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Vlada SOKYRSKA

PhD hab. (History), Professor of the Department of International Relations and Tourism, Kyiv International University, 49 Lvivska Street, Kyiv, Ukraine, postal code 03179 (vlada.sokirskaya@ukr.net)

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-9983-3234>

Researcher ID: B-4448-2019 (<http://www.researcherid.com/rid/B-4448-2019>)

Oleksandr CHUCHALIN

PhD (History), Associate Professor of the Department of Ukrainian History at Pavlo Tychyna Uman State Pedagogical University, 2 Sadova Street, Uman, Cherkassy region, Ukraine, postal code 20300 (aleksandr02.1989@gmail.com)

ORCID: <http://orcid.org/0000-0003-3876-8237>

Researcher ID: D-7654-2019 (<http://www.researcherid.com/rid/D-7654-2019>)

Влада СОКИРСЬКА

доктор історичних наук, професор кафедри міжнародних відносин і туризму Київського міжнародного університету, вул. Львівська, 49, Київ, Україна, індекс 03179 (vlada.sokirskaya@ukr.net)

Олександр ЧУЧАЛИН

кандидат історичних наук, доцент кафедри історії України Уманського державного педагогічного університету імені Павла Тичини, вул. Садова, 2, Умань, Черкаської області, Україна, індекс 20300 (aleksandr02.1989@gmail.com)

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**KYIV EPARCHY WITHIN
THE SOVIET RUSSIAN ANTI-RELIGIOUS POLICY IN THE 1920-ies**

Abstract. *The article aims at illustrating the functioning of Kyiv eparchy under the conditions of socioeconomic upheavals during the 1920-ies and at defining the principles of the Soviet state policy towards church treasures. The Research methodology is based on general scientific principles of objectivity, historicism, systematicity, comprehensiveness, which made it possible to accurately recreate the sociopolitical and economic standing of Kyiv eparchy and ensured the reliability of research findings. The scientific value of the article consists in the fact that the statistical data reflecting the functioning of Kyiv eparchy in the 1920-ies were, for the first time, systematized and analyzed in Ukrainian historiography. It is found that whether temples, monasteries and convents were closed or destroyed. It is defined when they ceased to be the objects of religious worship. Their further fate is clarified.*

The article focuses on the analysis of the Soviet government policy towards the demolition of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church as a social institution, elimination of its religious buildings, closure of temples and theological schools, destruction of monasteries and convents, prohibition of church

bells, confiscation of church property and persecution of the Orthodox priesthood in the territory of an individual church administrative unit. It clarifies the position of Kyiv eparchy of the Ukrainian exarchate of the Russian Orthodox Church in an age of the Soviet legislation in the 1920-ies. It specifies the principles of the Soviet policy towards church property within Kyiv eparchy, the position of its Orthodox clergy and the means of anti-religious propaganda, which made it possible to estimate the extent of material and spiritual losses of the Ukrainian people. **The Conclusions.** Studying the principles of the Soviet state policy towards the church treasures within Kyiv eparchy and analyzing the standing of its Orthodox clergy, as well as the means of atheistic propaganda, one can estimate the extent of material and spiritual losses of the Ukrainian people.

Key words: Russian policy, Soviet government, Kyiv eparchy, church property, confiscation, spiritual loss.

КИЇВСЬКА ЄПАРХІЯ В УМОВАХ РОСІЙСЬКОЇ РАДЯНСЬКОЇ АНТИРЕЛІГІЙНОЇ ПОЛІТИКИ 1920-х рр.

Анотація. *Мета статті* – показати становище Київської єпархії в умовах соціально-економічних потрясінь 1920-х рр., визначити засади радянської державної політики щодо церковного майна. **Методологія дослідження** ґрунтується на комплексі загальнонаукових принципів об'єктивності, історизму, системності, всебічності, дотримання яких дало змогу максимально точно відтворити суспільно-політичне та економічне становище Київської єпархії, забезпечило достовірність результатів дослідження. **Наукова новизна** полягає у тому, що вперше в українській історіографії систематизовано й проаналізовано статистичні дані, що відображають становище Київської єпархії у 1920-х рр., закриті чи зруйновані її храми та монастирі, встановлено дати виведення їх із об'єктів культового використання, з'ясовано подальшу долю.

У статті проаналізовано політику російської радянської влади щодо нищення православної церкви в Україні як соціального інституту, ліквідації її культових споруд, закриття храмів та духовних навчальних закладів, руйнування монастирів, заборону церковного дзвону, конфіскації церковних цінностей та репресії православного духовенства на території окремо взятої церковної адміністративно-територіальної одиниці. З'ясовано становище Київської єпархії Українського екзархату Російської православної церкви в умовах дії російського радянського законодавства 1920-х рр. **Висновки.** Дослідження засад радянської державної політики щодо церковного майна в межах Київської єпархії, аналіз становища її православного духовенства, засобів здійснення атеїстичної пропаганди дають можливість оцінити масштаби матеріальних і духовних втрат українського народу.

Ключові слова: російська політика, радянська влада, Київська єпархія, церковне майно, конфіскація, духовні втрати.

The Problem Statement. The democratic processes in the society and the collapse of the Communist ideology have contributed to the revival of religious life in Ukraine and expanded the role of the church in cultivating the spirituality of its people. A special period in the spiritual life of the Ukrainians began after the liberalization of state-church relations in the late 1980-ies and the early 1990-ies and the increased a religious activity of the population accompanied by religious renaissance, restoration of ancient temples, construction of new shrines and support of theological education. This was due to the raising of the ban on religious freedom at the constitutional level, the state guarantee for Freedom of Conscience, rejection of the Communist ideology and increasing social problems. The return to religion allowed the most Ukrainians to fill ideological and moral vacuum created as a result of the loss of previous religious beliefs and values and to seek for a spiritual support in life and to restore spiritual values of the past.

The Analysis of Recent Researches and Publications. O. Ihnatush and A. Kyrydon were the first ones, who conducted an overview of the position of the Ukrainian Orthodox

Church in the context of the state-church relations in the 20th century. O. Ihnatush analyzes the status of Orthodoxy in Ukraine, which split into several churches in the 1920-ies and 1930-ies and sought for the ways to restore unity (Ihnatusha, 2008). The author reveals the modernizing character of the split and highlights the influence of European civilization, the Ukrainian national revolution and the Soviet authorities on the institutional status of the church environment. He justifies the specifics of the internal organization of denominations, namely the administration, eparchial and parish units.

The relations between the Bilshovyk State and the Orthodox Church of 1917 – 1930s in the “state-church-society” system were studied by A. Kyrydon (Kyrydon, 2007). The author considers various aspects of state-church relations during this period: the origins and the evolution of the Soviet policy towards religion and church, the position of individual denominations through the prism of the state-church relations and interdenominational relations.

V. Pashchenko focuses on the status of the modern Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Pashenko, 1993). O. Tryhub investigates one of the most tragic periods in the history of the Russian Orthodox Church during 1920 – 1930, that is a period of active confrontation between the state and the church, the clergy’s search for their place in a new society, reformist aspirations and the struggle for survival (Tryhub, 2009).

At this stage, there are emerging calls for regional studies on relations between the state and the church within eparchies and administrative districts. O. Tatarchenko explores the problem of separation of churches from the state and the split of the Orthodox Church, property issues of eparchies and the characteristics of Soviet law on Freedom of Conscience in an individual region (Tatarchenko, 2010).

V. Olitskyi studies the Soviet repression of the church as a multidimensional process, aimed, on the one hand, against the church as a social institution and, on the other hand, against the clergy as its ministers (Olytskyi, 2017). E. Snida considers socioeconomic, cultural and educational activities of Yekaterynoslav (modern Dnipro) eparchy, as well as the changes in its territorial organization and administration structure (Snida, 2016).

O. Nestulia examines the influence of the state anti-religious propaganda on the protection of places of worship during 1917 – 1941 (Nestulia, 1995). He analyzes the activities of state landmark protective services, museums, institutions of the All-Ukrainian Academy of Sciences and the role of the public in protecting places of worship.

The problematic relations between the Soviet authorities and the Orthodox Church in the early 1920-ies have recently attracted the attention of Russian researchers. Indeed, M. Krapivin indicates the efforts of the Bilshovyk leadership, from the first days of its power, to control the Orthodox Church and its clergy. The Bilshovyks attempted to secure their own monopoly in political, ideological and cultural areas by neutralizing the influence of religion on society. The Orthodox Church faced hard times after the introduction of the Soviet legislation on religion. The author points out the absence of a transitional period between the old and new socio-legal status of confessional associations. The Basic Decree of 1918 and the Instruction on Its Application of August 30, 1918 completely deprived the Church of property and legal rights, as well as prevented the implementation of educational, pedagogical, charitable, missionary activities (Krapivin, 2016, p. 278).

The modern researchers are particularly interested in the position of Kyiv eparchy, its clergy, shrines and religious educational institutions in the 1920-ies, since the actions of the Soviet authorities aimed at eliminating religious buildings, confiscating church property and prosecuting the Orthodox clergy led to the negative consequences for the religious and

cultural development of Ukrainian society. Presently, one can only clarify the preconditions, causes and consequences of such a large-scale phenomenon in the 1920 – 1930-ies. Having assessed the damage done to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, one can conclude that the Ukrainian people lost material items, cultural values and spiritual treasures accumulated over centuries.

The purpose of the article to show the standing of Kyiv eparchy under the conditions of socioeconomic upheavals during the 1920-ies and define the principles of the Soviet state policy towards church treasures.

The Statement of the Basic Material. At the time of the proclamation of an independent Ukrainian State in 1918, there were nine Orthodox eparchies, namely Kholm eparchy, Volyn eparchy (with a bishop's throne in Zhytomyr), Podilia eparchy (with a bishop's throne in Kamianets-Podilskyi), Kyiv eparchy, Chernihiv eparchy, Kharkiv eparchy, Ekaterynoslav eparchy, Poltava eparchy, Kherson eparchy (with a bishop's throne in Odesa), which were the part of the metropolitan district. The issue of territorial boundaries between the eparchies was raised at the All-Russian Council or Sobor in September 1918. It was agreed to match the boundaries of the eparchies to the administrative boundaries of the provinces (*Polozhenie ob oblastnyh Preosvyashchennyh*, 1934, p. 218).

The eparchy was ruled by the administration directly subordinate to the supreme bishop. According to the canon law of the Orthodox Church, as well as the age-old tradition, the bishop is not only the bearer of sacred power but also the administrator within the boundaries of his eparchy. In Ukraine, the eparchies were ruled by one metropolitan, three archbishops and five bishops. In addition to the ruling eparchial bishops, there were 16 vicar bishops: 4 – in Kyiv eparchy (Chyhyryn, Uman, Kaniv and Cherkasy); 3 – in Kherson eparchy (Novomyrhorod, Yelyzavethrad and Mykolaiv); 2 – in Podolia eparchy (Vinnytsia and Balta); 1 – in Poltava eparchy (Pryluky); 1 – in Kharkiv eparchy (Sumy); 1 – in Ekaterynoslav eparchy (Pavlohrad) (Bilokin, 1992, 100).

Therefore, there were 25 Ukrainian bishops subject to the Holy Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia in 1918 (Bidnov, 1921, p. 5). All hierarchs were well-educated and had academic degrees in theology.

After the Church of Kyiv came into existence in the second half of the 9th century, certain historical circumstances changed the way eparchies were ruled. Thus, the Metropolitan of Kyiv was long the only bishop in his eparchy. He was entitled to elect or approve candidates to the priesthood and to ordain them. Some ordained priests helped the Metropolitan to solve some administrative issues. The Members of the Metropolitan Office were expected to be well-educated and respectable priests from Kyiv.

Due to the development and spiritual formation of the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra, it so successfully established itself that over 50 monks were ordained as bishops for only two centuries. Subsequently, each of these bishops invited to the Lavra familiar monks from the Monastery of St. Anthony and, consequently, the administration of Kyiv eparchy started to include monks.

In 1918, Kyiv eparchy was the largest church administrative unit of the Russian Orthodox Church and was headed by the eparchial bishop. It included vicar eparchies, namely Kaniv, Chygyryn, Cherkasy and Uman (Bilokin, 1992, p.100); 82 deaneries, 1478 independent parish and 29 assigned temples; over 1710 churches (parishes) with 1435 priests and 33 monasteries with 5193 monks (*Martyrolohiia ukrainskykh tserkov*, 1987, p. 909).

Kyiv consistory was considered to be an important authority of the eparchy administration. Being disestablished on August 2, 1918, it actually continued to exist until April 29,

1919. Consequently, Kyiv eparchial council was established by the decree of Metropolitan (Pravoslavna entsiklopediya, 2013, p. 197).

During 1918–1939, Kyiv eparchy was headed by the following members of the church: the metropolitan Volodymyr (Bohoiavlenskyi) (1915 – 1918); the bishop Nykodym (Krotkov) (January-May 1918); the metropolitan Antonii (Khrapovytskyi) (June-December 1918/September-November 1919); the bishop Apolinarii (Koshovyi) (December 1918); the bishop Nazarii (Blinov) (January-September 1919/November 1919 – July 1921); the metropolitan Mykhail (Yermakov) (July 1921 – February 1923/November 1927 – March 1929); the bishop Vasyl (Bohdashevskyi) (February-March 1923); the bishop Makarii (Karamzin) (April 1923 – January 1925); the bishop Serhii (Kumynskyi) (February-March 1925); the bishop Heorhii (Deliiev) (April 1925 – October 1927); the archbishop Konstantyn (Diakov) (April 1929 – April 1930/February-October 1932 July 1934 – November 1937); the archbishop Dymytrii (Verbytskyi) (April 1930 – February 1932); the archbishop Serhii (Hryshyn) (April 1932 – July 1934); the archbishop Oleksandr (Petrovskyi) (November 1937 – July 1938). From July 1938 to July 1941, the head of the eparchy was not appointed.

The Bolsheviks, who came to power as a result of the collapse of the Russian Empire, prepared a programme of action on religion and the church. They transformed state-church relations. The Russian Communist Party (the Bolsheviks) managed to launch anti-religious propaganda. Soviet legislation became an important tool for a revolutionary transformation of state-church relations. The first legislative acts of Soviet authorities undermined social and economic principles of the Orthodox Church. On January 20, 1918, the Council of People's Commissars of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic adopted a decree "On Separation of Church from State and School from Church" (Dekret, 1942, p. 286), which denounced state-church relations formed for centuries.

On January 19, 1919, the Provisional Workers and Peasants' Government of Ukraine adopted a decree "On Separation of Church from State and School from Church" (Dekret, 1919, p. 35). The decree reflected the position of the Russian Communist Party (the Bolsheviks) on religion, the church and religious persons, confirmed the priority of the state and its laws over religious ones and legalized the secular nature of the state policy towards the church.

The policy towards the separation of church from state was reflected in the legislation of the following years. Anti-religious policies were supported by the new initiatives of J. Stalin, who called for an even more active struggle with religion (Yaroslavskiy, 1929, p. 15). In January 1920, after the final approval of the Soviet power in Ukraine, the All-Ukrainian Revolutionary Committee adopted a resolution "On Unification of Activities of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic" and thus automatically extended the legislation of RSFSR to the territory of the USSR (Postanovlenie Vseukrrevkoma, 1919, p. 10). It was manifested in the limitation of the ritual side of the cult, the Soviet repression campaign against the church and the believers, as well as the elimination of holy relics.

On August 5, 1920, the Kyiv newspaper "Vesti" published an order of the Kyiv Province Revolutionary Committee on the closure of Kyiv Eparchial Council. In an attempt to preserve the structure of the eparchial administration, Nazarii, the bishop of Cherkasy and head of Kyiv eparchy, proposed to create an eparchial office on August 6, 1920. All members of Kyiv Eparchial Council were automatically included in the staff of the office and several departments were created. In particular, the department of religious affairs dealt with

appointment and transfer of the priesthood and the clergy and their rewarding. This department was headed by the archpriest S. Trehubov. The department of parish affairs was headed by the archpriest M. Vyshnevetskyi, who dealt with divine worship and the administration of the sacraments. The department of church construction and restoration was headed by N. Bilohirskyi, who was concerned with financial issues and supervised church and monastic property. The department of court proceedings was headed by the archpriest N. Hrosu and the archpriest F. Pavlovskyi, who studied the issues related to the failure of the clergy to follow the canonical rules, some cases of issuing permits for the sacrament of marriage to the persons who obtained a civil divorce and wished to marry in the church. A. Brailovskyi was appointed a secretary of the newly established Kyiv Eparchial Office.

The Bishop Nazarii appealed to the Province Revolutionary Committee about the possibility of granting the Office the premises used by Kyiv Eparchial Council (State Archives of Kyiv Region – SAKR, f. R-4752, d. 5, c. 634, p. 1).

A powerful Soviet campaign against the Orthodox Church began in 1918 with the campaign for the elimination of holy relics. There were some pogroms against the relics of the saints kept in the Alexander Svirsky monastery in Petrograd province of RSFSR. In autumn 1918, the monastery was seized and robbed by the Chekists and its abbot, the archimandrite Yevhenii (Trofimov), was shot dead.

On August 25, 1920, the Council of People's Commissars of the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic adopted a resolution "On Elimination of Holy Relics on All-Russian Scale" (Arhivy Kremliia, 1997, p. 457) to legitimize such actions in the future. According to it, local executive committees were obliged to consistently and systematically eliminate holy sites. Justice departments were obliged to institute criminal proceedings for non-compliance with the law.

An economic blow to the church became a decree "On Seizure of Church Property for the Assistance to the Starving People" signed by M. Kalinin, head of the Central Executive Committee, on February 23, 1922, in Moscow. The All-Ukrainian Central Committee issued a decree on "On Transfer of Church Property to the Fund for the Assistance to the Starving People" (Postanova VUCVK, 1922, p. 786) on March 8, 1922. According to these legal acts, a wide network of state authorities engaged in this area was established.

The decree and instructions issued in the second half of February 1922 in Moscow and those ones issued in the first half of March in Kharkiv differed only in dates and signatures. In their content, Kharkiv documents were a mere translation of Moscow ones. In this case, one could compare the sovereignty of Kharkiv government with Moscow one (Veriha, 1996, p. 37). With the adoption of these legal acts, the Soviet authorities legitimized the plunder of the Orthodox Church.

The church property was confiscated rather professionally. Initially, a campaign was launched to include it on the state register. On January 1, 1922, the circulars of the People's Commissars of Justice determined the procedure for a description of church property (Gidulyanov, 1926, p. 126). In Ukraine, the confiscation of church property began in April 1922. During this period, all the churches of Kyiv eparchy were forced to give up the state jewels accumulated for centuries, which would be able to feed provinces with poor harvest for two years. The state received 3 poods, 3 funts and 75 zolotniks of gold, more than 3105 funts of silver, 125 karbovantsiv in gold and 8615 karbovantsiv in silver, 856 diamonds (total weight 1469 carats), other precious stones and metals. The collected church wealth was valued at more than 834 thousand karbovantsiv in gold (Central State Archive of the Supreme Government Authorities and Administration of Ukraine – CSASGAU, f. 2, d. 2, c. 465, p. 1).

By autumn of 1922, almost all church property had been confiscated. The vandalism of the Soviet power was striking for its scale and brutality. As a result of the Bilshovyk policy towards seizing church property, thousands of cultural, historical and artistic values were destroyed. These jewels were also sold for scrap. This eventually led to the dehumanization of society. Therefore, the Soviet government attempted to use the fight against hunger to struggle with religion and its institutions.

The campaign for confiscating church property in favour of the starving people was a major state crime. Its true purpose was set far from the one declared by the Bilshovyks. Under various slogans of assistance to the starving people, organizers entirely robbed the temples. This action was aimed at eliminating economic independence of the church and establishing a gold fund of the Russian Communist Party (the Bilshovyks) designed to deal with the construction of state objects and promote “the world revolution”. It was aimed at discrediting the church in the eyes of the people, first of all, the population of the starving regions.

The main focal point of the Ukrainian Bilshovyks’ anti-religious propaganda, by analogy with the Russian one, was to be the All-Ukrainian Anti-Religious Commission established on April 4, 1922, at the Central Committee of the Communist Party (Bilshovyks) of Ukraine in Kharkiv. It was an authority unknown to society for a long period of time. The main activity of the commission involved the following two tasks: the struggle with the church and the clergy; the struggle with all manifestations of religion. Very soon anti-religious commissions were organized at provincial committees and their subdivisions – at district committees of the Communist Party (Bilshovyks) of Ukraine. They also started the campaign for confiscating church property. The churches were closed and reorganized into cultural institutions, warehouses, stables. The clergy was forced to engage in public works.

The anti-religious campaign was divided into three stages. The first stage covered 1919 – 1924, the second one – 1925 – 1933, the third one – 1934 – 1939. The current research finds that 32 temples were closed and 1 temple was destroyed during the first stage in Kyiv. In Kyiv eparchy, 4 temples were closed and 7 temples were destroyed. During the second stage, church buildings were confiscated from rural communities. During the second half of the 1920s and the early 1930s, 8 temples were closed and 9 temples were destroyed in Kyiv; 21 temples were closed and 24 temples destroyed in Kyiv eparchy. During the third stage, the number of closed temples increased. In Kyiv, 28 temples were closed and 32 temples were destroyed. In Kyiv eparchy, 1 temple was closed and 13 temples were destroyed. The confiscated church buildings were reorganized into clubs, libraries, theatres, museums and other cultural and educational institutions. Often, they were adapted to household needs, namely collective farms and granaries, warehouses or were closed. Along with the closure of churches, they started a campaign against church bells. On December 11, 1929, the People’s Commissariat for Internal Affairs issued a special resolution “On Seizure of Bells from Churches” (Kommunisticheskaya partiya, 1984, p. 375). In spring of 1930, the large churches of Kyiv lost their bells: St. Volodymyr’s Cathedral – 20 tons, the Church of the Tithes – 34 tons, St. Michael’s Cathedral – 12 tons, the Ascension Convent – 12.7 tons, the Trinity Monastery of St. Jonas – 30 tons (CSASGAAU, f. 1, d. 7, c. 345, p. 34).

In the 1920-ies, the very activity of the All-Ukrainian Anti-Religious Commission became the main reason for the split in the Orthodox Church and the emergence of new church movements. In Ukraine, there was Ukrainian Synodal (Renovated) Church, Ukrainian Cathedral Episcopal Church and other Orthodox fragments. The Commission stopped its activities only in 1929 (Holodnii, 1974, p. 77).

In 1918, the campaign for the mass closure of monasteries and convents and the confiscation of their property began. In the early 1920-ies, there were 15 monasteries and 15 convents in Kyiv eparchy. In 1921, there were 7 monasteries and 3 convents in Kyiv. According to the legislation of that time, by 1922, religious communities had been established at almost all monasteries and convents of Kyiv eparchy. Agricultural artels or labour communes housed in some of them and included settlers, workers and novitiates, who lived there. Soviet authorities were particularly interested in the financial situation of monasteries and convents, namely their lands, movable and immovable property. Therefore, in the 1920-ies and 1930-ies, Ukrainian monasteries and convents were viewed by the Soviet power as material objects as evidenced by the facts of the confiscation of property from monasteries and convents in Kyiv eparchy, as well as the deprivation of their right to own and use their lands.

The most devastating direction of the undeclared war of the Bilshovyk Party and the socialist state against the church was constant persecution of the clergy and even the physical repressions initiated from the very first days of the Soviet rule. Kyiv eparchy exceeded other Ukrainian eparchies by the number of the episcopate and the clergy. According to statistical data, there were 2520 priests on September 1, 1925, in the territory of Kyiv eparchy (CSASGAAU, f. 5, d. 3, c. 399, p. 10).

During “the atheistic five-year plan” aimed at eliminating all religious denominations and manifestations, 57 priests, 27 monks (celibate monks) and 10 laypeople from Kyiv eparchy were subject to repression and murdered for their religious beliefs.

On January 23, 1923, the exarch of Ukraine, the metropolitan Mykhailo (Yermakov) became the victim of repression. The Higher Church Administration sent the exarch a letter about his removal from the administrator of Kyiv eparchy. A criminal case was opened against him. The 60-year-old metropolitan was imprisoned in Butyrka prison in Moscow and soon sentenced to 2 years in concentration camps. Subsequently, this sentence was replaced by an administrative exile in Turkmenistan (Politychnyi teror, 2002, p. 302).

The rector of Kyiv Theological Academy, professor, doctor of theology Vasyl (Bohdashevskyi) became the victim of repression, too. In 1923, he was arrested by Soviet authorities, sent to Moscow, questioned in Butyrka prison and sent to exile in Zyryansky District of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic (Istoriya ierarhii, 2006, p. 205).

Religious educational institutions occupy a special place in the history of Ukrainian education. In Kyiv eparchy, there was Kyiv Theological Academy and Seminary, as well as Kyiv Podolia, Kyiv Sofiia, Cherkasy and Uman religious schools (Martyrolohiia, 1987, p. 912). In early 1919, there were 628 students in Kyiv Theological Seminary (SAKR, f. R-142, d. 1, c. 138, p. 4).

On April 3, 1919, Kyiv Theological Academy, one of the oldest educational institutions in Ukraine, was closed by Soviet authorities. In order to save the educational institution under these conditions, its rector Vasyl Bohdashevskyi appealed to the new government to allow the academy to operate as a private educational institution. Kyiv Province Executive Committee granted permission to establish Kyiv Orthodox Theological Academy as an educational institution of the Kyiv Orthodox Theological Society. This allowed the Academy to continue to exist for another four years (Sokolovskyi, 1999, p. 18).

According to the proposal (No 206) of School Subdivision dated April 30, 1919, on Elimination of All Schools of Religious Department in Kyiv, the seminary was reorganized into a higher labour school. The premises of the seminary were located at Voznesenskyi Descent. It was a three-story building with big halls and spacious classrooms. Soviet authorities planned

to place the Teacher Institute there (SAKR, f. R-142, d. 1, c. 138, p. 4). Over time, their plans changed, though.

According to the proposals of the Commission of the Bureau of Kyiv Province Committee of the Communist Party (the Bolsheviks) of Ukraine as of September 29, 1925, it was agreed to put the premises of the former seminary at the disposal of Tabaktrest with the aim to establish a tobacco factory there (SAKR, f. R-112, d. 1, c. 8439, p. 2). Kyiv Sofia and Kyiv Podolia religious schools were also reorganized (SAKR, f. R-142, d. 1, c. 138, pp. 25–26).

The Conclusions. The Soviet policy towards the church aimed at forming a rather wide range of legal relations, determined a diverse and objective content of these legal relations, as well as various preventive, regulatory, protective measures and various ways of legal regulation. All eparchies were at a disadvantage under the conditions of the new Soviet legislation. The eparchial administration and the clergy of Kyiv eparchy found themselves at the epicentre of the sociopolitical transformations of that time.

The introduction of the Soviet anti-religious legislation and atheistic policy have undermined the social and economic principles of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church and destroyed centuries-old state-church relations. The Campaigns for the elimination of holy relics, confiscation of church property, creation of anti-religious propaganda, persecution of religious associations, closure of religious institutions, reorganization or destruction of religious buildings, accusations against priests, deprivation of their electoral rights have resulted in the split in the religious environment and destructive influence on culture and identity of Ukrainian people, consciousness and spirituality of society.

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