena, were explained and thoroughly completed without the omission of a single page or term, with careful additions of various philosophical opinions."<sup>74</sup> In other sections of the report, he noted that when Baumeister lacked treatment of certain topics, he supplemented them from "various newer, clearer, and more renowned authors in Europe," dictating and explaining them to the students. He also conducted monthly and Saturday disputations, taught the *Canones*, and offered geography lessons based on Johann Hübner (1668–1731).<sup>75</sup>

<sup>71</sup> К. Кочегаров, *Киевская митрополия, князь Иероним Радзивилл и назначение Слуцким архимандритом Давида Нащинского в 1755 г.*, "Исторический вестник," 2020, Vol. 33, pp. 124–129.

<sup>72</sup> "[...] начатую бывимъ пречестнымъ префектомъ іеромонахомъ Давидомъ автора Бавмейстера философіи часть ученикамъ показывать [...]" Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и документы...*, Vol. 2, Киев 1905, pp. 181–184.

<sup>73</sup> "Въ школѣ философіи показывана ученикамъ чрезъ два года истекшіе философія auctoris recentissimi in universa, qua qua papet, Europa celebratissimi Volfii discipuli, Friderici Christiani Baumeisteri." *Ibidem*, p. 327.

<sup>74</sup> "Оныя философіи всѣ части, съ ихъ предисловіями и пролегоменами, не точію безъ упущенія и единого листа, но безъ оставленія и единого термѣна, которой бы аккуратнѣ, съ привнесеніемъ объ ономъ разныхъ философскихъ мнѣній, не изъясненъ былъ, истолкованы и дѣйствительно кончены." *Ibidem*.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 327–328.

While serving as prefect and professor of philosophy, Samuil Myslavskiy corresponded directly with Friedrich Christian Baumeister. Only a few short letters have survived; and in poor Russian translation. In the first surviving letter, Myslavskiy asked Baumeister to send his philosophy textbook to Kyiv. Baumeister replied that he had sent the book and advised Myslavskiy to take care of his health (perhaps Myslavskiy had mentioned health problems). In a later letter, Myslavskiy informed Baumeister that a student from Kyiv, who wished to study philosophy, would deliver his message and asked Baumeister to assist him. Myslavskiy also requested “some new books” for the Kyiv Academy, offering to pay. Baumeister replied warmly: “A worthy teacher of such students. God grant that I may be so fortunate as to have such students myself.”<sup>76</sup>

Samuil Myslavskiy was a leading exponent of Wolffian philosophy at the Kyiv Academy. An anonymous 1763 memorandum on educational reform stated: “The philosophy of Baumeister, a disciple of Wolff, is taught in the class; yet it has been claimed that Wolff was an atheist.”<sup>77</sup> Myslavskiy rejected this, defending Wolffian philosophy by pointing out that Wolff had earned the trust of Russian Emperor Peter I, and that Aristotle—described by Myslavskiy as an undeniable atheist—had been taught at the Academy until recently.<sup>78</sup> As a result, the Metropolitan issued a decree regulating the teaching of philosophy: “For two years, students are to be taught from the printed philosophy of the most recent author, Friedrich Christian Baumeister, a disciple of Wolff.” To dispel doubts about Wolff’s reputation, the Metropolitan added: “Wolff was a member of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences.”<sup>79</sup> Thanks to Myslavskiy, German Wolffian philosophy spread to other Ukrainian schools. For example, the 1769 regulations for the Kharkiv Academy required that Baumeister’s *Elementa philosophiae recentioris* be taught.<sup>80</sup>

The German philosophical system of Christian Wolff, mainly through the textbooks of Friedrich Christian Baumeister, dominated Kyiv and other

<sup>76</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 222–224.

<sup>77</sup> “Философія auctoris Wolffiani discipuli Baumeisteri преподається въ школъ; а слышно, яко доказано, что Wolffius былъ ateista.” Н. Петров (ed.), *Акты и докуменнты...*, Vol. 3, Киев 1906, p. 58.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 71–72.

<sup>79</sup> “Показывать ученикамъ чрезъ два года печатную философію auctoris recentissimi Friderici Christiani Baumeisteri, discipuli Volfiani; Volfius autem erat membrum Petropolinae scientiarum Academiae.” *Ibidem*, p. 83.

<sup>80</sup> А. Лебедев, *Харьковский коллегиум как просветительный центр слободской Украины до учреждения в Харькове университета*, Москва 1886, p. 64.

Ukrainian educational centers in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. This is evidenced by the holdings of school libraries as well as private book collections.<sup>81</sup> Several translations of Baumeister's works were published at that time.<sup>82</sup> In 1777, Kyiv graduate Mykola Bantysh-Kamenskyi published *Elementa philosophiae recentioris* in Latin in Moscow. In his preface, he praised Baumeister as "a man without equal, a man of the purest and most refined Latin, a man who stands as the foremost philosopher of our age."<sup>83</sup> He emphasized, in turn, the universal esteem in which Baumeister was held:

Almost the entire learned world, wherever it reaches, holds the works of this outstanding author in such esteem that, far from banning their use in schools, it urges their reading, study, and constant must-have on hand, even recommending that students, as it were, turn them into their very flesh and blood.<sup>84</sup>

Bantysh-Kamenskyi would note Baumeister's reputation in his homeland:

Our own republic of letters is so filled with admiration for this man that scarcely any branch of learning remains in which the minds of our youth are not directed toward refinement and education according to his philosophical principles.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Л. Посохова, *Твори мислителів доби Просвітництва у приватних бібліотеках духовенства Гетьманщини та Слобідської України другої половини XVIII – початку XIX ст.*, "Український історичний журнал," 2025, No. 3, p. 110.

<sup>82</sup> Х. Баумейстер, *Христіана Баумейстера Логика*, trans. А. Павлов, Москва 1760; Х. Бавмейстер, *Христіана Бавмейстера Логика*, trans. Я. Толмачев, Москва 1807; Х. Баумейстер, *Наставленія любуудріа нравоучителнаго, содержащаа любуудріе практическое, всеобщее право естественное, ивіку, и політику*, trans. П. Лодій, Львов 1790.

<sup>83</sup> "[...] 'Baumeisteri, viri incomparabilis, viri latinitatis purissimae candore longe suavisimi, viri, inter Philosophos hos nostrae aetatis, principis.'" F. Ch. Baumeister, *Elementa philosophiae recentioris, pluribus sententiis exemplisque ex veterum scriptorum Romanorum monumentis illustrata; nunc vero physica, nec non oeconomica, publica et ecclesiastica iurisprudentia, quibus accessit duplex appendix, exhibens regulas disputandi atque distinguendi, aucta; usibusque iuventutis Rossicae adornata*, ed. N. Bantisch-Kamenski. Mosquae 1777, p. IV.

<sup>84</sup> "[...] cum fere totus, quaque patet, eruditus orbis, praestantissimi huius auctoris scripta, eo in pretio habeat, ut tantum abest usum eorum in scholis interdicat, ut potius omne studium, in eis lectitandis, tractandis et semper in sinu suo circumferendis, colligandum esse inculcet, imo in succum et sanguinem, ut aiunt, convertenda esse commendet." *Ibidem*.

<sup>85</sup> "[...] cum nostra etiam literaria Respublica tanto viri huius amore teneatur, ut vix aut ne vix quidem aliqua doctrinarum sedes relicta fuerit, in qua iuventutis nostrae animi, non eiusdem praeceptis Philosophicis poliendi excolendique praecipiantur." *Ibidem*.


As can be discerned by such declarations, the dominance of German Wolffian philosophy in Kyiv and the Ukrainian lands at this time was comparable only to the earlier absolute reign of *dux philosophorum* Aristotle, as interpreted by early modern scholastics.

## Conclusions

The educational transformation at the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy in the mid-18th century was rooted in student mobility. The spread of the German language and growing interest in German scholarship in Kyiv began with Simon Todorskyi's studies in Halle. Upon his return, he introduced the knowledge he had acquired into the Academy's teaching. As a result, the institution shifted its intellectual orientation from the Catholic academies of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to Protestant centers of learning. This reorientation was supported by contacts with German publishers, continued student mobility, and an increasing interest in German culture. These changes eventually affected the higher disciplines—philosophy and theology—as professors seeking to modernize their curricula adopted textbooks by German authors. Thus, European philosophical ideas entered Kyiv through networks of mobility and communication, becoming part of the local academic environment.

Whereas in the 17th century, nearly all professors and rectors of the Academy had studied at Western universities, academic mobility significantly declined in the early 18th century, largely due to Kyiv's growing integration into the Russian Empire and its increasing isolation from European intellectual discourse. However, as this study has shown, contacts with the West did not disappear entirely. Although Davyd Nashchynskyi, Avraam Florynskyi, and Samuil Myslavskyi did not study abroad, new educational practices and ideas reached Kyiv through direct connections with German intellectual centers—via book purchases, private correspondence, and other channels. Notably, changes in Kyiv's educational tradition occurred in parallel with developments at Polish institutions, where professors in the 1740s and 1750s, seeking alternatives to outdated scholastic teaching methods ideas, found them in the philosophical system of Christian Wolff.

This turn towards Wolffian philosophy marked the end of the long-standing dominance of scholastic Aristotelianism in Kyiv, which was based on the Catholic *cursus philosophicus* and taught since the founding of the Collegium in 1632. By the mid-18th century, both the content and methods of teaching changed dramatically. From 1753 onwards, Aristotelianism and Cartesianism were replaced with textbooks written by Christian

Wolff's followers—especially *Elementa philosophiae recentioris* by Friedrich Christian Baumeister. These innovations, which initially met with resistance from the Kyiv metropolitan, were soon officially approved. As a consequence, Wolffian philosophy was adopted by Kyiv professors, who saw it as a modern and widely recognized alternative to outdated scholasticism; and one that was compatible with Christian doctrine. 

MYKOŁA FEDIAI – PhD, is a research assistant at the Centre for the History of Renaissance Knowledge, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, Polish Academy of Sciences, and a research fellow at the H. Skovoroda Institute of Philosophy, National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine. His research focuses on early modern philosophy, manuscript culture, and the intellectual history of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy, with particular attention to educational exchange between Catholic and Orthodox traditions. He prepared a critical edition of the Latin manuscript course *Philosophia moralis seu Ethica*, published in 2024 as part of the volume *Teophanes Prokopowicz, Ethica sive scientia morum* (1708); *Michael Kozaczynski, Philosophia moralis seu Ethica* (1740). ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8102-4036>

MYKOŁA FEDIAI – doktor filozofii, asystent w Centre for the History of Renaissance Knowledge w Instytucie Filozofii i Socjologii Polskiej Akademii Nauk, pracownik Instytutu Filozofii im. H. Skorowody Narodowej Akademii Nauk Ukrainy. Zajmuje się filozofią wczesnonowożytną, kulturą rękopiśmienną i historią intelektualną Akademii Kijowsko-Mohylańskiej, szczególnie w kontekście relacji między tradycjami katolickimi i prawosławnymi. Przygotował edycję krytyczną łacińskiego rękopisu *Philosophia moralis seu Ethica*, który ukazał się w roku 2024 w tomie *Teophanes Prokopowicz, Ethica sive scientia morum* (1708); *Michael Kozaczynski, Philosophia moralis seu Ethica* (1740). ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8102-4036>

