

Religion as a Field of Civilizational Conflict: Ukrainian National Self-Identification and the Ideology of the 'Russian World' in the Context of War

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This article analyses religion as a field of civilisational conflict in the context of the confrontation between Ukrainian national self-identification and the ideology of the 'russian world' against the backdrop of the Russian-Ukrainian war. The study focuses on the interplay of religious narratives, geopolitical strategies and nation-building processes that shape the contemporary transformation of Ukraine's religious landscape. It is pointed out that religion acts not only as a spiritual phenomenon, but also as an important factor in symbolic mobilisation, the legitimisation of political claims, and the formation of collective identity.

This article analyses the concept of the 'russian world' as an ethno-ideological model of religious nationalism, combining imperial, messianic and civilisational narratives aimed at undermining Ukrainian statehood and cultural and spiritual agency. At the same time, it examines the role of Ukrainian churches in the processes of social consolidation, strengthening humanitarian security and the formation of a modern civic nation. Particular attention is paid to the establishment of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, its rivalry with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate, and the transformations of religious identity in the context of war.

It is emphasised that the religious sphere has become an important arena for rethinking historical narratives, social solidarity and moral responsibility. The events of the war have acted as a catalyst for institutional and ideological changes of a long-term nature. The conclusions note that religion is increasingly being integrated into security and humanitarian discourse, playing a key role in strengthening national identity and the resilience of Ukrainian society.

KEYWORDS

*religion,
national identity,
national idea,
national church,
religious identity,
religious security,
Orthodox Church of
Ukraine,
humanitarian security*

Introduction

The relevance of studying religion as a field of civilisational conflict in the context of the confrontation between Ukrainian national self-identification and the ideology of the 'russian world' stems from the profound transformations taking place in Ukraine's contemporary socio-political and spiritual landscape amidst the war. Russian aggression is accompanied not only by military actions, but also by the active use of religious and civilisational narratives as a tool of geopolitical influence and the legitimisation of expansionist policy. In this context, the ideology of the 'russian world' emerges as a conceptual model that seeks to integrate religious symbolism, historical memory and cultural heritage into a system of political mobilisation aimed at undermining Ukrainian statehood and identity. At the same time, the religious sphere in Ukraine is becoming a vital arena for the formation and consolidation of national self-identity, particularly in the face of threats to territorial integrity and sovereignty. Church institutions, religious practices and spiritual values play a key role in mobilising society, supporting humanitarian resilience and reinterpreting historical narratives. Therefore, the aim of this study is to determine the role of religion in shaping the national self-identity of the Ukrainian nation and countering Russia's hostile ideological myths.

Research Methods

The research methodology is based on an interdisciplinary approach that combines tools from the fields of religious studies, political science, sociology and cultural studies. Central to this is a civilisational approach, which allows for the analysis of the ideology of the 'russian world' as a value-symbolic system aimed at forming an alternative model of identity and geopolitical influence. The use of the historical-genetic method makes it possible to trace the origins of contemporary religious-political narratives, whilst comparative analysis helps to identify differences between Ukrainian and Russian models of religious identification. A sociological approach is applied to study transformations in religious self-identification in wartime conditions, in particular through the analysis of empirical data and social practices. Discourse analysis is used to study religious-political rhetoric, symbolic narratives and the mechanisms of legitimising ideological concepts. Such a comprehensive methodology allows us to examine religion as a space of civilisational confrontation and a factor in the formation of national resilience.

Results and Discussion

In contemporary academic thought, national identity is defined as an individual's conscious sense of belonging to a national community, based on a strong emotional bond

formed by a system of beliefs regarding shared traditions, culture, language, history and political orientations, as well as the acceptance of collective norms and values. As noted by the authors led by D. Shevchuk, in contemporary societies the processes of national identity formation are often linked to secularisation and modernisation transformations, which alter the nature of the interaction between religion, the state and society (*Shevchuk et al., 2022: 202*).

National identity is not an innate characteristic, but is formed through an individual's interaction with the nation, its symbols, values, language, culture, history, territory and state institutions. It manifests itself through national sentiment, consciousness, mentality and the national idea (*Lomachinska et al., 2022*). National identity is not the same as citizenship or nationality, although these factors can have a significant influence on it. Language is a key element in its formation, serving as one of the key markers of identity. Since independence, language has become a crucial factor in the consolidation of Ukrainian society.

Another defining characteristic of the Ukrainian people is their deep religious devotion, shaped by the interplay of ethnic and spiritual traditions. Geographical conditions, the agrarian nature of society and historical circumstances have contributed to the spread of a worldview closely aligned with Christian values. Despite prolonged periods of statelessness and cultural pressure from imperial and Soviet regimes, Ukrainians have preserved their identity largely through their reliance on spiritual values, amongst which religion has played an important unifying role.

Religion occupies a complex and multifaceted place within the framework of Ukrainian national identity. The long and rich tradition of Christianity in Ukraine has led to the presence of religious motifs and symbolic meanings in liberation and national movements throughout the country's history. Religious identity is shaped by a system of values, symbols, myths and traditions, codified in rites and rituals (*Lomachinska, Alekseienko, 2023: 57*).

At the same time, Ukraine, as a post-Soviet state, is also characterised as a 'post-theistic' society, having developed under conditions of prolonged state-imposed atheism. This historical legacy gives rise to a certain degree of ambivalence, and at times even ideological uncertainty, regarding the role of religion in public life. According to a report by the Razumkov Centre, a significant proportion of citizens do not have a clearly defined church affiliation, and many Orthodox Ukrainians identify themselves in general terms – as 'Orthodox' – without specifying their denominational affiliation, although the proportion of such citizens is gradually decreasing: 39% in 2000, 29% in 2013, 27% in 2020, 22% in 2021, 19% in 2022, 14% in 2024 and 10% in 2025 (*Razumkov Centre, 2025*).

In such circumstances, the model of religious pluralism that has emerged in post-Soviet Ukraine is characterised by the presence of several competing national Orthodox jurisdictions, alongside the relatively free operation of other Christian and non-Christian religious communities. This configuration is unique both among Orthodox countries and in the broader European context. J. Casanova defines it as a kind of 'embryonic denominational model', which exhibits certain structural parallels with the American system of religious pluralism. At the same time, the researcher notes, the historical origins of these models differ significantly: whereas the American system was shaped by Protestant sectarianism and mass religious immigration, the Ukrainian model emerged amidst the gradual confessionalisation of the Orthodox majority in a country historically situated between the Catholic-pluralist tradition of the

Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and the imperial Orthodox legacy of Russia (*Casanova, 2022: 216*).

Christianity in Ukraine has traditionally been an important nation-building factor, helping to embed fundamental values, customs and cultural traditions in the public consciousness. In recent years, there have been noticeable changes in the ecclesiastical self-identification of Orthodox believers, driven both by transformations in the institutional structure of Orthodoxy in Ukraine and by the impact of full-scale Russian aggression on public consciousness. In this context, S. Salnikova notes that following the outbreak of the Russian-Ukrainian war in 2014, society expected moral support, solidarity and an active stance from the churches. Although religious institutions generally stood on the side of society, the change in the political climate after 2019 affected the level of state support they received, which in turn influenced the rate of conversions. A new wave of religious community conversions began following Russia's full-scale invasion on 24 February 2022, when the question of church affiliation once again took on clear socio-political and security significance (*Salnikova, 2023: 210*). According to sociological surveys by the Razumkov Centre, the proportion of those identifying with the Orthodox Church of Ukraine reached 42% in 2025, whilst the number of supporters of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate) fell significantly – from 13% in 2021 to 5% in 2025 (*Razumkov Centre, 2025*).

As V. Kuryliak notes, among the faithful of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate), there is a more pronounced tendency to identify oneself primarily through membership of one's own denominational community. Throughout the monitoring period, the vast majority of respondents expressed the belief that religious faith does not necessarily entail a clear denominational affiliation. In particular, in 2021, 58% of respondents agreed with the statement that a person can be a believer without belonging to any specific religion. This view is dominant in most regions of the country, with the exception of the west, where denominational affiliation traditionally plays a more significant role. Age differentiation is also significant: the younger the respondents, the more likely they are to support the idea of 'non-denominational' faith, that is, the possibility of individual religious self-determination without formal membership of a specific religious organisation. This indicates a gradual transformation of religiosity towards its individualisation and a weakening of institutional ties to traditional denominations. (*Kuryliak, 2022: 25*)

The concept of 'Open Orthodoxy', developed by Orthodox theologians in 2014–2015 on the basis of their long-standing educational and publishing activities, has made a significant intellectual contribution to overcoming inter-confessional differences. A statement by the initiative group of the "Open Orthodoxy" network, published on 23 August 2018, called on Orthodox Christians of various jurisdictions to refrain from using language of hostility and violence when resolving administrative and property issues. It was emphasised that Ukraine needs not only institutional unity within Orthodoxy, but also broader social consolidation. The concept envisaged the development of an Orthodox Church open to dialogue with the media, academia, education, other denominations and civil society, as well as support for socio-political efforts aimed at securing autocephaly for the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (*Havryliuk et al., 2024: 36*).

In the context of the development of the Ukrainian people's national identity and the formation of a modern Ukrainian nation – based primarily on the principles of civil

society rather than ethnic homogeneity – the Orthodox Church of Ukraine is gradually establishing itself as an important element of the public sphere. It promotes the dissemination of civic values, social solidarity and moral responsibility.

In this context, the concept of the nation takes on primarily a civic, rather than a purely ethnic, meaning, which corresponds to contemporary democratic models of state-building. Consequently, Orthodoxy in Ukraine is undergoing a transformation, seeking to integrate into the system of civil society institutions and perform socially significant functions (*Shevchuk, 2022: 205*).

International experience shows that efforts by secular states to establish or support a national church lend the phenomenon of autocephaly a particular complexity. Consequently, obtaining recognition of the status of an autocephalous church is not merely an element of foreign policy strategy, but also a vital component of nation-building and the construction of national identity. After all, in this context, the recognition of a national church is linked not only to inter-state relations but also to the transformation of models of interaction between the state and religious institutions within a specific political space.

The legitimisation of national identity through the religious factor becomes particularly relevant during periods of political upheaval or systemic transformation. In the Orthodox tradition, which has historically developed in close connection with state formations, church organisation is often aligned with the nation-state model. Local churches, as a rule, operate within a specific national context and perform not only spiritual but also symbolic and representative functions in relation to the relevant community (*Puleri, Vukoslavcevic, 2023*).

The establishment of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine has significantly altered the landscape of the Christian community in Ukraine as a whole, and of the Orthodox community in particular. The Tomos of Autocephaly became a historically significant act which contributed to strengthening the state's humanitarian security, rethinking public narratives regarding the canonical status of churches, and also had a noticeable impact on citizens' religious orientations and the development of their national identity. As V. Tokman asserts, the attainment of autocephaly became an important stimulus for rethinking the principles of interaction between the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU) and the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC). As early as the beginning of 2019, the primates of both churches expressed their readiness not only to cooperate in various socially significant spheres, but also to jointly revive the Kyiv Christian tradition, reveal its unique identity and define the prospects for Ukraine's spiritual development. The head of the UGCC, Major Archbishop Sviatoslav, emphasised the possibility of jointly bearing witness to Christianity in the world and the potential for ecumenical dialogue between the two churches, which, despite the absence of an institutionally formalised format, is already taking place at the level of personal contacts and inter-church communication. Thus, the institutional establishment of the OCU took place within the framework of a dialogical paradigm, where one of the key tasks is to foster an atmosphere of mutual understanding and cooperation between denominations on the religious landscape of Ukraine (*Tokman, 2023:55*).

The process of institutional development of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine between 2018 and 2021 was accompanied by a fierce struggle with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate for influence in the

religious sphere and public support. As Y. Boreiko notes, this struggle took the form of competition for symbolic capital – a resource encompassing authority, status, reputation and public recognition. The internal dimension of the OCU's formation manifested itself in inter-church competition at the institutional, personnel and personal levels, as well as in interaction with state structures and participation in addressing social issues. The external aspect of the conflict manifested itself in the Ecumenical Patriarchate's support for the OCU and the denial of its canonicity by the UOC-MP and the Russian Orthodox Church, which in response severed Eucharistic communion with Constantinople and continued to resist the recognition of Ukrainian autocephaly (*Boreiko, 2025:12*).

In the context of the war, the transformations within Ukrainian churches have taken on a multifaceted nature: humanitarian activities have intensified, interfaith tensions have escalated, and communities and sacred sites have been lost. There is a growing trend towards the political instrumentalisation of religion and an increasing dependence of churches on informal socio-economic factors. Despite the relevance of the idea of unity within Ukrainian Orthodoxy, its implementation is complicated by political and economic fluctuations. At the same time, as D. Brylov and T. Kalenychenko note, the identity of OCU believers has had a distinct national character from the outset, so the war has not caused any fundamental transformation of it. The OCU may, however, serve as a civic and religious centre of gravity for pro-Ukrainian citizens, although this creates risks of narrowing its own spiritual mission. (*Brylov, Kalenychenko, 2023: 369*).

In the context of military aggression, numerous violations of the rights of religious communities in the temporarily occupied territories have been documented, including the destruction or damage of places of worship and restrictions on freedom of religion. At the same time, as noted by V. Bodak and I. Baran, these processes were accompanied by a strengthening of national identity, which, in the face of a threat to the state's territorial integrity, took on a particularly unifying role. This led to transformations in the configuration of the religious landscape and also influenced a rethinking of state policy in the sphere of freedom of conscience. As a result, the religious factor is increasingly being integrated into the broader security and humanitarian discourse, acting as an important element of national mobilisation and the preservation of cultural and spiritual identity (*Bodak, Baran, 2024*).

The Orthodox Church of Ukraine and its Primate, Metropolitan Epifaniy, have taken a clear and uncompromising stance on Russian military aggression. In the occupied territories, this denomination has found itself under particular threat: from the very first days of the invasion, Russian troops have carried out attacks on its religious sites, destroyed churches, conducted searches, and exerted pressure on the clergy, including threats, abductions and murders of clergymen. Metropolitan Epiphanius himself was reportedly also under threat of sabotage. Despite this, the hierarchs, clergy and faithful of the OCU continued to hold services, pray for Ukraine's victory and provide spiritual and material assistance to those affected. Unlike most Ukrainian and many international religious communities, which expressed solidarity with Ukraine, the Russian Orthodox Church, which is closely linked to the Russian political leadership and associated with the ideology of the 'russian world', took the opposite stance on the war. Its head, Patriarch Kirill, effectively supported Russia's military invasion of Ukraine and also rejected a proposal by

the World Council of Churches to mediate in the conflict, which caused a significant stir in the international religious community (*Palinchak, Bokoch, 2023: 167*).

The religious and political rhetoric surrounding this war has already been the subject of numerous academic and journalistic studies, as religion can fulfil various functions within a national narrative – ranging from full integration with state ideology to its instrumental use as a means of legitimising political power. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, both Russian and Ukrainian societies underwent significant transformations, including a rethinking of the models of relations between state and church. In Russia, the ‘russian world’ narrative gradually took shape, combining religious, nationalist and imperial elements. This discourse is used to justify an authoritarian model of governance within the country and to legitimise expansionist policies abroad (*Surzhko-Harned, 2022*).

For many years, the idea of a ‘single people’ comprising Russians and Ukrainians – allegedly artificially divided by the West – was developed and promoted by political and religious circles in Russia. In this context, the Moscow Patriarchate, particularly during the tenures of Patriarchs Alexy II (1929–2008) and Kirill (elected on 27 January 2009), consistently advocated the concept of the so-called canonical territory, which encompassed the territory of the former Soviet Union and underwent a transformation following its collapse and the emergence of independent nation states. Since 1991, the Russian Orthodox Church has emphasised the supra-state unity of the Orthodox peoples of historical Rus’ regardless of political borders, whilst seeking to preserve and strengthen its own institutional influence (*Rousselet, 2022*).

The concept of the ‘russian world’ is an example of ethno-ideological religious nationalism. On the one hand, it represents the religious narrative of the Russian Orthodox Church, and on the other, it integrates a messianic dimension into the Russian Federation’s foreign policy towards the so-called ‘near abroad’. Religious arguments in this model are used to legitimise political claims regarding Ukraine, as the latter is regarded as an integral part of the ‘russian world’. Within this concept, emphasis is placed on the alleged historical mismatch between the cultural and spiritual space of ‘Rus’ and modern state borders, which gives rise to a desire for their ‘restoration’ or symbolic reunification (*Surzhko-Harned, 2022*).

According to the ideology of the ‘russian world’, Russia, Belarus and Ukraine are regarded as parts of a single civilisational space that stands in opposition to the West. Its foundation is said to be ‘traditional’ Orthodox values, which the Russian authorities contrast with Western individualism and liberalism. Drawing on a specific interpretation of religious history, this concept shapes a political narrative of restoring Russia’s geopolitical power through the fusion of religious symbolism and politics. It was in this vein that Vladimir Putin justified the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, whilst patriarch Kirill, in public speeches, reiterated the idea of a single spiritual space comprising three states, seeking to cement the notion of Ukraine as part of the ‘russian spiritual territory’ (*Coleman, Wanner, 2025: 2*).

In the context of active propaganda for the ‘russian world’, from the 1990s onwards, practices emerged in a significant number of UOC parishes that promoted the establishment of a Russian cultural and religious identity among the faithful, whilst Ukrainian identity was often marginalised or treated as secondary. This manifested itself, in particular, in the spread of the cult of saints associated with

the Russian imperial tradition, the use of the Russian intonation of Church Slavonic, and corresponding liturgical narratives. Following the election of patriarch Kirill in 2009, these trends intensified. In response to the full-scale invasion, a section of the UOC clergy criticised patriarch Kirill’s stance, accusing him of supporting this ideology. At the same time, the decision of the UOC Council in May 2022 to declare independence did not lead to clear canonical recognition by other local churches. As a result, an ambiguous status has emerged, which allows individual communities to distance themselves from the influence of the ‘Russian world’, yet at the same time preserves the established identity stereotypes formed over decades (*Dudchenko, 2022: 198*).

It is worth emphasising that the religious factor plays a significant role in the construction of Putin’s worldview and in the ideological justification of his policy towards Ukraine; indeed, since his rise to power, the Russian Orthodox Church has been integrated into the model of interaction between the Kremlin and Russian society as an institution which, in the words of C. Hovorun, is designed to provide a kind of ‘social glue’ that helped strengthen social cohesion in the fragmented post-Soviet environment. At the same time, the Church supported the Kremlin’s political course, thereby contributing to its legitimisation and greater acceptance by the Russian population. The services that the church provided to both society and the state authorities facilitated its return to the public sphere in Russia. After a long period of exclusion from the public sphere during the Soviet era, the church seized the opportunity not only to re-establish its presence but also to occupy a prominent place within that sphere (*Hovorun, 2022: 3*).

As a result, a unique symbiotic relationship has developed between Putin and Kirill (Gundyayev), aimed at realising the idea of ‘restoring Russia’s greatness’. Both figures share the conviction that Russia is capable of regaining its status as a great power by leading global resistance to the unipolar world order, which is associated with the globalist and liberal political agenda. In this context, contemporary Russian alt-right anti-globalism and anti-liberalism serve not so much as the ultimate goal of policy, but rather as a tool for restoring superpower status. Just as the Soviet Union achieved geopolitical influence by promoting alternative left-wing ideologies based on Marxism, contemporary Russian politics uses ideological narratives as a means of geopolitical mobilisation (*Hovorun, 2022: 5*).

Patriarch Kirill’s sermon in January 2023 contains geopolitical considerations in which he calls for the condemnation of ‘madmen’ who acknowledge that the ‘great Russian state’ might lose. Analysing the Russian media, N. Khrystokin & V. Lozovytskyi concluded that Kirill regards the defence of the Russian Federation’s interests as the mission of all Christians, requiring ‘spiritual mobilisation’. He accused Ukraine of a ‘radical shift in the direction of its political and historical development, which runs counter to Russian interests’. It turns out that it was not the Russian Federation that attacked Ukraine, but Ukraine’s democratic choice, which, in Kirill’s view, ‘is doing everything to make Russia an enemy in the eyes of Ukrainians’. That is precisely why the war is allegedly justified and sacred (*Khrystokin, Lozovytskyi, 2024: 52*).

Trends in religious affiliation indicate that, unsurprisingly, following Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, there was an increase in the number of believers – from 67% to 76% (*Razumkov Centre, 2025*). This places a particular responsibility on religious organisations, for however much they may declare the separation of religion from

politics, during a war 'allies' and 'enemies' are found within different social institutions.

Metropolitan Epiphanius's sermon during a prayer service at St Sophia's Cathedral in November 2023 contained many political, historical and moral messages. The Metropolitan speaks of the importance of national identity for a Christian, stating that the enemy's true aim is to destroy Ukraine, to dissolve and eradicate Ukrainian identity (*Epiphanius Metropolitan and special liturgy, 2023*). Particular attention was paid to the sacred duty of defending the Fatherland in the face of hostile invasion, which found expression in the concept of military chaplaincy (*Lomachinska, 2022*).

Russia's full-scale invasion in 2022 further highlighted the issue of legal regulation of the activities of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church (Moscow Patriarchate), intensified public and political criticism of structures linked to the Russian Orthodox Church, as well as the need to resolve inter-faith conflicts within the framework of national legislation and the principles of freedom of conscience. In this way, the war has acted as a catalyst for profound changes in the religious sphere, which are of a long-term institutional and ideological nature (*Bodak, Baran, 2024: 181*).

The main criticism levelled at the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP) is that any organisation that submits to Russia as an aggressor state poses a threat to Ukraine. V. Synchak emphasises that this issue was raised long before the war began, but against the backdrop of the conflict, it was resolved positively for Ukrainians with the granting of autocephaly to the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU) in 2018 (*Synchak, 2022: 50*). Against the backdrop of the Kyiv Patriarchate receiving the Tomos (2018) granting autocephaly to the OCU (which indicates its local nature within the territories of Ukraine and cements its independence from Russia), an open confrontation took place between the two religious systems (*Synchak, 2022: 52*). Thus, the attitude of representatives of the Moscow Patriarchate towards the Russian-Ukrainian war demonstrated that religion does not exist in isolation from politics.

Conclusions

In contemporary academic thought, national identity is regarded as an individual's conscious sense of belonging to a national community, shaped by shared values, history, culture, language and political orientations. It is not innate, but arises through social interaction and manifests itself in national consciousness, mentality and collective perceptions. Religiousness, shaped by the interaction of ethnic and spiritual traditions, is also a key feature of Ukrainian identity. Christianity has historically played a nation-building role, contributing to the preservation of cultural continuity and spiritual resilience. In the modern context, Orthodoxy is undergoing transformations as it integrates into civil society. In particular, the Orthodox Church of Ukraine is gradually establishing itself as an important element of the public sphere, supporting the development of civic values, social solidarity and a modern national identity.

The legitimisation of national identity through the religious factor becomes particularly relevant during periods of political crisis and systemic transformation. In the Orthodox tradition, church institutions have historically been linked to the nation-state model, fulfilling not only spiritual but also symbolic and representative functions. The establishment of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine and the granting of the Tomos of Autocephaly significantly altered the configuration of the religious landscape, contributing to the

strengthening of the state's humanitarian security and the development of national self-awareness. The institutional establishment of the OCU was accompanied by competition with the UOC-MP for symbolic capital and public support, as well as inter-church and international conflicts. In the context of the war, the OCU has taken a clear stance against Russian aggression, has faced persecution in the occupied territories, yet continues to conduct worship services and provide spiritual and humanitarian aid, thereby strengthening its role in the consolidation of society.

Following the collapse of the USSR, Russian and Ukrainian societies underwent profound transformations in the sphere of state-church relations, which directly influenced the processes of national identity formation. In Russia, a discourse of the 'Russian world' has emerged, combining religious, imperial and nationalist elements and aimed at establishing a supra-state cultural and civilisational community. Within this framework, Ukraine is viewed as part of a single spiritual and historical space, which undermines the foundations of Ukrainian national self-identification. The Russian Orthodox Church has actively supported this narrative, disseminating corresponding symbolic models of identity, particularly through the structures of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church. The full-scale war has intensified public debates regarding religious affiliation and national loyalty, prompting a re-evaluation of the role of religion in the processes of consolidating the Ukrainian political nation and transforming the state's religious landscape.

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Релігія як поле цивілізаційного конфлікту: українська національна самоідентифікація та ідеологія «руського міра» в умовах війни

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У даній статті релігія аналізується як поле цивілізаційного конфлікту в контексті протистояння української національної самоідентифікації та ідеології «руського міра» на тлі російсько-української війни. Дослідження зосереджене на взаємодії релігійних наративів, геополітичних стратегій та державотворчих процесів, які визначають сучасну трансформацію релігійного ландшафту України. Зазначається, що релігія виступає не лише як духовний феномен, але й як важливий чинник символічної мобілізації, легітимізації політичних претензій та формування колективної ідентичності. Концепцію «руського міра» проаналізовано як етноідеологічну модель релігійного націоналізму, що поєднує імперські, месіанські та цивілізаційні наративи, спрямовані на підрич української державності, культурної та духовної суб'єктності. Водночас розглядається роль українських церков у процесах соціальної консолідації, зміцнення гуманітарної безпеки та формування сучасної політичної нації. Особливу увагу приділено становленню Православної Церкви України, її суперництву з Українською Православною Церквою Московського патріархату та трансформаціям релігійної ідентичності в умовах війни. Наголошується, що релігійна сфера стала важливою ареною для переосмислення історичних наративів, соціальної солідарності та моральної відповідальності. Події війни виступили каталізатором інституційних та ідеологічних змін довгострокового характеру. У висновках зазначено, що релігія все більше інтегрується в безпековий та гуманітарний дискурс, відіграючи ключову роль у зміцненні національної ідентичності та стійкості українського суспільства.

Ключові слова: релігія, національна ідентичність, національна ідея, національна церква, релігійна ідентичність, релігійна безпека, Православна Церква України (ПЦУ), гуманітарна безпека.

Received (Надійшла до редакції): 08.02.2026, Accepted (Прийнята до друку): 10.03.2026
Available online (Опубліковано онлайн) 26.03.2026