

THE KYIV THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN 1947–1960: A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO FURTHER STUDY

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Summary: *Based on little-studied archival material, this article focuses on the history of the Kyiv Theological Seminary in the Soviet period. It was opened in 1947 after J. Stalin changed his repressive policy towards the Orthodox Church in the Soviet Union. But the changes in state-church relations after the Second World War did not change the course of the USSR to build an atheistic society, so the seminary constantly faced obstacles to the development of theological education and spiritual formation of young believers. During N. Khrushchev's rule, the government launched a new antireligious campaign, at the peak of which the seminary was closed in 1960. But, despite the short period of its existence after the revival, the Kyiv Theological Seminary became an important milestone in preserving and transmitting educational traditions from the pre-revolutionary Kyiv Theological Academy to the modern one.*

Key words: *Kyiv Theological Seminary, pastoral-theological courses, theological education, Russian Orthodox Church, Ukrainian Exarchate, antireligious campaign, Soviet Union, Ukrainian SSR.*

An Introduction to the Topic

Modern Orthodox theological education in Eastern Europe was first organised in Kyiv in 1632. This was one of the greatest achievements of St Peter Mohyla, the Metropolitan of Kyiv. His purpose was to prevent the conversion of Orthodox Ukrainian youth to Catholicism and Protestantism because of the better education they could provide. Despite the adoption of Jesuits' educational model and Western theological in-

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fluence, the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy served to strengthen Orthodoxy in the Commonwealth as well as in the Slavic countries under the rule of the Ottoman Empire. In the 19th century, under the Russian Empire, the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy was reformed and transformed into two independent educational institutions — the Kyiv Theological Seminary in 1817 and the Kyiv Theological Academy in 1819. They were in existence until the Russian Revolution. The Academy and Seminary were officially closed by the Soviets in 1919, although unofficially the theological courses were held privately under the name of the Kyiv Orthodox Theological Academy until 1924.¹

From the time of its foundation to the time of its closure, the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy and its successor, the Kyiv Theological Academy, had graduated many influential political and church leaders, theologians and priests. They carried out their ministry in different fields of social, ecclesial and scientific life not only in Ukraine and Russia, but in many countries, where they had come from as students, or where they emigrated later. Such countries are Moldova, Romania, Poland, Bulgaria, Serbia, Greece, Georgia, Syria, France, Germany, the United States, China, Japan and others. Among the graduates are primates and famous hierarchs of the Eastern Orthodox Churches such as Alexander III (Tahan) of Antioch, Leonid (Okropiridze), Kyrion II (Sadzaglishvili) and Callistratus (Tsintsadze) of Georgia, Mihailo (Jovanovich) of Serbia, Stefan I (Shokov) of Bulgaria, Makarii (Oksiyuk) of Warsaw, Dositej (Vasich) of Zagreb, Kliment (Drumев) of Tarnovo, Raphael (Hawaweeny) of Brooklyn and many others.²

But in this article, I am going to look at the ecclesial educational institution which succeeded its famous predecessor in Soviet times, the Kyiv Theological Seminary (hereinafter — the KThS). Although this seminary has not become widely known, it served as an important transition from the pre-revolutionary Kyiv Theological Academy to the modern one.³ It is an example of the continuing tradition of theological

¹ See more: Antonyi Pakanich, "Kiyevskiye dukhovnyye shkoly: 400 let sluzheniya Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi," *Trudy Kyivskoy dukhovnoy akademiyi* 23 (2015): 21–36 [Anthony Pakanich, "The Kyiv Theological Schools: 400 Years of Serving the Orthodox Church," *Works of the Kyiv Theological Academy* 23 (2015): 21–36].

² *Kyyivs'ki dukhovni shkoly. 400 rokiv. Istoriya v fotohrafyakh: Knyha-fotoal'bom* (Kyiv, 2015), 58–61 [*The Kyiv Theological Schools. 400 Years. History in Photos: A Book — Photo Album* (Kyiv, 2015), 58–61].

³ On the modern history of the Academy see: Syl'vestr Stoychev, "Kyyivs'ki dukhovni shkoly: trydtsyat' rokiv vidrodzhennya (1989–2019)," *Trudy Kyivskoy dukhovnoy akademiyi* 31 (2019): 29–40 [Sylvester Stoychev, "The Kyiv Theological Schools: Thirty Years of Revival (1989–2019)," *Works of the Kyiv Theological Academy* 31 (2019): 29–40].

education in Ukraine and the latent resistance to the militant atheist regime in the Soviet Union.

Although the USSR collapsed in 1991 and since then the Ukrainian government has opened many of its archives to the public, the Kyiv Theological Seminary of the Soviet period has not yet become an object of special historical research. Only recently some aspects of its existence have drawn the attention of scholars. Mostly, they dedicated their papers to the famous figures, theologians or future hierarchs, who worked there. These are articles about the life and work of Metropolitan Ioann (Wendland), Metropolitan Nicolai (Kutepov), Archpriest Alexander Lutsenko and professors Stepan Patiy and George Shimansky.⁴ Aside of these articles, there are two other studies: one is dedicated to the participation of the seminary staff in international contacts of the Ukrainian Exarchate of the Moscow Patriarchate in 1947–1955,⁵ and the other to the Soviet secret services and their activities within the seminaries in Ukraine in the 1940–1950s.⁶ Thus, there is a lack of studies focused on the Kyiv Theolo-

⁴ Aleksey Dyakonov, "Mitropolit Nikolay (Kutepov): vremya sluzheniya v Kiyevskoy dukhovnoy seminarii (1958–1959 gg.)," *Trudy Kyivskoy dukhovnoy akademii* 15 (2011): 167–172 [Alexei Dyakonov, "Metropolitan Nicolai (Kutepov): Time of Service at the Kiev Theological Seminary (1958–1959)," *Works of the Kyiv Theological Academy* 15 (2011): 167–172]; Rustic Kapauz, "Vykladachi Kyivskoy i Volynskoy dukhovnykh seminarii v radyans'kyy period — S.M. Patiy ta G.I. Shymans'kyi," *Trudy Kyivskoy dukhovnoy akademii* 23 (2015): 237–243 [Rustic Kapauz, "Professors of the Kyiv and Volyn Theological Seminaries in the Soviet Period — S.M. Patiy and G.I. Shymanski," *Works of the Kyiv Theological Academy* 23 (2015): 237–243]; Maksim Talalay, "Protoierey Aleksandr Lutsenko — vypuschnik Khar'kovskoy dukhovnoy seminarii i Kiyevskoy dukhovnoy akademii, pervyy inspektor vozrozhdennoy v 1947 g. Kiyevskoy dukhovnoy seminarii," *Trudy Kyivskoy dukhovnoy akademii* 24 (2016): 198–222 [Maxim Talalay, "Archpriest Alexander Lutsenko — a graduate of the Kharkov Theological Seminary and the Kiev Theological Academy, the first inspector of the Kiev Theological Seminary revived in 1947," *Works of the Kyiv Theological Academy* 24 (2016): 198–222]; "Pis'ma mitropolita Ioanna (Vendlanda) k mitropolitu Guriyu (Yegorovu)," podgotovka teksta, vstupitel'naya stat'ya i kommentarii E.A. Mezhennoy i V.V. Buregi, *Trudy Kyivskoy dukhovnoy akademii* 30 (2019): 123–139 ["The Letters from Metropolitan Ioann (Wendland) to Metropolitan Gury (Egorov)," preparation of the text, introduction and commentaries by E.A. Mezhennoy and V.V. Bureha, *Works of the Kyiv Theological Academy* 30 (2019): 123–139].

⁵ Viktor Kotsaba, "Uchastiye Kiyevskoy dukhovnoy seminarii v mezhdunarodnykh kontaktakh Ukrainskogo Ekzarkhata 1947–1955 gg. (po arkhivnym dokumentam upolnomochennogo Soveta po delam RPTs po USSR)," *Trudy Kyivskoy dukhovnoy akademii* 31 (2019): 41–51 [Victor Kotsaba, "Participation of the Kiev Theological Seminary in the International Contacts of the Ukrainian Exarchate in 1947–1955 (Based on Archival Documents of the Commissioner of the Council for the ROC Affairs in the Ukrainian SSR)," *Works of the Kyiv Theological Academy* 31 (2019): 41–51].

⁶ Dmitriy Vedeneyev, "Dukhovnyye uchebnyye zavedeniya Ukrainy kak ob'yekt opera-

gical Seminary during the Soviet era. At the same time, it is necessary to answer questions about the structure, regulation, teaching process, staff, students, material condition and economy of the seminary as well as its relationship with ecclesial and state authorities. Hence, the presented article is going to be a kind of introduction to further study of the seminary's history and offer an overview of its most significant events and features during the Soviet period.

Prerequisites for the Revival of the Seminary

During the Russian Revolution, the Soviet government announced the separation of the Church from the state and the school from the Church in 1918. It also proclaimed the building of a new atheistic society with no "antiscientific believes" and "religious prejudices." This meant the exclusion of the Orthodox Church from every sphere of social life. Moreover, the Communist Party accused the Church in supporting of anti-people's regime and conspiracy, declared the clergy the "enemies of the people" and, therefore, started the aggressive antireligious campaign and persecution. The most terrible time of Stalin's repression was in 1937–1938. Church educational system was also ruined; all educational institutions were closed because the government could not allow preparing ministers of "religious propaganda."

The situation began to change during the Second World War. The population, exhausted by the destruction, suffering and loss of loved ones, became increasingly inclined to faith. Besides, with the departure of the Communists, atheistic propaganda in the occupied territories ceased, while the occupying authorities promoted the opening of churches and the restoration of church life to gain the support of the people. The situation in the rear began to change as well. The reason for this was the patriotic activity of the Orthodox Church, which was manifested in prayers for the victory of the Red Army, as well as in material and financial support, care for the wounded, and so on. However, the change in Stalin's religious policy also had a propaganda purpose in response to the tolerant attitude of the occupying German authorities to religion and the Church. Obviously, the Soviet government sought to

tivnoy razrabotki spetssluzhb (po dokumental'nym materialam MGB-KGB USSR 1940-kh – 1950-kh gg.)," *Trudy Kyivivs'koyi dukhovnoyi akademiyi* 23 (2015): 244–263 [Dmitry Vedenev, "Theological Educational Institutions of Ukraine as an Object of Operational Activities of the Special Services (Based on Documentary Material of the MGB-KGB of the Ukrainian SSR in the 1940s – 1950s)," *Works of the Kyiv Theological Academy* 23 (2015): 244–263].

mobilise all resources to win the war and therefore was ready to go to the normalisation of state-church relations.⁷

The government took steps towards the Church in 1943. First of all, it allowed restoring the administrative vertical of the Church and electing a new Patriarch, who became Metropolitan Sergius (Stragorodsky, 1943–1944). To mediate between the Church and the government, a special body was created — the Council for the Russian Orthodox Church Affairs (hereinafter — the ROC Affairs), which was to “help” the Church and exercise control over her activities. Concerning theological education, the government had authorised the opening of educational institutions for the training of future pastors. On November 28, 1943, the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR allowed the opening of the Orthodox Theological Institute and pastoral-theological courses in Moscow.⁸ On the scale of the Soviet Union, the existence of two educational institutions in Moscow could not meet the needs of the whole Church. In this regard, Patriarch Alexius (Symansky, 1945–1970) appealed to the Council for the ROC Affairs for permission to open pastoral-theological courses in several cities. In response, the Council of Ministers of the USSR on March 22, 1945 allowed the opening of pastoral-theological courses in Leningrad, Kyiv, Lviv, Lutsk, Minsk, Odesa and Stavropol.⁹ A year later, on July 9, 1946, the Council of Ministers of the USSR approved the transformation of pastoral-theological courses into theological seminaries with a 4-year term of study.¹⁰

Thus, from March 22, 1945, the Kyiv diocese had official permission to train the clergy in pastoral-theological courses, and from July 9, 1946 — in a theological seminary. However, the decision at the state level did not mean its immediate implementation. In particular, on December 24, 1946, the Commissioner of the Council for the ROC Affairs in the Kyiv region P.D. Fedotov reported to Moscow that the “spiritual courses in

⁷ Viktor Voynalovych, *Partiyno-derzhavna polityka shchodo relihiyi ta relihiynykh instytutiv v Ukraini 1940–1960-kh rokiv: politolohichnyy dyskurs* (Kyiv, 2005), 65, 69 [Victor Voynalovich, *Party-State Policy on Religion and Religious Institutions in Ukraine in 1940–1960: A Political Discourse* (Kyiv, 2005), 65, 69]; Mikhail Shkarovskiy, *Russkaya Pravoslavnaya Tserkov' pri Staline i Khrushcheve (Gosudarstvenno-tserkovnyye otnosheniya v SSSR v 1939–1964 godakh)* (Moskva, 2000), 199 [Mikhail Shkarovsky, *The Russian Orthodox Church under Stalin and Khrushchev (State-Church Relations in the USSR in 1939–1964)* (Moscow, 2000), 199].

⁸ Aleksey Katayev, “Dukhovnyye shkoly Russkoy Pravoslavnoy Tserkvi v 1943–1949 godakh,” *Vestnik tserkovnoy istorii* 1 (2006): 178 [Alexey Kataev, “Theological Schools of the Russian Orthodox Church in 1943–1949,” *Bulletin of Church History* 1 (2006): 178].

⁹ *Ibid.*, 181.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 183.

Kyiv" had not yet been opened.¹¹ So, while in other cities the process of transformation of pastoral-theological courses into theological seminaries took place, in Kyiv they did not even exist. Later, the first rector of the KThS, Priest Serhiy Afonsky, explained this delay by the lack of suitable premises because of the very strong destruction of Kyiv by the Germans.¹²

Nevertheless, in 1946 intensive preparations were made for the opening of the theological school: the premises were overhauled, the teaching staff was selected, and applications were received. The documents give reason to believe that these were pastoral-theological courses, not a seminary.¹³ But, apparently, at the end of 1946 it was decided to open a theological seminary in Kyiv at once, bypassing pastoral-theological courses. In particular, on December 23, 1946, Priest S. Afonsky was appointed the first rector of the seminary.¹⁴

General Overview of the Seminary's Activity

Throughout the history of the Kyiv Theological Seminary during the Soviet period, the following rectors served in it:

- Archpriest Serhiy Afonsky — December 23, 1946¹⁵ – December 30, 1949;
- Archpriest Boris Shulkevich — December 30, 1949¹⁶ – August 16, 1951 (died);¹⁷
- Archpriest Volodymyr Ganetsky — January 18, 1952 (actually, from August 16, 1951)¹⁸ – September 11, 1954;¹⁹

¹¹ Tsentral'nyy derzhavnyy arkhiv vyshchykh orhaniv vlady ta upravlinnya Ukrainy (hereinafter — TsDAVO), Fond 4648, Opys 3, Sprava 32, Arkush 22 [The Central State Archive of the Highest Authorities and Administration of Ukraine, Fund 4648, Description 3, Folder 32, Sheet 22].

¹² Sergey Afonskiy, "Otkrytiye Kiyevskoy dukhovnoy seminarii," *Zhurnal Moskovskoy Patriarkhii* 6 (1947): 6 [Afonsky Sergey, "The Opening of the Kiev Theological Seminary," *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* 6 (1947): 6].

¹³ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 32, Sht. 18, 19, 22.

¹⁴ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 45, Sht. 80 backside.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 77, Sht. 50.

¹⁷ Vladimir Ganetskiy, "Protoiyerey B.L. Shul'kevich (Nekrolog)," *Zhurnal Moskovskoy Patriarkhii* 10 (1951): 57–58 [Vladimir Ganetsky, "Archpriest B.L. Shulkevich (An Obituary)," *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* 10 (1951): 57–58].

¹⁸ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 107, Sht. 74.

¹⁹ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 160, Sht. 4.

- Archpriest Mykola Kontsevych — September 11, 1954²⁰ – June 24, 1957;²¹
- Archimandrite Ioann (Wendland) — August 15, 1957²² – April 1, 1958;
- Archimandrite Filaret (Denisenko) — April 1, 1958²³ – June 8, 1960.

The grand opening of the Kyiv Theological Seminary took place on February 18, 1947. The celebrations were presided over by the Patriarchal Exarch of Ukraine, Metropolitan of Kyiv and Halych Ioann (Sokolov).²⁴ The seminary was located in St Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery in Kyiv. A two-story monastery building was set aside for auditoriums and dormitories, but the auditoriums turned out to be small because they were former monastery cells.²⁵

The first academic year began only with the 1st class, which had just 11 students.²⁶ The late beginning of the 1946/1947 academic year (February 18, 1947) was because of the late readiness of the seminary premises. Accordingly, the courses had also ended late — on July 25, 1947.²⁷ A similar situation developed two years later. On July 16, 1949, the authorities closed St Michael's Golden-Domed Monastery, because of which the seminary was transferred into the stylobate of St Andrew's Church.²⁸ Due to the renovation and adaptation of the new premises, the academic year began only on December 6, 1949 and lasted until July 24, 1950.²⁹

The lack of premises was a constant problem for the KThS administration, which did not allow it to increase the number of students. In 1955, Metropolitan Ioann (Sokolov) and Rector Archpriest M. Kontsevich repeatedly raised before the Commissioner for the ROC Affairs in the Ukrainian SSR G.A. Korchevy issue of buying or building a house for a hostel, but it was never resolved.³⁰ Then the solution to the problem was found in a very interesting way: students were resettled and registered in the private apartments of Kyiv parishioners.³¹ Particularly, in the 1955/1956

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Sergey Petrov, "Rektor Odesskoy Dukhovnoy Seminarii protoiyerey N.V. Kontsevich (Nekrolog)," *Zhurnal Moskovskoy Patriarkhii* 5 (1959): 19–20. [Sergey Petrov, "Rector of the Odessa Theological Seminary, Archpriest N.V. Kontsevich (An Obituary)," *Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate* 5 (1959): 19–20].

²² TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 204, Sht. 58.

²³ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 219, Sht. 92.

²⁴ Afonskiy, "Otkrytiye Kiyevskoy dukhovnoy seminarii," 6–7.

²⁵ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 45, Sht. 74.

²⁶ Ibid., Sht. 80 backside.

²⁷ Ibid., Sht. 105–105 backside.

²⁸ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 77, Sht. 17.

²⁹ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 77, Sht. 24; Flr. 92, Sht. 29.

³⁰ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 176, Sht. 42, 46.

³¹ Ibid., Sht. 47.

academic year, 60 out of 91 students lived in private apartments.³² This approach significantly increased the number of the seminary's students (see Table 1).

Table 1: Statistical Data of Entrants, Students and Graduates of the KThS in 1946–1960.

Academic years	Applications for admission	Arrived for entrance exams	Enrolled at the beginning of the year	The total number of students at the beginning of the year	The total number of students at the end of the year	Expelled during the year	Graduates
1946/1947 ³³	52	23	11	11	8 (+1)	3	–
1947/1948 ³⁴	48	21	15	24	20	4	–
1948/1949 ³⁵	25	21	11	31 (+1)	30	3	–
1949/1950 ³⁶	20	14	12	42	41	1	7 (+2 externs)
1950/1951 ³⁷	35	32	30	65	64	1	13
1951/1952 ³⁸	29	20	18	66	54	12	8
1952/1953 ³⁹	24	12	8	49	38	11	10
1953/1954 ⁴⁰	41	13	11	38	33	5	8
1954/1955 ⁴¹	39	24	18	39	26	17	4
1955/1956 ⁴²	74	61	45 (+7)	72	68	11	6
1956/1957 ⁴³	95	72	33 (+ 8)	91	no data	no data	–

³² TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 193, Sht. 7.

³³ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 32, Sht. 19–19 backside, 20–21; Flr. 45, Sht. 105, 106.

³⁴ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 45, Sht. 112; Flr. 61, Sht. 51–53, 56.

³⁵ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 77, Sht. 16–19.

³⁶ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 77, Sht. 24; Flr. 92, Sht. 29.

³⁷ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 92, Sht. 52, 36; Flr. 107, Sht. 24.

³⁸ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 107, Sht. 28–30, 70; Flr. 123, Sht. 127–128.

³⁹ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 123, Sht. 141–142; Flr. 139, Sht. 1–2.

⁴⁰ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 139, Sht. 15–16; Flr. 159, Sht. 175–177.

⁴¹ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 160, Sht. 4, 25–26; Flr. 176, Sht. 18.

⁴² TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 176, Sht. 40–41, 47; Flr. 193, Sht. 2.

⁴³ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 193, Sht. 5–7.

Academic years	Applications for admission	Arrived for entrance exams	Enrolled at the beginning of the year	The total number of students at the beginning of the year	The total number of students at the end of the year	Expelled during the year	Graduates
1957/1958 ⁴⁴	83	55	36	117	104	13	21
1958/1959 ⁴⁵	97	30	33	116	84	32	15
1959/1960 ⁴⁶	24	13	13	80	no data	no data	no data

Table 1: Statistical Data of Entrants, Students and Graduates of the KThS in 1946–1960. (continuation)

Taking into account the statistics given in the table, one should note that it has some inaccuracies. The table is based on the reports of the Commissioners of the Council for the ROC Affairs in Ukraine to the top management. But there were several discrepancies between the reports at the beginning and the end of the academic year on the same indicators noticed. Besides, some inconsistencies were found when a Commissioner tried to compare the current academic year with previous ones. Therefore, the correction of statistics is also a task for further research. However, even with a slight error, the table gives an idea of the number and dynamics of entrants, students and graduates of the KThS in 1946–1960.

A closer look at the statistics presented from the processed reports will allow us to notice some important moments in the seminary's life in Soviet times. First of all, there is a noticeable difference between the number of applications submitted and the number of those who then came to the entrance exams. Already at this stage, a significant dropout of possible students was carried out. The fact is that the KThS administration was obliged to send the lists of entrants to the Commissioner who then sent them to the relevant authorities in the places of residence of the entrants, and there the authorities tried to prevent them from

⁴⁴ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 204, Sht. 52; Flr. 205, Sht. 227–229; Flr. 219, Sht. 31–33.

⁴⁵ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 219, Sht. 36; Flr. 234, Sht. 24.

⁴⁶ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 234, Sht. 25–26.

appearing even for the entrance exams. Adults were not given leave from work, young men could be immediately called to the military registration and enlistment office and called up for military service. It was not uncommon for parents and relatives to be pressured to influence their relative and persuade him to withdraw documents from the seminary. Methods of influence and obstruction could be different, but the goal was always the same — to prevent a young person to enter a church educational institution. The opposite would mean that the construction of an atheistic society has no genuine success in the USSR.

Similar work was carried out by the authorities at all stages of admission and training in the seminary. After a person passed the entrance exams and was enrolled in the KThS, he did not always manage to come to the beginning of classes, for which he was immediately expelled. Conscription also often took place in the middle of the academic year, as students were not given any delay. Thus, although the KThS already had problems with the number of students because of the lack of dormitories, they were exacerbated by the purposeful actions of the Soviet authorities. Even though the authorities did not formally violate Soviet legislation on cults, they did everything as if the decline of the number of students were a natural process because of their successful atheistic propaganda. At the same time, the authorities used the very existence of the Kyiv Theological Seminary to show foreigners that there was no religious pe-



Photo 1. St Andrew's Church and the Kyiv Theological Seminary in its stylobate, 1958 (source: *Kyyivs'ki dukhovni shkoly*, 68).



Photo 2. Konstantin Yakovlev, a student of the KThS near the sign, 1959 (source: *Kyyivs'ki dukhovni shkoly*, 70).



Photo 3. The KThS Pedagogical Council. There is the rector Archpriest Mykola Kontsevich at the head of the table, 1952 (source: *Kyyivs'ki dukhovni shkoly*, 78).

rsecution in the Soviet Union and that young believers had free access to both theological education and associations based on their religious interests. Visiting St Andrew's Church and the KThS had always been a part of the program for foreign church delegations in Kyiv.⁴⁷

In fairness, one should note that the increase in the number of students was also due to the personal interest and activity of the rector and administration of the seminary. This becomes apparent when comparing the statistics with the years of individual rectors of the seminary in office. Sometimes during the academic year, some students returned to the KThS after military service, or previously expelled students were reinstated, or students from other seminaries were transferred.

As the table on pp. 730–731 shows, the first three years of the KThS had no graduates. This was so because it began its activities in 1947 with only one 1st class, which reached graduation in 1950. In September 1956, since there were only 9 people in the 4th class, it was closed. There was a plan to transfer students of the closed class to the Odesa Theological Seminary. But only 4 people moved to Odesa, another was transferred to the Volyn Theological Seminary, the other four were Kyiv priests, and therefore could not move to another city.⁴⁸ Because of this, graduation in 1957 did not take place. However, in September 1957, the 4th class in the KThS was restored.

⁴⁷ Kotsaba, "Uchastiye Kiyevskoy dukhovnoy seminarii," 44–46, 48–50.

⁴⁸ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 193, Sht. 5–6.



Photo 4. Students and professors of the seminary on St Andrew's Hill in Kyiv. There is the river Dnipro on the background, 1952 (source: Boris Yakemenko, "Shtrikhi iz zhizni Kiyevskoy Dukhovnoy Seminarii [Strokes from the Life of the Kiev Theological Seminary]," *Live Journal*, accessed November 15, 2020, <https://boris-yakemenko.livejournal.com/541173.html>).

The Closing of the Seminary

The religious situation in the Soviet Union changed dramatically after J. Stalin's death when M. Khrushchev came to power. The country began a policy of de-Stalinization, which meant a departure from the course of the previous leader. This fully affected the attitude of the state to the Church. A new wave of the aggressive antireligious campaign in the USSR began in 1958 and lasted until 1964. This time was fatal for the Kyiv Theological Seminary.

The covert preparations for the closure of the KThS began in 1958 when seminarians were denied registration in private apartments. Pa-



Photo 5. Students with Archpriest Mykola Kontsevich in the seminary canteen, 1952
(source: Yakemenko, "Shtrikhi iz zhizni").

triarch Alexius (Symansky) was informed about this difficult situation. At the same time, the authorities openly advised him to liquidate the Kyiv seminary and join it to the Odesa seminary. According to the Chairman of the Council for the ROC Affairs G.G. Karpov, the Patriarch agreed to liquidate the seminary in principle. However, it was necessary to do this gradually. The plan was not to accept applications from first-year entrants from the next academic year and for the next three years to make only graduations. The Commissioner for the ROC Affairs in the Ukrainian SSR M.F. Bibik believed that to close the seminary painlessly, the authorities should not aggravate relations with the Church's leadership, but prepare for it secretly.⁴⁹

In fact, since 1958, students had been recruited to the seminary, but the administration had faced extremely serious problems. Students were denied accommodation in private apartments, although 75% of seminarians lived there. The leadership of the Kyiv seminary and the Kyiv diocese

⁴⁹ TsDAVO, Fund 4648, Descr. 3, Flr. 234, Sht. 44.



Photo 6. In a seminary class, 1952 (source: Yakemenko, "Shtrikhi iz zhizni").

insisted on permission to build a new dormitory or set it up in the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra. But their requests were unsuccessful. In 1960, when the secretary of the Kyiv City Council B.F. Ermolovich announced that registration in private apartments would be suspended, Rector Archimandrite Filaret (Denisenko) said that then seminarians would be registered in the neighbourhood of Kyiv, in settlements close to the railway. But Commissioner M.F. Bibik flatly refused this. In his report, he explained that living in the suburbs is planned for senior students, which are almost trained priests. Their communication with the local people will become a threat of religious propaganda, which will succeed in suburban trains. Generally, the Commissioner considered the KThS as a harmful educational institution that prevented the authorities from conducting atheistic propaganda. Besides the problem with the dormitory, there was a food problem: all trade organisations in the city refused wholesale food supplies to the seminary's canteen.⁵⁰

All the stated above was done to create additional difficulties in the activities of the KThS. Given the "hopelessness" of the seminary which

⁵⁰ Ibid., Sht. 42–43, 62.

caused high costs for the training of priests, in the absence of many students, Commissioner M.F. Bibik pointed out in his report that it was necessary to inform the Moscow Patriarchate about the expediency of closing the Kyiv Theological Seminary and transferring its students to the Odesa Theological Seminary.⁵¹ As a result, on May 4, 1960, at a meeting with Patriarch Alexius (Symansky), the Chairman of the Council for ROC Affairs V.A. Kuroyedov demanded the liquidation of the Kyiv Theological Seminary. Unable to resist the pressure of the authorities, the Patriarch agreed. On June 8, 1960, the Educational Committee of the Holy Synod of the ROC adopted a corresponding decision.⁵²

Conclusion

Summarising a brief overview of the history of the Kyiv Theological Seminary in 1947–1960, one can say that in the fourteen years of its activity it had become one of the centres of spirituality and theological education in Kyiv and Ukraine. The way it walked was hard and thorny. The difficult conditions of post-war reconstruction were complicated by the specific “care” of the authorities, which tried to prevent the development of “religious propaganda” in the USSR. Subsequently, the hidden obstacle to theological education resulted in the open confrontation between the Church and the purposeful policy of the state. But, despite the forced closure, the KThS contributed to the future revival of the Orthodox Church. Its teachers and graduates, who later became famous bishops, professors and ordinary priests, worked in establishing and defending the Orthodox faith in the atheistic state. This is the main significance of the Kyiv Theological Seminary in the Soviet period: in difficult historical conditions, it served as a transit of the traditions of Orthodox education and spirituality to the present days. And modern researchers are faced with the task of a more thorough study of its past to answer the questions posed at the beginning of this article.

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⁵¹ Ibid., Sht. 28.

⁵² Vladimir Burega, *Kiyevskaya dukhovnaya akademiya i seminariya* (Kyiv, 2009), 44 [Vladimir Bureha, *The Kyiv Theological Academy and Seminary* (Kyiv, 2009), 44].

Abbreviations

KThS — Kyiv Theological Seminary.

ROC — Russian Orthodox Church.

TsDAVO — Tsentral'nyy derzhavnyy arkhiv vyshchyykh orhaniv vldy ta upravlinnya Ukrayiny [Central State Archive of the Highest Authorities and Administration of Ukraine].

USSR — Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Descr. — Description.

Flr. — Folder.

Sht. — Sheet.

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КИЕВСКАЯ ДУХОВНАЯ СЕМИНАРИЯ В 1947–1960 ГГ.: КРАТКОЕ ВСТУПЛЕНИЕ К ДАЛЬНЕЙШЕМУ ИЗУЧЕНИЮ

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Резюме: Основываясь на малоизученных архивных материалах, статья уделяет внимание истории Киевской духовной семинарии в советский период. Она была открыта в 1947 г. после того, как И. Сталин изменил свою репрессивную политику в отношении Православной Церкви в Советском Союзе. Но изменения в государственно-церковных отношениях после Второй мировой войны не изменили курса СССР на построение атеистического общества, поэтому семинария постоянно сталкивалась с препятствиями на пути раз-

вита богословског образовања и духовног васпитања младих верујућих. Уже во време прављења Н. Хрущева влада развела нову анти-религијозну кампању, на пику које семинарија била затворена у 1960 г. Тем не менее, несмотря на недолгий период своего существования после возрождения, Киевская духовная семинария стала важной вехой в сохранении и передаче образовательных традиций от дореволюционной Киевской духовной академии к современной.

Кључеве слова: Киевская духовная семинария, пастырско-богословские курсы, богословское образование, Русская Православная Церковь, Украинский Экзархат, антирелигиозная кампания, Советский Союз, Украинская ССР.

КИЈЕВСКА ДУХОВНА СЕМИНАРИЈА У ПЕРИОДУ 1947–1960: КРАТКИ УВОД ЗА ДАЉЕ ПРОУЧАВАЊЕ

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Апстракт: На основу мало проучавање архивске грађе, аутор у чланку истражује усредсређује на историју Кијевске духовне семинарије у совјетском периоду. Ово богословско училиште отворено је 1947. године, након што је Јосиф В. Стаљин ублажио репресивну политику према Православној Цркви у Совјетском Савезу. Међутим, промене у односима државе и Цркве после Друге светске ратне раине нису промениле и усмерење СССР-а ка изградњи атеистичкој друштва, те се због тога Кијевска духовна семинарија непрекидно суочавала са препрекама у развоју и постовању богословској и духовној образовања младих верника. Већ током владавине Никите Хрушчова, влада је покренула нову антирелигијозну кампању, на врхуницу које је Кијевска духовна семинарија 1960. године затворена. Но упркос крајњом периоду свој постојања након обнављања у совјетској епохи, Кијевска духовна семинарија остала је важан чинилац у очувању и преносу образовних традиција од предреволюционарне до савремене Кијевске духовне академије.

Кључне речи: Кијевска духовна семинарија, пастирски и богословски курсеви, богословско образовање, Руска Православна Црква, Украјински екзархат, антирелигијозна кампања, Совјетски Савез, Украјинска ССР.