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Attempts to raise the educational level of the Uniate clergy at the Basilian Seminary in Novy Sverzhen (1743-1833)

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Abstract: *The aim of this paper is to present the activities of the first educational institution educating Uniate clergy in the Metropolitan Diocese of Kiev and its role in the education of the Uniate community of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The seminary was founded in 1743 by Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł 'Rybeńko' in Novy Sverzhen (Nowy Świerżeń). The conduct of the seminary was entrusted to the Order of the Lithuanian Basilian Province. Monks served as rectors and teachers. The curriculum was modeled on Jesuit colleges. The seminary in Novy Sverzhen was planned for 12 alumni. The seminar educated clergymen for the Uniate parishes located in the Radziwiłł estate. The first seminary in the Uniate Metropolitan Diocese of Kiev did not solve the problem of the low intellectual level of the Uniate clergy. In relation to the needs the ability to train 12 alumni was far too small. The seminary closed in 1828.*

Key words: History, Education, the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the Uniate clergy, the Basilians, Radziwiłł, the Metropolitan Diocese of Kiev

Introduction

Transformations in culture and accessibility to the written word in the 16th century led to new views towards the importance of education and contributed to changing social attitudes. Education was an important weapon at the time of polemic between confessions.¹ The creators of the idea of a union between the Eastern Churches and the papacy, which was realised in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth

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¹ Nosilia, 2017: 141-7.

in 1596 at the synod in Brest, were aware how important education was.² One of the conditions its initiators set for recognising the primacy of the papacy was to obtain permission to establish schools and printing houses.³

The decision on the union did not only change the religious landscape of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, but it also influenced the conditions for running educational activities. In the new religious community – the Uniate Church – the organisation of education for the clergy was adopted as a priority action. The Uniate hierarchs, in the first decades after the declaration of accession to the union, sought to establish an education system and a network of schools to educate future clergy. The first seminary for 12 students opened in Vilnius in 1601 ceased to exist after five years.⁴ The issue of establishing a metropolitan seminary was one of Metropolitan of Kyiv Joseph Veliamyn-Rutski's main tasks. In 1613, he was granted a privilege by King Sigismund III (1587-1632) to establish schools in Minsk, Novogrudok 'and other towns'.⁵ In his last will of 1627, the metropolitan mentioned the issue of the seminary as many as seven times. J. Veliamyn-Rutski claimed that there was well-educated clergy only among the monks from the Vilno Holy Trinity monastery, and pointed to the need for an educational institution to provide training for clergy from diocesan parishes: "there has not yet been a seminary, which now, with God's help, there must be."⁶ The opening of a seminary for the clergy of the 'Lithuanian' part of the Kyivan Uniate metropolitanate was discussed at the Kobryn Council in September 1626. The issue of how to implement the Council's resolutions was examined in the local community during a local council in Novogrudok on 15th October in the same year. In accordance with the resolutions of the Kobryn Council, a decision was made to start fund-raising for this purpose from the local clergy, who understood the need to raise money for an institution providing education for all social classes, teaching both Latin and Ruthenian cultural traditions.⁷ Minsk was chosen as the location for a future educational institution. Minsk Seminary did not begin its activities until the late 1740s and early 1750s, and ceased to exist with the start of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth's war with the Muscovite state in 1654, although projects for its restoration existed until the end of the 17th century. In the subsequent century, in the Kyivan metropolitanate, despite the recommendations made at Zamość Council in 1720 and addressed to the Uniate bishops to establish institutions for the teaching of clergy in their eparchies, there was no real action on the part of the metropolitans that would

² The Union of Brest was the 1595-96 decision by the majority of Eastern Orthodox hierarchs in the Ruthenian lands of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth to transfer their ecclesiastical jurisdiction from the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople to the jurisdiction of the Holy See; Gudziak, 2001.

³ *Documenta Romana Ecclesiae Catholicae*, 316.

⁴ *Epistolae Josephi Velamin Rutskyj*, 372.

⁵ Nosilia, 2017: 157.

⁶ Liseichykau, 2020a.

⁷ RGIA. F. 823. Op. 2. D. 536: "Абысмы мели школу досконалую латинскую и словенскую для науки детям священническим и шляхетским и розных станов, которые бы се до того приложит хотели."

lead to the opening of a seminary in the Kyivan metropolitanate.⁸ The reason for this state of affairs can be attributed to material and staff shortages and the tradition of training clergy in family homes.

Novy Sverzhen seminary

It is probable that the project of Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł ‘Rybeńko’ and his wife Franciszka Urszula née Wiśniowiecka aiming at establishing an institution to educate clergy in their town of Sverzhen (Novogrudok Voivodeship, Novogrudok District) was a response to the lack of initiatives from the Uniate hierarchs.⁹ The choice of location was determined by practical and religious considerations. There were many people moving through the city. It was an important centre – here started one of the main communication routes via the Neman River to Königsberg (Królewiec). The first harbour on the Neman River for storing goods and operating river ships was located in Sverzhen. From this section the river became navigable.¹⁰ Sverzhen was an important centre of religious worship. Since the middle of the 17th century, the faithful made pilgrimages to the venerated image of Our Lady.¹¹

The seminary in Novy Sverzhen was the first seminary initiated by lay people and ran by the Basilian Order of the Lithuanian Province in order to educate diocesan clergy.¹² The aim of this paper is to present the activities of the first educational institution educating Uniate clergy in the Kyivan metropolitanate and its role in the education of the Uniate community of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Establishment of the seminary

On 5th June 1739, Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł ‘Rybeńko’ and his wife Franciszka Urszula proceed an agreement with the protoconsult of the Lithuanian Basilian Province, the superior of the monastery in the town of Byeń (Słomim District),

⁸ Wereda, 2013a: 283-98.

⁹ *Opisaniye tserkvey i prikhodov*, 1879: 27-8; *Lietuvos metrika*, 115. The first written mention of Sverzhen (Świerzeń, Świerżno) dates back to 1428. Next to the manor house there was a village with an analogous name (today the village Stary Świerżan). The settlement of Sverzhen, as early as in the 15th century, was the centre of the district and the parish seat. In the mid-16th century, it was divided into two parts: the old part, which was established in the village and came to be known as Stary Sverzhen (Stary Świerzeń), while the part that was established around the new town was called Novy Sverzhen (Nowy Świerzeń). In the second half of the 16th century, on the other side of the Namen River, opposite the town, there was also the Sverzhen Castle.

¹⁰ Shabliuk, 1994: 242.

¹¹ Dungowski, 1650.

¹² The Order of Saint Basil the Great is a Catholic congregation of the Greek rite. By monastic and ecclesiastic tradition, Basilians are inscribed in the history of the Eastern Churches. The Basilian Order was the only congregation in the Uniate Church in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. In the modern era, monks formed the elite of the Uniate Church – they were bishops, carried out pastoral, preaching, missionary and educational activities. Many monks undertook their training in Rome and at the papal alummates in Brunsberg and Vilnius; See Pidlypczak-Majerowicz, 1986; Blażejovskij, 1984.

Theodosius Koniaczewski, under which a new Basilian monastery was established next to the former parish church.¹³ The rules of the seminary under which it organised its educational process were based on the Jesuit educational system, recommending the colleges of Polotsk and Krasław as well as the Papal Aluminate in Vilnius as model establishments.¹⁴

Material Status and Financial Documents

The change in the church status from parish to monastery took place gradually. Ignacy Homolicki, a clergyman of the Uniate parish church, appointed to this parish by the Kyivan Metropolitan Atanasyi Sheptycky on 28th December 1732, held this position until 1st February 1740.¹⁵ As part of the changes, he was already presented on 2nd February 1740 by M. K. Radziwiłł ‘Rybeńko’ as parish head priest of the Orthodox church in the village of Berezowiec (Novogrudok District), and then appointed by the Metropolitan on 4th February 1740. At least until 1754, he served as a dean of the Nesvizh (Nieśwież) deanery. The entire Orthodox church property, including the land, was transferred for the upkeep of the monastery. In addition, on 12th July 1743, M. K. Radziwiłł donated 74,300 zloty to the monastery and seminary, of which 7% (5,200 zloty) was to be paid to the monks each year. This amount was recorded on the estates of Zaturia, Piaseczna, Cetra and Boracin in the following proportions: 30,000 – for the Diampol manor with the village of Zaturia, 30,000 – for the Piaseczna and Cetra estates, 14300 – in the Boracin manor.¹⁶ The money was to be paid twice a year – on St John’s Day (24th June) and Christmas Day (25th December). There were almost always difficulties in receiving payments on time. Rector Jerzy Szatałowicz wrote to M. K. Radziwiłł ‘Rybeńko’ on this matter as early as in July 1758.¹⁷ After ‘Rybeńko’s’ death of in May 1762, the amount of payments was reduced by more than a half.¹⁸ In September 1767, Rector Hieronim Mankiewicz complained about the non-payment of interest for the last 3 years.¹⁹ Problems with interest payments put rectors in a very difficult position. On 20th April 1772, Rector Gedeon Hajewski wrote that the inability to raise adequate funds had literally driven the previous rector, Mankiewicz, to the grave, and that now, due to the impossibility of changing the monastery’s sources of support, Hajewski was forced to think about death.²⁰ Difficulties with payments were even more onerous after 1772,

¹³ AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570, k.39: “klasztor ich mościów xięzy bazylianów prowincji litewskiej w mieście naszym dziedzicznym Swierznie przy cerkwi zdawna murowanej”.

¹⁴ Wereda, 2014: 48.

¹⁵ Liseichykau, 2015: 198.

¹⁶ AGAD. AR. Dz. V. Sygn. 4949, k.1-2.

¹⁷ AGAD. AR. Dz. V. Sygn. 15999, k.2-3.

¹⁸ AGAD. AR. Dz. V. Sygn. 4949, k.6.

¹⁹ AGAD. AR. Dz. V. Sygn. 9241, k.3.

²⁰ AGAD. AR. Dz. V. Sygn. 4949, k.6.

when the monks of the monastery in Novy Sverzhen had to hand over food for the needs of the Moscow army garrison in Nesvizh.²¹ On 27th April 1772, G. Hajewski wrote a letter to Karol Stanisław Radziwiłł ‘Panie Kochanku’ (‘My Dear Sir’) threatening that he would be forced to close the seminary due to deprivation.²² Another guarantor of the monastery’s fund, Karol Stanisław Radziwiłł ‘My Dear Sir’ stayed outside the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth between 1769 and 1777. Interest payments were even more problematic. The petitions submitted did not bring any positive results.²³ The functioning of the seminary was made possible thanks to the support of the protohegumen of the Lithuanian Basilian Province and the monastery in Żyrowice. After 1780, the Radziwiłł administration stopped payments altogether. The inspector visiting the monastery in 1785 and 1786 noted that the sums from the interest payments had not been paid for many years and that the income to maintain the institution was insufficient. The non-payment of interest significantly affected the operation of the monastery and the seminary in the 1780s. The number of monks there decreased from five to three. This situation forced Rector Ignacy Szymkiewicz to initiate proceedings against the minor Dominik Radziwiłł and his guardians in the Novogrudok Land Court in 1794.²⁴ Although the court obliged the Radziwiłł administration to pay the interest by a certain date, the problems with the payment did not stop.²⁵ In 1809 the seminary was given the eparchial status. Metropolitan Hryhory Kochanovych was obliged to provide funds for the seminary. Forced to intervene, he filed a complaint against the Radziwiłł administration on 5th March 1812. In his complaint, he testified that the Radziwiłłs had been in arrears for the entire period of the seminary’s operation, with payments totalling more than 100,000 zloty.²⁶ Despite another court ruling in favour of the monastery, the interest was not paid on time. Another Metropolitan, Jozaphat Bulhak, who also started legal proceedings for the same reason on 9th April 1826, testified that by that time the debts of the Radziwiłł administration had risen to 123,000 zloty.²⁷ The problem of payment arrears was very

²¹ AGAD. AR. Dz. V. Sygn. 4949, k.7. Gedeon Hajewski wrote: “Zadłużyli się od różnych ich mości kredytorów na 18000 złotych, z którymi xiądz rektor ma jedyną zabawę traktować o poczekanie”.

²² AGAD. AR. Dz. V. Sygn. 4949, k.11: “Jako do tych czas od ośmiu lat fundatorskimi i komissarskimi klasztor żyje obietnicami, tak i ja ciesze się z wielkiej nadziei wielmożnej mości Pana Dobrodzieja z łaski jego do mnie wypisanej i obiecanej. Sam bym pokłonił Panu mojemu dziś, ale że konie ostatnie przedać musiałem na chleb i wyprawienie xiędza vice rektora mojego. Mam też honor upewnić wielmożnego jego mości Pana Dobrodzieja iż in spacio niedziel czterech solenny akt uczynie w Nieświeżu idą alumnów wszytkich rozpuszczę, xięży porozysłam, a sam monstracyą przedawszy będę się zwił, gdyż sposobu żadnego nie mam, ani się zadłużać myślę wzorem mojego antecessora”.

²³ AGAD. AR. Dz. V. Sygn. 17146, k.1. Rector Josaphat Wereszczaka wrote in April 1776: “Lecz po wyjeździe Waszej Xiążęcej Mości Dobrodzieja, gdy nic zgoła od komissarzów wyprosić nie możemy, ostatnią ponosim nędzę. Staraliśmy się ile możności dla honoru Waszej Xiążęcej Mości Dobrodzieja klasztor w należyтым utrzymać stanie, owszem nad wyznaczoną liczbę osób zakonnych dla ćwiczenia świeckiej młodzi szkolnej przymnożyliśmy”.

²⁴ AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570, k.151.

²⁵ AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570, k.172.

²⁶ AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570, k.177-80.

²⁷ AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 571, k.10.

acute, as the monastery had no land or manors of its own, and the interest received was used not only to maintain the church, the seminary, but also to buy staple foodstuffs. The debt was not repaid until the closure of the monastery in 1833. The issue of loan repayment to the Minsk Orthodox Theological Consistory was last considered by the administration of the Radziwiłł and Wittgenstein heirs in 1854.²⁸

The Radziwiłł Archive preserves 29 receipts drawn up by the Basilians from the monastery in Novy Sverzhen confirming the payment of interest in the years 1753-1810.²⁹ It is likely that not all the receipts issued have survived, but even an analysis of the incomplete documentation allows a certain picture of the situation to be reconstructed. It is noticeable that after 1762 the amount of interest paid almost halved, and from 1778 to 1806 there is no single receipt, which indicates that interest payments virtually ceased during that period.

This lack of concern by successive owners from the Radziwiłł family was probably due to the ideological changes brought about by the Age of Enlightenment. Financial and social elites were limiting financial involvement in religious foundations, previously seen as an investment in eternal life and image-building among their subjects. The Radziwiłłs' behaviour towards the foundation in Novy Sverzhen was no exception. Also, at the Radziwiłł's residence in Biała Podlaska (Brest-Lithuanian Voivodeship), the owners withdrew from the creation of the cult of the Blessed Josaphat Kuntsevych, and did not fulfil their obligations towards the Basilian Monastery involving financing and erecting a new church building to house the relics.³⁰

The monks informed the nuncio about their poor financial situation.³¹ It appears that the intervention may have aimed at obtaining for the seminary in Novy Sverzhen the status of a papal aluminate modelled on the seminary in Vilnius, which was financed by the Holy See.

Teaching curriculum

The lack of information makes it impossible to know the full curriculum and organisation of the teaching process at the seminary in the second half of the 18th century. According to information from 1777-1780, the seminary offered classes in infima (the basics of Latin grammar), syntax (the correct use of the Latin language in speech and writing), rhetoric, and theology.³² During a visitation of the monastery in 1788, the monks pointed out to the inspector that the seminary alumni were paying too much attention to learning Latin from the 'Alvara' textbook (probably a reworking of the popular textbook by Emanuel Alvarez), at the expense of learning

²⁸ AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570, k.196-203.

²⁹ AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570, k.205.

³⁰ AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 17, k.91-147.

³¹ ASV. ANV, CP, 8, k.756-750; 9, k.342-52.

³² Nabywaniec, 1998: 321.

moral theology. There were also attempts to find a monk to take on the task of teaching alumni in the humanities.³³ It was intended that the training time for an alumnus would last six years, but if his level of education was sufficient, he was allowed to take the final exam even after two years of education.³⁴ It was required for a seminary graduate to be ordained at the age of 24.

Information from the 19th century shows a change in the curriculum and a departure from the teaching of Latin. In 1817, theology was taught at the seminary based on Yosyf Narolskyi's book *Teologia moralna albo do obyczajów ściągająca się* (Moral theology and behaviour) and the manuscript works of Basilian Ambroziy Kiryat, a professor of theology at the Papal Seminary in Vilnius. A catechism compiled by Robert Bellarmine was used. Arithmetic was also taught from a textbook titled *Arytmetyka dla szkół narodowych* (Arithmetic for National Schools) published by the Commission of National Education around the year 1780. The seminary also taught 'chanting as practised in the Eastern Church', the rites how to administer the holy sacraments, how to celebrate the liturgy and read prayers.³⁵ The certificates issued to graduates in the 1820s show that they were given marks for reading and writing in Polish and Orthodox Slavonic, Christian science, moral theology, rituals, character formation, and behaviour.³⁶

Until the end of 1810, seminary graduation certificates were issued in Latin, and from 1819 on, they began to be issued in Polish. As of 1819, a new matrix for the monastery seal began to be used [Figs. 1-4].³⁷

An analysis of the teaching curriculum proposed by the Basilians indicates that they applied Jesuit educational models. In the 18th century, Latin and pronunciation skills were part of the education of future clergymen in Novy Sverzhen. It was an education in the spirit of humanities from the Latin cultural circle. The changes introduced in the nineteenth century testify to the perception of some of the teaching curriculum

³³ ÖNB. Cod. Ser. n. 3849, 456v-57.

³⁴ AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570, k.15.

³⁵ NHABG. F. 1621. Wop. 1. Spr. 10.

³⁶ NHABG. F. 1621. Wop. 2. Spr. 244, k.3; NHABG. F. 1621. Wop. 2. Spr. 245.

³⁷ The first known imprint of the rector's seal of the seminary dates from the mid-1840s. The oval seal features a modified Radziwiłł coat of arms – a black eagle in a princely crown, with a staff on its breast, with the Greek abbreviation IXΣ instead of Radziwiłł's 'Trumpets'. As in the traditional coat of arms of the Radziwiłł family, the eagle is placed under the ducal mantle and the ducal crown. Around the seal there is an inscription in Latin: SIGIL(LUM) RECTOR(IS) COL(LEGII) SVERSAN(ENSIS) RADIVILIAN(ORUM) DUC(UM) O(RDINI) S(ANCTI) BASIL(II) MAGNI (Seal of the Rector of the Secular College of the Dukes of Radziwiłł of the Order of Basil the Great). The most recent imprint of this seal was found in a document dated 3 December 1818 (LVIA. F. 634. Ap. 2. B. 168, l.6). The document, which was drawn up at the seminary on 23 June 1819, bears the imprint of the new seal (LVIA. F. 634. Ap. 2. B. 158, l.10). The oval-shaped seal depicts the coat of arms of the Russian Empire – a two-headed eagle, on the breast of which there is an image of St George. There is a Russian-language inscription around the seal: ПЕЧАТЬ НАСТОЯТЕЛЯ МОНАСТИРА СВЕРЖЕН(С)КОГО; See Liseichykau, 2020b.

introduced in schools under the system of the Commission of National Education.³⁸ The classes necessary to prepare clerical students for the liturgy and sacraments in the Byzantine rite were not abandoned.

In the first year of their education, all alumni had to pass a test by wearing something like a monastic garb for the whole year (more expensive clothes were allowed to be sewn at the expense of parents or relatives). At the end of the probationary period, the alumni had to sign a document stating that they would not join any monk's orders but would take up clerical duties in Uniate parishes.³⁹

Library resources were used in the education process. During a visitation in 1786, according to the monks, the library in the monastery was in order and the book collection was sufficient.⁴⁰ In 1821, the monastery library numbered 240 books, most of them in Latin, and also in Polish.⁴¹ In terms of their subject matter, the largest number of books were theological, but the library's resources included books on history, rhetoric, and philosophy as well.⁴² The library also held a set of liturgical books in the Old Church Slavonic language.

The seminarians supposedly attended religious events in the church in Novy Sverzhen, which in the 1880s and 1890s were given more splendour by organ music and a musical ensemble of four musicians.⁴³

Teaching staff

The quality of knowledge imparted to seminarians and the level of teacher training played a key role in this process. According to the available information, 6 teachers (Gedeon Hajewski, Mercury Giedroyć, Joachim Jastrzębski, Aleksander Koźmiński, Hieronim Mankiewicz, Władysław Pułkotycki) studied at the Papal Seminary in Vilnius, 3 teachers (Melecjusz Łucki, Hieronim Mankiewicz, Metrofan Mazanowski) graduated from the Pontifical College Urbano de Propaganda Fide in Rome, 2 teachers (Władysław Pułkotycki and Jozafat Wereszczaka) graduated from the Pontifical Greek College of St. Athanasius in Rome, and one teacher (Ignacy Szymkiewicz) graduated from Collegium Hosianum in Braunsberg, Prussia.

Tymoteusz Szczurowski stood out in terms of his level of education. He studied theology from 1764 at the Basilian school at the Hagia Sophia Monastery in Polotsk, then from 1765, he continued his studies at the Basilian Monastery in Vilnius⁴⁴.

³⁸ The Commission of National Education (KEN) established in 1773, was the first ministry of education in Europe. It dealt not only with problems related to the learning-teaching process, but also promoted scientific development. On KEN see: Piłatowicz & Maksymiuk, 2020: 447-50.

³⁹ AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570, k.15.

⁴⁰ ÖNB. Cod. Ser. n.2798, 266v.

⁴¹ NHAB. F. 136. Wop. 1. Spr. 41260, k.36v.

⁴² NHAB. F. 136. Wop. 1. Spr. 25373, k.1; Liseichykau, 2012: 61.

⁴³ ÖNB. Cod. Ser. n.2798, 541; Cod. Ser. n. 3849, 243.

⁴⁴ More about this monastery see: Bumblauskas, Kulevičius & Skochylas, 2019.

In 1776, in Rome, after an examination before the Dominican Cardinal Juan Tomás de Boxadors, he was awarded the degrees of doctor of canon law and doctor of theology. Prior to his arrival in Novy Sverzhen, T. Szczurowski worked as a teacher at the Basilian College in Volodymyr. He was the rector in Novy Sverzhen, or more precisely an interim administrator of the monastery and seminary for a short time in the summer of 1784.⁴⁵ His personality and activities aroused the interest of Karol Stanisław Radziwiłł ‘My Dear Sir’, although he had not previously aroused interest among the founding family for more than 10 years. By way of a decision made by Karol Stanisław Radziwiłł, he became the father superior at the monastery in Biała Podlaska – a town owned by the Radziwiłłs.⁴⁶

Clerical students

The seminary in Novy Sverzhen was planned for 12 alumni.⁴⁷ The wording of the contract concluded on 5th June 1739 by M. K. Radziwiłł ‘Rybeńko’ with the superiors of the Lithuanian Basilian province envisaged, in the first place, the training of clergy from the Radziwiłł estate.⁴⁸ Only when the required number of 12 clerical students would not be taken by clerical children from the Radziwiłł estate, did the founder allow clerical children from other parishes to be enrolled in the seminary. After its launch, more applicants wanted to enrol in the seminary.⁴⁹ For example, in December 1747, Hryhor Rożanowicz, parish head priest of an Orthodox church located in the extensive Radziwiłł estate in the village of Łachwa (Nawahrudak Voivodeship, Nawahrudak District), arrived in Novy Sverzhen. He asked the rector for permission to hold an examination for his sons with a view to admitting them to the seminary. The places in the seminary were fully occupied by the stipulated number of alumni, but the rector did not dare refuse a clergyman from the Radziwiłł estate. He contacted M. K. Radziwiłł ‘Rybeńko’ by letter, requesting that a decision be made in this matter.⁵⁰

An analysis of the Uniate clergy community of the Kyivan metropolitanate has identified the names of 88 alumni of the seminary in Novy Sverzhen throughout the period of its existence.⁵¹ Lack of sufficient information does not allow for carrying out analyses to describe how dynamic and intense the educational process was.

⁴⁵ AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570, k.276.

⁴⁶ Wereda, 2013b, 508-11.

⁴⁷ AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570, k.14.

⁴⁸ AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570, k.15: “W tym że klasztorze seminarzystów dwunastu de ritu graeco unito kapłańskich synów z dóbr moich tak w Koronie, jako też w Wielkim Księstwie Litewskim leżących continuo mają zostawać”.

⁴⁹ AGAD. AR. Dz. V. Sygn. 4949, k.7. In 1772, rector Gedeon Hajewski wrote: “Osób do alumnatu czasem aż nad liczbę przyjmować musimy, ponieważ tak jaśnie oświeceni xiążęta ich mości, jako i jego mość xiądz metropolita bez pytania o komplet zalecać zwykli”.

⁵⁰ AGAD. AR. Dz. V. Sygn. 11364, k.8.

⁵¹ Liseichykau, 2015.

However, it is noticeable that the largest number of alumni were educated at the seminary in the 1840s and 1850s (the first decades after its foundation), and between 1810 and 1820 (after it had obtained the status of a diocesan seminary). By the end of the 1880s, it is likely that the monks tried to maintain the number of 12 alumni in accordance with the foundation rules.

Candidates under the age of 18 were not to be admitted to the seminary. This principle was not followed. In 1777, the age of 12 alumni varied from 14 to 22, while in 1779 their age ranged from 15 to 24.⁵² However, the list of alumni dated 25th August 1795 shows that there were six students at the seminary at that time, aged between 16 and 20 (average age 17.6 years).⁵³ In 1817, the average age of the students increased: the seminary then had six students aged between 12 and 31 (average age 24.2 years).⁵⁴ Decisions to choose a career as a clergyman taken at a very young age were most likely made within the family circle. According to data from 1777 and 1778, almost all students came from the Minsk and Novogrudok provinces.⁵⁵

Careers of graduates

Having graduated, some graduates returned to their home parishes. The founders of the seminary had an impact on the graduates' careers. The Radziwiłłs often asked the rectors to select a candidate to staff parishes in churches located in places important to the functioning of the magnate estates. In 1755, Michał Kazimierz Radziwiłł 'Rybeńko' asked for an able graduate to be appointed to the vacant post of pastor of the Orthodox church in the town of Łachwa (the fund of this parish provided for the maintenance of two clergymen at the same time). In a letter to the patron on 23rd November 1755, Rector Piotr Łapinkiewicz recommended Józef Tarasewicz as a person of outstanding abilities.⁵⁶ Between 1757 and 1767, Józef Tarasewicz, a graduate of the seminary in Novy Sverzhen, is recorded as the parish head priest at the church in Łachwa.⁵⁷ In the selection of parishes, the diocesan affiliation of the church was not a criterion. The location of the parish within the Radziwiłł's estate was decisive. In August 1758, Rector Jerzy Szatałowicz, in his correspondence addressed to M. K. Radziwiłł, assessed the candidate for priesthood in Ołyka in Volhynia (in the territory of the Lutsk-Ostrogsk Diocese) as not yet sufficiently educated.⁵⁸

⁵² ASV. ANV CP, 9, k.342-52.

⁵³ NHAB. F. 333. Wop. 9. Spr. 51, k.156-7.

⁵⁴ NHABG. F. 1621. Wop. 1. Spr. 10, k.5.

⁵⁵ ASV. ANV CP, 9, k.349, 352.

⁵⁶ AGAD. AR. Dz. V. Sygn. 8765, k.1-2.

⁵⁷ NHAB. F. 3245. Wop. 7. Spr. 3, k.4v.

⁵⁸ AGAD. AR. Dz. V. Sygn. 15999, k.4. He described the candidate as follows: "Przysłany na examen z krajów ruskich pater presentium godzieln byłby łaski Waszej Xiążęcej Mości Dobrodzieja i beneficium Ołyckiego, gdyby przy swoich naukach, które ma w języku łacińskim, wyexercytował się choć rok jeden w seminarium dla mówienia kazań, katechizmów, nauk duchownych i obrządków cerkiewnych. Mógłby

The rectors also showed concern for their graduates' future. In June 1782, Rector Ignacy Ptak asked Karol Stanisław Radziwiłł 'My Dear Sir', to take a graduate, Jan Dylewski, under his protection and provide him with a vacant clerical post in any church in the Radziwiłł estates. He motivated this request with an important educational purpose. The behaviour and attitude of the graduate from the Sverzhen seminary was to be a model for other clergy.⁵⁹ This information may indicate that, in addition to the imparting of knowledge, care was also taken for the education and moral level of the alumni.

The seminary became a venue for social advancement, a kind of 'social lift', and helped the able children of clergy from one part of the Kyivan metropolitanate to find work in another part. The clerical careers of seminary graduates contributed to the process of moving away from the tradition of taking over a parish 'from father to son' and remaining staffed as a clergyman in one parish often for several centuries. The most interesting example is that of alumnus Aleksy Mihaj (Mihajewicz /Mihajewski). His grandfather Cyryl Migaj was ordained in the early 18th century by Sylwester Czertwertyński, the Orthodox Bishop of Mogilev. He was an Orthodox clergyman in Rzeczyca.⁶⁰ In 1719, he joined the Uniate Church and was given the post of a parish head priest at the church in Uwarowicze (Rzeczyca District), where he stayed until 1752. In 1742, Cyryl's son and Aleksy's father, Leon Migaj, became a parish head priest at the Uniate Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Rzeczyca, where he ran his ministry until at least the early 1750s.⁶¹ Aleksy Migaj was first recorded among the alumni of the seminary in Novy Sverzhen on 4th November 1753 (according to the census of 14th June 1752 he was not yet in the seminary).⁶² In 1753, he was a student of moral theology. On 25th October 1754, the scope of his education was defined in a peculiar and surprising way: "русински багаслоў" (*bohoslov ruthenorum*).⁶³ This vague definition becomes clearer if it is known that the cleric Aleksy Migaj came to Novy Sverzhen from the eastern regions of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, from areas where 'Ruthenian' was spoken by a large part of the population.⁶⁴ His grandfather Cyryl, as mentioned above, was an Orthodox clergyman until the 1820s, his father Leon in the 1750s kept the church register of births, deaths and marriages of the Uniate parish in Rzeczyca in the 'Ruthenian' language, while Aleksy Migaj in 1761 became the parish head priest of the Orthodox church in the village of Hrebień (Minsk District), where he found himself in the Uniate

na te beneficium promowany być alumnus Waszej Xiążęcej Mości Dobrodzieja, który przeszłego roku skoczył teologią moralną, nazwiskiem Stefanowicz”.

⁵⁹ AGAD. AR. Dz. V. Sygn. 12626, k.1: “Będzie to zaszczepieniem w klerze tutejszym lepszej ochoty do pilniejszego w powinnyich sobie obowiązkach i naukach edukowania się, razem i dowodem że ma Wasza Xiążęcia Mość i ten kler i ten klasztor w swej najlaskawszej pamięci”.

⁶⁰ Liseichykau, 2015: 379.

⁶¹ Liseichykau, 2015: 380.

⁶² ÖNB. Cod. Ser. n. 3848, 126v, 232v.

⁶³ ÖNB. Cod. Ser. n. 3848, 344.

⁶⁴ Liseichykau, 2016: 119, 146, 162.

clergy environment, where there had long been a tradition of keeping all documentation in the parish in Polish.⁶⁵ Aleksy Migaj, ‘a Ruthenian theologian’ from Novy Svezhen took over the Polish-speaking tradition of the clergy in the Minsk District, although he made sure to keep the title page of the church register of births, deaths and marriages in the ‘Ruthenian’ language, which the local Minsk district clergy thought was an old-fashioned exotic practice.⁶⁶

Decline and cassation

At the end of the 18th century, the political situation changed. The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth was divided by Austria, Prussia and Russia. The areas of the Basilian Order of the Lithuanian province came under Russian rule. The Basilians, in order to protect themselves from suppression, re-profiled the monks’ field of activities and engaged in various forms of educational activities directed at both the clergy and lay people. At the order’s congregation in Novogrudok on 20th May 1799, they decided to establish a new seminary at the Ławryszewo Monastery (Novogrudok District).⁶⁷ It is likely that the new seminary contributed to a reduction in the commitment of the monks. The Ławryszew Seminary had a much larger estate, including its own manor of Nowy Dwór. In its first decade, 20 seminarians studied at the institution.

In 1828, the seminaries in Novy Svezhen and Ławryszew were closed by a decision issued by the Russian authorities. It was a political decision. Russia had a planned project to subordinate the Uniate Church community to the Russian Orthodox Church. As a result of administrative reforms of the Uniate Church from 1828, 2 large dioceses of Lithuania and Belarus, stretching from north to south, were created in place of the abolished dioceses of Brest, Lithuanian-Vilnius, Lutsk and Polotsk. The role of diocesan seminaries was taken over by the Basilian monasteries in Żyrowice and Polotsk. The activities of other seminaries (including Novy Svezhen) were suspended and their funds and real estate assets were transferred to Żyrowice or Polotsk. The Basilian monastery continued to function in Novy Svezhen. However, after the November Uprising (1830-1831) was suppressed, the Russian government continued its efforts to reduce the number of monasteries of Catholic orders in the so-called North-West Country.⁶⁸ According to the decree of the Greek-Uniate clerical council held on 14th June 1833, the monastery in Novy Svezhen was closed.⁶⁹ On 24th July 1833, Lithuanian Bishop Josyph Siemaszko, wrote that he had already

⁶⁵ Liseichykau, 2015: 379; NHAB. F. 136. Wop. 13. Spr. 1083.

⁶⁶ NHAB. F. 136. Wop. 13. Spr. 1083, k.21.

⁶⁷ Radwan, 2004: 146.

⁶⁸ North-West Country (In Russian: Seviero-Zapadnyj kraj) – a name introduced into official use in Russia in 1832, covering the historic territories of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania (Lithuania and Belarus) incorporated into Russia as a result of the partition of the Republic; used until 1917.

⁶⁹ *Zapiski Iosifa*, 7-8.

chosen a candidate for the father superior from among the diocesan clergy.⁷⁰ In 1854-1855, the former monastery library, in which 117 of the 240 books were preserved, was moved to the Minsk Orthodox Theological Seminary.⁷¹

Conclusions

The first seminary in the Kyivan Uniate Metropolitan Eparchy did not solve the problem of the low intellectual level of the Uniate clergy. In relation to the needs (the Kyivan Uniate Metropolitanate in 1748 had about 1,925 parishes, while in 1772 it had about 1,805 parishes) the ability to train 12 alumni was far too small.⁷² It resulted from the foundation dedicated to the clergy working in the parishes of the Radziwiłł's estate. It is likely that the founders saw their own self-interest in raising the level of education of the clergy: the opinion of visitors about their subjects, a better organisation of religious life in the towns that were the seat of the magnates' residences. The institution in Sverzhen did not have the chance to develop into a diocesan seminary open to all applicants from the diocese. The Radziwiłł foundation in Sverzhen did not become a model for other magnate families. Nor did the seminary's activities influence the decisions of the hierarchy of the Uniate Church. Seminaries organised by the clerical authorities of the Kyivan Metropolitan Eparchy were not established until after 1780 (Zhytomyr, Kyiv Voivodship) and around 1789 (Radomyshl, Kyiv Voivodship).⁷³ In the Lithuanian part of the eparchy, no post was established.

The organisation of the institution and its education activities were entrusted to the Basilians, who offered an educational programme that introduced an educational model combining the two traditions: Ruthenian and Latin. The graduates educated in such a manner contributed to the circulation of the religious culture of the Latin cultural circle in the provincial areas of the eastern Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The graduates did not create an academic environment that could organise and run an educational institution to educate clergy without the participation of the Basilian Order. The seminary's activities were definitely negatively affected by financial instability. The political situation contributed to the final decline of the seminary, as a consequence of which Novy Sverzhen found itself within the borders of Russia.

⁷⁰ *Zapiski Iosifa*, 11.

⁷¹ NHAB. F. 136. Wop. 1. Spr. 25373.

⁷² Nabywaniec, 1998: 222-4.

⁷³ Nabywaniec, 1998: 323; Wereda, 2013a: 290-1.

Table 1. Rectors of the seminary in Novy Sverzhen

| Last and first name | Dates of office |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Jackowski Herman ⁷⁴ | 1739 |
| Paszkowicz-Lawdański Genadiusz | 12.06.1743 - 18.04.1749 |
| Jastkiewicz Innocenty | 21.08.1749 - 08.1755 |
| Łapińkiewicz Piotr | 05.10.1755 - 23.11.1755 |
| Szatalowicz Jerzy | 1756 - 04.09.1758 |
| Mazanowski Metrofan | 1759 - 02.02.1762 |
| Mańkiewicz Hieronim | 15.07.1763 - 12.02.1771 |
| Hajewski Gedeon | 23.07.1771 - 18.03.1774 |
| Wereszczaka Jozafat | 21.10.1774 - 29.05.1776 |
| Kaskowicz Maurycy | 1776 |
| Łucki Melecjusz | 1777 - 30.01.1779 |
| Ptak Ignacy | 1781 - 06.04.1784 |
| Szczurowski Tymoteusz | 26.06.1784 |
| Dołmat Grzegorz | 24.12.1784 - 27.07.1788 |
| Olechnowicz Marcian | 1790 |
| Szymkiewicz Ignacy | 01.12.1793 - 12.1797 |
| Semetkiewicz Gerwazy | 1798 - 1800 |
| Dowgierd Oktawian | 22.09.1802 - 01.01.1806 |
| Butkiewicz Aleksander | 29.11.1806 - 10.1819 |
| Pułkotycki Władysław | 04.10.1819 - 1821 |
| Pławski Tadeusz | 30.06.1827 - 29.06.1828 |

Sources: AGAD, AR. Dz. V. Sygn. 4949, 8765, 8982, 9241, 11364, 12626, 15662, 15999, 17146, AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570; ÖNB, No. 2798, ÖNB, 2799, 3847, 3848, 3849; VUB. F5-A35-6590-6591, VUB. F5-A35-6629; NHAB. F. 136. Wop. 13. Spr. 1083; NHAB. F. 3245. Wop. 2. Spr. 5.

⁷⁴ AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570, k.276. As the first rector is noted in the document titled *Wiadomość rektorów w klasztorze Świerżańskim od roku 1739 w zarządzeniu jacy znajdowali się* (1810). According to other information, at that time he held the position of abbot of the monastery in Cholm. No other documentary confirmation of this man's rectorship in Novy Sverzhen has been found.



Fig. 1. The imprint of the rector's seal of the seminary used between 1743 and 1818 [source: NHAB. F. 3245. Wop. 2. Spr. 5, k.11]

Fig. 2. The rector's stamp of the seminary used between 1743 and 1818. [source: BABB. I-70. 18PΦ12874]

Fig. 3. The rector's stamp of the seminary used between 1743 and 1818 [source: AGAD. AR. Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570, k.208]

Fig. 4. The rector's stamp of the seminary used between 1819 and 1833 [source: NHABG. F. 1621. Wop. 2. Spr. 244, k.3]

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Dz. V. Sygn. 9241, Mankiewicz Hieronim.

Dz. V. Sygn. 11364, Paszkowicz Gennadjusz.

Dz. V. Sygn. 12626, Ptak Ignacy.

Dz. V. Sygn. 15662, Szczerowski Tymoteusz.

Dz. V. Sygn. 15999, Szatałowicz Jerzy.

Dz. V. Sygn. 17146, Wereszczaka Jozafat.

Dz. VIII. Sygn. 17, Biała Podlaska.

Dz. VIII. Sygn. 570, Nowy Świerżeń [Novy Sverzhen].

Dz. VIII. Sygn. 571, Nowy Świerżeń [Novy Sverzhen].

ASV. ANV, CP – Archivio Segreto Vaticano. Archivum Nuntiaturae Varsaviensis, Collegia Pontifica [Vatican Secret Archive, Archives of the Nunciature in Warsaw, Pontifical College].
vol. 8 (copy ABMK, Lublin, microfilm no. 4857), vol. 9 (copy ABMK, Lublin, microfilm no. 2402).

BABB – Bresckaja ablasnaja biblijateka imia M. Gorkaha. Siektar redkaj knihi [Brest Regional Library named after M. Gorky. Rare book sector], Brest. I-70. 18PΦ12874

LVIA – Lietuvos valstybės istorijos archyvui [Lithuanian State Historical Archives], Vilnius

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NHAB – Nacyjanalny historyčny archiū Bielarusi [National Historical Archives of Belarus], Minsk

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VUB – Vilniaus universiteto biblioteka [Vilnius University Library], Vilnius

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