

## The Russian-Ukrainian war of 2014-2022: Monitoring of state-confessional relations in Ukraine

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### ABSTRACT

The article examines the changes that have taken place in religious life in Ukraine since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war. In particular, it describes how the unlawful forceful occupation of the territory of a sovereign state has led to the restructuring of the Ukrainian confessional landscape and mass migration of Ukrainian confessionals of different faiths. Based on data from open sources, the authors present the position of the most influential confessions in Ukraine and their leaders on the Russian-Ukrainian war. The authors prove that the war-affected intensification of the identification processes in the religious segment of Ukrainian society has affected state-confessional relations in the country, and now society needs clear, consolidating messages from the state more than ever. The recommendations provided by the authors determine that the state and religious organisations ought to dynamically strengthen their partnership, develop new forms of relations, and jointly preserve religious pluralism and freedom of religion. The issues of state re-registration of all religious structures of Ukraine, including their social characteristics and the nature of relations with foreign religious centres, and creating a public Scientific Expert Council on security in the humanitarian sphere are also being considered. In order to protect the national information and spiritual environment, the state initiated the study of confessional periodicals of Ukraine and printed materials imported from abroad for distribution among Ukrainian religious believers. The state, according to the authors of the article, has to initiate amendments to the current Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organisations that exercises the principle of religious separation of the church from the state and school, as well as the establishment of penalties for religious activities that harm the national and state security of the Ukrainian people.

### KEYWORDS

*the Russian-Ukrainian war, state-confessional relations, transformation of religious life, Orthodoxy in Ukraine*

### Introduction

Since the beginning of the Russian-Ukrainian war in 2014, religious life in Ukraine has changed. The annexation of Crimea and occupying parts of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts (regions) have affected the Ukrainian religious landscape. The statistics of the religious community of Ukraine underwent constant adjustments in relation to the temporarily annexed territories. For the first time in almost 25 years of state independence and freedom of conscience, a significant decrease in the number of religious organisations and the geography of their distribution was recorded. First of all, this affected the network of Islamic organisations, the vast majority of which were Crimean Muslim communities. With the emergence of the OCU and the receiving the Tomos on its autocephality, the Orthodox life of Ukrainians has also undergone significant changes. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine further accelerated identification processes in Ukrainian society, which could not but affect state-

confessional relations in the country (Fylypovych, Tytarenko, 2022). In the vast majority of Ukrainian regions, the state and religious organisations dynamically strengthened their partnership, developed new forms of relations, and jointly preserved religious pluralism and freedom of religion. Religious communities that were not included in the national Ukrainian patriotic trend were generally not tolerated by local communities and, accordingly, by the Regional State Administrations (RSA). In occupied Ukrainian territories, the collaborator authorities imposed the Russian state-confessional relations (SCR) model. Therefore, this asserted the church monopoly of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC), ignoring the religious needs of Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, and representatives of new and non-traditional religions. There is tension between the central government and society over the ambiguous position of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP)



and the reaction of its leadership to Russian aggression. The general legal principles of SCR, as defined in the Constitution and the Law on Freedom of Conscience, and religious organisations, without the appropriate interpretation and implementation following the state of war, turn into vague requirements that are not applicable in conditions of critical insecurity for the country.

### Research methods

The article examines the state of religious life in Ukraine and the nature of state-confessional relations in times of war. The authors traditionally used the participatory observation method in the context of transformational events caused by the war. They continued communication with representatives of religious organisations within the framework of the interdepartmental information-analytical seminar "Religion in Persons." The guests at these seminars were the hierarchs of Orthodox churches, leaders of Greek and Roman Catholic communities, including the head of the UGCC Patriarch Sviatoslav Shevchuk and the Nuncio of the Apostolic Capital Archbishop Visvaldas Kulbokas, representatives of Protestant, Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist and other communities.

An extensive content analysis of various confessional and state documents, interviews, decisions of councils and synods, and meetings of committees and commissions on social and religious issues was conducted. Obtaining high-quality primary information provided objective monitoring of state-confessional relations based on a modern research method known as the method of sequential analysis of systemic transactions. Being designed to show how a system, in this case, the system of relations between the state and the church, is supposed to function, the method was creatively implemented in the studied domain. Acknowledging that the state-confessional relations have still remained far from ideal, the authors chose the event of the war as the trigger that launches a new perspective on the system of relations that have developed in the context of socio-religious processes, providing them with a new semantic meaning. This made it possible to identify those data flows, particularly official statements of religious organisations. Due to the systemic transaction, passing through specific information sources, they influence the course of events by adopting appropriate decisions by key players in this field. The authors resorted to the recommendations method after discovering that state-confessional relations require constant monitoring and timely correlation because of the variable social transformations, especially during wartime. The latter involves the expert environment of competent proposals (suggestions) addressed to the participants of socio-religious relations with the purpose of their improvement.

### Results and Discussion

Since 2014, the religious processes in Ukraine have significantly intensified. The Revolution of Dignity, the annexation of Crimea, and the occupation of parts of Donetsk and Luhansk Oblasts have caused visible transformations in religious life in Ukraine and changes in its religious landscape. A detailed theoretical analysis of these processes until February 2022 is contained in the works of Ukrainian researchers such as V. Bokoch (2017), L. Fylypovych (2018), V. Balyuk and M. Doroshko (2020), L. Fylypovych and O. Horkusha (2018; 2020), R. Holyk (2022). At the moment, the objective is to monitor and scientifically document new transformations in the reli-

gious life of Ukraine in connection with the large-scale invasion of Russia into Ukraine on February 24, 2022. Therefore, the authors will try to do this by consistently analysing the emerging perspectives in state-confessional relations, the current structure of the Ukrainian confessional landscape, and the opinion of the leaders of the most influential denominations in Ukraine on the Russian-Ukrainian war.

1. The Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU) appeared on the religious map of Ukraine. Since the 2018 unification council of the three branches of Ukrainian Orthodoxy (the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate - UOC-KP, the Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church - UAOC, and part of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate - UOC-MP) and the receipt of the Tomos of autocephaly from the Ecumenical Patriarchate in 2019, this circumstance has changed the alignment of Orthodox forces not only in Ukraine but also in the world. The hegemony of the UOC-MP in Ukraine and the ROC in the world has been severely undermined. During the recognition of the OCU, Ecumenical Orthodoxy has become even more polarized: those churches that supported Constantinople and those who supported Moscow cannot accept the fact that another autocephalous church - the Ukrainian one - has appeared in the dip-tych of Orthodox churches to become the fifteenth. There is a paradoxical situation. Those who were ignored for 30 years, considered dissenters and neglected any working relations have now acquired canonical status. Meanwhile, their counterpart - the UOC-MP - has lost this ecclesiastical privilege since their proclaimed independence (not even the autocephaly) is not recognised anywhere.

*This circumstance required a fundamental revision of the SCR, which still fluctuated depending on the influence of one or another church on state leaders. Not all government officials, especially those of the highest level, positively perceived the emergence of the OCU. State bodies have become a field of confrontation between supporters of the UOC-MP and the OCU, patronage by the state of one or the other church.*

2. In fact, a "church coup" took place in the Orthodox Church of Ukraine of the Moscow Patriarchate, which has the most significant number of parishes. The election of Onufriy Berezovsky, a bishop from Bukovyna, who, unlike his predecessor, did not have a pro-Ukrainian focus, determined the denationalisation processes in the church after the death of Metropolitan Volodymyr Sabodan. It was Onufriy who disagreed with the assessment of the Holodomor as a genocide of the Ukrainian people, calling it God's punishment of Ukrainians ("deserved execution"<sup>1</sup>, according to his words). After leading the UOC-MP, Onufriy dismissed from the office of the Church all pro-Ukrainian supporters close to Volodymyr Sabodan, including Metropolitan Oleksandr Drabynko, the spokesman of the Church, Archpriest Heorhiy Kovalenko. Others, being concerned about their positions, became silent, supporting non-Ukrainianism, and Khokhlyandism. For a long time, Onufriy did not acknowledge Russia as an aggressor, called for some abstract peace, and thus equated Ukrainian soldiers with separatists and Moscow invaders. Furthermore, the bishop presented the manifestations of the national identity of Ukrainians as a sin. Based on his position on interfaith relations in the country, and hostility to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, Onufriy

<sup>1</sup> <http://pravoslavie.ru/28395.html>

contributed to the incitement of interfaith confrontations<sup>2</sup>, in particular in the Orthodox segment of the country. Under the pressure of the war's circumstances and their parishioners' disapproving reaction, the church leadership started cautiously moving towards genuine autonomy from the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC). By the local council's decision on May 27, 2022, the church declared itself independent from the ROC<sup>3</sup>. However, the UOC is still uncertain regarding the relation to the political and religious Kremlin. It seems to be waiting for the return of its former status when it perceived itself as a daughter church of the MP, which never accepted its autocephaly.

The facts of extensive collaboration with the occupation authorities of the Church of the Moscow Patriarchate<sup>4</sup> bring to the fore the issue of a unified official position of the UOC on the war and spiritual and mental connection with Orthodox Moscow. Until the UOC proclaims its pro-Ukrainian orientation and does not avoid clear answers to the critical question, "Who do you support, Kyiv or Moscow?" the UOC will remain one of the most well-organised and structured communities in Ukraine, with a clear opposition to the approval of Ukrainian independence, and the desire to return Ukraine to a new union community with Russian supremacy. In the context of open military confrontation, such a position is defined as anti-Ukrainian, anti-state, and anti-national.

In unison with Putin, the Moscow Orthodox Church, i.e., the UOC, defends the concept of the "Russian world," which led to the mass extermination of Ukrainians under the wings of these ideas - "one and indivisible holy movement," "the only truth of Russian Orthodoxy," "the divine election of the Russian people and Putin." The Russian Orthodox Church is still experiencing phantom pains from the deprivation of the history of Kyivan Rus', Prince Volodymyr, St. Sophia of Kyiv, from the separation of Moscow from the Kyivan baptismal font, continues to actively spread and assert the doctrine of "Moscow - the Third Rome," Russia as the source of Orthodox civilization, the doctrine of the Old Russian language as a sacred one, etc.

In Ukraine, pro-Moscow-oriented Orthodox near-church structures still operate freely. They constantly carry out religious processions in Ukraine under Russian flags, with icons of Emperor Nicholas II and imperial slogans "Orthodoxy-Autonomy-Nationality." While the Russian Empire's ideas are promoted, Ukrainian state independence and Ukrainian symbols are neglected. No one stops this anti-Ukrainian activity. The state is either indifferent or powerless in the fight against the overt anti-Ukrainianism of these structures. The brotherhoods oppose the European orientation of Ukraine, even blocking its state institutions with demands to prevent the country from joining the EU. The UOC-MP claims that it has nothing to do with this "political orthodoxy"; even during Met-

ropolitan Volodymyr's reign, it condemned it. However, these events are held in monasteries and churches, and all anti-Ukrainian pro-Moscow decoration of columns is located on premises (in particular in the Kyiv Pechersk Lavra). Moreover, all these religious processions are held with the participation of its clergy and monks, financed by the church or its sponsors.

The Moscow Patriarchate and its de facto branch in Ukraine - the UOC-MP - want to discredit Ukrainian national communities in every possible way, declaring them a manifestation of Ukrainian fascism. All religious communities that support Ukraine in the war with Russia are declared Nazi/fascist and are now satanic, in their opinion. All non-ROC structures are affected. Thus, in particular, the UGCC, in the Moscow Church narration, is presented as a fascist organisation, and their leaders, Metropolitans Andrey Sheptytsky and Joseph Slipyy are presented as fascists, "blessed" Nazi collaborators, Nazi scum in a bishop's hat<sup>5</sup>. The history of Greek Catholicism is falsified, the nature of Uniatism is distorted, and the human dignity of the UGCC believers is humiliated<sup>6</sup>. Those Protestant communities that unequivocally demonstrate their pro-Ukrainian position are also being persecuted<sup>7</sup>. Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, and other religious communities, which understand and reveal the true intentions of Moscow to destroy the Ukrainian state and its citizens, are subjected to an adverse reaction from the Russian Orthodox Church.

*The state has no common and distinct position on such a policy of the UOC. Numerous calls to ban this organisation do not find appropriate explanations from the state, and the statements of the Speaker of the Parliament Ruslan Stefanchuk about solving the problems of the UOC after the war<sup>8</sup> suspend the complex conflict between civil society and the UOC. On the contrary, the Ivano-Frankivsk Regional State Administration, without waiting for instructions from Kyiv, and especially after the escape of the UOC Bishop Seraphim to Moscow, closed their church until the proper formalisation of documents. They claim to be renamed under the law of subordination of the eparchy to the ROC. The situation is coming to the point that there will be no parish of the UOC in the Carpathian region.*

*During the war, the state's role must be strengthened; the state must send clear messages to the society, formulate common approaches, and cement, but not split, the society. Does the state think that uncoordinated advocacy of the UOC will save this church from collapse? From shame, a disgrace? The UOC now has to justify why the bishops of the UOC-MP did not stand up at the commemoration of heroes in the Verkhovna Rada, why they did not condemn Moscow's aggression, why they did not serve a funeral service for the fallen soldier in the church, why they cooperated with the occupation authorities, why they fled from Izyum to Russia, and many others. The state has to initiate an open conversation between civil society and the UOC, from which citizens, conscious patriots, want to hear answers to their "Why?". In the meantime, it is unclear*

<sup>2</sup> <https://news.church.ua/2022/05/12/zayava-svyashhennogosinodu-ukrajinskoji-pravoslavnoji-cerkvi-vid-12-travnja-2022-roku/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://news.church.ua/2022/05/27/postanova-soboru-ukrajinskoji-pravoslavnoji-cerkvi-vid-27-travnja-2022-roku/>

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid02me-i2fmaRdn2sD1eKjsRrR2z38Qj5YvHKaC7xbESbfc-5pprmToX8DyB44D8ew3NvGl\(05.09.2022\);](https://www.facebook.com/GeneralStaff.ua/posts/pfbid02me-i2fmaRdn2sD1eKjsRrR2z38Qj5YvHKaC7xbESbfc-5pprmToX8DyB44D8ew3NvGl(05.09.2022);)  
[https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-svyashhennyk-mp-kolaborant/32016852.html\(03.09.2022\);](https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news-svyashhennyk-mp-kolaborant/32016852.html(03.09.2022);)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2adRGA7r4k&t=276s\(24.08.2022\).](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2adRGA7r4k&t=276s(24.08.2022).)

<sup>5</sup> Semyon Chamey. "Blessed" Nazi accomplices <https://mars22-livejournal.com/2205532.html>

<sup>6</sup> Uniatry. The Great Russian Encyclopedia. [https://bigenc.ru/-religious\\_studies/text/4699326](https://bigenc.ru/-religious_studies/text/4699326)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/novyny-pryzovoya-peresliduvannya-baptystiv-okupatsiya-kherson-melitopol/32112054.html>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.rbc.ua/ukr/news/ruslan-stefanchuk-shansov-lyuboy-prorossiyskoy-1650837541.html>

*whether there are any discussions and if the leaders of the government hold meetings with the church. No one talks about the church's trial, but the state, which registered the church, has to break the wall of deaf silence. The arguments used by the faithful of the UOC to justify their behaviour may convince others of the relevance of such a position in a time of war. Conversations about the separation of church and state in wartime are demagoguery. Now everyone is working for victory, so they must unite, not separate. The state, during the war, shall not be separated from the church from Ukrainian society.*

3. The establishment of the OCU in the religious life of Ukraine has become a significant canonical challenge for Catholics (Nedavnia, 2022). Registered by the state and recognised by the Ecumenical Patriarch, the new church demanded the building of official relations with the RCC and UGCC. Previously they maintained such contacts mainly with the UOC, while the UOC-KP and UAOC were ignored. Nevertheless, according to the authors' observations, the attitude of Catholics to the OCU - a new subject of interfaith and state-confessional relations - is gradually evolving. The war has accelerated these changes, as the patriotic orientations of the UGCC and the OCU coincide entirely. The position of the RCC in Ukraine regarding Russian aggression with its condemnation is somewhat different from the contradictory official position of the Vatican, which ranges from recognition of the majesty of the Russian people, "humanistic in nature" and, in fact, justification of the outrages committed by this "great people" on Ukrainian land, to the mantric repeated narrations about the presence of Ukrainians in the heart of the Pope. In addition, there are ideas about the need for peace-making and "free hearts from hatred."

Both in the UOC and the RCC, there is no consensus reaction of the hierarchs of the churches to the war in Ukraine. Back in the days of the Maidan, part of the church unconditionally accepted the protest of Ukrainians against autocracy and totalitarianism in the person of Yanukovich, and the other part was waiting to see where the history of the struggle for democracy would lean. So now, in the conditions of war, the RCC in Ukraine certainly follows the Vatican, the views of Pope Francis. This position is influenced by the fact that among the clergy of the RCC, many representatives of other nationalities, mainly Polish. It has been repeatedly said that it is time for this church to overcome the Polish identity and eliminate the fact that its primate is elected from Poland. It seems that the Vatican does not trust ethnic Ukrainians. By recognizing Lviv and Halychyna as "Polish Kresy," the head of the Catholics of Ukraine, Bishop Mieczyslaw Mokrzycki, does not receive support from Ukrainians but instead deserves to be recognised as *persona non grata*<sup>9</sup>. His recent statements about the need to grant the status of the state language to Russian - the language of the aggressor and occupier - outraged Ukrainian society, which regarded these recommendations as unqualified interference in our internal affairs.

The latent historical confrontation between Greek and Roman Catholics in Ukraine, which is something neither of them wants to advertise, has now, in the conditions of war, escalated due to the ambiguous position of Pope Francis. The latter does not wish to quarrel with the Russian Orthodox Church because of Ukraine. Therefore, the Ukrainian side thinks he makes ambiguous decisions on

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.avvenire.it/attualita/Pagine/intervista-arcivescovo-latino-leopoli-ucraina-mokrzycki>

the Easter procession in Rome with the participation of Ukrainians and Russians<sup>10</sup>, considers the current war as a consequence of the civil conflict in eastern Ukraine, and condemns the provision of weapons to Ukraine for defence against the aggressor. Furthermore, he confirms his desire to visit Moscow before visiting Kyiv<sup>11</sup>, emphasizes the humanity of Russians who elect and honour their fascist president Putin, etc.

*The political maturity of Ukrainian society leads to criticism of the Vatican's Ostpolitik aimed at deterring and indulging the enemy's aggressiveness, destructive attitudes, and actions. Kneeling to the Vatican, which has not been a friend of Ukraine for centuries, is coming to an end. In this war, Ukraine declares itself as a subject of international relations and an active participant in reformatting the world's political and religious maps. A powerful protest voice is heard from civil society, experts, and state leaders, in particular from the Ambassador of Ukraine to the Vatican, Andriy Yurash. It also stems from Catholic believers and church leaders themselves. Despite the respect for the age and status of the Pope, his position as the Pontiff, who "respects both the great Russian and Ukrainian peoples," is rather harshly condemned. The dogmatic infallibility of the Pope in matters of doctrine and morality is seriously shaken in the minds of his faithful. Yet the Ukrainian state avoids open official reactions to such offensive statements of the Apostolic Capital.*

4. Some Protestants are still ambivalent about the pro-European path chosen by Ukraine. Ukraine, with its Maidan, opposed the Eurasian orientation of the country proclaimed by Yanukovich against the Customs Union with Russia. Still, some Protestant communities maintain their long-standing contacts with Russia, its educational and leadership centres, thus ignoring the pro-Ukrainian orientation of the majority of communities from the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations. Protestants pray fervently for peace (but not for the victory of Ukraine in the war), praising God for the opportunity to live in peace in the unoccupied territories, asking for God's protection of their fellow believers in the occupied lands, but are convinced that Ukrainians are punished by this war for lack of faith, for indifference to Christ.

The euro-Asian focus was manifested to the last by both Adventists and Baptists, who finally withdrew from joint Euro-Asian structures and organisations with Russia. A clear Ukrainian orientation in Protestantism is held primarily by Christians of the Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals) and the Ukrainian Lutheran Church. The Christians of Evangelical Faith (Pentecostals) recently published a document condemning the activities of Russian Pentecostals, whose leader Ryakhovsky is listed among Putin's personal advisers, and the community generally approves of Moscow's aggression<sup>12</sup>.

Protestants are poorly represented in the Armed Forces because of the religious prohibition to taking up arms. However, some of them perform chaplaincy<sup>13</sup> and volunteer<sup>14</sup> functions. Protestants have distinguished themselves in the mass evacuation of civilians from the

<sup>10</sup> <https://tsn.ua/svit/skandalna-hresna-hoda-u-rimi-vatikan-hoche-primiriti-ukrayinciv-ta-rosiyan-2035534.html>

<sup>11</sup> <https://twitter.com/i/status/1562471084498100225>

<sup>12</sup> See Statements All-Ukrainian Council of Churches after 24.02.2022. // <https://vrciro.org.ua/ua/statements>

<sup>13</sup> Chaplaincy. All-Ukrainian Union of Churches of Evangelical Christians-Baptists <https://www.baptyst.com/category/kapelan/>

<sup>14</sup> News. Church of Christ // <https://www.chve.org.ua>

regions of hostilities, the collection and distribution of humanitarian aid to the needy, reconstruction of destroyed housing, medical care, etc.

*The state, in all respects, supports such activities of Protestants, meets them halfway in granting permits to travel abroad for volunteer work, organising volunteer hubs, centres, and warehouses, distributing aid to the needy, providing medical care to the population, displaced persons, etc. With the support of local authorities, Protestant communities on the ground have sheltered thousands of refugees and constantly provided them with humanitarian aid. Nevertheless, the advantage that Protestants have in mobilisation needs to be redefined. It is particularly essential in times of disastrous war with the enemy, when Orthodox and Greek Catholics, pagans and unbelievers, Muslims and Jews are fighting for the freedom and independence of Protestants and their children at the cost of their own lives. The Law on Military Service has to be updated so that it is not a "hiding place" for evaders of this service. It has to consider the religious prohibition on using weapons and replace it with alternative forms of service and various forms of assistance to the Armed Forces and refugees to ensure Ukraine's victory.*

5. Uncertainty about the current war is observed in the institutional structures of Muslims in Ukraine. Spiritual directorates of Muslims located not in the occupied territories position themselves differently. For example, the Spiritual Directorate of Muslims of Ukraine (SDMU) of Mufti Ahmed Tamim does not clearly state its condemnation of Russian aggression. Until recently, the SDMU had friendly relations with Chechen leader Kadyrov<sup>15</sup>, whose militants are fighting as volunteers against independent Ukraine.

The SDMU Ummah has been and is showing a pro-Ukrainian position. Recently the Mufti of this Board, Said Ismagilov, supported the Donetsk Maidan. In order to avoid arrest, he was forced to leave for Kyiv and continued his spiritual and charitable activities in cooperation with the Muslim public society "Arraid." Now he serves in the Armed Forces of Ukraine in the crew of Hottabych paramedics<sup>16</sup>. He takes the wounded from the front line as a driver and a shooter. Recently the new Mufti Imam of Muslims of Lviv and Halychyna, Sheikh Murat Suleymanov<sup>17</sup> was elected. He is one of the most educated Muslim religious figures in Ukraine, who speaks fluent Ukrainian, Crimean Tatar, and Arabic.

The activity of the Spiritual Center of Muslims of Ukraine in Donbas, which consists mainly of Volga Tatars, who are forced to support the pro-Moscow orientation of their leader Rashid Bragin, remains obscure and silent. The existing Shiite Muslim communities in Ukraine do not play a significant role in the Muslim Ummah of the country.

*The state must effectively use the Islamic factor to establish friendly relations with the Arab world, which generally took a non-Ukrainian position in the Russian-Ukrainian war. The neutrality of some Muslims in Ukraine regarding the Russian-Ukrainian war is unacceptable for the state security of Ukraine, which the state has to directly and openly declare.*

6. The position of Jewish organisations is not quite ar-

ticulated. The head of the centre of Progressive Judaism, Alexander Dukhovny,<sup>18</sup> declared his pro-Ukrainian position. On the other hand, Moshe Aisman, the Chief Rabbi of Ukraine, who heads the All-Ukrainian Congress of Hasidic Jewish Religious Communities, actively supports Ukrainians in word and deed. He has repeatedly appealed to the government of Israel, which refuses to supply Ukraine with defensive weapons, with a request to help in the war against the Russian aggressor<sup>19</sup>.

However, the activity of the "Congress of Jews of Ukraine," headed by the opposition MP Rabinovich, remains unclear. In addition, he organized and led the pro-Ukrainian party "For Life!" which nominated the Party of Regions member Mr. Boyko for the presidency. For a long time, Rabinovych-owned TV channel 112 criticized the Ukrainian government, Ukraine's European choice, and its orientation towards the EU and NATO.

*The state, in its international policy (especially in times of war), does not fully take into account the presence in Ukraine of world centres of Judaism, headed by authoritative Jewish leaders who can significantly influence different countries and their administrations. In general, the Jewish communities of Ukraine organically fit into the Ukrainian model of the SCR, appreciating the non-discriminatory policy of the state towards Jews in Ukraine.*

### Conclusions

The changes that the religious practice of Ukraine underwent during the war of 2014 require a correlation of the state-confessional relations, making them more unambiguous, transparent, and mutually understandable. In the vast majority of regions of Ukraine, the state and religious organisations dynamically strengthened their partnership, developed new forms of relations, and jointly preserved religious pluralism and freedom of religion. Local religious communities and the Regional State Administration did not tolerate religious associations that fell out of the general Ukrainian patriotic trend. In the occupied Ukrainian territories, the collaborationist authorities imposed the Russian model of SCR, asserting the church monopoly of the Russian Orthodox Church while ignoring the religious needs of Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, and representatives of new and non-traditional religions. There was tension in the relations between the central government and society over the ambiguous position of the UOC and the reaction of its leadership to Russian aggression. The general legal principles of SCR, defined in the Constitution and the Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations, without the appropriate interpretation and implementation, turn into abstract requirements that do not effectively address the critical danger to the country.

Ukrainian society expects the state to clarify its position on these changes, to predict and inform its citizens of the steps that will lead to the return of everyday religious life after the victory, the restoration of destroyed churches, compensation for losses incurred by religious organisations, etc. Furthermore, it is recommended to conduct a state re-registration of all religious structures of Ukraine,

<sup>15</sup> <https://islam.in.ua/ua/tochka-zoru/naperedodni-vazhlyvyh-dlya-ukrayiny-podiy-drug-kadyrova-znov-nazvav-nashu-krayinu-bazoyu>

<sup>16</sup> <https://youtu.be/shyigmv2Ggs>

<sup>17</sup> <https://velychlviv.com/imam-murat-slabki-lyudy-oburyatsya-chomu-tse-vony-v-pekli/>

<sup>18</sup> Self-determination: progressive Judaism of Ukraine. Alexander Dukhovny, Oksana Gorkusha, TV-7 production // <https://youtu.be/PuTmEu4E9rl>

<sup>19</sup> Rabbi Moshe Asman on ... supporting Israel // <https://www.dw.com/uk/golovnij-rabin-ukraini-mose-asman-pro-zelenskogo-i-pidtrimku-izrailu-15092022/video-63132963>

taking into account their social orientations and the nature of relations with foreign religious centres.

In addition to the existing scientific expert councils on religious affairs at the Ministry of Education and Science, the Ministry of Culture and Information Policy, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it is worth having such councils at the Ministry of Digital Transformation and the Ministry of Justice. Moreover, a public Scientific and Expert Council on Security in the Humanitarian Sphere must be established at the Security Service of Ukraine.

The state must study the confessional periodicals of Ukraine, those printed products imported from abroad for distribution among Ukrainian believers, to protect the national information and spiritual space. It is long overdue to check the entire system of the book trade, especially in shops and kiosks belonging to denominations.

With public support, it is the state that has to raise the question to the Parliament to introduce an article in the current Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organisations that would clearly define the concept of church and state separation, indicating the inseparability of the church from the state and school from the church. Furthermore, it has to cover the willingness and possibility of including different religious communities in the Ukrainian state development. Moreover, the war has demonstrated that the law has to provide for accountability for religious activities contrary to the interests of the Ukrainian people and its national and state security.

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## Російсько-українська війна 2014-2022: моніторинг державно-конфесійних відносин в Україні

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У статті розглядаються зміни, які відбулися в релігійному житті України з початком російсько-української війни. Зокрема показано, як незаконна силова окупація частини території суверенної держави призвела до переструктуризації українського конфесійного ландшафту та масової міграції українських вірян різного віросповідання. На підставі аналізу даних з відкритих джерел автори показують позицію найвпливовіших в Україні конфесій та їхніх лідерів щодо російсько-української війни. Обґрунтовано думку, що прискорення через війну ідентифікаційних процесів у релігійному сегменті українського суспільства позначилося на державно-конфесійних відносинах в країні і зараз суспільство як ніколи потребує зрозумілих об'єднаних меседжів від держави. У рекомендаціях, які надаються авторами, визначено, що держава і релігійні організації мають динамічно змінювати своє партнерство, розвивати нові форми взаємин, спільними зусиллями зберігати релігійний плюралізм і свободу віросповідань. Актуалізуються також питання державної перереєстрації всіх релігійних структур України із урахуванням при цьому їх суспільних орієнтацій і характеру зв'язків із зарубіжними релігійними центрами, створення громадської Науково-експертної ради з безпеки в гуманітарній сфері. З метою захисту національного інформаційного і духовного простору за ініціативи держави пропонується вивчення конфесійної періодики України та друкованої продукції, яка завозиться із зарубіжжя для поширення серед українських вірян. Держава, на думку авторів статті, має стати ініціатором змін до чинного Закону про свободу совісті і релігійні організації, пов'язаних з формулюванням принципу відокремлення Церкви від держави і школи, а також встановленням покарань за релігійну діяльність, що шкодить національній і державній безпеці українського народу.

**Ключові слова:** російсько-українська війна, державно-конфесійні відносини, трансформації релігійного життя, православ'я в Україні.

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