

Витяг із звіту про виконання проекту Фонду Кіндрата МБФВКМА  
«**Prominent philosophers of Kyiv Theological Academy  
(1819–1924): biographies and studies**»,  
керівник – д-р філос. наук, проф. М.Л. Ткачук.

*Мета проекту:* створення передумов для ознайомлення світової наукової спільноти з феноменом та здобутками вітчизняної духовно-академічної філософії, представленими через призму аналізу життя і творчості видатних філософів Київської духовної академії (1819–1924). Основний результат проекту передбачає підготовку до друку першого англomовного монографічного дослідження із зазначеної тематики “Prominent philosophers of Kyiv Theological Academy (1819–1924): biographies and studies”.

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*To the 200th anniversary of Kyiv Theological Academy*

**Prominent Philosophers  
of Kyiv Theological Academy (1819–1924):  
Biographies and Studies**

(edited by Maryna Tkachuk)

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## **PREFACE**

Year 2019 marks the 200th anniversary of the foundation of Kyiv Theological Academy (1819–1924) – the successor of Kyiv-Mohyla Academy closed in 1817 and the only Orthodox higher educational institution in the territory of modern Ukraine of the 19<sup>th</sup> – the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

As discovered during the recent years, Kyiv Theological Academy, one of the leading confessional educational centers of Central and Eastern Europe at the time, had significantly contributed to the development of many cultures – Ukrainian, Russian, Georgian, Romanian, Serbian, Bulgarian etc., while also leaving a vivid mark on the history of education and science, not exclusively theological one.

That of particular significance is the work of professors and students of Kyiv Theological Academy in the field of philosophy and the development of philosophical education in Russian Empire. This is not a coincidence. After all, the Orthodox spiritual institutions of Russia developed its own model and tradition of philosophical education and science throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

One of the key features of this model was systematic, consistent study of philosophy at all levels. Unlike secular system of education, with philosophy taught only in higher educational

institutions, students receiving theological education began to master philosophy at theological seminaries. Subject to educational goals, the study of philosophical propaedeutics, a brief course in history of philosophy, logic and psychology introduced seminary students to philosophical disciplines, acquainted them with relevant terminology, contributed to the formation of ideological values, and prepared them for independent mental activity. Their seminary-gained philosophical experience was greatly enhanced and expanded while studying at theological academies. The volume of teaching of philosophical disciplines in academic curriculum was increasing steadily, reaching the level of contemporary departments of philosophy during the 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The study of history of ancient and modern philosophy, logic, metaphysics (replaced by “systematic philosophy” in 1910–1911) and psychology was mandatory, with each of the disciplines taught at least one year. Historical and philosophical education, work with original sources and the latest philosophical literature, made possible through a thorough study of classical and foreign languages, exactingness of professors, promotion of scientific integrity, translation skills and writing of philosophical texts – all of these are undoubtedly positive signs of philosophical education provided by theological academies of 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, worthy of imitation. Those were factors that led to emergence of philosophical specialists in spiritual environment, capable to satisfy staffing needs not only at spiritual academic, but also university departments of philosophy, and to promote professional philosophy in Russian Empire.

Institutionalization in the system of spiritual education, the subjection to its requirements, goals and objectives was obviously providing both philosophical education and spiritual and academic philosophy itself, as a type of philosophizing, a rather specific flavour. A lack of self-sufficient status, total control by the Most Holy Synod structures, the need to meet a “state demand” of developing a “healthy philosophy”, adherence to the principles of Christian Orthodoxy, the monological nature of philosophical education – all these circumstances factored in the creation of a rather unfavourable background for the development of philosophical creativity in the spiritual academic environment, setting the paradigm of “philosophizing within boundaries” from the beginning. Because of the latter, the spiritual and academic philosophy appears to be a rather peculiar phenomenon on the verge of speculative philosophy and orthodox theology: if philosophy is trying to reach the free thinking of the existence of man and the world, and theology seeks to reconstruct the doctrine of God on the basis of the enclosed in the Scripture of the Word Divine, then, the spiritual and academic philosophy understands the philosophical path of pure thinking itself as a rise to the inexhaustible treasury of Revelation, finding in it the key to such mysteries of God, the world and man who are not subject to human mind. Proceeding from the teachings of Christian theism, from the understanding of the Absolute

as the “living” God, the Creator and the Prophet, a free and conscious Personality, spiritual and academic philosophizing appears from the religious roots and makes its first conscious steps in the development of Orthodox philosophy and culture – the fact that its usually linked to the works of Slavophiles Ivan Kyreievskiy and Oleksii Khomiakov. Perceiving the learning of truth as a matter of not thinking itself, but of personality in its integrity, the living unity of reason, will, feelings, conscience, etc., seeking a coherent universal outlook, the agreement of faith and reason in the “believer's understanding”, the philosophers of theological academies had outlined the path which Russian religious philosophy followed.

It is with theological academies that one should link a turn of philosophy to the origins of the Orthodox tradition – to a sacred heritage that not only became the subject of numerous studies and translations, undoubtedly enriching the Eastern Slavic culture of the 19<sup>th</sup> – early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, but also firmly entered the religious philosophical discourse of this time. At the same time, the same theological academies are linked to the first experience of profound professional reflection of modern German idealism, represented by names such as Kant and Hegel, Schelling and Baader, Jacobi and Schopenhauer, Lotze and Benecke, Herbart and Ulrika, and others. German philosophers are not followed – they are learned from, disputed with, being in a constant “state of conversation”, a lively and fruitful dialogue through which their own ideas and words are crystallized, a philosophical choice in favor of the Platonic type idealism get stronger, one passed the crucible of the Orthodox contemplation – the very “concrete idealism”, which, unlike abstract idealism, implies the rootedness of philosophical thinking in the absolute being as its beginning. Teaching about the spirit as something more than consciousness or cognitive activity, considering it a real substance, seeing the truth not a mere mental category, but “living”, concrete ontological essence, spiritual academic philosophers laid the foundations of “ontological epistemology”, which subsequently became one of the key features of Russian religious metaphysics.

Finally, it is difficult to exaggerate the role of spiritual academic philosophy in the attempts to establish the understanding of the significance of philosophical knowledge and philosophical education in the public consciousness of the 19<sup>th</sup> – the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. These attempts were not limited to everyday teaching work – it is enough to mention the active participation of philosophers of the theological academies in the activities of various educational “courses” and societies, in discussions in newspapers and magazines, their numerous public events of educational nature, that is, in the real practice of spreading of philosophical education and culture. Considering the study of philosophy a powerful means of forming personal values, nurturing one’s ability of cultural thinking, they especially emphasized the role

of study of philosophical disciplines as a factor in the humanization of education and the factor that can hold back the establishment of utilitarian priorities in science, culture and social life.

Unfortunately, by the beginning of the 1990<sup>th</sup>, the philosophical heritage of Russian theological academies, claimed by Soviet historiography to be the “breeding grounds of obscurantism”, remained almost a total “blind spot”. This also involved the philosophical work of professors and students of Kyiv Theological Academy. However, over the last 25 years, many major results have been achieved in this field study, still unknown to the world scientific community.

Therefore, the purpose of the book is to familiarize Western researchers and intellectuals with the phenomenon and achievements of spiritual academic philosophy, presented through the prism of the analysis of life and work of the prominent philosophers of Kyiv Theological Academy. At the same time, this book is oriented towards a wider range of foreign readers interested in history of religious philosophical thought in the lands of modern Ukraine, philosophical heritage of Kyiv Theological Academy and its prominent representatives. We hope that getting acquainted with the biographies of their figures, accompanied by a broad bibliography, will be another positive factor in Ukraine's “recognizeability” on a cultural map that can contribute to the formation of sustainable research interests of Western intellectuals with its educational and scientific achievements, as well as the strengthening of a productive dialogue of cultures and intellectual traditions in the modern world.