Scholars in Exile

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Establishment

The founding of the Ukrainian Economic Academy in Czechoslovakia was initiated by the Ukrainian Civic Committee. As noted, the committee played an important role in distributing financial assistance from the Czechoslovak government to Ukrainians. Using its contacts in government circles, the committee – led by Shapoval – was vital in establishing the institution as well as providing financial and logistical support in the initial stages of its development. Overall, this committee was instrumental in the life of the Ukrainian émigré community in Czechoslovakia in the 1920s. Besides founding the academy, the committee established several other important institutions, namely the Ukrainian Higher Pedagogical Institute, the Ukrainian secondary education evaluation courses (matura), the secondary education evaluation courses in Josefov, the Ukrainian Sociological Institute (Ukrains’kyi instytut hromadoznavstva, 1925–32), the Ukrainian Civic Publishing Fund (Ukrains’kyi hromads’kyi vydavnnychyi fond), and the Ukrainian National Museum and Archive, as well as several other professional courses. An important role in the creation of the academy was also played by the All-Ukrainian Union of Agricultural Technicians (Vseukrains’ka spilka sil’s’ko-hospodars’kykh tekhnikiv), which was based in Poland at the time; members of this group were invited to Czechoslovakia to teach in the future institution and created the curriculum. The Czechoslovak government provided generous – indeed, crucial – support to the academy.1

The academy’s organizing committee was formed in January 1922 with the goal of helping Ukrainian scholars in the Ukrainian lands and abroad. It also aimed to prepare young Ukrainian intellectuals to enter the technical and economic sectors. The committee members included Shapoval, writer and pedagogue Nykyfir Hryhoryiv (1883–1953), doctor of medicine Borys Matiushenko, economist and
sociologist Oleksander Mytsiuk (1883–1943), arboriculturist Mykola Kotsiura, economist Borys Martos, civic and political leader Solomon Gol’del’man (1885–1974), pedagogue Ivan Palyvoda (1885–1985), and Mykola Halahan (1882–1955), who was named secretary. The committee engaged in correspondence with the council of the union in Poland, whose members received with enthusiasm the idea of creating the academy and were eager to take part in it. The union included, for example, the expert hydrotechnologist Ivan Shovheniv (1874–1943) and engineer Oleksander Mykhailovs’kyi (1882–1932). For its part, the Czechoslovak government received the idea of a private Ukrainian economic institution positively, although some Czechs as well as Ukrainians were opposed to it. Their argument was that the Ukrainians did not have enough qualified people to teach at such an institution. Czech professors from the Higher Agronomic and Forestry School (Vyšší agro- nomická a lesnická škola) in Prague proposed establishing separate Ukrainian departments within the Czech Higher Technical University in Prague (České vysoké učení technické), which would teach in areas relevant to the Ukrainian economy. After various issues were resolved, initial opposition was overcome; the initiative to establish an independent Ukrainian technical school gained the government’s support, and on 25 February 1922, Masaryk warmly received the delegation.

Several cities and towns across Czechoslovakia were considered for the location of the future academy: Chrudim in eastern Bohemia, Tábor in southern Bohemia, and Roudnice (now Roudnice nad Labem) in the north, as well as Brno, the capital of Moravia. Brno was especially seriously discussed, as the idea was to establish the academy within the Higher Agronomic School in Brno (Vysoká škola zemědělská v Brně). However, the time was ripe for the opening of the academy, and any delay threatened to void the undertaking altogether. So the committee acted quickly and decided to temporarily open the academy in Poděbrady, a spa town near Prague, and later transfer it to Brno.

The civic committee developed a statute for the institution. In April, it had received confirmation from the Ministry of Agriculture that the submitted statute would be approved, thus enabling the activities to start immediately. The first joint meeting of the professors, who were appointed by the organizing committee, had taken place earlier, on 28 April 1922. The agriculture ministry approved the institution and signed the decree that established the private Ukrainian Economic Academy in Czechoslovakia on 16 May 1922. However, disagreements arose quickly regarding how to interpret certain rights and obligations, and this led to issues between the committee and the academy’s faculty council. The institution was granted independent status by the foreign ministry on 28 August 1923; from that point on it dealt with the
government directly, without the committee as mediator. On 23 May 1925, a new statute was enacted that transformed the academy into an institution of higher learning with a four-year program, and with Ukrainian and Czech as the languages of instruction.5

**Goals**

The aim of the academy was to prepare students to participate in the future economic development of an independent Ukraine by educating them in various technical fields. It also intended to gather Ukrainian scholars in those fields, thereby creating a centre of Ukrainian scholarship. This technical academy would train agronomists, forestry specialists, statisticians, technologists, economists, and others. Moreover, the academy sought to create not only highly skilled professionals but also well-rounded and competent individuals. The founding of the academy in Czechoslovakia – a country with a developed economic culture – was a sterling opportunity for Ukrainians to learn from the best practices of the Czech economy. This was extremely important for the academy’s development and success.6

Besides preparing a new generation of professionals in a variety of fields, the academy took on an additional mission – to develop technical and economic fields theoretically and create a new professional literature in Ukrainian. At that time, science textbooks in the Ukrainian language were almost non-existent. Future students would require them, so the production of textbooks in various technical fields was an extremely important task for the professors. For lecturers, creating textbooks in their fields was a prerequisite for promotion, with the result that many textbooks were written in a variety of fields during the school’s first year of operation alone. Terminology presented a considerable challenge and would need to be established. To that end, terminological committees were created in every department, after which a single common committee was struck, led by renowned civic leader and philanthropist Ievhen Chykalenko (1861–1929). This committee included Ukrainian-language experts Valeria O’Konnor-Vilins’ka (1866–1930) and Modest Levyts’kyi (1866–1932).7

While visiting Poděbrady on 9 May 1923, President Masaryk visited the academy, where he was warmly welcomed by the teaching staff and students. It was an opportunity for the academy to show the president its efforts and achievements and to express profound gratitude to the Czechoslovak government for its support. In his brief speech, Masaryk expressed satisfaction that the government had been able to implement Slavic programs and help support the undertakings of Slavic nations.8
Structure and Study Program

From 1922 until 1928, regarding the organization of its programs of study, the academy was subordinate to the Education Department of the Ministry of Agriculture. At the same time, it reported to the foreign ministry on all administrative and organizational matters, and that ministry also provided financial assistance and scholarships to underprivileged students. After 1928, the academy reported only to the agriculture ministry, which also approved decrees regarding the professional development training certification of the teaching staff as well as elections for administrative positions. However, the academy enjoyed a high degree of autonomy in its academic affairs and administration. Its management was built on democratic principles; the highest governing body was the council of professors, with faculty affairs falling under the professorial councils of the academy’s three departments. As the executive body, the senate oversaw administrative and economic matters; it consisted of the rector, the vice-rector, three deans, and the secretary of the professorial council. The academy applied the best practices of the Czechoslovak technical schools, while tailoring its curriculum to the needs of Ukrainian lands. This institution, like other Ukrainian institutions of higher learning in Czechoslovakia, always hoped its students would return home. Thus, the academy’s departments were created with an eye to the economic and technical needs of various Ukrainian lands, for which it prepared its graduates.9

The academy had three departments: Agriculture and Forestry, Economics and Cooperative (which included a statistics section), and Engineering, composed of the hydro-technical and chemical-technological sections. Overall, there were fifty-nine subdivisions: nineteen in the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, twenty in the Department of Economics and Cooperatives, and twenty in the Department of Engineering. Table 11 provides information about these departments and their offices (kabinet) and laboratories.

Supplementary units at the academy included a terminology committee, a forestry nursery, a meteorological station, a tractor garage, a training consumer cooperative, and a training credit cooperative. In addition to seminars in various subjects, the academy offered special classes (lek-tury) in foreign languages, among other additional classes. The duration of the program was four academic years, divided into eight semesters. Students who finished the entire program and who passed their exams received the title of engineer, with their area of expertise specified: economist, forester, agronomist, technologist, or hydraulic engineer. In addition, students had the option of continuing their studies and receiving a
Table 11. Offices and laboratories at the academy

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<td>Pedology</td>
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<td>Construction</td>
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<td>Application of Hydropower</td>
<td>Agrochemistry</td>
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<td>Geodesy</td>
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<td>Geology and Mineralogy</td>
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<td>Hydraulic Engineering</td>
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<td>Entomology and Zoology</td>
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Finance

The Czechoslovak government’s subsidies for the academy varied every year, for they were tied to the needs of the academy as well as to
the overall Czechoslovak budget earmarked for assisting émigrés. In the first year, the academy received 70,000 crowns of financial support monthly; the subsidies were increased to 250,000 crowns in 1927. In this peak year of the academy’s activities, by which time the organizational process had been completed and normal operations had begun, the academy’s expenses, including student scholarships, were 2,777,848 crowns (a little over US$84,000). The professors themselves made much of the laboratory equipment, which helped save money. After 1928, the financial assistance started to decrease, and the academy was prohibited from accepting new students and ordered to prepare for a slow closure. By 1931, annual assistance for the academy had decreased to 1.6 million crowns and the estimated cost of all its inventoried property was 1.573 million crowns; the most valuable assets were the library and the geodesy, botany, physics, and chemistry labs. The academy’s true wealth, however, was non-monetary, held in various systematically created collections and their utility for the academy’s learning process.

Students also received financial support from various organizations that the academy’s staff and students had themselves created. Especially noteworthy were the activities of the Charitable Relief Committee (Blahodiino-dopomohovyi komitet), which raised funds from Ukrainians in or outside Czechoslovakia. In reality, however, those funds were raised from individuals close to the academy: professors, staff, and the students themselves. The first two voluntarily imposed deductions from their salaries in order to help poor students. Between 1926 and 1931, 530,000 crowns were collected in this way: 52.3 per cent from professors and staff, 10.6 per cent from students, and 19.9 per cent in the form of subsidies from the academy and affiliated organizations. Only 17.2 per cent was raised from other Ukrainians, with Bukovynians was the most generous in their donations. Another organization that assisted students was the Student Support Committee (Komitet dopomohy studentam), which operated in accordance with the budget approved by the academy’s financial committee. This committee – the members of which were professors and students – provided students with clothing, arranged medical assistance for them, helped their families, and provided them with small loans. Also, alumni of the academy established a scholarship to enable students without means to study.

Faculty

The academy’s teaching staff consisted of professors, assistant professors, lecturers, assistants, auxiliaries, and technical staff. The professors and assistant professors possessed higher education degrees in their
fields. Most of the other teaching personnel had obtained higher education qualifications in Czechoslovakia. Several obstacles to staff expansion were encountered besides financial ones: it was difficult to find appropriate staff for the academy’s programs due to the thin ranks of the Ukrainian scientific force. Over time, however, the staff numbers grew. By 1928, the teaching staff consisted of 25 professors, 21 assistant professors, 16 lecturers, and 10 assistants. From 1922 to 1932, the academy had 118 teaching staff, of whom 92 were from the Ukrainian lands and 26 were Czechs. At its height, the academy had 96 teaching staff.\footnote{15}

Most of the teaching staff had participated in the events of 1917–21 in Ukraine, and some had been members of the government of the Ukrainian People’s Republic. Among the faculty were statistician Fedir Shcherbyna, economist Valentyn Sadov’s’kyi (1886–1945), geodesist Leonid Hrabyna (1885–1971), agronomist Viktor Domanyts’kyi (1893–1962), chemist Serhii Komarets’kyi (1881–1952), and cooperative organizer Serhii Borodaievs’kyi (1870–1942). In Czechoslovakia, they were building the academy and providing education to students who, at least initially, consisted largely of former soldiers. These former politicians, having fallen short in their efforts to found an independent country, now tried to educate these former soldiers and thereby create experts for a future independent Ukraine. As Rusova recalls in her memoirs:

Many professors who taught at the academy often did not have any teaching experience in a higher learning institution; some of them did not even speak Ukrainian. But these people tackled books and became immersed in them with youthful enthusiasm, whole nights they were working on preparing their lectures and working on their latest scientific discoveries, which they enthusiastically presented to their audience. So far from Ukraine, Ukrainian science grew in a small Czech resort. For that we feel eternal gratitude to the organizers of the academy and to the Czechoslovak government that financed its development. In three or four years, very valuable work has been accomplished in the form of textbooks for high schools that interested also other scientists. [Also], collections for zoology, geology, forestry and other fields were created, which surprised even the Americans, who came to Czechoslovakia to examine various cultural institutions.\footnote{16}

The teaching staff lived modestly. Each professor received 1,800 crowns a month, assistant professors 1,500 crowns, and lecturers 1,200 crowns, which was quite modest. For professors and associate professors, that was the equivalent of 48 and 41 US dollars, respectively. The ministry transferred funds to the academy each month, and the
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professors determined their own salaries and other expenses. Assigning themselves minimal salaries allowed them to hire more people.17

The rectors throughout the academy’s years of operation were the scientist and engineer Ivan Shovheniv, the forester Borys Ivanyts’ky, and professor of construction Serhiy Tymoshenko (1881–1950). The first rector, Shovheniv, was born in the Kharkiv region. From 1893 to 1899, he studied at the Institute of Transport (Institut putei soobshcheniia) in St Petersburg. He also studied in Germany and the United States. For eleven years, he worked on or led a variety of hydro projects on various rivers in the Russian empire, and he later became the state inspector of shipping. Shovheniv was more than a good practitioner; he was also a theoretician who produced many works in his field. In 1917 he moved to Kyiv and accepted the post of director of the Water Department in the Ukrainian People’s Republic government. Over several years at that post, he organized Ukraine’s water management while simultaneously serving as a professor at the Polytechnic School in Kyiv. After the Bolsheviks established their rule, along with other members of the government, he moved to Czechoslovakia, where he served as rector of the Ukrainian Economic Academy between 1922 and 1928. At the same time, he taught as a guest professor at the Czech Higher Technical University. During this period he published extensively, producing technical books and textbooks in Ukrainian, including the following: *Analitychna heometriia na ploshchi* (Analytical Geometry of Two Dimensions, 1923), published in Poděbrady; *Hydraulika. Ch. 1. Hydrostatyka* (Hydraulics. Part 1. Hydrostatics, 1923), also published in Poděbrady; and *Hidravlika pidzemnykh vod* (Ground-Water Hydraulics, 1929), published in Prague. After the academy closed, he moved to Poland, where he worked as a contract inspector for melioration projects until his death in 1943.18

Another rector of the academy, Ivanyts’kyi, was born in 1878 in Sumy, a town founded by Cossacks in the mid-seventeenth century. His father was an agronomist from the gentry, his mother was a Ukrainized Pole. From 1897 to 1902, Ivanyts’kyi studied at the St Petersburg Forestry Institute (Sankt-Peterburgskii lesnoi institut), where he specialized in arboriculture. While there, he joined a number of student organizations, with which he participated in demonstrations until he was arrested. In St Petersburg, he took up the Ukrainian cause and joined the Ukrainian Student Hromada (Ukrains’ka students’ka hromada). In 1901, he was sent to Poltava, where he established close ties with local pro-Ukrainian individuals. Until 1917, he worked as a forester, primarily in the northern part of the Kyiv region. He gained considerable experience in forestry, and in 1907 Prosvita in Kyiv published his work,
which became the first work on forestry published in Ukrainian. At that time, he was also a member of a forestry society in Kyiv that held meetings and offered professional lectures on various topics. During the revolutionary years 1917 to 1920, Ivanyts’kyi, along with Shapoval, established the Forestry Department of the Ukrainian People’s Republic government. Taking an active part in the reorganization of forestry in the new Ukraine, Ivanyts’kyi planned several congresses for foresters. After the Ukrainian national revolution failed, he fled to Vinnytsia and then to Kam’ianets’-Podil’s’kyi in Ukraine before ending up in Tarnów in Poland. There, a union of former ministers was created, of which he became head. Ivanyts’kyi helped develop a plan for a two- or three-year economic school, which later served as the template for the academy in Poděbrady. He contacted Shapoval at the civic committee with this plan and the idea of organizing a technical school, providing a list of union members who might staff the planned institution. Later, along with Shovheniv and others, he was invited to teach in the new establishment. There, he served as rector, vice-rector, and dean of the Forestry Department. He taught dendrology, forestry, and forest policy, besides taking on some teaching in forest protection. 19

Another rector of the academy was Serhii Tymoshenko, who was born in the Chernihiv region in 1881. He finished his schooling in the Poltava region and studied at the Institute of Civil Engineers in St Petersburg, where he belonged to the Hromada and participated in Ukrainian life. After finishing his studies in 1906, he moved to Kovel, in the Volhynia region, and then to Kyiv. In 1909, he relocated to Kharkiv, where he served as chief architect for the North-Donets’ Railways. In this most productive period of his life he designed many buildings in and around Kharkiv, and during this time received ten architectural awards. Tymoshenko saw his mission as the restoration of the old Ukrainian style in architecture. In 1917, when the revolution broke out, he became an official in the Kharkiv region and later fought with the army of the Ukrainian People’s Republic’s. Between 1921 and 1924 he lived in L’viv, where he worked on several projects, including a hotel on Potots’ky Street and the redesign of a church in that city’s Levandivka district. With his family, Tymoshenko came to Poděbrady in 1924, where he taught architecture and agricultural construction. His lectures were well structured and informative, and he got along well with his students, dedicating considerable amounts of time to them. In 1930, he returned to Lutsk, a city in the Volhynia region, where he worked on many architectural projects close to his heart. He survived the war and emigrated to the United States in 1946, settling in California. Over the course of his life, he designed more than four hundred buildings and
complexes in cities where Ukrainians lived, not only in Ukraine, but also in Canada, in Toronto, Edmonton, Saskatoon, and Vancouver.\textsuperscript{20}

These three rectors differed in their backgrounds, personalities, and professional fields, but in some ways they were also similar. All were born in eastern Ukraine, which at the time was part of the Russian empire. All of them studied their professions in St Petersburg and then worked for many years in their respective fields in different parts of the empire. Shovheniv worked in the central region of the Russian empire; Ivanyts’kyi and Tymoshenko spent their professional careers in the Ukrainian lands. In Poděbrady, all three contributed greatly to the academy’s development.

It is interesting to note that twenty-six of the professors at the academy were Czechs. They had been invited to teach there because in some fields there were no experts among the Ukrainian émigrés. Their presence was also meant to develop and strengthen professional ties between Czechs and Ukrainians. Among these Czech scholars were the Czech Higher Technical University professor of forestry and dendrology Vilibald Ševčík (1890–1945), the Czech Higher Technical University professor of the history of cooperation and cooperative law Antonín Hůlka (1892–?), and Karel Dusl (1884–1948), a mathematician and professor at the same institution. One of the Czech professors was the renowned chemist, physiologist, and biologist Julius Stoklasa (1857–1936). Well-known in the field of agricultural chemistry and biology, Stoklasa contributed to the organization of higher education in agriculture in Czechoslovakia. He was founder and first dean of the Department of Agronomy at the Czech Higher Technical University and founder of the Czechoslovak Agricultural Academy. At the academy, he taught agrochemistry and a course titled New Ideas in Agronomy.\textsuperscript{21}

Almost fifty years later, one of the students of the academy, Valentyn Simiantsiv (1899–1992), recalled in his memoirs the Czech professor Rudolf Kukač (1889–1957), who taught ferroconcrete at the Czech Higher Technical University in Prague and was a very good teacher, although a demanding one. Simiantsiv also remembered another Czech professor, Jan Vladimír Hráský (1857–1939), who came from a Czech family in Galicia. Hrásky was widely recognized in Czechoslovakia as an expert in hydrology as well as an engineer, balneologist, and architect. To his students, Hrásky often recalled the land of his birth and expressed his warm feelings toward Ukrainians. Simiantsiv also mentioned Czech professor Theodor Ježdík (1889–1967), who taught hydrotechnics, and passed on as much of his knowledge as possible to his students.\textsuperscript{22}

There were other Czechs teachers at the academy, including soil scientist Vladimír Kosil (pseud. Vladimír Gössl (1898–1977)); one of the
republic’s leading forestry experts, Vojtěch Kaisler (1870–1943); and
doctor and veterinarian Theodor Kašpárek (1864–1930). Over time, as
the Czech professors at the academy became familiar with the work of
the Ukrainian professors, they established respectful and friendly rela-
tions with them. Whether the Czech professors taught at the academy
for career, financial, or other reasons, they did their jobs well and left a
significant mark on the lives and professional growth of their students.
It is noteworthy that professional collaboration took place between the
Czech and Ukrainian scientists and engineers.

Students

The composition of academy’s students changed over the years. Initial-
ly, they were former soldiers of the Ukrainian People’s Republic and
the Western Ukrainian People’s Republic, as well as the children of
members of former governments, so the academy was largely an émi-
gré institution. After 1926, more and more Ukrainian students from
Galicia and Volhynia came to study because there were no Ukrainian
institutions of higher learning in Polish-ruled Galicia, and especially
none that provided a technical education. There were also some stu-
dents from the Kuban region.23

Many of the former soldiers had fled the internee camps in Poland
in the hope of finding support in liberal Czechoslovakia. These young
men had had their educations interrupted by the war, and those who
had already graduated often found that their documents had gone
missing during the turbulent years. In 1922, to prepare these young
people for further studies, secondary education courses were created
in order to qualify them for higher institutions. The director of these
courses was professor of mathematics Ievhen Ivanenko (1883–1941). A
few years later, the courses were terminated, but those who had yet to
take those exams could do so at the academy in the presence of a rep-
resentative of the Czechoslovak education ministry. The Czechoslovak
government, besides subsidizing the academy and other institutions,
tried to maintain some form of control over the professional and ed-
ucational level of students entering them. After finishing the courses,
students went on to Ukrainian or Czechoslovak schools. Those who
wanted to study in schools that were tailored towards the future needs
of Ukraine went to Ukrainian schools. Some students chose to study
fields that the academy did not offer and sought diplomas from Czech-
oslovak institutions of higher learning.24

A total of 786 students enrolled in the academy, with their numbers
divided fairly equally among the three departments. In the years with
the highest activities, 1926 and 1927, 613 students studied there. With
the agreement and support of the Czechoslovak government, the acad-
emy gathered Ukrainian youth not only from Czechoslovakia but also
from Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Germany, Austria, Latvia,
and Turkey. Most of the students were Ukrainians, but some Belarus-
ians, Czechs, and Jews studied there as well. Of special interest is the
case of the Belarusians; they did not have their own school, so they of-
ten studied at the Ukrainian one. Overall, 559 students graduated from
the academy.25

Some statistics are available on Ukrainian, Belarusian, and Georgian
students in Czechoslovakia from 1919 to mid-1924. These data tell us
the student composition during the earlier stages of the academy’s ex-
istence. Out of 1,824 surveyed students, 45.6 per cent came from Galicia
and 42.6 per cent from Dnieper Ukraine; 91.6 per cent were men and
only 8.4 per cent were women. During these years, only 32.3 per cent
of students entered the country legally with visas, while 64.3 per cent
came without. In these years, 82.5 per cent of the men who enrolled at
the academy were single; married men constituted only 12.3 per cent.
During that time, 52 per cent of the students had had their higher edu-
cation interrupted as a result of war mobilization; 15 per cent as a result
of the war for independence, and 13 per cent for both reasons. Overall,
80 per cent of students had had to pause their education. In Czecho-
slovakia, almost two thirds of the surveyed students chose to receive
higher technical education. Student health during that period was a
great concern, especially for those who had lung catarrh or tuberculo-
sis, who constituted 36.5 per cent of the surveyed students. There were
also the war-wounded, who of course required extra care. According
to the same survey, 61.6 per cent of the students reported poor health.26

The students who received scholarships to the academy were required
upon graduation to work in the Ukrainian lands one and a half years
for every year they had spent there. Kateryna Antonovych recalled that
students studied hard and had to pass all their exams each semester. If
they did not pass their tests, scholarships were not paid to them. She
also remembered that relations between professors and students were
open and sincere.27 During summers, students worked or took appren-
ticeships in various industries to obtain hands-on experience. Future
hydro-technologists found apprenticeships on construction sites; fu-
ture technologists practised their craft in factories. In addition, students
took occasional part-time jobs in the academy’s laboratories and offices.
Simiantsiv recalled in his memoir that the Ukrainian students had not
expected the warm welcome they received in Czechoslovakia. He re-
called that during their apprenticeships the students worked not only
for the money but also because they were truly interested in obtaining new skills, and they did their jobs well. They also worked on construction and in other fields to complement their modest incomes.28

Naturally, there were many moments in the lives of these young people that were unrelated to study or work. The hopes of Ukrainian students to return home were high in the 1920s but had waned by the 1930s, and this certainly affected them. Rusova in her memoir recalled instances of suicide and alcoholism; Simiantsiv recalled that one student shot himself and that another poisoned himself as a result of unrequited love for a Czech woman. Simiantsiv recalled several get-togethers, which were attended by students from various Slavic nations – Czechs, Serbs, Croats, Bulgarians, Slovaks, and Slovenes – during his early years in Czechoslovakia. As for Czech society in Poděbrady, Ukrainian students did not manage to assimilate. Simiantsiv wrote that this was mainly because the Ukrainians did not try hard enough; another reason was their poverty.29

Some students – especially those with considerable talent for their fields – devoted themselves fully to their studies. The academy saw it as one of its tasks to prepare new scientists and teachers for institutions of higher learning in Ukraine. Scholarships were established at the academy to support these young students, who were eager to do scholarly work; twenty-four of these scholarship holders later joined the academy’s staff. Some of them continued their research after finishing at the academy, some wrote many scholarly and professional works, and some were esteemed researchers in various research institutes.30

Fifty organizations were active at the academy over the years. Nine were of a scholarly and professional nature, ten educational, twelve economic, and nineteen related to culture or sports. Some of these organizations included only professors, some only students, and some both, and alumni of the academy often remained members. These organizations, which arranged discussions, performances, lectures, and concerts, greatly enriched the lives of students and their teachers. Some of these organizations established contacts with other Ukrainian, Czechoslovak, and international organizations. Examples of the latter included the Society for the League of Nations (Tovarystvo dla Lihy Natsii) in the international Union for the League of Nations, and the Union of Organizations of Ukrainian Émigré Engineers Abroad (Soiuz orhanizatsii inzheneriv ukraintsiv na emihratsii), in which alumni and various organizations took active roles. Likewise, the Ukrainian Sokil Society (Tovarystvo “Ukrains’kyi Sokil”) had some contact with the Czechoslovak and other Slavic Sokil societies. These organizations also undertook some publishing activities, though their efforts were not
sustained. Examples include *Nasha hromada* (Our Community) – the student organ of the Academic Community (Akademichna hromada), and *Ukrains’kyi ekonomist* (Ukrainian Economics) – the organ the Society of Ukrainian Economists (Tovarystvo ukrains’kykh ekonomistiv).\(^3\)

After graduation, some of the young engineers found employment in Galicia, Volhynia, and the Transcarpathian region. They helped significantly improve regional agriculture, especially in Galicia. Other economists and financiers worked in Czechoslovakia, Poland, and later in the United States and Canada. According to the available data, as of 1931, the engineers were working in sixteen countries: 189 in Czechoslovakia (including the Transcarpathian region), 185 in Poland (including Galicia), 14 in the United States, 11 in France, 6 in Germany, 5 in Soviet Ukraine, 5 in Canada, 4 in Romania, 3 in China, 2 in Brazil, 2 in Argentina, and 1 in each of Bulgaria, Belgium, Luxemburg, Lithuania, and Switzerland. In all of these countries they built reputations for themselves as knowledgeable professionals, which boosted the academy’s reputation in the Ukrainian lands and beyond. Notwithstanding the difficulties of émigré life, the academy had allowed them to establish a solid base for their future lives as professionals and as human beings. This school had created a learning environment for them – something that would not have been possible in their homeland.\(^3\)

**Scholarly Activities**

The academy’s professors and lecturers took part in many conferences in Czechoslovakia and abroad. Examples are abundant. In Czechoslovakia, Isaak Mazepa (1884–1952) participated in the Czechoslovak Congress of Natural Scientists and Doctors; Domanys’kyi presented at the International Agricultural Congress in Prague; the agronomist Volodymyr Cherediiv (1885–1961) participated in the International Congress of Slavic Botanists in Prague; and Hrabyna took part in the International Scholarly Congress of Geodesy and Geographic Union in Prague in 1927. In April 1932, Borodaievs’kyi participated in the International Congress of Middle Class in Prague. Academy professors also took part in the International Economic Conference in 1928 in Prague. Professors tried to participate in conferences in other countries as well. For instance, in 1924, professors Martos and Borodaievs’kyi represented the academy at the Eleventh Congress of the International Cooperative Alliance in Ghent, Belgium. Hrabyna took part in the International Congress of Surveyors in Paris in 1926. In October 1932, Borodaievs’kyi took part in the Conference of Founders of International Scholarly Co-operative Institute in Basel, where he was admitted as a member. In addition, members of the
Society of Ukrainian Engineers (Tovarystvo ukrains’kykh inzheneriv) took part in the Congress of Slavic Engineers.33

Many of the academy’s scholars participated in the two Ukrainian congresses, which were held in 1926 and 1932. At the first congress, there were five sections and subsections in which they participated: economics and cooperatives, natural sciences, agronomics and forestry, medical sciences, and technical and mathematical sciences. Altogether, there were 21 scholarly meetings in these sections and subsections, with 81 papers presented, discussions in which 125 individuals took part, and an overall turnout of 623 attendees.34 Table 12 details academy’s scholars participation.

While some participants spoke on more general subjects, especially in the medical, technical, and mathematical sections and subsections, the topics of many other presenters were strongly linked to Ukraine and its future development. Hrabyna spoke about geodesic samples in Ukraine, Ivanyts’kyi delivered a paper that focused on the main tasks of foresters in Ukraine based on developments in Central European forestry, Matiushenko focused on the health of Ukrainians and the impact of the war and revolution on it. Clearly, the scholars were still very much concerned with developments in the future Ukraine and tailored their research toward these.

At the second congress, in 1932, when the political situation was very different, the professors focused on summarizing their work in emigration. They delivered nine papers that were reviews of their previous work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections and subsections</th>
<th>Meetings</th>
<th>Presentations</th>
<th>Participation in discussions</th>
<th>Panel participants</th>
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<td>Members</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Economics and cooperatives</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Natural sciences</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Agronomics and forestry</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Medical sciences</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Technical sciences</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>49</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>205</td>
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ten years’ work in various disciplines. For instance, Komarets’kyi talked about the work of émigré chemists in theoretical and applied chemistry, Martos reported on work undertaken in the field of cooperative movements, hygienist Vsevolod Harmashiv (1863–1953) described developments in the field of natural sciences, and Cherediiv talked about émigré scholars’ work in the field of agronomy. These comprehensive reports highlighted the achievements of the émigré scholars and scientists; they also provided a more general picture of activities in their respective areas in the Ukrainian émigré scholarly community. The scholars participated in these congresses because they believed they were significant for the development of Ukrainian scholarship and their own fields. How important they were for the outside world is a separate matter. The language of these two congresses was Ukrainian (although the participants knew other languages), which indicates that the presentations were geared not for outsiders but for the Ukrainian émigré community.

The academy encouraged its teaching staff to expand their knowledge and made it possible for them to obtain books for the library as well as devices and materials for laboratories and offices. This was mainly possible in the first years, when the academy’s funding was at its highest. At that time, several faculty members and lecturers conducted research trips around Czechoslovakia and abroad. Sixty-one research trips were undertaken between 1924 and 1927: 35 from the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, 10 from the Department of Economics and Cooperative, and 16 from the Department of Engineering. Many research trips were undertaken on the scholars’ own initiative and were paid for from their personal funds. Many undertook research trips to study forests in Czechoslovakia and in the Transcarpathian region. Petro Andriievs’kyi (1880–1945) went to France to familiarize himself with new soil analysis methods; Cherediiv spent time in Moravia and Slovakia to learn about agricultural machinery; and agronomist Irodion Sheremetyns’kyi (1873–1937) travelled to various Czechoslovakian lands to learn more about stockbreeding. They also conducted research in tree nurseries and in offices of the Agriculture and Forestry Department. The first four or five years of the academy’s existence were the organizational years, during which the teaching staff published 165 textbooks. As noted above, this was of crucial importance for the students, for it enabled them to learn their subjects in Ukrainian. Almost all of the textbooks published at that time were the first textbooks in the Ukrainian language in their respective disciplines. Shovheniv, Borodaievs’kyi, Ivanyts’kyi, Shcherbyna, and many others wrote the textbooks for their courses in their respective fields. In the second decade of the academy (after its reorganization), when the need for textbooks was less
demanding, the scientists focused largely on writing monographs or articles. When the works of the academy professors became known to their colleagues outside of the academy, and after they had attended international conferences and published in scholarly and scientific journals, their prestige increased in their professional world. In particular, the professors’ presentation of their works at the Chicago World’s Fair had a great impact on the academy’s image.

Outreach

The academy’s teaching staff made efforts to reach out to Czechoslovak society. The opening of the academy in a little spa town was certainly surprising for its inhabitants, for it soon filled the town with students speaking a language they could not understand but that was somehow similar to their own. At some point, the senate of the academy delegated to Martos the task of organizing a series of public lectures in the Czech language to inform the locals about Ukrainian issues. Bochkovs’kyi was very helpful to him; he had lived in Prague for many years, was fluent in Czech, and had developed a broad network of Czech political and literary figures. Of special interest for the audience was a lecture on the influence of the Czech enlighteners on Ukrainians, featuring Karel Havlíček Borovský (1821–1856), and another about Masaryk. Simiantsiv recalled that every year the academy organized parties in Poděbrady, to which they invited the town’s most influential people. In addition, a small book in the Czech language was published in Poděbrady titled *Ukrajinská hospodářská akademie v Č.S.R.: soukromý ústav s vysokoškolskou organisací: 16. IV. 1922–1926* (Ukrainian Economic Academy in the Č.S.R.: Private Institute of Higher Education: 16. IV. 1922–1926). This book was aimed at a Czechoslovak audience and highlighted the academy’s goals and faculty. The impact of the book was uncertain, but its intent was clearly stated: to explain the academy’s work and build connections between the two peoples.

Reorganization of the Academy

In 1931, anticipating the abolition of the academy, the professors founded the Society of Supporters of the Ukrainian Economic Academy (Tovarystvo prykhyl’nykiv Ukrains’koi hospodars’koi akademii). This charitable organization intended to collect funds by means of membership fees and fundraising among Ukrainians who lived both in the Ukrainian lands and in the emigration. However, it soon became evident that the society would be unable to collect the funds needed
to save and sustain the academy, largely because of the evolving economic crisis. So the professors decided to organize a school in which all educational processes would be conducted by correspondence. Thus, on 12 November 1932, the Ukrainian Technical-Economic Institute (Ukrains’kyi tekhnichno-hospodars’kyi instytut) was founded, offering correspondence-based learning. Like its predecessor, it provided education to students in all Ukrainian lands and to Ukrainian émigrés. The society promoted the idea of the Ukrainian polytechnic institute by running articles in various publications as well as disseminating brochures and press releases. In the first six years of its existence the society managed to collect 283,800 crowns, of which 223,600 were given to the institute; this served as its financial base and constituted half its budget. In 1936, Bochkovs’kyi, the society’s head, travelled to Canada with a mission to raise funds for the institute. He visited Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta and delivered more than one hundred lectures. Bochkovs’kyi encountered many friends of the institute and was able to collect many donations.41

The Ukrainian Technical-Economic Institute’s objectives were stated thus: to produce highly qualified professionals in economics and the technical fields, to provide individuals with experience to enhance their knowledge in their fields, and to promote the expansion of technical knowledge among Ukrainians. Ivanyts’kyi was the institute’s director from 1932 to 1936, Martos from 1936 to 1937, and jurist Luka Bych (1870–1945) from 1937 to 1939. It had the same structure as the academy, comprising departments of Economics and Cooperative Studies, Agronomy and Forestry, and Engineering, with the first of these being the most popular. It eventually restructured itself in response to students’ demands, establishing additional courses in accounting, foreign languages, and radio technology, among others. For a very modest fee, the professors sent their students lectures and textbooks, as well as instructions for hands-on exercises. In its first two years, the institute mailed out 4,287 letters and 6,799 parcels, which indicates the intensity of the learning process. It is of note that around 80 per cent of the students were from the western Ukrainian lands, while the institute received around 80 per cent of its funding from Ukrainians in emigration. Between 1932 to 1937, 749 students signed up for the institute’s courses.42

The closing of the Ukrainian Economic Academy in Poděbrady was a misfortune for its professors, who had devoted themselves so deeply to the academy and had built it from scratch. Its closing was no less painful for the students, who lost their first higher polytechnic institution. Both professors and students were forced to curtail their activities at the zenith of their academic success. The cessation of government
funding was partly a consequence of the world economic crisis. Also playing a role was the waning of hope that the Soviet Union would collapse; it seems there was no longer a need to prepare professionals for work in Ukraine that remained part of it. Nevertheless, the professors succeeded quite well at reorganizing the academy and would continue for decades to educate young people in their fields of expertise via correspondence. Despite having to cease operations, the academy’s founders did accomplish their goal in creating the first generation of the Ukrainian technical intelligentsia. In emigration, they managed to build the academy based on the long-tested structure of technical institutions in Europe. They created the first Ukrainian scholarly centre in technical disciplines, where scholars wrote monographs, articles, and textbooks. They also transferred their knowledge to future generations of students, many of whom considered their years in Poděbrady the best of their lives. After the war, many of the students were able to develop their knowledge in their countries of settlement, particularly in Canada and the United States. As Rusova stated in her memoir, “the Ukrainian Economic Academy is one of the creations that will always be in the history of Ukrainian culture as a vivid manifestation of creative forces of the Ukrainian intelligentsia.”43