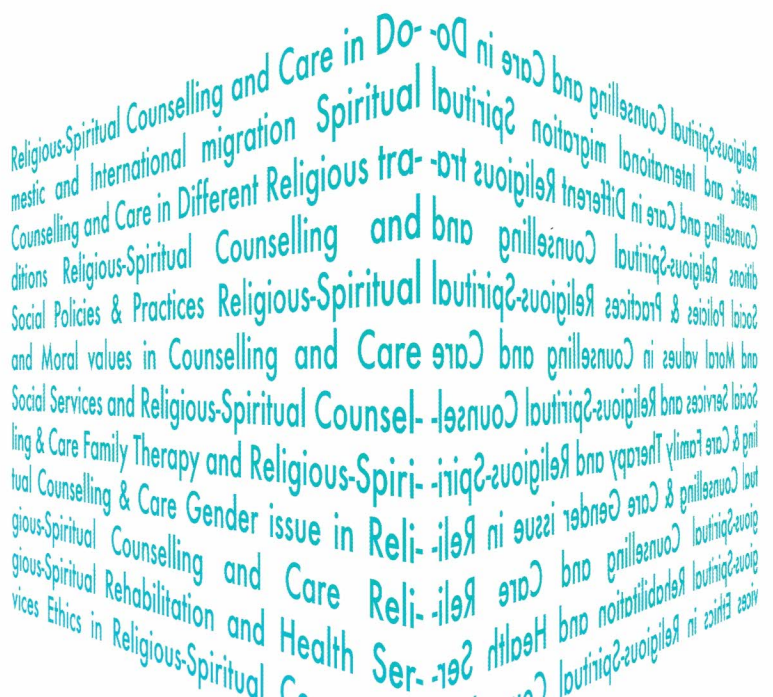
# RELIGIOUS-SPIRITUAL COUNSELLING & CARE



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# Changing Focus on Military Chaplaincy: Religious-Spiritual Counseling and Care in Ukraine

Tetiana Kalenychenko*

Two years since the beginning of the armed conflict in the Eastern Ukraine the institution of Military Chaplaincy has radically changed. During that period of social turmoil, not only the need in spiritual help arose, but also in spiritual leaders on the front line. The phenomenon of religious volunteering has become widespread. For Ukrainian society the Religious-Spiritual Counseling and Care were no longer empty words.

The institution of military chaplaincy has met significant changes. Religious organizations that were previously exclusively pacifist have become active in the military chaplaincy and spiritual aid for armies and volunteers. Religious volunteering issues put forward in the direction of competition because of the crisis in the country. People witnessed close cooperation among institution chaplains of various denominations and imam-chaplains. Together with the interfaith cooperation, the problems arose war traumas, PTSD, psychological assistance and theological acceptance of the war.

In addition to assisting the military forces, chaplains took on other social functions. In particular, it was psychological assistance to the people in the conflict zone, support and socialization of internally displaced persons, working with civilians and interpretation of the importance of the war in the spiritual sense. During this period, joint trainings for spiritual leaders of different denominations, volunteers and psychologists about working with [illegible] started to develop

The religious component of social and political conflict in Ukraine showed peacekeeping capacities of religious organizations. Some spiritual leaders started a kind of mediation and facilitation, by connecting civil society, military forces, government and local population in conflict zone. Churches and religious sites became a neutral platform to promote dialogue and possible cooperation. Nevertheless, there was another side of religious component, such as mobilization force for both sides of the conflict and its escalation.

However, religious communities of Ukraine gota new role in civil society after the events on Maidan, and later - as participants of the conflict in the East. Religious volunteers became active promoters of societal changes and took on the role of many other institutions that could not assist in the case. Leading role in this trend belongs to the institute of military chaplaincy, that provides religious-spiritual counseling and care for different parts of Ukrainian society.

## Historical background

Creation of the military chaplaincy service has started since Ukraine declared independence in 1991. Ukrainian military chaplains were present in the peacekeeper forces since 2003, particularly in Iraq, Kosovo, Sierra Leone, Congo (Lysenko, 2013: 120). Denominations were represented as following: 12 chaplains from Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate (UOC MP), 4 chaplains from Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC KP), 4 from Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church (UGCC). However, the first major steps in the relations between government and religious organizations were made in 2008, when a Memorandum of cooperation in pastoral care for soldiers in the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) was signed (Sadovyak, 2013: 42). Representatives of religious organizations signed this agreement: UOC KP, UOC MP, UGCC, Ukrainian Autocephalous Orthodox Church (UAOC), Roman Catholic Church (RCC), All-Ukrainian Union of Associations of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, and Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Ukraine (DUMU). The next year Council for Pastoral Care at the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine (MoDU) was installed – by minister Youriy Yehanurov's order of 20.03.2009 – «On approval of the Council for



worked on the law about chaplaincy service. However, there are certain worries that only representatives of religious organizations that are members of All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious organizations (UCCR) may be included there. We will discuss this issue in the chapter about law for chaplaincy in Ukraine.

## It all starts with revolution

The history of modern, updated military chaplaincy began during the revolution on Maidan which took place in Kyiv during 21.11.2013 - 21.02.2014. The participation of the clergy and religious organizations actualized on 1stof December 2013 (Walker, 2013), when about 500,000-1,000,000 people were on a peaceful protest against the police beating students. Then on the Maidan the first priests came, who communicated with people, and on 4th and 5th of December two prayer tents from Protestants and Greek-Catholics were created (Mukhomorova, 2013). Representatives of different religions were invited there to pray together and help each other. Another demonstration of openness of religious leaders was a common prayer on the stage, service and work of religious volunteers together with civil activists on Maidan. Public prayers were performed by representatives of different Christian denominations, Muslims (Yakubovich, 2014)and Jews together. After the beginning of violent phase of the conflict, priests acted as peacemakers (Mukhomorova, 2013) (created a live shield between the parties of protest), medical volunteers (Mukhomorova, 2014) and mediators in negotiations between government and opposition after condemning violence (RISU, 2014). Some clerics were constantly among activists, praying for them and communicating, started calling themselves "chaplains of Maidan". After the revolution, many religious activists and priests met a new problem – they had the urge for spiritual work, but did not see a new mission. Political circumstances at the beginning of the annexation of the Crimean peninsula created a new goal - and, priests became the first volunteers to help the Ukrainian army in Kherson region. As a journalist, I visited the military places and witnessed changing attitudes and the role of priests. From the very beginning volunteering were promoted by Orthodox and Greek Catholics, and later joined by almost all religious groups. In particular, it is important to pay attention to the religious pluralism within Ukrainian society.

### Features of the pluralistic religious environment

In the case of Ukraine, military chaplaincy issue is complicated by the non-homogeneous religious environment. According to a recent survey conducted a year ago, the religious map of Ukraine consists of 33 781 religious organizations (Kalenychenko, 2014) and looks like this: UOC Kyiv Patriarchate – 44,2 %, UOC Moscow Patriarchate – 20,8 %, UGCC – 11 %, Atheists, non-believers – 9,5 %, Protestants – 2,5 %, RCC – 1 %, Muslims – 0,1 %, Jews – 0,1%, others – 8,4 %. (25.12.2014-15.01.2015, sociologocal service «USS»; 4413 respondents, mistake no more than 5 %). Chaplaincy service areas (including medical and prison) are presented inUGCC and UOC KP, in Protestant societies, less presented in UOC MP and RCC. During last year were created additional units as imam-chaplains by different spiritual administrations (DUMU and DUMU "Ummah").

However, the cause of conflict between chaplains and religious organizations lies within basically religious cleavages in Ukraine. In particular, it's about activity of three Orthodox churches, two Catholic, two active and three passive spiritual administrations of Muslims, several Judaism directions and many Protestant denominations. This leads to the fact that there are local conflicts over religious affiliation of a chaplain or a soldier. Specially, it affected relations between UOC KP and UOC MP that were perceived as pro-Ukrainian and pro-Russian churches. By now this confrontation has resulted in not much in the area of chaplaincy, but in public statements and cooperation with the authorities, contacts with the Ecumenical Patriarchate and even parish transitions in various regions.

Churches participation in political discourse is also characterized by the combat with the Russian propaganda. As the first public authority for UOC on Maidan, the role of "Ukrainian Church"was took over by UOC KP. This was indicated by changing of its rhetoric, of Patriarch Filaret, especially in the last interview (RISU, 2016) where he said that "without Kyiv Patriarchate in Putin would rule Ukraine". An external enemy image was established – Russia and the Russian Orthodox Church. It deepened the conflict with the UOC MP. Spokespersons and clergy of the latter not always bothered with neutrality. Besides parishes transitions (particularly in the West), strengthened the public rhetoric about Russian influence through religious institutions. The slogans echoed "Get out of here, Moscow priests!", activists also promoted a petition of the transfer the land of Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra (the



known old Orthodox complex in the center of Kyiv) to another jurisdiction (RISU, 2016).

This conflict increased on the backdrop of high trust (58,8% of trust and 18,4% of distrust where the Church is second only after volunteers) to religious institutions from population. Publicity of thereligious environment and open declaration of spiritual and moral values has caused a surge of confidence in the Church (RISU, 2016). However, the influential position of spiritual leaders become intertwined with and somehow legitimized pro-nationalist mood that became widespread after the annexation of the Crimea and the beginning of the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine. Notably, scientists observed similar trends before the beginning of protests. They explained that religious values and "Christian morality" as an appeal to the Ukrainian culture. That became an argument for resolving political disputes and adoption of new laws (Chermalykh, 2012: 9). One could witness even more strengthening the conservative discourse before the next elections that allowed to increase the number of voters (Chermalykh, 2012: 61). According to the researcher Ingelhart, sociological and religious (Christian) discourse can successfully work together to dominate as the ideological symbiosis (Ingelhart, 2004). Researching the religious environment interactions and nationalist centrist sentiment may have two trends: integrationalism and fundamentalism (Verhovskiy, 2003). In Ukraine religious integrationalism was more visibleas congregations hold course for unity, finding the total value of the religious foundations of society and building a traditionalist discourse for society. Sociologist Gellner suggests that Eastern European nationalism usually served as a spiritual exaltation, when in fact it is only the rise of national character (Gellner, 1997: 8). He said that Eastern Europe faced a dilemma of idealization: whether to build the country based on the Western ideals, or to return to the values of "their" people (Chermalykh, 2012: 82). In this case, national manifestations were seen in many external aspects – increase of the number of national symbols, Ukrainianization and promotion of language, national producers, the construction of Ukrainian identity in response to an external threat. The question is where we can find placethat takes religious identity. If it matches pro-nationalist rhetoric, both components harmoniously cooperate in public. Instead of it, if religious community crosses a certain level where spiritual traditions disapprove a particular choice or reform the modern world, society can respond based on other values.

### Formation of renewed military chaplaincy

After attracting first regular troops to stabilize the situation in the Crimea, and later to the fighting in the East of the country, priests have become a part of the army. Fewer of them were already experienced as military chaplains, others tried a similar role for the first time. This is why there were many disputes within religious organizations on where and how a chaplain should be submitted, what his mission and functions are and whether the believer can be a minister in the army. This led to the fact that after several round tables and public conferences, some of religious communities has changed their attitude, recognizing defending the Homeland assacred thing. Others were neutral or continued to oppose participation of believers in war in any form.There were also other extreme cases– the priests who took up arms and became volunteers: one orthodox, former soldier, and another a monk (Volynnews, 2014). Later one more Orthodox minister, who was close to the "defense hundreds"on Maidan, signed a contract with volunteer battalion Aydar (Ryabokon', 2014).

Military chaplain associates with a particular denomination, being its representative in the army. He provides though spiritual support to people of any religion, without imposing his religious beliefs to others, or giving up their beliefs, said in our conversation Colonel Ruslan Kohanchuk. In fact, the chaplain is needed by a commander as another factor to promote obedience of subordinates. Therefore, during the first phase of restoration of military chaplaincy, when the culture of communication between officers and chaplains has not formed yet, military commanders were considering priests as their subordinates. Moreover, there are chiefs who believe that the presence of a military chaplain infringes their status and power. The commander may even ignore events, organized by a chaplain. This behavior is very different from armies in developed countries with chaplains shell and service. Unofficially chaplain mission is defined by several functions: "to be close" ("to be with them", "to be a brother"); to save humanity; to save the conscience of man in uniform; to give faith (hope); to share a prayer.

Colonel Ruslan Kohanchuk, a main specialist on chaplaincy in MoDU, conventionally identifies seven types of military priests: priests-volunteers (a week in ATO zone), their assistants, priests-chaplains (who served from 3 weeks to several months in ATO) and their assistants, local clergy and armed ministers. (Kalenychenko, 2014). Chaplain-volunteer could have a route that



also took at least two weeks, making the rounds of the known position, but not detained there for a long time. This type of behavior became less common after the first year of renewal movement, when many of the volunteers left the service because of work, while other servants conversely chose it is a vocation. This also contributed to the tightening of requirements for chaplains by the Ministry of Defense.

Before the beginning of warfare in the East and South of Ukraine, military chaplains were represented by single ministers. Today in Ukraine there are three battalions of military chaplains, developed as civil organizations, departments of military clergy in the churches and religious communities. But because of the lack of a unified service, no one can establish the exact number of volunteer chaplains who continue to travel, live and serve soldiers on the frontline. During the first year through official permits 350 chaplains traveled to the front, including 150 active and permanent ministers, says Ministry of Defense.

To make the structure of military chaplaincy universal, MoDU developed specific requirements for future chaplains and their denominations. First, it is a membership in the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (AUCCRO covers 95% of the religious organizations of Ukraine). It should be recognized as a church, "socialized" in the sociological sense. Second, religious doctrine should not reject armed defense of the Homeland. The priest cannot deliberate whether he does the right thing. Thirdly, the Church must have believers in the Armed Forces of Ukraine. If there are several specific denominations of believers, the individual chaplain is not needed. Instead of it another minister will comeor a believer (or another chaplain) who will find appropriate local community.

### The volunteers' dilemma

At the front there are three volunteer formations: Battalion of military chaplains from Pentecostal (60 ministers), First Ukrainian battalion of military chaplains (Protestants and Orthodox, 48 ministers, 7 of them returned to the UOCKP), Inter-confessional battalion of military chaplains (united Protestants, Orthodox, Catholics - about 150 attendants). Starting as volunteers, they created a civil organization and continued chaplains' ministry. However, the new requirements excluded most of them as inappropriate to such activities, because not all of them are ministers of religious organizations in

AUCCRO and have spiritual education. Moreover, not all of them will be willing to give up a civil career or a pastoral ministry for public service and constant military priest mission.

Now these problems led to the fact that representatives of battalions complaint to MoDU, trying to get legal status of their ministry. Instead, representatives of the MoDU regard them as assistants for chaplain, because they do not meet all the requirements faced by official military chaplains. But even these processes are inhibited by government reluctancy to open a special department to manage a system of chaplaincy, delaying decisions and eliminating the responsible persons. That is why the system is still in chaos.

### Special law as a basis for service

Another problem for the introduction of future chaplaincy service is that in matters of church-state relations was considered only an aspect of military-patriotic education, not pastoral. Mandragelya reminds this in case of Order of the Minister of Defense on ideological work in the Armed Forces (Mandragelya, 2003; 28). On various perceptions of chaplaincy service by soldiers, Malyuga added that some officers remembered how they have been forced to participate in religious activities by commanders (Malyuga, 2013: 48). However, the function of the military priest should be determined not only by religious ceremonies but also by the introduction of patriotic education and socialization of the military. This prevents ignorance of the needs commanders who perceive visits to the religious institutions as a tribute to tradition, scorning believers' personal needs in the service.

The need for the institute of military chaplaincy is understandable due to the fact that the inner life of soldiers is clearly regulated and does not provide much time to satisfy the spiritual needs (Vladychenko, 2014: 189). The researcher divides the stages of the military chaplaincy service from 1992 to periods: from 1992 to 2008 (during the formation and implementation) and after November 2008 (consolidated cooperation between religious organizations and power structures). The presence of inconsistent mechanisms for resolving problems in the area of church-state relations and the simultaneous orientation on the consolidated collaboration between these institutions creates conditions for future development of the service. At the beginning of the process there was a desire to provide the best conditions for the soldiers. Ukrainian sociologist of religion Victor Yelenskyi highlights three types of



proposals: ensuring of the regulated free time just for religious purposes; providing places of worship of each military unit; implementation of military chaplaincy service (in the beginning of 2000) (Elenskyy, 2003). By mid 2014 there was as a single form of answer - common aspiration of the final implementation of the Service of military chaplaincy.

It is necessary to point out that during the events on Maidan in November 2013 and the beginning of a renewed military chaplaincy movement, in March 2014, attitudes to pastoral service and understanding of its role has changed radically. According to Lysenko, analyst of the Department of Religious Affairs and Nationalities of Ministry of Culture of Ukraine, the MoDU has not direct influence, leaving the pastoral phenomenon as freelance (Lysenko, 2003: 60). Still an order №40 of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine on the right of military clergy in the Armed Forcesand direction №677-p «On the service of military clergy in the Armed Forces, National Guard and the State Border Service» changed the environment. The future limits of military service are still uncertain, while it is primarily regulated by the new Office of Council- editor ministry and upcoming law. The phenomenon of military pastoral ministry went beyond specialization within religious and military circles, becoming a well-known factor to influence society.

The only institution that is effective and solves strategic issues and direction of the military chaplaincy is the Council for the Pastoral Care of the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine. Its staff is also limited by AUCCRO membership, and currently consists of: UOC Kyiv Patriarchate; UOC Moscow Patriarchate; UGCC; RCC; UAOC;All-Ukrainian Union of Christians of Evangelical Faith - Pentecostals; Union of Free Churches of Christians of Evangelical Faith of Ukraine; All-Ukrainian Union of Associations of Evangelical Christians-Baptists, Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Ukraine (DUMU).Other laws and regulations, as well as the creation of a separate institution for military clergy, await for a step from the authorities.

### The perception of chaplaincy by military

As part of my research I conducted an additional participant observation and a series of deep interviews with various chaplains, soldiers, mobilized units and officers serving under contract. The aim of my research was to find out how the new chaplains see their role and mission, and how they are actually perceived by fighters. In this article I will not give precise an-

swers, but note the major trends that are changing today. First, at the beginning of chaplains service near Crimean peninsula, neither the military nor the ministers themselves were aware of their mission and its values. From the very beginning, clergy visits looked like humanitarian assistance, later this niche was occupied by secular volunteers.Only after the first visits and building up trust with the command, priests began to ask to hold a joint prayer service and then some ritual or spiritual conversation. Their visits became regular, strengthened by joint celebration of religious holidays and close contacts with the officers, who were given permission to stay aside. At first chaplains began to define their mission as support of the troops morale, spiritual nourishment and psychological assistance. However, such an idea differs from international standards and these tasks, performed by professional chaplains units in Ukraine. Ukrainian chaplains combined their function in the three key roles: clergyman, psychologist and volunteer. First, each of this manifests in different proportions for every minister. Nevertheless, we should recognize that the key to access the military was just a volunteer humanitarian aid from the clergy, and only then - the spiritual and psychological ones. Further development of the warfare and continued service transformed these roles and their balance for each chaplain. Some of them began to refuse to provide volunteer assistance, stressing that they are only there for spiritual needs. Others continue to help, fundraise and purchase necessary items, and provide psychological counseling and complete special training. Those chaplains who are still over a long period of war, describe their mission and tasks in a single field, understanding the features of their service.

The most interesting phase of the study was the survey on the opinion of military personnel, particularly their perception of the priests at the forefront. A special feature is that most of the army at that time was mobilized - that these were people who previously had only conventional military training, didn't live with other military and brought in their culture and environment. We can also argue that all soldiers were happy to see priests nearby. Volunteer assistance by chaplains became the key that opened access to aid and basic demands. The relationships with the clergy in the military developed differently, directly depending on the decisions of middle commanders. Some officers forced soldiers to attend religious events or conversations, others left them choice. And if the first spiritual support to chaplains was provided to only religious soldiers and officers sometimes, later the situation



dramatically changed. The reason was the beginning military action. Then, according to the military, the presence of a priest was necessary – he, even if not perceived as a "shepherd of souls", was a stranger, a person "from another world". Military could talk with him, trust him, share domestic issues or solve some psychological dilemmas. Chaplains recall that during the hot phases of conflict requests for baptism ceremonies or for confession or prayer increased dramatically. The chaplain has become accessible to all, often in a separate tent, where everyone could relax and discuss problems. Another regular request were burial ceremonies after the mass losses.

Chaplain performs another important function – communication with the outside world and military families. Such assistance has developed in several directions of religious volunteering for the front line, on which military chaplains had a strong influence.

### Social service and religious volunteers

Chaplains took it upon themselves to contact with the outside, "peaceful world". In addition to volunteer duties, such as procurement and supply of necessities or products, ministers were in touch with the families of military personnel. First, they established communication between officers and their relatives, shared news and symbolic signs of support, transported gifts to children. Later they were pastorals for widows who lost their husbands at war. Now similar work resulted in several areas: rehabilitation for children of ATO participants, work with military families, psychological trainings and work with the discharged, social and cultural events, special religious events, rehabilitation program for injured at temples and monasteries (Depo, 2015). In inter-religious cooperation, in addition to these benefits, assistance to the injured was strengthened, as well as celebrations, events and prayers for peace in the country.

A separate line of chaplains work in the rear was dealing with war trauma and PTSD symptoms. Moreover, most ministers noted that they also needed skilled psychologists and therapists, because they experienced war themselves. Thus, a number of religious organizations have started their own or in cooperation with other communities - training workshops on the basic psychological and spiritual aid, PTSD, and different methods of psychological rehabilitation. This process involved international experts, including professionals from Israel, Canada and the USA. Chaplains began to accum-

pany the soldiers in their rehabilitation journeys, working together with psychologists. That transformed in close co-operation at the forefront.

Systematic education and training for future and current chaplains remind a problem. The answer to this was the trial training program that started this year in the National Pedagogical Dragomanov University (NPU) Psychotherapy and Spiritual Counseling. The master's program has been created together by Christian center "Realis" and the Center for the study of religion at NPU as a Master degree and certificate programs (Realis, 2015). Despite the interest in training, only Protestants who were admitted want to have a legitimate reason for their chaplain ministry. Educational courses on tactical medicine, psychological and military aid occure in various communities with the experts, agreed by religious leadership. Still the problem is the lack of a unified system chaplains' ministry, absence of common training. Chaplains have very different levels of training that leads to professionalism and may result in the need for retraining and restructuring in the future.

Additional tasks for the military chaplains emerged when society asked military chaplains to combat drinking problems. Due to the high percentage of mobilized soldiers and bad moral atmosphere, and due to protracted conflict, the addiction problem became widespread. It helped the authorities and the Ministry of Defense to see a new potential of the military chaplaincy. Considering their reputation and moral image, the commanders began to ask the priests to come to persuade soldiers "to stop drinking and begin to serve." Some chaplains have seen it as a new opportunity to serve, whereas others flatly refused, stressing that the minister must meet spiritual needs, and not serve as an expert in narcomania. It must be added that a role in shaping the image of the chaplains was also played by media, who passed their stories and made them public, helping chaplains to design their own mission during the armed conflict.

### Creating image through media

To understand the functions, roles and definitions of military chaplaincy we must understand how it was perceived in a secular environment through the lens of media and publications dedicated to them.

It is important to point out that during the time of military chaplains there were created several valuable stories in the form of video (most of them documentary). Other publications and videos are still to be published.



These types of mentions within the news environment were singled out for relatively constant monitoring and writing news on subjects:

1) Holding services and blessings for military chaplains and those who are preparing for duty;
2) Holding sacraments: baptism and wedding for soldiers, funerals, confession, communion;
3) Implementation of social activities, rehabilitation assistance, pilgrimages, joint work;
4) Volunteering chaplains and faithful: donor action, collecting things and food, collect money to help in the ATO, culinary and charity events;
5) Thematic conferences, meetings, workshops and training.

Individual cases have caused big resonance in the press, but they cannot be attributed to the underlying distribution. In particular, this news concerned denial of the rights and freedoms of religious leaders (captivity, intimidation, torture, etc.) and cooperation with militants across the front.

Management of Department for Pastoral ministry for power structures of UGCC has decided to publish a separate magazine - "Chaplain" - which became a vivid example of dissemination and promotion of military priests ("Chaplain", 2015).

If we turn to the analysis of the main printed articles about military chaplains, the sources of their origin are divided into two types: religious and secular media. And this division can be traced by the level of expertise, special terminology and creating structures of journalistic material. It should be noted a publication was considered the issue, covered at least in 1 or 2 articles about chaplains, excluding news and short messages. In mentioned period (before 26.10.2015) we distinguished 84 such messages. The Religious Informational Service of Ukraine also launched a separate special project "Faith and War", where materials about priests in war, since 14.10.2014, were collected.

The first such publication mentioningchaplain ministry can be found in an article entitled "Religious Maidan". It tells about the participation of priests on the Maidan, and particularly for people volunteer at the barricades. This first collection of articles about military chaplains was also published at RISU– series of publications "Military Field Notes" (5 articles (Kalenychenko, 2014)), which tells about the first priests and volunteers in

the Kherson region, where there were located with the Ukrainian army after the annexation of the Crimea.

The following information lists articles about chaplains can be seen in December 2014, March-April 2015, July-August 2015 and the following autumn. Overall media coverage of chaplains held a little late, when military priests became public and wrote a lot about their activities, especially in social media.

With the number of mentions in religious and secular publications UGCC, remains the leader – 29 messages in mentioned period. With a small margin in second place is the UOC KP with 20 articles, showing the clear division that is present in the information environment. These representatives of two denominations "represent" military chaplaincy in Ukraine and being the most frequent speakers for journalists. All other ministers are shown in a lower number of articles, including: Protestant churches (6 messages), RCC (5 articles), UOC MP (5 articles) and UAOC – 1 message. It is necessary to emphasize the fact that not all journalists ask about religious affiliation of the hero of article, and sometimes do not specify his name and rank. Mostly it happens with the representatives of the secular media.

Articles on military chaplains did not cover two other topics that are gaining popularity in the Ukrainian media: fight against addictions (including alcoholism at the forefront) and overcoming trauma (PTSD).

Thus, the key representatives of the modern phenomenon of military chaplaincy in Ukraine became the image of moral and spiritual foundations of the conflict in the East and South of Ukraine. Moreover, they were not only one of the key positions of the conflict innovators to be the first military pastors of souls in the Ukrainian history. The absence of coverage of negative stories about chaplains means that they gained a positive image of the priest in the war, which successfully combined the role of a pastor, psychologist and volunteer. They were the source of information for Ukrainian journalists, since they can describe and assess the emotional and psychological state of the soldiers on the front line, to share stories as well as secular activists. However, the issues of the chaplaincy service, which is still not equipped, is lost among positive reviews and stories. That is why many believers called chaplains and spiritual ministry to carry out in the area ATO. Social networks have a major impact on the dissemination of information and perspectives of the development of the chaplaincy, they have become a platform for publishing views of churches and religious organizations and promotion of military chaplains. One cannot deny that the phenomenon of the renewed chaplaincy in Ukraine has become widespread in the media, creating new awareness in society that can lead to some changes in attitudes towards the activities of religious communities and individual ministers. So perhaps we should expect major changes in the field of church-state relations, when Ukraine will have the first official service of military clergy.



## Perspectives

Regulations on military chaplaincy, order №40 of February 2015, should be embodied in the form of a new Office of Military Clergy, which will operate in conjunction with the Council for Pastoral Care at the Ministry of Defense. Now it is assumed that chaplain would be attached to the garrison, not the brigade or battalion (to military units that are in a certain area). In the sector of ATO senior chaplains have already begun to act among some denominations that control the ministers from their current position, solving local problems and reporting to the MoDU. A completely new position was introduced – chaplain assistant - who has much smaller claims. But the General Staff did not harmonize these activities, citing the lack of jobs. If the problem of quotas, the proportions of certain denominations of believers in the army is discarded, many battalions of chaplains and other ministers will be left outside the new system.

Those who create the system will have to answer another question – is there a real need for chaplains in the Armed Forces, State Border Service and National Guard? It appears that a significant part of the current chaplains may remain beyond the system or start informal activities through non-compliance and the low proportion of Protestants in the army. The chaplaincy service will consist of those willing to give up other work and devote themselves to the service. According to the founders' expectations, the first year is to fix basic problems and lead to a new law on chaplaincy service.

## Conclusions

Thus, we can conclude that the last three years have dramatically changed military chaplaincy in Ukraine. Starting from events on Maidan, a renewed movement of military chaplaincy began, involving not only professional chaplains, and creating new institutions in religious sphere or even

new organizations. Moreover, this service first went beyond purely Christian organizations – covering also the spiritual administrations of Muslims and individual ministers of non-Christian denominations. Another phenomenon - newly formed volunteer battalions of military chaplains, which now act as informal alliances or NGOs. They began the path of changes, during which they met with inconsistency of the official requirements for chaplains, but remaining needful at the forefront. We can therefore expect that after the war some part of volunteers will leave such service, while others will find the opportunity to get additional training and officially become military chaplains.

Nevertheless, the biggest problem today is that the absence of a special law, covering military chaplaincy. Only Council in MoDU the relative impact on the chaplaincy service, but there is no single law or specified requirements for chaplains. Representatives of MoDU have conflicts with the officers from the General Staff, creating different conditions for pastoral service, which creates more confusions and local conflicts. In addition, despite the informal requirements from the military leadership, there is no single educational and training network for chaplains. It depends on personal choice of religious organization, whether to make the courses independently or to train chaplains in public programs individually.

Such undefined management behavior and natural phenomenon of military chaplaincy led to the fact that there is still no clearly defined and universally accepted mission and role of a military priest. Each minister is personally responsible, self-defining his role, values, functions and actions. From the beginning of the renewed service of chaplaincy, clergy combined three roles: minister, psychologist and volunteer. Now a similar interrelation varies with the change of the situation in ATO. It also affects the perception of military chaplains by military. If at first the later perceivedthe former only as volunteers, now there are popular requests for the priests from commanders. But still not all soldiers require the presence of a priestor cannot agree about concrete denomination of chaplain.

Chaplains found themselves in a particular social niche, at the turn of national and religious identities.They have to contribute to the formation of a new identity and values of Ukrainian society, however if religious identity rises against the new secular orientations, the result of the dispute will not be granted. In return, the positive image of chaplains affects their social activity, assistance to victims of war and work with military families, enlightenment



activity. Media play an important role in creating positive image for them, broadcasting their stories and discussing the role of the priest in front line.

This research is only the first such project and should certainly be deepened and broadened. However, due to constant transformation of Ukrainian society, one can predict, that the institution of military chaplaincy will be equipped but it will undergo considerable changes. When the conflict ends or freezes, we can expect that the number of military priests will either reduce or increase: it will depend on the decision of the authorities to identify the needs of troops in ministers. Moreover, not every minister now working as a chaplain may remain in that position, they may give up normal church service or main job. Consequently, we can expect the creation of Service of military chaplaincy in Ukraine, defining of the clear framework and place that this service will occupy in society.

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