

SHORT EXISTENCE OF THE FACULTY OF EASTERN ORTHODOX THEOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAGREB 1920–1924

Aleksandar Raković*
*Institute for Recent History
of Serbia, Belgrade*

Summary: Through archival sources from the Archives of Yugoslavia in Belgrade (AJ) and the Archives of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology of the University of Belgrade (APBF) as well as literature, this paper shows history of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology at the University of Zagreb.

Key words: Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology, University of Zagreb, Serbian Orthodox Church, Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.

According to Vladan Maksimović, professor of the Karlovci Seminary (secondary school of the Serbian Orthodox Church in Sremski Karlovci) and later the first dean of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb, as early as in 1903 there was an idea to transform the Karlovci Seminary to the Faculty of Orthodox Theology of the University of Zagreb. He claimed that “this idea was abandoned because of the national reasons. They did not want to promote Serbian theologians to PhDs on behalf of the Austrian Emperor. Another reason was clerical because the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Metropolitanate of Karlovci did not want to waive its right to appoint professors, which they thought was a guarantee of their autonomy.”¹ Zagreb was

* rakovic@gmail.com.

¹ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – “Promemoria o istočno-pravoslavnom bogoslovskom fakultetu zagrebačkog univerziteta za gospodina ministra prosvjete M. Trifunovića” written by Vladan Maksimović on March 3rd, 1923. Hereinafter referred to as: Promemoria; – Vladan Maksimović (Prhovo, Srem, 1879 – Beograd, 1956), graduated from the Karlovci Seminary and Spiritual Academy

not selected accidentally, because this city at the turn of 19th and 20th century became the economic and political centre of the Serbian people in Austria-Hungary and attracted more and more Serbian intellectuals from Hungary. Thus, “the Serbian centre was moved to Zagreb.”²

Maksimović also wrote that during World War I, the Croat-Serb Coalition worked “on establishing the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Zagreb for political reasons, because it wanted to show the solidarity between Serbs and Croats to the Hungarian government.”³ This was also discussed in the Provisional National Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in early 1919.⁴ According to the census of 1921 there were 8.55% Orthodox (9,293) in Zagreb. However, in Zagreb district there were 23.5% Orthodox (114,682) and about 75% Roman Catholics (365 077). In the territory of Croatia and Slavonia there were about 25% Orthodox (657,823) and about 69% Roman Catholics (1,803,263).⁵ So, with careful planning Zagreb had a

in Moscow where he also acquired a PhD degree. Reference: *Znamenite ličnosti Srema, Sremska Mitrovica* 2003, 257; – Maksimović did not have a PhD degree during the existence of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb.

² Vasilije Krestić, *Istorija Srba u Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji 1848–1914*, Beograd 1991, 368.

³ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Promemoria.

⁴ Stenographic notes of the Provisional National Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, III, Beograd 1920, 47th regular meeting held on July 4th, 1919, 150–151; – Also see: Aleksandar Raković, “Akademska i politička rasprava o Bogoslovskom fakultetu tokom 1919. godine (sa osvrtom na ranije pisanje Vesnika Srpske crkve)”, *Srpska teologija u dvadesetom veku*, I, Beograd 2007, 119; – This paper about the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology has already been published in Serbian language, with minor alternations: Aleksandar Raković, “Istočno-pravoslavni bogoslovski fakultet Sveučilišta u Zagrebu 1920–1924”, *Srpska teologija u dvadesetom veku*, II, Beograd 2007; – The Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology was also written about by Sofija Božić. See: Sofija Božić, *Srbi u Hrvatskoj 1918–1929*, Beograd 2008, 394–396, 669.

⁵ According to the Census of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes in 1921, Zagreb had the population of 108,674 out of which 9,293 were Orthodox and 91,600 Roman Catholics. Zagreb county had 487,831 citizens. In the territory of Croatia and Slavonia there were 2,614,378 people. Reference: Federal Institute of Statistics, *Census 1991*. (with reference to the results of previous censuses 1921–1981), CD, Beograd 1998; – According to the data of the Serbian Orthodox Church Community in Zagreb (SPCO), in 1919 there were 3,300 Orthodox, compared to 3,707 in 1920, whereas in 1921 SPCO records as many as 9,183 Orthodox in Zagreb including Russian refugees. In 1922 there were 5,329 Orthodox Christians, 5,599 in 1923 and 5,639 in 1924. Reference: Dimitrije Vitković, *Srpska pravoslavna crkvena općina, parohija i škola u Zagrebu*, Zagreb 1985, 119–120; – Serbs started settling in Zagreb during the 1780s. From 1814 to 1929 Serbian National Primary School was working in Zagreb. Since 1929 the students of other confessions were able to enrol. More on this school see: Ivan Jurišić, Milan Matijević, Goran Nikić, *Srpske škole i istaknuti srpski učitelji u*

potential to become the seat of a higher school such as the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology.

Political efforts on the establishment of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Zagreb

The initiative for the establishment of the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb was re-opened in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Kingdom of SHS). During 1919 the Provincial Government of Croatia and Slavonia wanted the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb to be founded with the support of the Government of the Kingdom of SHS. In March 1919, Croatian ban Dr Ivan Paleček wrote to the Minister of Education Ljubomir Davidović: "Given the fact that our Kingdom has no faculty of Eastern Orthodox seminary, the Minister of Religion made me think that such a faculty should be established in Zagreb." Paleček wrote that "because of the urgent need," he ordered "the opening of the faculty in the very next school year 1919/20 pointing out that the law would be brought later." Paleček's order was made according to the Austro-Hungarian order of 1875 by which "the Greek-Eastern Seminary in Chernovtsy was abolished and a Faculty of Greek-Eastern Theology of the University of Chernovtsy established and according to the Statute of the Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Karlovci". Croatian Ban said that "by the oral proposal," of the Minister of Religion Tugomir Alaupović, four teachers should be appointed as regular seminary professors of the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb, so that they could continue to organize the work of this higher education institution. The four professors were Dr Vojislav Janić (Belgrade Seminary), Dr Simeon Popović (Sarajevo Seminary), Vladan Maksimović (Karlovci Seminary) and Dr Irinej Kalik (Zadar Seminary).⁶ At the beginning of April 1919, the Minister of Religion, referring to Palaček's letter, asked the Minister of Education to appoint Dr Irinej Ćirić, professor of Karlovci Seminary instead of a late Irinej Kalik.⁷

Hrvatskoj do 1941. godine, Zagreb 2005, 137–170; – On education of Serbs in Croatia, see: Sofija Božić, *op. cit.*, 231–303.

⁶ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42. – Ban of Croatia to the Minister of Education of the Kingdom SHS, March 1919. Letter was filed under Br. 10.600. – 1919 under the name "Predmet: Sveučilište, istočno-pravoslavni bogoslovni fakultet, osnivanje".

⁷ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42, V. br. 1112, 11. april 1919. – Minister of Religion to the Minister of Education.

Here we need to pause and explain why Alaupović and Palaček's initiative was so interesting. The Minister and the Ban, the latter being the head of the Provincial Government of Croatia and Slavonia, were both Croats, Yugoslav centralist close to the Serbian leader in Croatia who was also the leader of the Prečani wing of the Democratic Party and then the Minister of Interior, Svetozar Pribičević.⁸ Besides these two, another person had a very important and maybe the most important role during the founding of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Zagreb. It was the Acting Chief of the Orthodox Department of the Ministry of Religion, professor of Karlovci Seminary and a candidate, although without a doctorate, for the position of a full professor at the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb – Vladan Maksimović.⁹

However, in early April 1919, Novi Sad newspaper *Zastava* (close to radicals) wrote that the preparations for the establishment of the faculties of Orthodox theology in Zagreb and Belgrade were going on without public debate. The newspaper claimed that the state did not consult “ecclesiastical authority” and that undergoing “action of establishing the faculties of Orthodox theology,” was unnecessary at that time. *Zastava* also wrote about the University of Zagreb: “The government circles thought that, beside the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology, the University of Zagreb should also include the faculty of Orthodox theology, whereas both Orthodox and Roman Catholic faculty of theology should be established at the University of Belgrade.” “According to the information that we gathered, we are authorized to claim, that the activities on the establishment of the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb started and were conducted in a wrong way. The Ministry of Education and Religion has already done something meritorious, which prejudged the solution of the whole thing, about which the church authorities were not asked or invited to participate, nor were they informed in any way what so ever.” *Zastava* believed that this problem could “cause an open conflict between state and church authorities.”¹⁰ Hence, the Metropo-

⁸ Ivo Perić, *Stjepan Radić 1871–1928*, Zagreb 2003, 294, 301; – Svetozar Pribičević (Hrvatska Kostajnica, 1875 – Prague, 1936) was one of the leaders of the Croat-Serb Coalition in Austria-Hungary from 1905, one of the founders of the Democratic Party in the Kingdom of SHS and the Minister of Education in several terms. He resigned from the Democratic Party in 1924 and founded Independent Democratic Party. Reference: *Enciklopedija srpskog naroda*, 891–892.

⁹ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42, V. br. 577, 17. januar 1922. – About the appointment of Vladan Maksimović for the acting Chief of the Orthodox Department of the Ministry of Religion filed on January 28th, 1919 under V. br. 130.

¹⁰ P. J., “Bogoslovski fakulteti”, *Zastava*, 5. april 1919, 2.

litanate of Karlovci was not consulted about the establishment of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Zagreb.

After the session in June 1919, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci informed Central Holy Assembly of Bishops in Belgrade about the conclusion of the Council of the Karlovci Seminary on “the issue of the establishment of the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb.” In late March 1919, the Council of Karlovci Seminary concluded: “The Council of Seminary have learned that the Ministry of Religion in Belgrade took the necessary steps to establish the faculty of Orthodox theology of the University of Zagreb, and that the whole process is already in its final stage, and that the Council of Karlovci Seminary – the highest Orthodox Theological institute in the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes – has not been consulted therein. However, since the Council of the Seminary thinks that the issue of the establishment of the faculty of Orthodox theology should not have been resolved without consulting it, as the representative of the Karlovci Seminary, which has already been organized as a faculty, and needs only a formal ratification of relevant factors – the Council of the Seminary unanimously resolved: to send a letter to the supreme authority of the Church, the Holy Synod of Bishops in Sremski Karlovci, then to the Minister of Religion Mr Tugomir Alaupović in Belgrade and to the Academic Senate of the University of Zagreb, in which the Council of the Seminary would explain its position in the establishment of the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb.” The Council of Karlovci Seminary decided that “it would be unjust to outline the Statute of the faculty of Orthodox theology without hearing the stand of the Seminary and look for the teaching staff at the lower Serbian Orthodox seminaries or elsewhere in the church, and only later call the Seminary professors for cooperation, who were preparing themselves for years to teach at the higher school of theology.”¹¹

There is no doubt that some people in the Ministry of Religion were in a hurry to open the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb before the faculty of Orthodox theology in Belgrade. On July 2nd, 1919 the latter was finally established as an equal faculty of the University of Belgrade.¹² The

¹¹ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42. – The Holy Synod of Bishops of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci to the Holy Assembly of Bishops in Belgrade. Letter was filed in the Metropolitanate of Karlovci under Br. 19/27–1919. Attached to the letter is the opinion of the Council of the Karlovci Seminary of March 31st, 1919. Also attached was the extract from the transcript of the session of the Council of the Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Sremski Karlovci held on March 31st, 1919 in Sremski Karlovci.

¹² Aleksandar Raković, “Akademska i politička rasprava o Bogoslovskom fakultetu tokom 1919. godine (sa osvrtom na ranije pisanje Vesnika Srpske crkve)”, *Srpska teologija*

Minister of Education and leader of the Democratic Party Ljubomir Davidović believed that the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb could be established only after the one in Belgrade.¹³ He disagreed with his party colleagues in the west of Yugoslavia about the centre of the higher Orthodox theological education. He and his party colleagues from Serbia believed it should be Belgrade. Disagreement between the Serbian wing and Prečani wing of the Democratic Party was reflected in the two faculties of Orthodox theology. Although the Karlovci Seminary reacted to the establishment of the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb, it did not make it clear whether it wanted to be transformed to this higher education institution.

The establishment of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb in 1920

In April 1920, the Ministry of Religion asked the Serbian Orthodox Church Community in Zagreb to provide, if possible, facilities for the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb, “until the state finds appropriate accommodation.” The Ministry of Religion thought it was “in the political and national interest of the state and in the interests of the Orthodox Church,” as well as in the interests of the Serbian Orthodox Church Community, “to establish an Orthodox, religious, cultural and educational centre in Zagreb.”¹⁴ The subsequent course of events showed that the Serbian Orthodox Church Community in Zagreb was unable to find an appropriate location for the temporary accommodation of the faculty that was to be established.

On June 10th, 1920 Vladan Maksimović from the Ministry of Religion sent a following telegram to the Vicar of Karlovci Ilarion Zeremski: “Selection not done. Probably delayed until autumn. Pressing Synod to send

u dvadesetom veku, I, Beograd 2007, 123–124.

¹³ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Promemoria.

¹⁴ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42, Pov. br. 85. – By the order of the Minister of Religion, the Acting Chief of the Orthodox Department of the Ministry of Religion to the President of the Serbian Orthodox Church Community in Zagreb (SPCO). The document is not dated. – According to the transcripts of the 6th meeting of the Board of the Serbian Orthodox Church-School district in Zagreb dated April 19th, 1920 (copy in possession of A.R.) we can see that the Ministry of Religion sent a letter on April 3rd, 1920. On April 19th, 1920 SPCO authorized the President of SPCO Paja Teodorović to discuss this with the Ministry of Religion.

act to Provincial Government to move Seminary to Zagreb as a Faculty.”¹⁵ Although the telegram did not state what kind of selection was in question, it probably referred to the filling of the vacant teaching positions of Karlovci Seminary. It seems that the Ministry of Religion was pressing the Karlovci Seminary to accept the transformation to the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb. However, the Karlovci Seminary did not share their opinion. Faced with the lack of teaching staff in the Karlovci Seminary, and obviously compelled by the Ministry of Religion, the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci in mid June 1920 tried to find a compromise. The Synod decided that “the Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Sremski Karlovci needs to be raised to the level of the faculty and have the right to grant scientific degrees, but only if it was possible to preserve its cardinal rights in relation to the same institution.” Synod appointed Bishop Ilarion Zeremski to “start negotiations with the relevant authorities.” If there were no results by September 1st, 1920, the Metropolitanate of Karlovci would fill the teaching positions by itself.¹⁶

The Ministry of Religion did not give up and on June 22nd, 1920 they sent a letter to the Minister of Education, suggesting once more the transformation of the Karlovci Seminary to the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb.¹⁷ During the correspondence in June and by the end of 1920, the ministries were held by two democrats: Minister of Religion Pavle Marinković and Minister of Education Svetozar Pribičević.¹⁸ During their term, the idea was partially realized. The Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology of the University of Zagreb was established by a royal decree of August 27th, 1920¹⁹ which was published in the *Official Gazette* on September 5th, 1920.²⁰ The Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb was not established as a successor of the Karlovci Seminary. The Synod of

¹⁵ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 19, V. br 5135, 10. jun 1920. – The Chief of the Orthodox Department of the Ministry of Religion Vladan Maksimović to Vicar Bishop of Karlovci Ilarion Zeremski.

¹⁶ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 19. – Decision of the Holy Synod of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci filed on June 1/14 1920 under Br. 17.71–1920, was received in the Ministry of Religion on June 22, 1920 and filed under V. br. 5660.

¹⁷ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 19, V. br. 5660, 22. jun 1920. – Minister of Religion to the Minister of Education.

¹⁸ *Vlade Srbije*, Beograd 2005, 285–289.

¹⁹ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Decree of the King Aleksandar Karadorđević on abolishing the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb, dated April 26th, 1924. The Ministry of Education sent a copy of the Decree to other competent authorities and institutions on May 2nd and 3rd, 1924 under P. br. 3749/924.

²⁰ *Službene novine Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca*, 5. septembar 1920.

the Metropolitanate of Karlovci did not give its consent to the transfer to which the part of the Democratic Party devoted so much effort.

Since the Karlovci Seminary did not agree to be transformed to the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb, by the royal decree of September 12th, 1920 it was obliged to suspend regular classes. Minister Marinković thought that the Karlovci professors, who lost their jobs by the decree, should be employed at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb. On September 21st, 1920 due to the new circumstances, the Synod of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci was practically forced to offer its teaching staff to the Provincial Government in Zagreb for the positions of full-time professors at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Zagreb: Archimandrite Dr Vikentije Vujić for the canon law, protopresbyter Vladan Maksimović for moral theology, protopresbyter Nikola Đurić for dogmatics, protopresbyter Dimitrije Stefanović for the New Testament, presbyter Dr Lazar Mirković for liturgy and protopresbyter Jovan Vučković for pastoral theology. Ministers of Religion and Education were asked to “ensure at least as much right to the Serbian Orthodox Church towards this faculty, as the Roman Catholic Church has towards the Roman Catholic Faculty. For this purpose, the members of the faculty “nucleus” were instructed to organize the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in agreement with episcopate of the Serbian Orthodox Church.”²¹

Three years later (1923) Maksimović explained that the abolishing of the Karlovci Seminary was supposed to enable the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb to start working. He claimed that in 1920, he and Bishop Ilarion Zeremski suggested to the Minister of Education and Acting Minister of Religion Svetozar Pribičević to “work on the establishment of the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb.” Then, Pribičević “ordered” Maksimović “as the Acting Chief of the Ministry of Religion, to Draft a proposal for the Council of Ministers on the establishment of the faculty.” The proposal was made in the name of Pribičević and it was about raising the Karlovci Seminary to the level of the faculty of Orthodox theology of the University of Zagreb, which was supported by the Provincial Government of Croatia and Slavonia in 1919. Pribičević’s proposal, Drafted by Maksimović, said: “Seminary students, being gymnasium graduates, and having no opportunity to acquire a university degree at the Seminary, started leaving it. Today, in all four years of Seminary there are

²¹ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 19. – Letter of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci to the Minister of Religion dated September 8/21, 1920, filed under Br. 135 and 155/120–1920; – The exams for the remaining students of the Karlovci Seminary were held till 1922. More on that: Nikola Gavrilović, *Karlovačka bogoslovija (1794–1920)*, Sremski Karlovci 1984, 101.

only 15 students, which is 1/7 of a prescribed number...” It was added that “irrational spending” for this seminary “should be reduced and our theological youth allowed to acquire university degrees with less expenditure, which could be accomplished by transferring the Karlovci Seminary as the faculty of Orthodox theology to Zagreb.” “In the circles of Metropolitanate of Karlovci, the establishment of the faculty of Orthodox theology at the University of Zagreb was deemed to be more than necessary; internal state, religious, educational and national policy categorically demanded the establishment of an Orthodox educational and religious centre in Zagreb, which would not be just a higher school but would serve a greater purpose of national unification and religious convergence.” Maksimović (i.e. Pribičević) suggested that, in case of a favourable outcome, St. Sava Seminary in Belgrade should be moved to Sremski Karlovci or Karlovci boarding school be moved to the Karlovci Seminary building. The building would be sold to the state and this money would be used to build a boarding school in Zagreb. This was the conclusion of the proposal about which Maksimović said: “The Council of Ministers has partly adopted this proposal and by a really high royal decree established the faculty of theology in Zagreb, and moved St. Sava Seminary from Belgrade to Sremski Karlovci. As soon as the faculty in Zagreb was established, all students of the Karlovci Seminary were enrolled at this faculty.”²²

When the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology was established three full professors had already been appointed: Vladan Maksimović, Nikola Đurić and Dimitrije Stefanović. Maksimović became the first dean and together with the above mentioned colleagues made the rules of procedure and regulation of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology, which was verified by the Provincial Government of Croatia and Slavonia.²³ Maksimović was dismissed from the position of Acting Chief of the Orthodox Department of the Ministry of Religion on January 5th, 1921.²⁴ On April 16th, 1921 the Commission for education and religion in Croatia and Slavonia published a temporary statute of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology.²⁵

²² AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Promemoria.

²³ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – The report of the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology to the Ministry of Education filed on April 18, 1922 under Br. 98.

²⁴ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42, 5. januar 1921, V. Br. 135. – Decision of the representative of the Minister of Religion was filed as a document of the Orthodox Department of the Ministry of Religion

²⁵ *Sveučilište Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca u Zagrebu 1874–1924: Spomenica Akademičkog senata*, Zagreb 1925, 71.

However, the circumstances were quite dependent on the situation at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade and its impact. In the summer of 1921, *The Journal of the Serbian Orthodox Church* published the fact that during 1920/21 only eight teachers gave lectures to the first year students at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade, which was yet to be developed over the years. The teaching staff was supposed to increase to establish regular classes for all four years. The *Journal of the Serbian Church* also published the following: "In case that the faculty of Orthodox theology is not opened at the beginning of the next school year at the University of Zagreb, the teaching positions at the faculty of Belgrade faculty will be filled immediately and in the next school year, the lectures will be held for the students of all four years..."²⁶ On June 24th, 1921 the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade decided, due to the expected, and probably inevitable, abolition of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology, to announce a competition to fill the teaching positions and enable the teaching of "all subjects" in the school year 1921/22.²⁷ In Belgrade circles it was that thought that the Faculty of Orthodox Theology could have the full scope of work only if the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb was abolished.

Dispute between the Ministry of Finance and the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology

During 1920 and 1921, "despite all efforts, the Dean's Office [of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology] was unable to find the appropriate location for the faculty or a single room for its office. That is why the Dean, not having the apartment of his own, was often seen sorting out the official documents at the tavern." To solve the accommodation issue, on January 20th, 1921 the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology sent the first proposal to the Commission for education and religion in Croatia and Slavonia, to buy land in Vlaška Street in Zagreb for the construction of a faculty building and a student dormitory. Then on September 29th, 1921 another, more urgent proposal was sent to the Commission stating that in addition to the faculty and dormitory, the future Serbian Diocese should also be build. On the same day, the Dean's Office

²⁶ "Naša duhovna prosveta u ovoj školskoj godini", *Vesnik Srpske crkve*, juli–avgust 1921, 377.

²⁷ APBF, Transcripts from the sessions of the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology held on June 24th, 1921.

sent the proposal to the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes.²⁸ On October 21st, 1921 the Commission for education and religion in Croatia and Slavonia requested from the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Religion to provide a loan for the construction of the building of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology.²⁹ At the end of 1921, the Ministry of Religion asked the Ministry of Education whether it made a decision thereon.³⁰ On the back of the letter from the Ministry of Education there was a note saying: "To wait until it is resolved whether the Faculty of Orthodox Theology will stay in Zagreb, or not."³¹ In October 1922 the Minister of Education Svetožar Pribičević asked the Minister of Finance Kosta Kumanudi, his party colleague, to approve a loan for the purchase of the land on which the buildings of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology would be built. The Minister of Finance rejected this proposal straightaway.³²

These were not the only financial problems that threatened the survival of the faculty. In mid-January 1922, vice dean Vladan Maksimović wrote to the Minister of Education that "since the establishment of the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb till today the loans for personal and material costs for this faculty have not been approved. The Provincial Government used loans to cover the costs while waiting for the credit approval. This situation could no longer be sustained and Provincial

²⁸ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology to the Commission for Education and Religion in Croatia and Slavonia filed on September 29th, 1921 under Br. 122.

²⁹ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of the Commission for Education and Religion in Croatia and Slavonia to the Ministry of Religion filed on October 21st, 1921 under Br. 43.162–1921.

³⁰ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of the Ministry of Religion to the Ministry of Education filed on December 22nd, 1921.

³¹ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – The note was written sometime between December 26th, 1921 and March 4th, 1922. Beside these two dates, the document has couple of registry numbers and it is not clear which one refers to this note.

³² AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175, 10. oktobar 1922. – Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Finance who replied on October 18th, 1922; – Kosta Kumanudi (Belgrade, 1874 – Belgrade, 1962) received his PhD degree from the Faculty of Law in Paris. He taught at the Faculty of Law in Belgrade. In the Kingdom of Serbia, he was the member of the Independent Radical Party. Reference: *Enciklopedija srpskog naroda*, Beograd 2008, 563; – In the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes he was the member of the Democratic Party during 1921 and 1922, the Minister of Finance, and the Minister of Interior for a very short period of time. Reference: *Vlade Srbije*, 290–294; He was the Mayor of Belgrade from August 22nd, 1926 to February 18th, 1929.

Government might even suspend the payments to the professors of the faculty until the budget for the year 1922 is adopted. That would bring into question the survival of the faculty which we need for cultural, educational and national reasons". Maksimović wrote to the Ministry of Education to ask the Yugoslav government and the Minister of Finance to approve "a special loan" for "covering personal and material expenses of this faculty for the period from October 1921 until the budget for the year 1922 was adopted". That money "would cover current expenses and allow the appointment of elected teachers without whom the faculty could not start working."³³ Pribičević asked Kumanudi to meet this "reasonable request" of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology.³⁴ Kumanudi replied: "Regarding your request, it is my honour to inform you that it cannot be approved because, on the one hand, the current financial situation in the state does not allow for it; on the other hand, there is a very small probability that the National Assembly, when discussing the budget for the year 1922, will approve the loan for the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb. In that case, the faculty would have to be unconditionally closed down."³⁵ In late January 1922, the Ministry of Education informed the Commission for education and religion that due to the financial situation in the country the loan for the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology would not be granted, but did not mention the possibility of closing down the faculty.³⁶

As we can see, in 1922 it was clear that the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology would not survive. Financial problems the faculty was faced with, reached a level of real controversy in the fall of 1922. In March 1923, remembering the events of last fall, Vladan Maksimović wrote that the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology received an "oral report signed by the then Minister of Education Mr Pribičević and Minister of Finance Mr Kumanudi that the budget for 1922/1923 provided loans for 5 professors of this Faculty. Professor of the Faculty of Medicine Smetanka, who was present at the session of the finance committee

³³ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of the Vice Dean of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology to the Minister of Education filed on January 17th, 1922 under Br. 23.

³⁴ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175, 17. januar 1922, V. N. Br. 205. – Minister of Education to the Minister of Finance.

³⁵ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of the Minister of Finance to the Minister of Education filed on January 25th, 1922 under D. R. Br. 8276.

³⁶ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175, 30. januar 1922, V. N. Br. 393. – Ministry of Education to the Commission for Education and Religion.

at which this issue of loans for the faculty was resolved, said to the undersigned, that the loan for five professors of the faculty was approved at the proposal of Dr Vojislav Janjić, Secretary of the National Assembly on the basis of his report that the legislative committee of the National Assembly validated the High Royal Decree on the establishment of the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb. However, when the Dean's Office raised the question of the appointment of professors before the Provincial Government in Zagreb, it was found that the entry 'Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology' was mistakenly omitted in a printed copy of the budget for the year 1922/1923 and belonging positions were partly entered under the 'Catholic Faculty', and partly under 'Faculty of Forestry'. On that occasion, the Dean's Office sent the request to the Minister of Education to correct this mistake in the budget..."³⁷

In the previously mentioned request of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology sent to Svetozar Pribičević on October 4th, 1922 the Dean's Office pointed to "a cardinal mistake" in the budget of the Ministry of Education because the amount of money approved for the salaries of two teachers of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology were added to the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology, and the salaries of three more teachers to the Faculty of Forestry. It further said: "It is our honour to send you a rectified copy of the chapter and the entry, which is obtained from the Department of education and religion in Zagreb, and which is Drafted according to the notes of a ban adviser Dr Zajić who was present at the session of the finance committee, when the final redaction of this chapter and entry was done." "Mr Minister, reporting on this mistake, which can be crucial for the survival of the faculty, the Dean's Office asks you, Mr Minister, most politely to take urgent and energetic steps with the competent authorities to immediately correct this mistake. And for the purpose of more responsible behaviour regarding important things such as budget, you should request Mr Minister of Finance, to find and punish the guilty, who with his negligence and carelessness threatened the survival of one of the educational institutes, which was created for the needs of our education policy, which was entrusted to you, Mr Minister." The request concluded that it was "about time this faculty should be put on a solid ground, and thus cease to be a laughing stock of its opponents, who probably were those who made the mistake."³⁸

³⁷ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Promemoria.

³⁸ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – "Request for the correction of the mistake in the budget for the year 1922/1923", sent by the Dean's Office of the Faculty of the Eastern Orthodox Theology to the Ministry of

It seems that Kumanudi was intentionally obstructing the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology. The Serbian wing of the Democratic Party to which he belonged was in a political conflict with the Prečani wing of Svetozar Pribičević over the Croatian issue and state organization. Davidović's Democrats wished for a relief in Serbo-Croat relations through concessions to Croats and reduction of centralism.³⁹ The Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology was probably seen as a useful tool of Pribičević's pressure. Kumanudi as a professor of the University of Belgrade might have also wished for the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology to stop working, thus enabling the strengthening of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade.

The struggle for the survivor of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology, its professors and students

The work of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology was mostly documented by the Dean and Vice Dean of this Faculty Vladan Maksimović. On the basis of his reports to the Ministry of Education, we can

Education on October 4th, under Br. 171.

³⁹ Branislav Gligorijević, *Demokratska stranka i politički odnosi u Kraljevini Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca*, Beograd 1970, 247–266; Branislav Gligorijević, *Parlament i političke stranke u Jugoslaviji (1919–1929)*, Beograd 1979, 75, 279–284; – In September 1920, there was a rebellion of Croatian peasants “caused by measures of the central government in Belgrade in connection with the branding of cattle and Radic’s subversive agitation.” The rebellion of Croatian peasants brought together Pašić’s radicals and Pribičević’s democrats. However, the Croatian Community, due to the violent suppression of the rebellion drifted from the policy of the two largest Yugoslav Parties (Đorđe Đ. Stanković, *Nikola Pašić i Hrvati*, Beograd 1995, 95), that made the Yugoslav government with Slovenian People’s Party and independent individuals like Ante Trumbića (*Vlade Srbije*, 288–289); There are opinions that after rebellion it became clear that “Croats cannot accept the Kingdom of SHS as their own state” and that later on they accepted Stjepan Radić as a national leader. At the elections for the Constituent Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes held on November 28th, 1920. Radić’s Croatian Peasant Party became the strongest Croatian party, fourth strongest in Yugoslavia (Ivo Perić, *Stjepan Radić 1871–1928*, Zagreb 2003, 319, 324); During 1921 the Croatia question became increasingly popular. At the election for the Assembly of the City of Zagreb, Croatian Bloc (Croatian Peasant Party, Croatian Community, Croatian Party of Rights) led by Stjepan Radić dealt a serious blow to Serbian and Yugoslav politics in Croatia. Bloc won a landslide victory at the elections held in Zagreb on December 11th, 1921. (Ivo Perić, *op. cit.*, 356); During 1922 the relations between Serbian wing and Prečani wing of the Democratic Party worsened. Pribičević supported radical policy of centralism, and Davidović considered that Yugoslav circumstances and Serbo-Croat dispute should be resolved through concessions to Croats by Hrvatima and reduction of centralism. (Đorđe Đ. Stanković, *op. cit.*, 190–191).

reconstruct the efforts invested in teachers' appointment and students' enrolment, and bring the story about this faculty to a closure.

We have already seen that on the occasion of the establishment of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology, three full professors were appointed: Dean Vladan Maksimović, Nikola Đurić and Dimitrije Stefanović. They formed the Council of Professors which at the beginning of the academic 1921/22 elected new teachers: seven full professors, two associate professors and four docents. Newly elected teachers were proposed for "appointment by decree" to the Minister of Education⁴⁰ It was officially done by the Provincial government of Croatia and Slavonia, which on November 7th, 1921 suggested full professors of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology: Dr Vikentije Vujić for canon law, Dr Dane Trbojević for pedagogy and methodology of religious studies, Dr Lazar Mirković for Liturgics with church archaeology and church rhetoric, and Dr Svetomir Ristić for philosophy. Suggested associate professors were: Dr Simeon Popović who was supposed to teach apologetics and history of religion, and Dr Milan Georgijević for Church Slavonic and Greek.⁴¹ However, due to the delay in the approval of the state budget for 1922, the appointment was also delayed. In January 1922 Dimitrije Stefanović was appointed professor of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade, although he was the Dean of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb in the academic year 1921/22. Maksimović said that Stefanović did not inform his two colleagues from the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology or the University of Zagreb about his appointment. Maksimović thought Stefanović's "disloyal act" was a "serious blow" to the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology. Therefore, only two professors remained – Maksimović and Đurić. Three-member Council of Professors thus ceased to exist. Regular classes were not held.⁴²

⁴⁰ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – The report of the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology to the Ministry of Education filed on April 18, 1922 under Br. 98.

⁴¹ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of the Provincial Government of Croatia and Slavonia, Department for Education and Religion, filed on August 29th, 1922 under Br. 34.171–1922, to the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology.

⁴² AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – The report of the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology to the Ministry of Education filed on April 18, 1922 under Br. 98. – Dimitrije Stefanović (Pašičevo, Bačka, 1882 – Belgrade, 1945), graduated from the Karlovci Seminary and Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Chernovtsy where he received his PhD degree. He taught New Testament at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology. Reference: *Bogoslovski fakultet Srpske pravoslavne crkve 1920–1980*, 165–166.

This was not the end of troubles. After all, the budget for the academic year 1922/23 hardly enabled the appointment of two new professors at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology. Thus, on October 4th, 1922 Vikentije Vujić and Lazar Mirković were appointed regular professors by a royal decree, but they refused to lecture at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology.⁴³ Despite budgetary constraints, Milan Georgijević was appointed associate professor at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology.⁴⁴ On December 2nd 1922 Vujić reported to the University of Zagreb that he was sorry he could not accept the appointment to the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology.⁴⁵ On December 7th, 1922 Mirković informed the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb that he “gave his word” to the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade and thereby explained: “... I gave my word when, a year after the election day at the Academic Senate, my decree for Zagreb was not issued. So, I thought it would never be issued.”⁴⁶ Both professors returned decrees on their appointment, and the Dean’s Office of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology informed the Ministry of Education that “they could not understand why they returned the decrees on the appointment because they previously agreed to the appointment.” The Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology invited them once more to take their positions, and then asked the Minister of Education to call these two professors to accept their appointments. If not, the Dean’s Office asked for the appointment of two other professors. The same letter said that neither Ilarion Zeremski wanted to be a professor at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb. Thus, candidates for two new appointments were for the position of full professors Dr Vojislav Janić for the New Testament, Dr Dane Trbojević for pedagogy and methodology of religious studies, Dr Svetomir Ristić for philosophy, and for the position of an associate professor Simeon Popović for apologetics and history of

⁴³ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of the Dean’s Office of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology to the Ministry of Education filed on December 22nd, 1922 under Br. 236.

⁴⁴ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of the Provincial Government of Croatia and Slavonia, Department for Education and Religion to the Ministry of Education filed on March 10th, 1923 under Br. 10.464–1923.

⁴⁵ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of Vikentije Vujić to the faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology of December 7th, 1922.

⁴⁶ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of Lazar Mirković To the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology dated December 7th, 1922; – Lazar Mirković (Pivnice, Bačka, 1885 – Sremski Karlovci, 1968), graduated from the Gymnasium of Karlovci, Karlovci Seminary and The faculty of Orthodox Theology in Chernovtsy where he acquired a PhD degree. He taught Liturgics at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade. Reference: *Bogoslovski fakultet Srpske pravoslavne crkve 1920–1980*, Beograd 1980, 109–111.

religion. The Dean's Office of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology asked the Minister of Education to choose two candidates.⁴⁷ In January 1923, the new Minister of Education and member of the Radical Party, Miloš Trifunović, accepted the decisions of Vujić and Mirković not to accept the teaching positions in Zagreb and informed the newly appointed Minister of Religion and a party colleague Ljubomir Jovanović thereof.⁴⁸

Therefore, in 1923 the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology had three appointed professors: Maksimović, Đurić and Georgijević. Unable to find accommodation in Zagreb, Georgijević did not start teaching before March 1923.⁴⁹ It is also possible that during 1923 the four professors that thought at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology were three Serbs and one Croat.⁵⁰

The lectures at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology did not start before March 1923.⁵¹ Although it seems that the lectures were later held in a reduced form. First, we need to look back in order to become aware of the structure of students of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology.

During 1921/22 Maksimović „took upon himself to guide the first year students who lived in Zagreb in a common room of a barracks. He directed them to work independently at home, in the university library, and managed their seminar work in disciplines that were taught in the first year. Forced by circumstances... Students had to work in the library and seminar room”. There were 46 students who were admitted in that school year: 28 students of the first year, 2 students of the second year, 6 students of the third year and 10 students of the fourth year. Besides them, 23 candidates applied for admission, “and would be admitted formally as soon as the lectures began, because they could not come to Za-

⁴⁷ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of the Dean's Office of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology to the Ministry of Education filed on December 22nd, 1922 under Br. 236.

⁴⁸ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175, 1. januar 1923, P. Br 17. – Letter of the Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Religion; – Miloš Trifunović was the Minister of Education in two Pašić's governments from December 16th, 1922 to March 27th, 1924. He replaced Svetozara Pribičevića, who became the Minister of Education once more on March 27th, 1924. More on Serbian governments see: *Vlade Srbije*, 293–301.

⁴⁹ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of the Provincial Government of Croatia and Slavonia, Department for Education and Religion to the Ministry of Education, filed on March 10th, 1923 under Br. 10.464–1923.

⁵⁰ Sofija Božić, *op. cit.*, 669.

⁵¹ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Promemoria; also: Letter of the Provincial Government of Croatia and Slavonia, Department for Education and Religion to the Ministry of Education, filed on March 10th, 1923 under Br. 10.464–1923.

greb earlier due to financial reasons. The news about the proposal of the Committee of University Professors to abolish this faculty spread privately and through the press introducing great deal of confusion among the students... This was one of the main reasons why students hesitated to come to Zagreb and enrol at the faculty.” In April 1922, there was “a small number of students in Zagreb and the common room in the barracks was mainly occupied by Russian refugee students. They had a place to live and, as students, enjoyed a monthly support from the State Commission for Russian Refugees in the amount of 400 dinars per month. In case they ceased to be students of this faculty, they would lose both accommodation and support.” Considering the circumstances, the Dean’s Office of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology asked the Ministry of Education whether to enrol the students to the second semester of the school year 1921/22.⁵²

On February 28th, 1923, the Rector of the University of Zagreb informed the Ministry of Education that 49 students were enrolled at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology.⁵³ The August 1923 issue of the *Journal of the Serbian Church* published an article regarding the work of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in the academic year 1922/23. According to the article, 52 students were enrolled in the winter semester and because of the resignations of Vujić and Mirković lectures could not “start on time and once they started, the number of students at the faculty was reduced to 28. The others fled to other faculties in the fear of losing the semester. 11 out of these 28 were Serbian and 17 Russian.” It was further said that the spring semester enrolled “30 students – 13 Serbs and 17 Russians. 18 students applied to take exams and 12 of them delayed exams until the autumn exam period. Eight students of the first year and eight students of the fourth year passed the exams, whereas seven students received diplomas” i.e. graduated. That year, the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology employed “two professors, two associate professors and one docent. The classes included Dogmatics, Ethics, History of Religion, Philosophy, Pedagogy, Sociology, and Matrimonial right.” It was concluded that new professors needed to be appointed and that the faculty development was hindered “by the rumours about abolishing, but that it would certainly be in the interest of the church and the people if

⁵² AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – The report of the Dean’s Office of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology to the Ministry of Education filed on April 18, 1922 under Br. 98.

⁵³ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 161. – A letter and a statement of the Rector of the University of Zagreb about the students enrolled at this University, sent to the Ministry of Education on February 28th, 1923.

faculty was maintained and developed, which is what we most sincerely wish for". The school year ended on July 18th, 1923.⁵⁴

In 1925, the *Memorials* of the Academic Senate of the University of Zagreb provided no information on whether lectures were held at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology or not. Unlike the *Journal of Serbian Church* which recorded that there were 30 students in the summer semester 1922/23, the *Memorials* wrote that 26 students were enrolled at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in that semester.⁵⁵

By the above mentioned article in the *Journal of Serbian Church*, it might be concluded that the classes started towards the end of the winter semester, which at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb finished before Easter⁵⁶ around the end of March or early April 1923.⁵⁷ The Rector's Office of Zagreb University expected the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology to start "functioning" during 1923 and planned the funds in the budget for the school year 1923/24, for its "first furnishing" – the supply of furniture, textbooks and library equipment.⁵⁸ It seems that classes could not have started before mid-March 1923. However, archives do not provide any testimony on whether the classes were held and if they were how it was done. Maybe we know the regular professors (Maksimović and Đurić), but we do not know who was a docent. Was Georgijević mistakenly referred to as a docent and was it probably a professor of Croatian nationality? When it comes to lecturers, they could be some of elected professors who were not appointed by decree. There could also be some others. It seems that exams were least questionable since they were held in the summer semester of 1923. At this point, we do not know which seven students graduated and how many exams and subjects from the Karlovci Seminary or some Russian Spiritual Academy were re-

⁵⁴ "Hronika. Sa pravoslavnoga Bogoslovskega Fakulteta u Zagrebu", *Vesnik Srpske crkve*, mart–avgust 1923, 179; – According to Nikola Gavrilović the issuance of "diplomas" with the list of grades and professors' signatures was the proof of successfully ended studies. More on that in: Nikola Gavrilović, *op. cit.*, 90.

⁵⁵ *Sveučilište Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca u Zagrebu...*, 71.

⁵⁶ Data on the usual ending of winter semester at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb are contained in the transcripts of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade, which considered the applications of two students from Zagreb to transfer to the Belgrade Faculty. On that see: APBF, Transcripts from the Sessions of the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology held on April 8th, 1922.

⁵⁷ According to Belgrade *Politika's* triple issue of 7, 8 and 9 April 1923 we can see that Orthodox Christians celebrated Easter on April 8th, 1923 (according to the Gregorian calendar). According to *Politika* of April 1st, 1923 other Christians celebrated Easter on that day.

⁵⁸ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 164. – Explanation of the budget basics of the University of Zagreb for the school year 1923–24.

cognized, but it seems that the exams and subjects from previous schools were mainly recognized enabling students to graduate more quickly.

The opponents of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology and its abolition

In the Promemoria of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology from March 1923, Maksimović wrote about the opponents of this higher school. He wrote that “the rumours about the faculty were unjust and unfounded.” He also wrote: “For example, some opponents of this faculty argue that the establishment of the faculty met with the opposition in Zagreb, because it was considered as a provocation and the first sign of proselytizing of the Orthodox Church in the western part of our country. For my part, I can say that I have noticed no resistance: the Provincial Government itself proposed the establishment of this faculty; professors of the faculty of Roman Catholic theology received us kindly and agreed that we need to work together on cultural and religious rapprochement of these two confessions; some of them were more personally involved in Belgrade, e.g. Dr Zimmerman, for the maintenance of our faculty in Zagreb. The Academic Senate decided by majority vote, that the faculty should be retained. Only when University of Belgrade and Belgrade Faculty of Orthodox Theology raised the question about whether we actually needed two theological faculties, some of the professors came up with the opinion that one Catholic and one Orthodox faculty of theology were enough and that Catholic faculty in Ljubljana and Orthodox faculty in Belgrade should therefore be abolished and that both Catholic and Orthodox faculty should be kept together in Zagreb.” Since the new Draft of the Law on University left no room for the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology, Maksimović said that “if this was adopted, there would be two Catholic faculties and only one Faculty of Orthodox Theology, although the number of Orthodox is no less than the number of Catholics. If we take into account the fact that our students in today’s situation cannot study in Russia, then the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb cannot be redundant.”⁵⁹

Hence, the two faculties of Orthodox theology planned to eliminate each other and they were apparently supported by their universities. The

⁵⁹ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Promemoria.

Position of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade was, however, much stronger because it held lectures and exams on regular basis. Maksimović did not realize that when he suggested that, since “the Draft of the Law on University did not allow the students of the faculty in Belgrade, who finished St. Sava Seminary to take the rigorous exams and acquire the degree of the doctor of theology,” the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade “should be transformed to a spiritual academy with a mission to educate staff in the church field, and the Faculty in Zagreb to educate staff in the scientific and spiritual educational field.” i.e. “the real faculty might be only the one in Zagreb.”⁶⁰ So, Maksimović suggested a scientific status to the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb at the expense of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade, even when everybody knew that the Faculty in Zagreb would be abolished.

Maksimović thought that he should deny any involvement with the Democratic Party: “In Belgrade I heard a version that the faculty in Zagreb is the branch of the Democratic Party in Zagreb and that professors were elected in accordance with their political beliefs, and not objectively. I feel obliged to deny this. Participation of Dr Janić in the establishment of this faculty and the proposal for his appointment, the fact that among elected and appointed professors two belong to the Radical Party and two do not belong to any organized party, best show the absurdity of this version. Moreover, the establishment of a purely Orthodox cultural centre in Zagreb can in no way be considered as incompatible with the program of the Radical Party.” Maksimović then concluded: “there are no serious reasons for the abolition of the faculty. The opposition towards the faculty comes from the religious circles of both sides, individual ambitions still playing an important role. Chauvinists from the Catholic side think it is the proselytism of the Orthodox Church, whereas the Orthodox side criticizes us for secular liberalism and fear that we will be catholicized in Zagreb. Both ideas are absurd and show the lack of understanding of the importance of this faculty and the circumstances in Zagreb where, over time, our people will be culturally united in the field of religion.” At the end of a Promemoria of March 1923, Maksimović asked the Minister of Education to support the survival of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology which should “start working in the shortest possible time.”⁶¹

However, on August 20th, 1923 the Minister of Finance and the member of the Radical Party, Milan Stojadinović asked the Minister

⁶⁰ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Promemoria.

⁶¹ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Promemoria.

of Education to take “the necessary measures to abolish the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb, because the faculty in Belgrade could meet the needs of the entire country.”⁶² Thus began the procedure of abolishing the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology. In late September 1923, the Rector of the University of Zagreb asked the Minister of Education Trifunović whether to allow the admission of students to the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology since “necessary professors had not yet been appointed at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb.”⁶³

To prevent the abolishing of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology, the Minister of Religion and the member of the Radical Party Vojislav Janić, who was actively involved in the establishment and maintenance of the faculty, at the end of March 1924, requested the graduates of the St. Sava Seminary to be allowed to the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology because until then they were only able to enrol at the Belgrade Faculty of Orthodox Theology. Janić wrote to the Minister of Education Svetozar Pribičević, a returnee to this position, that the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb “had one, not only scientific but also necessary and important national mission.”⁶⁴ To make the position of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology stronger, on March 22nd, 1924, the faculty was even given the right to grant doctoral

⁶² AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of the Minister of Finance to the Minister of Education dated August 20th, 1923. under Dr. R. Br. 104854; – Milan Stojadinović (Čačak, 1888 – Buenos Aires, 1961) was a politician and professor at the University of Belgrade. He received his PhD degree from the Faculty of Law in Belgrade. He was a member of the People’s Radical Party and the Minister of Finance of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes from 1922 to 1926. Later he was the leader of Yugoslav Radical Union and the Prime Minister from 1935 to 1939. Prince Pavle Karađorđević interned him in the heartland of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia. The British then took him to Greece, and then deported to Mauritius from where he moved to Argentina. Reference: *Enciklopedija srpskog naroda*, 1098.

⁶³ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Telegram of the Rector of the University of Zagreb to the Minister of Education dated September 25th, 1923.

⁶⁴ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of the Minister of Religion to the Minister of Education dated March 17th, 1924 under V. Br. 5081. Letter was signed by Dr Vojislav Janić who came to the position of the Minister of Religion once more on March 27th, 1924. The letter is either signed ten days after it had been written or it was dated wrongly. The letter was received at the Ministry of Education on March 27th, 1924 when Svetozar Pribičević took office; – Vojislav Janić was the Minister of Religion from May 2nd, 1923 to July 31st, 1923 and from March 27th to July 27th, 1924. Reference: *Vlade Srbije*, 297–301; – On October 19, 1923 Janić was elected honorary Professor of Comparative Theology at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade. Reference: Čedomir Drašković, *op. cit.*, 7.

degrees to the candidates who have written and defended their doctoral dissertation at “two rigorous oral exams.”⁶⁵

The Ministry of Education requested the opinion of the Rector's Office of the University of Zagreb on the Janić's proposal to give the St. Sava Seminary graduates the opportunity to enroll at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology.⁶⁶ On April 3rd, 1924, the Academic Senate of the University of Zagreb suggested that “it needed new law according to which those students, who finished St. Sava Seminary in Belgrade or Karlovci Seminary and passed the maturity exam, could be admitted to the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb as regular students.”⁶⁷ Pribičević then informed Janić that by the applicable law the graduates of St. Sava could not be admitted to the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology.⁶⁸ Svetozar Pribičević, one of the founders of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb, was then forced to propose the abolition of the faculty. On April 26th, 1924, the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb was abolished by the Decree of King Aleksandar Karađorđević.⁶⁹ On the same day, by another royal decree, professors: Đurić, Maksimović and Georgijević were put at disposal.⁷⁰ Maksimović had previously requested the appointment to the Faculty of Belgrade Orthodox Theology, but in April 1924 he was rejected.⁷¹ He later admitted that the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology was “tolerated” by the University of Zagreb and had no special support for its existence.⁷²

⁶⁵ *Sveučilište Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca u Zagrebu...*, 71.

⁶⁶ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175, 27. mart 1924, V. Br. 2549. – Ministry of Education to the Rectorate of the University of Zagreb.

⁶⁷ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Letter of the Rector of the University of Zagreb to the Minister of Education dated April 5th, 1924.

⁶⁸ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175, 8. april 1924, V. Br. 2969. – Minister of Education to the Minister of Religion.

⁶⁹ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Decree of the King Aleksandar Karađorđević on abolishing the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb dated April 26th, 1924.

⁷⁰ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 175. – Decree of the King Aleksandar Karađorđević on placing at the disposal the professors of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb dated April 26th, 1924.

⁷¹ APBF, Transcripts from the Sessions of the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, April 1924. – Date of the April session is illegible at the copy of the document. Maksimović requested to be admitted to the Faculty of Orthodox Theology as the full professor of Moral Theology. The Faculty of Orthodox Theology replied that the position was already occupied.

⁷² Sofija Božić, *op. cit.*, 395, footnote 504. – With reference to Sofija Božić, Vladan Maksimović wrote this in his autobiography which is found in the Manuscript department

It is interesting that the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology survived eight months from the Stojadinović's proposal till the abolition. Undoubtedly, as we have seen, there was a strong desire to abolish the Faculty but this secret was revealed in February 1924 by the associate professor of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade, Lazar Mirković, during his fierce debate with former rector of the Karlovci Seminary Dobrosav Kovačević, who in December 1923 suggested the abolition of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade.⁷³ In addition to the reasons for the survival of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology of the University of Belgrade, Mirković pointed to the destiny of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb: "Look at Slovenians. Both clergy and laity defended their faculty of theology so fiercely that the Council of Ministers had to withdraw the decision on its abolition. Thus, they even helped the survival of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology until further decisions, and our Church wants to destroy its only faculty of theology".⁷⁴ In this way, Lazar Mirković indirectly blamed a "big part" of bishops of the Serbian Orthodox Church for the abolition of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb and quite directly for the "destruction" the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade.

After four years of existence and pretended work, the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb was closed in 1924. It was established for the political reasons, and for the same reasons it was closed. However, it seems that seven students graduated from this faculty after they have been recognized exams and subjects transferred from previous schools, and then probably took additional exams. Thus, the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb gave its contribution to the theological education.

Finally, our main sources for the history of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb were the writings and letters of Vladan Maksimović. Undoubtedly, he was partial, but a very informed man. He

of Matica Srpska in Novi Sad.

⁷³ Dobrosav M. Kovačević, "Bogoslovski fakultet ili duhovna akademija", *Glasnik: Službeni list Srpske pravoslavne patrijaršije*, 14. decembar 1923, 356. – In this issue of *Glasnik*, Kovačević's name was misprinted as "Dobroslav".

⁷⁴ Lazar Mirković, "Bogoslovski fakultet ili duhovna akademija?", *Glasnik*, 14. februar 1924, 42; – Although Mirković was a full professor at the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb, after being transferred to the Faculty of Orthodox Theology at the end of 1922, the Belgrade University Council thought Mirković should be elected Associate Professor. University Council held that it was "early" for Mirković to be elected full professor. On Lazar Mirković's proposal for an Associate Professor, see: APBF, Transcripts from the sessions of the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology held on November 15th, 1922.

took part in a conflict and carefully monitored the moves of the opponents both in Belgrade and Zagreb. Threats to his faculty, that he wrote so much about, were eventually fulfilled.

* * *

Bibliography:

Sources:

Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

Archives of Yugoslavia, Fond Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

Archives of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology (University of Belgrade), Transcripts from the Sessions of the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology.

Stenographic notes of the Provisional National Assembly of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, III, Beograd 1920.

Službene novine Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca (Official Gazette of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes)

Vesnik Srpske crkve (Beograd).

Glasnik: Službeni list Srpske pravoslavne patrijaršije (Beograd).

Zastava (Novi Sad).

Politika (Beograd).

Literature:

Bogoslovski fakultet Srpske pravoslavne crkve 1920–1980, Beograd 1980.

Boranić, D. (prir.) (1925), *Sveučilište Kraljevine Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca u Zagrebu 1874–1924: Spomenica Akademičkog senata*, Tisak zaklade tiskare Narodnih novina, Zagreb.

Božić, S. (2008), *Srbi u Hrvatskoj 1918–1929*, Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, Beograd.

Gavrilović, N. (1984), *Karlovačka bogoslovija (1794–1920)*, Srpska Pravoslavna Bogoslovija Svetog Arsenija, Sremski Karlovci.

Gligorijević, B. (1970), *Demokratska stranka i politički odnosi u Kraljevini Srba, Hrvata i Slovenaca*, Institut za savremenu istoriju, Beograd.

Gligorijević, B. (1979), *Parlament i političke stranke u Jugoslaviji (1919–1929)*, Institut za savremenu istoriju : Narodna knjiga, Beograd.

Jurišić, I., Matijević, M., Nikić, G. (2005), *Srpske škole i istaknuti srpski učitelji u Hrvatskoj do 1941. godine*, Srpsko kulturno društvo „Prosvjeta“, Zagreb.

Krestić, V. (1991), *Istorija Srba u Hrvatskoj i Slavoniji 1848–1914*, Zavod za udžbenike, Beograd.

Ljušić, R. i dr. (2008), *Enciklopedija srpskog naroda*, Zavod za udžbenike, Beograd.

Ljušić, R., Dimić, Lj. (2005), *Vlade Srbije (1805–2005)*, Zavod za udžbenike, Beograd.

Perić, I. (2003), *Stjepan Radić 1871–1928*, Dom i svijet, Zagreb.

Raković, A. (2007), “Akademska i politička rasprava o Bogoslovskom fakultetu tokom 1919. godine (sa osvrtom na ranije pisanje Vesnika Srpske crkve)”, *Srpska teologija u dvadesetom veku*, I, Beograd.

Stanković, Đ. Đ. (1995), *Nikola Pašić i Hrvati*, BIGZ, Beograd.

Примљено: 12. 11. 2013.

Одобрено: 15. 11. 2013.

КРАТКОТРАЈНО ПОСТОЈАЊЕ ИСТОЧНО-ПРАВОСЛАВНОГ БОГОСЛОВСКОГ ФАКУЛТЕТА У ЗАГРЕБУ (1920–1924)

Александар Раковић

Институт за новију историју Србије, Београд

Апстракт: Кроз архивску трагу Архива Југославије (АЈ) и архиве Православне богословске факултете Универзитета у Београду (АРБФ), као и литератури, рад приказује историју Источно-православне богословске факултете Загребачког свеучилишта.

Кључне речи: Источно-православни богословски факултет, Загребачко свеучилиште, Српска православна црква, Краљевина Срба, Хрватска и Словенаца.