

KARLOVCI SEMINARY: FROM ONE STEP TO THE LEVEL OF THE FACULTY (1914–1920) TOWARDS SUBSEQUENT RECOGNITION OF THE FACULTY LEVEL (1925–1933)

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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 long path of the Serbian Orthodox Karlovci Seminary towards recognition of faculty (higher education) level for that institution.

Key words: Sremski Karlovci, Karlovci Seminary, Metropolitanate of Karlovci, Serbian Orthodox Church, Faculty of Orthodox Theology.

Besides Belgrade in the Kingdom of Serbia, another centre of Serbian theology in the 19th century was Sremski Karlovci (Karlovci) in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. From its establishment till its closure the Karlovci Seminary (Clerical or Old Seminary from 1794 to 1872 and Serbian Orthodox Seminary or New Seminary from 1875 to 1920) had undergone the way that brought it one step from the level of the faculty.¹

In church historiography the Karlovci Seminary was often ascribed the status of a higher education institution that, despite various efforts, it failed to achieve during its existence. Historical sources witnessed serious efforts of the Orthodox Church of the Metropolitanate

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¹ On the history of the Karlovci Seminary, see: Nikola Gavrilović, *Karlovačka bogoslovija* (1794–1920), Sremski Karlovci 1984.

of Karlovci to upgrade the Karlovci Seminary to a higher level. The turmoil of the War and the Yugoslav unification set it back. However, its teaching staff helped the establishment of not one but two faculties: the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade and the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb.

The idea of upgrading the Karlovci Seminary to the level of the faculty can be observed before and after World War I in two different states: the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes (Kingdom of SHS).

Elaborate on raising the Karlovci Seminary to the level of the faculty (1914)

The most important source for the reconstruction of the idea of establishing the faculty of orthodox theology in Sremski Karlovci in the period of Austria-Hungary is an Elaborate on raising the Karlovci Seminary to the level of an independent faculty of orthodox theology which was done in February 1914 by the Karlovci Seminary in the name of the Metropolitan of Karlovci. There are some details which cannot be found in this document and which will be referenced in other sources.

The Elaborate was written after the Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph with the support of the Hungarian government and the Metropolitanate of Karlovci abolished the Serbian national-church autonomy in 1912. They thought that this would decrease the influence of Serbian political parties in Hungary, which had a majority in the Serbian Peoples & Church Assembly, were at odds with the church leadership and were the opposition to the Hungarian authorities.² The leaders of the Serbian political parties in Hungary referred to the policy of the church leadership as „Karlovci clerical conservatism“, which, with the support of Vienna and Budapest, wanted to reduce the influence of the secular Serbian national-church autonomy. The church leaders, however, thought that the Serbian political elite in Hungary wanted to dominate the Metropolitanate of Karlovci.³

Therefore, as we analyse the Elaborate, we must not forget that the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Metropolitanate of Karlovci were

² Andrija Radenić, „Borba za politička prava u Južnoj Ugarskoj“, *Istorija srpskog naroda*, VI-1, Beograd 1994, 548–550.

³ Đoko Slijepčević, *Istorija Srpske pravoslavne crkve*, II, Beograd 1991, 188–193.

allies at that time. This fact, together with other facts, gave freedom to the Metropolitanate of Karlovci to make a proposal for raising Karlovci Seminary to the level of faculty and refer it to the competent authorities.

The Royal Rescript of 1868 provided that a reformed four-year Karlovci Seminary can admit the candidates who finished an eight-year gymnasium. The teaching staff was required to have a university degree. The Karlovci Seminary considered that the reformed school that was opened in 1875 was very close to the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Chernovtsy that was opened by the Austro-Hungary at the edge of its Empire for their Orthodox subjects, mostly Russian and Romanian. However, Serbian people who lived in the central part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire did not get a similar institution for their higher education needs.⁴ In reality, the work of Karlovci Seminary from 1875 to 1890 was quite disorganized, with poor teaching and students' potential. The circumstances in this school did not improve until 1890 when Georgije Branković came to the throne of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci.⁵

Considering the reasons that led to missing what they thought was a good chance for faster progress towards the status of a faculty, they decided to blame Serbs. The justification for the alleged failure was sought in unresolved custody of the National Church Assembly and the Holy Synod of Karlovci over the Karlovci Seminary. The Elaborate says that this issue was resolved in 1912 when the Karlovci Seminary came under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Holy Synod of Bishops, and was believed to acquire the level of the faculty more easily.⁶

⁴ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42. – At the request of the Minister of Religion of the Kingdom of SHS, Tugomir Arnautović, dated May 14th, 1919, the administrator of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci Bishop Georgije Letić sent the „requested documents concerning the elevating of the Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Sremski Karlovci to the level of an independent faculty of theology“ in former Austro-Hungarian Monarchy on May 20/June 2, 1919. These „documents“ included Elaborate and supplements which on February 11/24, 1914 were sent by the administration of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci to the Metropolitan of Karlovci. In 1914, the Elaborate should have been sent to the royal Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian Government in Zagreb. During 1919 the Elaborate served as a support for the establishing of The Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb. Hereinafter, it shall be referred to as: Elaborate.

⁵ Đoko Slijepčević, *op. cit.*, 200. – Slijepčević writes with reference to: Vladan Maksimović, „Patrijarh srpski Georgije Branković i duhovna prosveta“, *Bogoslovski glasnik*, VIII, Sremski Karlovci 1905, 302, 308.

⁶ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42. – Elaborate.

In 1895, the Holy Synod of Karlovci passed the Statute of the Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Karlovci which was supplemented in 1897. The Metropolitanate of Karlovci thought a new curriculum and staff would make Karlovci Seminary „more equal“ to the Faculty in Chernovtsy and Russian spiritual academy.⁷

The professor of Karlovci Seminary Vladan Maksimović wrote that the idea of transforming this seminary to the faculty came in 1900 and that the Holy Synod of Karlovci supported elevating the Karlovci Seminary to the level of faculty of theology or spiritual academy „with the right of granting scientific degrees“.⁸

According to the Elaborate of the Karlovci Seminary's administration, the Head of the Department for Theology and Teaching of the Croatian-Slavonian-Dalmatian government Armin Pavić when visiting Karlovci Seminary in 1901 was „convinced“ that „the Seminary was above diocesan and bishop clerical schools and quite close to the faculties of theology“. Therefore, the Rector of the Karlovci Seminary Jovan Vučković said to him that the seminary „should have the status of an independent faculty of theology and the right to grant academic degrees“: „This was the first time that the Rector of the Seminary mentioned this aspiration before the competent authority, the aspiration that he never said aloud, and the realization of which was considered not only possible and reasonable, but also necessary.“ Pavić later said „he also wished for the Karlovci Seminary to be raised to the level of academy or individual faculty, as soon as possible“.⁹

In the end of November 1903, the Holy Synod of Karlovci started preparing for the transformation of the Karlovci Seminary to an independent faculty of theology or spiritual academy.¹⁰ Ilarion Zerevski and Dr Vikentije Vujić were entrusted with the task to Draft a proposal for the transformation of Karlovci Seminary to the faculty of theology.¹¹

⁷ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42. – Elaborate; – Referring to the Report of the Karlovci Seminary for the school year 1900–1901 Nikola Gavrilović suggested that Armin Pavić visited this school on June 2nd, 1900 which does not comply with the information from Elaborate that he made a visit in 1901. On that: Nikola Gavrilović, *op. cit.*, 163.

⁸ Đoko Slijepčević, *op. cit.*, 200. – Slijepčević writes with the reference to: Vladan Maksimović, *op. cit.*, 310.

⁹ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42. – Elaborate.

¹⁰ Nikola Gavrilović, *op. cit.*, 22, 164.

¹¹ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42. – Elaborate.

In May 1906, the Holy Synod passed a new Statute of the Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Karlovci which added new subjects and provided for the appointment and promotion of teachers with academic degrees considering their scientific and technical research. Teachers were appointed by the Metropolitan of Karlovci and the Holy Synod. The Karlovci Seminary felt that the subjection of its teaching staff to the Holy Synod of Karlovci, in which the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy had full confidence, was a guarantee that the school and the faculty status were important „not only for the church but for the state interests as well“.¹²

The fact that the Karlovci Seminary admitted only graduates of a real or classical gymnasium, which was also a condition for the admission of students to Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology of the University of Zagreb, also which spoke in favour of raising the Karlovci Seminary to the level of the faculty. The Karlovci Seminary was of the opinion that their classes were better organized than the classes at the Roman Catholic Faculty of Theology in Zagreb.¹³

During the school year 1913/1914, five out of nine teachers of the Karlovci Seminary had a PhD degree, and only two of them did not have academic degree. The Karlovci Seminary thought that, at the beginning of the 1914, they met more conditions for acquiring the level of the faculty than the school in Chernovtsy did when in 1875 it became the faculty of theology.¹⁴

In 1914, it was believed that the Karlovci Seminary had everything it needed for acquiring the level of the faculty. It was considered that „when comparing the Karlovci Seminary to other similarly structured institutions of other religions, one could not find a reason, in the name of science or in the name of the church, or in the name of the well-understood interests of the state, to deny our Seminary the blessing to enter a circle of similar sisters and provide academic degrees in the Serbian Orthodox theological science and church.“ It was also emphasized that Sremski Karlovci is located in the centre of the Serbian people in the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and not far from the border with Serbia, and that Karlovci Seminary was the best place for the development of the higher theological education of the Serbian people.¹⁵

¹² Nikola Gavrilović, *op. cit.*, 22, 164.

¹³ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42. – Elaborate.

¹⁴ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42. – Elaborate.

¹⁵ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42. – Elaborate.

In the end, they emphasized the petition of the Metropolitan of Karlovci sent to the Croatia-Slavonia-Dalmatia government to support the proposal of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci and Karlovci Seminary, to harmonize it with the Hungarian government and propose the Emperor of Austria „to most compassionately provide Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Karlovci with the status of an independent faculty of Orthodox theology and with the right to grant the degree of the doctor of theology to the students who passed the rigorous exams as prescribed“.¹⁶

At the dawn of the World War I, the Karlovci Seminary „had the appearance of a faculty and obviously was a school with the high level of education“,¹⁷ but still „of secondary rank“.¹⁸ The Elaborate of 1914 aimed to persuade Vienna, Budapest and Zagreb that the Serbian people in the Austro-Hungarian Empire needed a faculty of theology, and that the Karlovci Seminary fulfilled all the necessary requirements to be raised to the level of a higher education institution. Unfortunately, historical sources do not offer evidence on whether the Elaborate of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci and Karlovci Seminary was sent to Zagreb or not. Considering the tone of the Elaborate, it seemed that the Serbian leaders in Sremski Karlovci thought the level of the faculty was close at hand.

However, the death of the administrator of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci, Bishop of Gornji Karlovci Mihailo Grujić¹⁹ and the beginning of the World War I thwarted these plans. The lectures at the Karlovci Seminary were interrupted in 1914 and restated in 1917 but only for the students of the fourth year.²⁰ After the World War I, in a unified Yugoslav state, the Karlovci Seminary faced another challenge regarding the level of the faculty, not in Sremski Karlovci but at the University of Zagreb. At the same time, the Karlovci Seminary started its final battle for the status of an independent faculty of theology.

¹⁶ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42. – Elaborate.

¹⁷ Doko Slijepčević, *op. cit.*, 202.

¹⁸ Nikola Gavrilović, *op. cit.*, 168.

¹⁹ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42. – The Holy Synod of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci to the Holy Synod of Bishops in Belgrade. Letter was filed at the Metropolitanate of Karlovci under Br. 19/27–1919. Attached to the letter was the opinion of the Council of the Karlovci Seminary dated March 31st, 1919 on founding the faculty of orthodox theology in Zagreb.

²⁰ Nikola Gavrilović, *op. cit.*, 22, 101.

The last try of the Karlovci Seminary to acquire the level of the faculty 1919–1920

Sremski Karlovci, once a cultural center close to the Serbian border which used to spiritually connect disunited Serbian people, in the Kingdom of SHS became only a town near the capital of Belgrade. Geographical position of Sremski Karlovci in a new state gave it quite a subordinate role and its importance inevitably declined.

After the World War I, because of the insufficient number of students, the lectures at the Karlovci Seminary were no longer held, but only the exams.²¹ Its survival was at stake. The loudest proponents of the idea that Karlovci Seminary should be moved to Zagreb were the Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of SHS, leaders of the Prečani wing of the Democratic Party and an influential priest Vladan Maksimović (Prečani – Serbs who lived across the Danube, Sava and Drina rivers, that is, in Vojvodina, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia) This is discussed in the next chapter which deals with the history of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb. At this point we will show three attempts of the Karlovci Seminary to be raised to the level of the faculty of theology in the Kingdom of SHS. At that time the Karlovci Seminary was administered by Bishop of Timisoara Georgije Letić, a doctor and professor of theology at the Karlovci Seminary.²²

On March 31st, 1919 the Council of Karlovci Seminary decided that it would be completely wrong not to consult it about the establishment of the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb. In their opinion, the Karlovci Seminary was a most competent Orthodox theological school in the country lacking only the „formal ratification of relevant factors“ to acquire the level of the faculty. Although this stand of the Karlovci Seminary was the response to pressures from the Ministry of Religion, and although the issue of the relation of the Karlovci Seminary to the faculty of Orthodox theology in Zagreb was left open, it seems that in

²¹ *Ibid.*, 101

²² AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42. – In official documents Vladika Georgije signed himself as „Bishop of Timisoara, administrator of the Orthodox Archbishopric of Karlovci and Metropolitanate of Serbia.“; – Georgije (Đorđe) Letić (Stari Bečej, 1872 – Belgrade, 1935), acquired his PhD at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Chernovtsy. He taught the Canon Law at the Karlovci Seminary. He was the Bishop of Timisoara from 1904 and Bishop of Banat from 1931. He was also the author of the Constitution of the Serbian Orthodox Church. Reference: *Enciklopedija srpskog naroda*, 228.

March 1919 the first interest was to upgrade the Karlovci Seminary to an independent university.²³ The stand from March 1919 was the first attempt of the Karlovci Seminary to survive and get the level of the faculty in the Kingdom of SHS.

In September, 1919 the Council of the Karlovci Seminary made another, more interesting, step by writing to the Council of the University of Belgrade: „The Council of the University received from the Collegium of the Karlovci Seminary, a petition in which it proposed the raising of the Karlovci Seminary to the level of faculty, which would make available the present buildings of Karlovci Seminary, a library and a seminar for more than 100 students, even if the seat of that faculty should remain in Karlovci permanently or temporarily until everything required for its opening is prepared and built in Belgrade.“ The Rector of the University of Belgrade Đorđe Stanojević informed the Minister of Education Pavle Marinković about this letter. He said that the Council of the University of Belgrade could make no decision on that, but that the proposal is interesting especially the part concerning the buildings. If the proposal of the Karlovci Seminary was accepted, financial expenses for the start of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade would be cut down to the teaching staff.²⁴ The Minister of Education authorized the Rector to travel to Sremski Karlovci and check whether the proposal of the Karlovci Seminary was acceptable.²⁵ We have no information if either of the rectors (at this time there was a regular change of rectors at the University of Belgrade whereby Đorđe Stanojević was replaced by Jovan Cvijić) went to Sremski Karlovci but the agreement was not reached. The proposal of the Karlovci Seminary to the University of Belgrade was certainly the result of the pressure from the Ministry of Religion

²³ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 42. – The Holy Synod of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci to the Holy Synod of Bishops in Belgrade. Letter was filed at the Metropolitanate of Karlovci under Br. 19/27–1919. Attached to the letter was the opinion of the Council of the Karlovci Seminary dated March 31st, 1919. Also attached was „the extract from the transcripts of the session of the Concil of the Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Sremski Karlovci held on March 31st, 1919 in Sremski Karlovci“.

²⁴ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 155 – The Rector of the University of Belgrade to the Minister of Education. Letter of the University of Belgrade Br. 5515 of September 26th, 1919 was filed under P. Br. 15234 in the Ministry of Education on September 29th, 1919.

²⁵ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 155, P. Br. 15234, October 8th, 1919. – Minister of Education to the Rector of the University of Belgrade.

to move this institution to Zagreb. Thus, in March 1919, the Karlovci Seminary had two options: to become an independent faculty or become a part of the University of Belgrade which showed a particular interest in the property of Karlovci Seminary. By the way, the same property drew the attention of the followers of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Zagreb.²⁶ Therefore, the proposal of the Karlovci Seminary to the University of Belgrade was its second attempt to acquire the level of the faculty in the Kingdom of SHS.

On June 14th, 1920 the Holy Synod of Karlovci Seminary decided to „establish the need of the Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Karlovci to be raised to the level of an academy or faculty with the right of granting scientific degrees, but only if it was possible to preserve its cardinal rights in relation to the same institution.“ The results of negotiations with the state leadership concerning the teaching staff of Karlovci Seminary were expected by September 1st, 1920. If, by then, there were no result, the Metropolitanate of Karlovci would fill the teaching positions by itself.²⁷ This was the third and last attempt of the Karlovci Seminary to acquire the level of the faculty in the Yugoslav state. This time no alternative was offered, and soon Karlovci Seminary was abolished.

On August 20, 1920 Bishop Georgije Letić wrote to the Minister of Religion Pavle Marinković who was a former Minister of Education, that „even if the faculty was established in Zagreb, it would be hard to fill the void that would grow by leaving the Karlovci Seminary.“ In this letter, there was no word of raising the Karlovci Seminary to the level of faculty, but Bishop Georgije wrote that the Karlovci Seminary, as a high school, should stay in Sremski Karlovci, and that Belgrade Seminary would not be moved to this city.²⁸ Of course, it made no difference. By the royal decree of September 12th, 1920 the Karlovci Seminary, which held no regular classes for years, was finally forced to stop working and leave its place to the St. Sava Seminary in Belgrade. The Holy

²⁶ 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 3, 1923.

²⁷ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 19 – Decision of the Holy Synod of Bishops of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci dated 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.

²⁸ AJ, Ministry of Religion of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 69, Folder 19. – Letter of the administrator of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci to the Ministry of Religion dated August 7/20, 1920 under Br. M. 252/1920.

Synod of Bishops of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci was then forced to offer their teaching staff to the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb,²⁹ which was established by the royal decree of August 27th, 1920.³⁰ On the same day, September 12th, 1920 the unification of the Serbian Orthodox Church was officially declared.³¹ The Metropolitanate of Karlovci ceased to exist as a separate entity.

Graduate students of the Karlovci Seminary enrolled to the studies at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade. The Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb enrolled even those students who were still attending the Karlovci Seminary classes. In 1920, the students of the Karlovci Seminary became the students of the Faculty of Eastern Orthodox Theology in Zagreb.³²

After being enrolled at the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade they submitted applications for the recognition of semesters which were resolved case by case. They sometimes recognized two, sometimes four, sometimes even six semesters, with or without differential exams. At the end of October 1922 a student who requested validation of Karlovci Seminary diploma was rejected at the session of the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology.³³

Although the Holy Synod of the Metropolitanate of Karlovci and the Karlovci Seminary sometimes pondered between the University of Belgrade and the University of Zagreb, their main objective was the preservation of the Karlovci Seminary and its transformation into an independent faculty. The Karlovci Seminary was not assimilated to

²⁹ 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, *op. cit.*, 101; – On the work of the relocated St. Sava Seminary see: Radmila Radić, „Bogoslovija Sv. Save u Sremskim Karlovcima: između Sinoda SPC i Ministarstva vera Kraljevine SHS“, *Srpska teologija u dvadesetom veku*, II, Beograd 2007.

³⁰ 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.

³¹ Đoko Slijepčević, *op. cit.*, 559.

³² 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.

³³ APBF, Transcripts from the Sessions of the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology 1920–1930.

either of the faculties of Orthodox theology which were founded in Belgrade and Zagreb before it was closed. During its existence, the Karlovci Seminary did not acquire the level of the faculty.

Subsequent recognition of the faculty level to Karlovci Seminary and Zadar Seminary 1925–1933

In 1920, the Karlovci Seminary was practically closed by a Decree of Regent Aleksandar Karađorđević, but the lectures for the remaining students were held until 1922³⁴. Zadar Seminary stopped working in 1919 due to the Italian occupation of Zadar.³⁵ The status of these professional schools was resolved after their closure and during the process of harmonization of different school systems in a unified Yugoslav state and regulation of the relations between diverse professional and general schools.³⁶

In addition to these issues preoccupying the country, personal initiatives were also important. We have already seen that during the 1920s the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade did not think that the education provided in the former Karlovci Seminary was equal to that of a faculty.³⁷ However, in 1925 the question of the status of the Karlovci Seminary was also raised in Zagreb because of the rank of clerks who finished this faculty. On May 27th, 1925, the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology in Zagreb decided that: „... the former Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Sremski Karlovci – where a candidate after 8 years of gymnasium, 8 semesters of theology, maturity exam and final exams passed received a certificate on the acquired science degree – may be considered equal to the faculties of theology.”³⁸ This is, by all

³⁴ 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, *op. cit.*, 101.

³⁵ Dragan Novaković, *Verske zajednice na razmeđu vekova*, Beograd 2003, 236.

³⁶ Ljubodrag Dimić, *Kulturna politika Kraljevine Jugoslavije 1918–1941*, II, Beograd 1997, 152–153, 169.

³⁷ APBF, Transcripts from the Sessions of the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology 1920–1930.

³⁸ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 155. – Copy of the Letter of the Dean's Office of the Catholic Faculty of Theology in Zagreb to the Rectorate of the University of Zagreb dated February 23rd, 1931. The original

accounts, the first document by which the Karlovci Seminary was recognized the level of the faculty by an institution of higher education.

This issue was not completely resolved by the Law on Civil Servants of March 31st, 1931. It was left to the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia to adopt a special decree on the status of theological schools. The status of two Orthodox schools, Karlovci Seminary and Zadar Seminary, should have been determined after the new consultations with the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade, the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology in Zagreb and the Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology in Ljubljana. On this occasion, both Roman Catholic faculties declared themselves incompetent.³⁹

On April 1st, 1931, even before the official request of the Ministry of Education, the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology decided on the status of the Karlovci Seminary by which it was a „higher professional school, but without the right to grant scientific degrees“.⁴⁰

Then, on October 1st, 1931 the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology „acknowledged“ that the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia decided that all diplomas issued by the former Austro-Hungarian Empire were not subject to the validation. At the same session, Professors Dimitrije Stefanović and Lazar Mirković were appointed to draft the opinion of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology about the letter received from the Rector of the University of Belgrade regarding the ranking of the former Karlovci Seminary and Zadar Seminary.⁴¹

The Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology on November 25th 1931 adopted Stefanović's and Mirković's opinion to recognize the faculty degree to the graduates of the Karlovci Seminary because

letter was written on May 27th, 1925. The credibility of the copy was confirmed in Sombor on June 21st, 1932 and verified by the seal of the Department of Social Policy and Public Health of the Banovina administration of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia in Novi Sad. Before that, on May 1st, 1924 Faculty of Roman Catholic Theology in Zagreb made a decision to recognize the level of the faculty to „diocesan seminaries“. It was filed at the Ministry of Education on July 19th, under P. br. 28094 in the case of resolving the bureaucratic status of Triva Marcikić.

³⁹ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 155, 7 December 1931, P. br 56493. – Letter of the Ministry of Education to the Supreme Inspectorate of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia

⁴⁰ APBF, Transcripts from the Sessions of the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, April 1st, 1931.

⁴¹ APBF, Transcripts from the Sessions of the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, October 1st, 1931. –Rector of the University of Belgrade requested opinion from the Faculty of Orthodox Theology on the status of „non-orthodox higher spiritual schools“ in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

it „enrolled only the graduate students of gymnasium“ and because the four-year curriculum of the Karlovci Seminary „matched“ the curriculum of the faculty of theology.⁴² Thus, the Karlovci Seminary was subsequently recognized the level of the faculty by the Faculty of Orthodox Theology in Belgrade.

The issue of ranking the Zadar Seminary was raised in October 1929 by Presbyter Ljubomir Vlačić who requested from the Ministry of Justice of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia to recognize him the faculty degree so that he could achieve better clerical status. The Ministry of Justice refused this request because the Zadar Seminary did not have the level of the faculty. Then, in January 1931, Vlačić addressed the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, which on that occasion demanded a new opinion from the Ministry of Justice. Vlačić was rejected once more, and on August 15th, 1931 he wrote to the Ministry of Education which referred the letter to the Rector's Office of the University of Belgrade to send it to the Orthodox Faculty of Theology and ask for the opinion.⁴³

On November 25th, 1931 the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology recognized a faculty degree to those graduates of the Zadar Seminary „who enrolled the Seminary with a maturity exam.“⁴⁴ According to Bishop of Dalmatia Nikodim Milaš, the Zadar Seminary established a university form of theological education as early as in 1882/83. However, Milaš said that the number of students who enrolled the Zadar Seminary with maturity exam was „very small“.⁴⁵

⁴² APBF, Transcripts from the Sessions of the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, November 25th, 1931. – Stefanović and Mirković stated that „they could not give the opinion on non-Orthodox theological schools because they were not familiar with the regulations of those schools.“ They added: „These schools are under supremacy of the faculties of these religions. But, it should be fair to take into consideration whether these schools are enrolled with or without a maturity exam.“

⁴³ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 155. – Ljubomir Vlačić to the University Council of the Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia on August 15th, 1931. – Filed in Orthodox Consistory of the Diocese of Montenegro and the Littoral under Br. 2019 of August 15th, 1931. Vlačić was a full professor of Orthodox Consistory in Cetinje; – AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 155, 18 August 1931, P. br. 38292. – Ministry of Education to the Rectorate of the University of Belgrade.

⁴⁴ APBF, Transcripts from the Sessions of the Council of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology, November 25th, 1931.

⁴⁵ Clerical school in Sibenik was founded in 1832, and transferred to Zadar in 1841 where it was raised to the level of seminary. Zadar Seminary was raised to the level of the Theological Institute in the school year 1863/84 and could enroll the students who completed „a full gymnasium.“ On this, see: Đoko Slijepčević, *op. cit.*, 543–551; – In his autobiography, Nikodim Milaš writes that, upon his arrival at the head of the Diocese

Vlačić finished 8 grades of gymnasium, but did not pass the final exam before he enrolled the Zadar Seminary. Upon the receipt of the opinion of the Orthodox Faculty of Theology, on December 7th 1931, the Ministry of Education notified Orthodox consistory of Diocese of Montenegro that Vlačić did not fulfil the conditions for recognition of the faculty degree.⁴⁶ Vlačić, therefore, did not manage to acquire a faculty degree for himself, but his initiative granted the level of the faculty to the Zadar Seminary.

On December 7th, 1931 The Ministry of Education notified the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia on the opinion of the Faculty of Orthodox Theology about recognizing the level of the faculty to the Karlovci Seminary and Zadar Seminary, but added that the opinion cannot be considered final before a relevant regulation was issued.⁴⁷

The Regulation of The Ministry of Education comparing the level of the professional schools to that of the high schools and faculties was issued on May 1st, 1933. The Article 4 of this Regulation provided that the former Serbian Orthodox Seminary in Sremski Karlovci and former Orthodox Theological Institute in Zadar „comply with the level of the faculty, if maturity exam was passed in the high school.“ Clerks meeting these criteria were recognized „higher ranking“.⁴⁸ This gave them the opportunity of career advancement and salary increase.

of Dalmatia in 1890, „very few“ graduates of the gymnasium decided to enrol Zadar Seminary. He writes that he received unfinished gymnasium students to Zadar Seminary in order to fill the scarce clergy in his diocese. For more on this, see: Nikodim Milaš, *Autobiografija, studije, članci*, Beograd–Šibenik 2005, 85; – By The Treaty of Rapallo between Italy and the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes of November 12th, 1920 Zadar was ceded to Italy; – Nikodim (Nikola) Milaš (Šibenik, 1845 – Dubrovnik, 1915) was the Bishop of Dalmatia, and a canonist. He graduated from the Karlovci Seminary and the Spiritual Academy in Kiev. Reference: *Enciklopedija srpskog naroda*, 745.

⁴⁶ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 155, 7 December 1931, P. br. 56566. – The Ministry of Education to the Orthodox Consistory of the Diocese of Montenegro and the Littoral.

⁴⁷ AJ, Ministry of Education of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia, Fond 66, Folder 155, 7 December 1931, P. br 56493. – Letter of the Ministry of Education to the Supreme Inspectorate of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom of Yugoslavia.

⁴⁸ *Službene novine Kraljevine Jugoslavije*, 10 May 1933, 569–572. – The same article recognized a faculty degree to the graduates of former Forest Academy in Zagreb and former three-year School of Commerce and Transport in Zagreb, if they had passed a maturity exam in the high school. This Regulation specifies the status of another 165 then current and former vocational schools: 23 schools satisfy two years of high school, 81 vocational schools was considered equal to incomplete secondary schools, and 61 vocational schools were made fully equal to the level of the high school. Four schools were elevated to the level of the faculty including Karlovci Seminary and Zadar Seminary.

The Kingdom of Yugoslavia subsequently recognized the level of the faculty to the Karlovci Seminary and Zadar Seminary, which these professional schools did not have in the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

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КАРЛОВАЧКА БОГОСЛОВИЈА: ОД КОРАКА ДО ОСТВАРИВАЊА СТАТУСА ФАКУЛТЕТА (1914— 1920) ПРЕМА НАКНАДНОМ ПРИЗНАЊУ ФАКУЛТЕТСКОГ РАНГА (1925—1933)

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Апстракт: Кроз архивску трагу Архива Југославије (АЈ) и архиве Православне богословске факултета Универзитета у Београду (АРБФ), као и литературу, рад приказује две пута Карловачке богословије ка признању високошколског статуса тој образовној институцији.

Кључне речи: Сремски Карловци, Карловачка богословија, Карловачка митрополија, Српска Православна Црква, Православни богословски факултет.