

Public Religion During the Maidan Protests in Ukraine

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Abstract

A sense of public religion emerged in Ukraine during the Maidan protests at the end of 2013-2014 as religious leaders, groups and organizations played a key role in the protests and in mediating between the authorities and opposition. However, using religion as a cultural resource to shape social processes presents both opportunities and serious challenges for religious organizations. In this paper I analyze different religious manifestations during the Maidan and the consequences the protests have had for religious institutions. I focus on the different dimensions of the religious components of social change as it unfolds.

Key words: Maidan, Ukraine, religion, sociology of religion, religion and conflict, revolution.

Protests broke out in November 2013 in the heart of the capital of Ukraine when students demonstrated against ex-president V. Yanukovich's refusal to sign an Association Agreement with the European Union. The protests ended in February 2014 with the shooting of activists and the formation of a new government. During that time, religion was a highly visible and influential factor. There were public prayers on the main stage of the protests led by clergy, who were involved in multiple activities.¹ This tense situation created challenges for secular and religious institutions alike. Now faced with a "post-revolutionary" society and the transformational processes underway, churches are addressing the pressure to change² in order to answer to the needs of believers.

A sense of public religion emerged in Ukraine during the Maidan protests at the end of 2013-2014 as religious leaders, groups and organizations played a key role in the protests and in mediating between the authorities and opposition. However, using religion as a cultural resource to shape social processes presents both opportunities and serious challenges for religious organizations. In this paper I analyze

different religious manifestations during the Maidan and the consequences the protests have had for religious institutions using in-depth interviews, context analysis of official documents, and personal observations.³

Public religion in the global age

It is easier to see the division of secular and religious domains in the European context than in Ukraine because of social circumstances and practices. This European trend contrasts with other parts of the world where religion is increasingly present in the public sphere⁴. Which path is Ukraine following? Is there a shift to a European model or are we witnessing the transformation of public religion? And if we use the term "public religion", how exactly we can understand it and use it to build an analytical framework?

According to Ingolf Dalferth, modern societies are experiencing a different concept of publicity and media representation of religion.

3 L. Fylypovych, O. Gorkusha, *Narodzhena na Maidani – Gromadynska Cerkva*, RISU http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/studios/studies_of_religions/56419/.

V. Babych, personal blog: <http://vasyl-babych.livejournal.com/189931.html>.

4 Grace Davie, *Europe: The exception that proves the Rule? The Desecularization of the world: resurgent religion and world politics*, ed. By Peter Berger/ Ethics and Public Policy Center, Washington, D.C., 1999, p. 65.

1 Viktor Yelenskyy: *Maydan zminyuye Tserkvy*, RISU: <http://www.religion.in.ua/main/interview/24423-viktor-yelenskij-majdan-zminyuye-cerkvi.html>

2 Ibid.

⁵ The role of religion in public life is growing.
⁶ It has a significant impact on public debates and asserts its role in politics, even in secular European countries.⁷ The concept of ambient faith was developed by Matthew Engelke to describe the public presence of religion.⁸ An “ambience” of religion determines the context of its publicity, removing the separation of public and private spheres under conditions of a transition of religion from institutional to post-institutional forms.⁹ José Casanova argues that the term “public religion” does not necessarily entail a significant systemic impact on society, other than defining new boundaries between public and private spheres of society and in terms of stimulating public debate.¹⁰

According to this logic, religion can find a place in non-religious subsystems. In the framework of my research, I refer to a key proposal by Peter Beyer that the globalization of society creates a new foundation for the public influence of religion¹¹. Thus, religion can be the source of collective duty and legitimize collective actions in the name of concrete norms in two ways: **institutionally** by creating special societal systems and subsystems of communication and **socio-culturally** when religion acts as a cultural resource for other subsystems in society. The first way, institutionally, not only requires a strong position of religion, but also the consolidation of religious leaders, a well-organized strategy,

and readiness for the renewed role of religion as an independent player in a global arena. I agree with P. Beyer that public religion and its influence can be more productive when it acts as a cultural resource for social and political structures. It does not deny the current homogenous religious landscape. However, the process of crossing other spheres of social structure creates new ways for the religious element to have an effect.

If we analyze the public manifestation of religion in the case of the Ukrainian protests on the Maidan, we can observe some broader tendencies. N. Luhmann proposes to look at religious subsystems in public spheres in two ways: **function** (direct religious function to search for meaning, sacrality, and understandings of who we are etc.) and **performance** (when religion is applied to other systems)¹². By using these markers of functions and performances, we can see how public religion manifested itself, and how its direct function changed. Before I use this model to analyze the Ukrainian situation, I consider the wider religious context and its specific characteristics, which created particular conditions for public religion as well.

DE-SECULARIZATION IN THE UKRAINIAN CONTEXT

The 72 years of communism included forced secularization during the Soviet period and resulted in a resurgence of new religious movements in the early 1990s¹³. After the general period of re-distribution of property and positions, religious communities stabilized.

¹² Niklas Luhmann, *The Differentiation of Society*. – Tr. Stephen Holmes and Charles Larmore. New York: Columbia University, 1982, p. 238-242.

¹³ V. Yelens'kyi, *Relihiya i «Perebudova»*, in *Lyudyna i svit*, 2000 №11-12, p. 11-21

⁵ Jens Kohrsen. How religious is the new public sphere? A critical stance on the debate about public religion and post-secularity. in *Acta Sociologica*, Vol. 55, No3, 2012. p. 275

⁶ Peter Beyer, *Religion and Globalization*. The Cromwell Press Ltd, 1994, p. 104

⁷ J. Kohrsen, p. 277.

⁸ Matthew Engelke. Angels in Swindon: Public religion and ambient faith in England. in *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 39, No1, p. 155.

⁹ M. Engelke, p. 166.

¹⁰ J. Casanova. Po toy bik sekulyaryzatsiyi: relihiyna ta sekulyarna dynamika nashoyi hlobal'noyi doby. – per. z anhl. O. Panycha. Kyiv: Dukh i Litera, 2017, p. 21-22

¹¹ Ibid., 71.

Ukraine was always a multi-religious country with a large number of Christian communities (35,709 religious organizations at the beginning of 2016¹⁴). In such a multi-religious context, the Ukrainian government officially upheld the separation of religion from the state. However, the politization of religion remained. The processes, which are occurring in the religious sphere of Ukraine, can be viewed as **desecularization** and, according to Peter Berger, as the revival of religion and its social influence¹⁵. Berger claims that this process is an answer to the uncertainty of modern reality. Vyacheslav Karpov, in contrast, sees the process of desecularization not as secularization in reverse, but as a multiform social transformation in which the role of religion is growing¹⁶.

There are three main components of desecularization: rapprochement among previously secularized institutions and religious norms; revival of religious practices and beliefs; and the presence of religion in the public sphere¹⁷. All three took place after the Maidan events of 2014. First, there was a rapprochement among previously secularized institutions and religious norms that led to the implementation of several new laws, which paved the way for the creation of new religious educational institutions, an official prison chaplaincy, and the recognition of theological diplomas. The clergy were involved in the process of creating new laws through the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (on the basis of the

Constitution). Second, there was a revival of religious practices and beliefs, which began in the 1990s and led to the growth of religious organizations. Lastly, religion reentered the public sphere with the public activity of clergy on the Maidan. Even after the end of the protests, clergy were included in civil society to a far greater extent.

Besides the chosen model of analysis regarding the function and performance of the religious element, I also introduce two ways of dealing with the problem of religion in the global world according to Beyer¹⁸. The first way – conservative – is a typical pattern of behavior for religious actors, where the emphasis is on the private sphere and helping people heal their soul. This goes together with Luhmann's understanding of function: when religion remains in the boundaries of its first, spiritual function of searching for answers. The second way – liberal – uses the model of religious performance by Luhmann so that religion is involved in the process of dealing with non-religious problems; the decisions, which will be made with the involvement of religious organizations will not be religious themselves. According to Beyer, the liberal way, or the way of performance, allows religion to break out of its own ghetto walls and to come back to the public scene¹⁹. He is also sure that the work social justice is optional by the unity of traditional way – its function or conservative strategy – with performance or the liberal way, which can create new forms of social cooperation and new ways for the realization of the religious element as the cultural resource for other subsystems.

Peter Beyer argues that there are **five types of religious public influence**: collective

14 Larysa Vladychenko. Relihiyna merezha Ukrayiny: Analiz dynamiky stanom na pochatok 2016 roku, RISU: http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/analytic/63066/

15 Vyacheslav Karpov, Kontseptual'nye osnovy teoryi desekulyaryzatsyy // Religion, State, Society // #2(30) 2012, p. 118.

16 Ibid., 121.

17 Ibid., 123.

18 Peter Beyer, Religion and Globalization. The Cromwell Press Ltd., 1994, p. 53-89.

19 Ibid., p. 90.

duty; the legitimization of collective action; collective mobilization; generation of values; and sacralization of new developments.

PERIODIZATION: FROM EUROMAIDAN TO THE HEAVENLY HUNDRED

Changes in the motivation and dynamics of protest and religious involvement determine the periodization of the Maidan. We can identify four stages of protest: EuroMaidan (until the night of 30 November 2013), peaceful Maidan (30 November 2013 – 19 January 2014), radical Maidan (19 January 2014 – 22 February 2014) and the end of Maidan (until the end of March 2014). The EuroMaidan is characterized by the participation of students and elite, but without the active participation of clergy, although some were present as observers during the phase of the “dancing” protest. The only active clerical participants were from the Protestant community. The dean of the Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary and pastor of the church “Holy Trinity” Denis Kondiuk remembers:

I was very skeptical about the Maidan in its November form. I dislike contradiction, but here we were proposed a dilemma: are you supporting the EU or are you supporting the Customs Union (in cooperation with Russia?)... I was disappointed that the Christians supported Eastern integration because of their fear of “homodictature” and because they are influenced by political manipulations.²⁰

Igor Kaluzhniy from the Protestant New Life Church, who became an active Maidan activist and soldier in the ATO zone in the next phase of the conflict, described the EuroMaidan period as “no one thought about

the Maidan. The main slogan was – we are for Europe”²¹.

Facing critical challenges to human rights, support for the Maidan split Protestant communities, and prompted theological rethinking of the protest and the dogma of the “power of God”. This resulted in theological discussions and round tables on such themes as “Church in a time of war”²² and “Theology of Maidan”²³.

According to Denis Brylov²⁴, it is important to understand where the religious factor was relevant and where religious organizations acted out of their own social-political positions.

Before the 30th of November the religious component can be artificially involved as protest motivation. Of course, there were manipulations of the religion question in the case of the revolution, and it was used by both sides of the conflict, by both, supporters and enemies of the Maidan. Some pro-Russian activists in the Orthodox Church stressed the problems of the European choice, concentrating on “Sodomites of Europe» (without seeing the same problems in the Russian Orthodox Church), issues of juvenile justice and the overall anti-Christian lifestyle of modern Europe.

In contrast, others, especially the head of UGCC Patriarch Svyatoslav (Shevchuk) and the head of the UOC KP Patriarch Filaret (Denysenko), totally supported the European choice of Ukrainian society. Clerical supporters

21 O. Hordyeyev, T. Mukhomorova, p. 14

22 Cerkva v umovakh viyny: khrystyians'ki vidpovidi na aktual'ni pytannya. Chastyna 1, RISU: <http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/exclusive/reportage/57729/>

23 V UKU vidbulas' konferentsiya pro bohoslav'ya Maydanu, RISU: http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/all_news/community/conferences/65483/

24 Ekspert: “Tserkvy postaly pered vyborom: yty za Maydanom, chy namahatysya vesty yoho za soboyu”, RISU: http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/comments/54758

20 O. Hordyeyev, T. Mukhomorova, Tserkva na Maydani. – K: Knyhonosha, 2015. p. 21.

of European integration spoke about a civilizational choice and were motivated by fear of Russia taking over Ukraine, or even losing its independence. In other words, they were making a socio-political choice, not a religious one, and as religious leaders they were more likely to act as citizens of Ukraine and not as representatives of some religious institution or tradition.

The Euromaidan ended rapidly with the arrival of the Berkut special forces at 4 a.m. on 30 November to forcibly disperse students. The religious component of the protests came to bear the night the monks gave the protesters the possibility to hide in St. Michael's Monastery and closed their gates to the Berkut. The violent intervention provoked mobilization and changed the main motives of the protest from European integration to a desire to defend rights and stand against violence. The dean of the Ukrainian Evangelical Theological Seminary and pastor of the church "Holy Trinity" Denis Kondyuk remembers this moment²⁵:

Exactly at that moment (after the attack on the students – auth.) I decided to be on the Maidan; not because of violations of human rights, which we had all the time - we were used to them -, but because of the use of force against peaceful citizens.

Thereafter, representatives from multiple religious organizations were on the square, including the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Kyiv Patriarchate, Ukrainian Orthodox Autocephalous Church, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate, Roman Catholic Church, Spiritual Administration of Ukrainian Muslims, Spiritual Administration

25 O. Hordyeyev, T. Mukhomorova, Tserkva na Maydani. Kyiv: Knyhonosha, 2015, p. 46

of Ukrainian Muslims "Ummah", numerous Protestant churches and councils, as well as Buddhists and Neopagans. While they all were present on the Maidan, they acted differently with different levels of activity and involvement in the protest movement.

From the 30 November to 3 December 2013, numerous religious organizations in Ukraine and around the world issued statements. One of the first reactions was from senior bishops of the Council of Independent Evangelical Churches of Ukraine, including Leonid Padun, and first Vice-President of Church of Christian-Evangelicals Mykola Sunyuk²⁶. On 2 December 2013, a statement from bishops of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church in Canada was published and on 5 December Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew issued a statement about "the complicated situation in Ukraine". There was also prayer support from the Bishop's Conference in Poland on 6 December 2013.

The radical Maidan phase started on 19 December 2013 with the first open confrontation between the Berkut and protesters. The crowd included representatives of right-wing movements and football radicals, who threw bricks, Molotov cocktails, and other weapons in the direction of security forces. During this radical stage of the protests, when there were the first victims, the religious component became most clear to society. People turned to priests for advice and explanations as to why this was happening, and the clergy prayed for the defenders of the Maidan and the members of the Ukrainian People's Self-Defense. However, secular protesters did not always agree with the active clergy involvement. A young woman, 27, who was an active protester and daughter of a priest who was killed, says: Religion became obvious to me on the Maidan

26 O. Hordyeyev, T. Mukhomorova, p. 35.

when protesters started to use force and when the events unfolded on Hrushevskoho Street. People needed religion to defend their moral views. It played a protective function in this situation. Our people in the majority consider themselves religious. Together with priests, people felt more secure, morally and physically - if the priest stands before you as a protective barrier, then you will not be shot. According to a young male activist, who was an atheist and worked as a translator, the churches tried to reconcile the different parties to the conflict and mediate talks between the government and the opposition. They also confirmed by their presence that the actions of the Maidan are well-intentioned.

The religious factor was important. Perhaps it was not decisive, but it was important for the spiritual support of people, for the moral side. People understood that they are right in what they are doing. Due to the priests, they knew that what they were doing was good. There was no religious motivation at the forefront of the Maidan, and I think it was good that there was not. There was no agitation for a military solution of the situation. There were attempts to pacify both sides. Therefore, I believe that the church plays an important and significant role.

At the end of the Maidan there were three days of memorial services for the dead protesters, who would be named the "Heavenly Hundred". More than 100 people were killed. All the funerals of the victims were carried out over a period of three days by various clergy, who never left the Maidan. Politically, the departure of Ex-President Victor Yanukovych to Russia on the night of February 22, 2014 marked the end of the revolution. This changed the dynamics of power. The Maidan lasted until spring, when

the square became a new gathering place. The core activists of the Maidan formed the first volunteer group of chaplains from religious leaders.

PUBLIC INFLUENCE OF RELIGION

What role did the religion play in the Maidan events? The markers of religious involvement were not only active clergy and believers, but official documents and statements by religious leaders and other unofficial actions. What was unique was the manifestation in two dimensions: **hierarchical (official)** presence of religion on Maidan – when clergy were involved in protest actions – and **local (inclusive)** – low-level involvement of clergy with believers. The official (hierarchical) presence was manifested in clerical performances on the Maidan stage, clerical participation in Sunday's viche²⁷, leading prayer from the stage, conducting sermons, and memorial services for the dead. The highest level of religious hierarchies from different denominations represented their religious organizations and engaged in talks with the authorities through the All-Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (AUCCRO). However, perhaps the most significant contribution clergy made was simply their continued presence on the Maidan.

All public manifestations of religion in this process remain important in spite of the danger. Some priests, including those from the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate, were forced to act informally

²⁷ Viche is an old tradition of mass communication from the Kyiv Rus period when people came together on the main square in town to make decisions. That word was used during the Maidan period because of Sunday's large-scale talks on the main square which actually where the place to make decisions.

because of possible persecution from both the church leadership and security forces who worked for the government. They came in lay clothing without any religious signs to indicate who they were. Protesters were intimidated and threatened with arrest by text messages, social media, and during informal talks. Because of the politicized religious environment, some bishops and senior members of the clergy suffered at different levels for their open support of the revolution, especially at the beginning when it was not clear whether it would be successful or not. This indicates that religion can be public, but not always on an official level or even on a visible level. The co-organizer of the prayer tent, Oles' Dmytrenko, emphasized the initiatives in the creation of religious communities on Maidan:

*Further Protestant services on the Maidan were initiated not by bishops, not by the heads of organizations, but by active youth from different Kyiv churches. The lack of an actual reaction, concrete position, and elementary love of our country on the part of key leaders sincerely made me angry. We were waiting and waiting for our bishops to make their statements. They stayed silent. Popular spiritual leaders disappeared in one moment.*²⁸

MORAL CODES AND THE WAYS OF RELIGIOUS MANIFESTATION

Public religion as a **source of collective duty** emerged when the clergy tried to change or establish the moral rules of life on the Maidan. Lesya Kotvytska, an active believer and medical activist on the Maidan, recalled those discussions by spiritual leaders:

28 O. Hordyeyev, T. Mukhomorova, Tserkva na Maydani. – K: Knyhonosha, 2015. – p. 54.

*The level of morality on the Maidan in February shocked me. I heard discussions among priests, who talked about how to ban alcohol and abuse people in a most effective way. I will explain: they did not allow newcomers to swear. That was another form of influence on people by the church.*²⁹

The creation of moral codes, according to Beyer, is common practice for global religions, which unite religious communication and social problems³⁰. Such moral codes, which are a privileged form of social regulation, inform the law and social norms of society. In the context of the protest, such moral codes played the role of a symbolic compass, which pointed the way to which decisions are right and should be accepted. One of the main markers of such moral codes was discovered in official statements by religious organizations³¹ and AUCCRO³² with an appeal to the government to stop the violence³³.

The moral judgement of actions and decisions is another way in which religion impacts **the legitimization of collective action** as a direct statement about what is right, because it reaffirms values (which are generated with religious involvement, but not religious in and of themselves). Despite official statements and public support for activists from different religious organizations, the legitimization of collective

29 O. Hordyeyev, T. Mukhomorova, p. 256.

30 Peter Beyer, Religion and Globalization. The Cromwell Press Ltd., 1994, p. 83.

31 Glava UGCC nahadav pro «vsyu povnotu vidpovidal'nosti za te, shcho vidbuvayet'sya v krayini, RISU: http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/all_news/state/national_religious_question/55369/

32 Zayava VRTsiRO z pryvodu eskalatsiyi nasyll'stva u Kyievi: <http://vrciro.org.ua/ua/statements/370-statement-about-escalation-of-violence-in-kyiv>

33 Patriarkh Filaret zaklykav prypyntyty nasyll'ya I poperedyv Yanukovycha pro nayvyschu miru yoho vidpovidal'nosti, RISU: http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/all_news/state/national_religious_question/55370/

action was additionally manifested through the renewal of the traditional spiritual function (conservative way of acting).

That function meant long-term conversations with protesters from both sides as well as help for those who experienced trauma, which was frequently connected with spiritual services and even evangelization. The main place for such activity were prayer tents, which were interreligious and everyone could ask for help³⁴. Moreover, the clergy took on the responsibility to discuss the reasons and the goals of the protest for Maidan activists and for representatives from the opposing side (Anti-Maidan, internal forces). At the moment of the protest not only believers asked the clergy for help, some of them were just looking for moral support, as volunteers from the prayer tent state:

People on Maidan were traumatized...Volunteers with jackets "Pray for Ukraine" helped them to cope, they were special. Their mobility helped the mission as well; most activists from the Right Sector and Self-Defense did not have enough time to stand near the stage and listen to the priests³⁵.

The involvement of public religion on Maidan was wider and included all the volunteer functions – from the preparation of tea and sandwiches to the building of barricades. Protesters, many of them non-religious, said that it was a chance to see the clergy not in a traditional way, but as part of the population. Such inclusive activity might be one of the key factors in raising the level of trust in the Church among the population (at the level of 57%, according to the data by

Razumkov Center³⁶).

Clergy from AUCCRO and the Spiritual Council of Maidan took responsibility for negotiations between Maidan and government representatives as a means of mobilization for action. Religious leaders encouraged people to start to establish a dialogue, and not to "betray" the Maidan and to continue to peacefully protest. Then Bishop Stanislav Shyrokoradyuk of the Roman-Catholic Church asked for permission from the people on the stage for the opposition to speak with the government, because it was prohibited before.

Religious activists and clergy created an opportunity to form a collective identity³⁷ as being a part of "revolutionary" society, an imagined community associated with the change from passive to active social action. After the end of the Maidan it was shared by official authorities and by unofficial, influential sources through the mass media, clergy, volunteers and others. There were frequently asked existential questions, addressed to clergy such as "who are we?" and "why we are here?". But a collective identity was also formed by cultural actors (poets, singers, journalists, artists etc.), opinion leaders (who shared their views on social media) and political and business elites.

The activity by spiritual actors, who were trying to understand events theologically, became part of the **creation of values** for the new public space. There were not only discussions about new values and frameworks for understanding civil society, but also public declarations of religious actors as the

34 Molytva na Maydani, CREDO: <http://www.credo-ua.org/2013/12/106879>

35 O. Hordyeyev, T. Mukhomorova, p.57.

36 Relihiya, Tserkva, suspil'stvo i derzhava: dva roky pislya Maydanu, - informatsiyni materialy Tsentru Razumkova vid 26.05.2016

37 A. Melucci. The process of collective identity// Social Movements and Culture/ Minneapolis, 1995, p. 26.

generators of values. According to the clergy and believers, the protest was understood as a war between good and evil, which is why religion bore new values for society.³⁸ Such rhetoric is closely connected with another type of influence – **sacralization of the new turn of history** – which became a “revolution”.

The book *“Stones of Maidan”* by priest Mykhailo Dymyd³⁹, who actively took part in the protest and gave sermons in Lviv and on Kyiv stages, could be regarded as an example of sacralization of the Maidan events. The Maidan barricades for him are the “body of Christ”, a springboard for the battle between good and evil for Maidan activists.” The spiritual essence of the Maidan and the changes that came after it is the resurrection and baptism of people. The author focuses on personal responsibility and for each course of events, refers to the concept of “internal Maidan”, which secular leaders began to consider later.

Protesters from Western Ukraine, who were used to the public presence of priests in their everyday lives, especially appealed to clergy. Father Ivan Galio from Sambirsko-Drohobych eparchy remembers:

They asked me, Father, pray for me. I read “Our Father”, gave them cross to kiss, anointed them, and asked their names and tried to support them morally. I urged them that I would be praying for them to not lose their good mood, as spiritual support gives people physical strength as well. That was the mission for priests on the Maidan⁴⁰.

Different interpretations of religious

influence on the Maidan aim not only for theological explanations, but also a response from society to the need for the sacralization of the new developments in modern history. The Heavenly Hundred and the “Revolution of Dignity” became part of the rhetoric about the new renewal of the Ukrainian nation. This discourse is also shaped by public religion. According to Immanuel Wallerstein⁴¹, there is a need for transcendence and teleological globalization in order to unite society and establish common goals. In the modern world, if a society is not living in crisis, it is harder to discover the “good” forces without having a concrete “evil”. An appellation to Christian theology includes Satan as the marker of God’s presence and salvation, and the transcendental element plays a role in guaranteeing moral norms. Another way of returning religion to the public sphere is through the demonstration of what is good and what you have to achieve⁴².

The manifestation of the religious element on the Maidan was observed in its “ideal type” which people saw in mass media and in memories as a “common feeling of spirituality, rightness” post-institutional and ambient. Charles Taylor emphasizes that social connections through the spiritual practices are still strong, despite individual or privatized understandings of religion⁴³. Thus, people are still looking for a special occasion to live together with the feeling that there is something bigger than they are. Activists spoke of such feelings after the protest as well as a special bond and desire for something bigger. That feeling is also described by Victor

38 U Toronto obhovoryly dukhovni tsinnosti Maydanu, UCU: <http://ucu.edu.ua/news/17987/>

39 Kalenychenko T.A, Kontent-analiz knyhy «Kaminnya Maydanu», Naukovy chasopys NPU im. Drahomanova №34 (47)

40 O. Hordyeyev, T. Mukhomorova, p. 218.

41 Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Capitalist World-Economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1979.

42 P. Beyer, p. 85.

43 Charles Taylor, *The Secular Age*// The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London, 2007, p. 516

Yelenskyi:

If we put aside the sacramental aspect of the problem, then prayers and worship on Maidan entail the creation of a special spiritual space, which not only unites that insight, but also legitimizes the mature and complete community of people on Maidan⁴⁴

Therefore, all the five types of public religious involvement took place on the Maidan, sacralizing social changes. Religious organizations and leaders were looking for a new place for themselves. But even this desire could not be fully realized for several reasons. If we look at the situation after the end of the protest, we can see concrete examples of this.

THE RESULTS OF THE "REVOLUTION": ECUMENISM OR PARTICULARISM?

The unusual context of the Maidan, spiritual and emotional elation, created a space for changes for religious organizations. Experts, journalists and clergy frequently remembered that precisely during the protest they were united, had mutual goals and were moving to reach them and did not see the differences among themselves. Nevertheless, future outcomes after the end of the Maidan have shown that such feelings were short-lived. During the public prayer on the stage you could see the activists in the crowd, who put on headphones in a demonstrative manner, but did not protest against the priests openly. Additionally, not all the religious organizations supported Maidan. That is why the spiritual meaning of the protest became a point of division for some partner institutions or among ministers on a personal level.

44 Viktor Yelens'kyi: Solidarnist' tserkov pered nastupom vlady – krytychno vazhlyva skladova yikhnoyi spravzhnoyi nezalezhnosti», RISU: http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/interview/55166/

Coming back to the two approaches to the public manifestation of religion – conservative and liberal –, the conservative approach to fulfilling religious functions can be seen as concentrated in spiritual services, as well as in answers on the existential questions of believers or ordinary people. By contrast, the liberal approach, which develops together with society and social movements, foresees religion on the public stage. Typically, in such instances religious organizations have to choose between two approaches: **particularism**, which means realizing their own interests as institutions (which can frequently result in the politicization of religion) or choosing the approach of **ecumenism**, which means to give answers to profound questions from society together with other religious groups⁴⁵. When religious leaders forget the needs of their own spiritual group and are united, it is easier for them to cooperate in a globalized social context. The ecumenical approach is based on religion as a cultural resource for other subsystems, when groups are not closed on their own. In this case, the mutual movement is active without one form of institutionalization. Peter Berger understands ecumenism as the way to find brothers in dealing with a concrete problem and to rationalize one's own struggle in a globalized world⁴⁶. This automatically results in more success, in contrast to a situation, when someone grabs the biggest piece of the pie.

Social processes of seeking new authorities under conditions of reinforced dissatisfaction with the social and economic needs of society may generate new religious movements and provoke

45 P.Beyer, p. 97.

46 Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy. Elements of sociological theory of religion*// Doubleday, 1990, p. 141

ecumenism⁴⁷. The **ecumenical movement**, which religious leaders would call an example of “real unity on Maidan”, reached a new stage of development during the revolution. However, its expression even on the level of religious groups will not nourish new movements, but create balance in informal networks of horizontal cooperation between religious leaders and activists due to issues of trust during critical situations. Shared values and a willingness to take risks generated these informal networks. However, ecumenical expressions began to decrease after the revolution and were limited to several statements and aspirations of leaders of churches. A new level of conflict also came about. Interinstitutional conflicts were generated by the weakening of the central government, resulting in a loss of common purpose⁴⁸ and a sense of emergence of a much more profound conflict in the country. This is a typical transition, as defined by Pareto, when “the old law died and the new one is not yet born”. In this situation society falls back on the old familiar system. The same process affected religious networks in Ukraine, when they were faced with the challenge of publicity and involvement in society. During their search for a new place and “open ecumenism”, they returned to older patterns of behavior in some cases after the “revolutionary” events.

The tendencies to theologize politics and politicize theology are especially visible in the globalized world, where there are political-religious group⁴⁹. Religious and political leaders see the direct benefits of this strategy – they receive mutual legitimization and access

to goods, maintaining the old model of official religion and sacralized power. This, however, has led to the loss of authority for some religious organizations and undermined the trust, which was earned during the protests.

The **politicization** of religious communities has especially aggravated the relationships between the UOC MP and UOC KP, UGCC and Orthodox communities, as well as different Muslim and Protestant communities, while strengthening the dichotomy of “friend or foe” and redistributing the influence of religious organizations. It has also **strengthened horizontal networks** of cooperation between people of different religions. These aspects are noted in an analysis of the decline of ecumenism by theologian and sociologist Cyrill Hovorun:

*Hostility and discord as a comfort zone for churches were created during the period of independence and have not gone away. Now the churches are returning to these zones - to their fundamental identities. But this return does not coincide with the aspirations of society, since the social demand for church unity is growing. I think that Ukrainian society is still very religious and will not become secular in the near future. But the churches are not the points of unity for it. I do not want to talk about specific examples or about all the churches in a single definition and emphasize particular roles, but there is a definite general trend. However, there are of course churches whose contribution to the unity of the Ukrainian society is constructive and positive.*⁵⁰

CHANGES AFTER CRISIS

Protestant theologian and professor Cherenkov

⁵⁰ Vorozhnecha ta rozbrat zalyshayut'sya zonamy komfortu dlya ukrayins'kykh tserkov – o. Kyrylo Hovorun, RISU: http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/interview/62242/

⁴⁷ Vilfredo Pareto. Transformatsyya demokratyy (sbornyk)/ Terrytoryyya budushcheho, M.: 2011, p. 28

⁴⁸ V. Pareto, p. 30

⁴⁹ Roland Robertson, Joann Chirico, Humanity, Globalization and Worldwide Religious Resurgence: A theoretical exploration, Sociological Analysis, 46, 1985, p. 238.

sees similar tendencies and oppositions within the religious environment. According to him, Ukrainian religious organizations define themselves in terms of opposition to other organizations, and the Maidan showed the fallacy of such a strategy. He writes:

But I worry that these “home” activities will be fruitless. Gone are the days when identity was produced by a church in a closed mode. Now it is being formed in an open environment of ecumenism... But we still partially live in a nineteenth-century paradigm. We adhere to the ideas of a unified local church or a nation state, which are based on immediate and permanent dependence on ethnicity, language, and religion⁵¹.

The Maidan exposed the problem as a **crisis of religious affiliation** and the churches' inability to meet social needs. An earlier Ukrainian researcher A. Bureyko wrote⁵² that the crisis of religious identity provoked an acute phase of transition to a new stage of development, which not only created the conditions of external aggression, armed conflict, but also social institutions, which are deeply connected with the spiritual factor.

An appeal to nonviolence on the Maidan resulted in the recovery of the churches' moral authority, allowing their influence to affect civil orientations in the process of social transformation. Later, the increase in competition and conflicts between religious structures and their ambiguous positions led to a certain loss of prestige and leverage. Although the level of trust in religious institutions is still one of the highest among all

social institutions, their public influence and ability to intervene socially is partial.

This has led to the rapid rise of **social services and volunteering**, the rapid development of the **military chaplaincy** and an enhancement of medical and prison chaplaincy through horizontal networks of cooperation. These are some of the successful examples of cooperation between public religious and social movements. Their chances of success increase when they move from an institutionalized form into spontaneous volunteering. Other social initiatives, which are realized together with religious groups and non-governmental institutions, such as lobbying for palliative aid and dealing with HIV/AIDS or work with international charitable religious foundations, such as Caritas, ADRA or Mission “Pope for Ukraine”, have also been successful. If we analyze those initiatives as new social movements, we see that they can propose constructive solutions to social problems, which Ukrainian society is facing, especially during this transitional period. J. Beckford believes such social movements will be especially powerful, if they use religion as a cultural resource and if religious groups embrace a liberal way of responding to the challenges of a globalized world.

CONCLUSIONS

The phenomenon of public religion was manifest during the Maidan events, whereby the religious component acted as a cultural resource for Ukrainian society in the process of transforming identity thanks to the leveling of differences among the main religious groups. However, the experience of living in “sacral unity” was short-termed. There was a loss of unity and increase in competition in the

51 Mykhaylo Cherenkov: Pid chas Maydanu relihiya bula myrotvortsem, a pid chas viyny stala mobilizatorom, RĠSU: http://risu.org.ua/ua/index/expert_thought/interview/61746/

52 Shul'ts Ė.Ė. Teoryya sotsyal'nykh dvyzheny: problemny teoryy y praktyky/ Nyzhnyy Novhorod, 2014, p. 56.

religious sphere after the “revolution”, while religion was also politicized in a conservative way. This reversed the effects of the chosen liberal way of involvement characterized by ecumenical cooperation, where religion served as a cultural resource for non-religious systems of society.

According to Beyer, social movements with religious components will create wider opportunities for building bridges and covering the gap between function and performance (conservative and liberal strategies)⁵³. This way of thinking also has some risks for public religion, because religious actors can promote their values, which might run contrary to social norms, instead of adding to them. Such a situation can create conflicts. Society can be ready to allow religious influences in some frameworks, which creates an uncomfortable situation for religious actors because they have to balance their influence on social issues and their allegiance to their beliefs. Davie agrees that frequently a public role of religion is possible and even desirable for citizens⁵⁴. The main barrier in establishing this is the lack of direct contact between churches and the people.

The result of the social-political conflict in Ukraine was new social movements, some of which used religion as a cultural resource. Their success depended on cooperation with non-religious actors and organizations, as well as with other religious movements. The other important aspect is cooperation with governmental institutions, which guarantees the stability of their work and legitimizes it.

While the Ukrainian government has attempted to maintain a balance by trying to keep partnerships with a multi-religious community, the religious groups frequently

turn away from the liberal way of cooperation and integration into social structures. They choose instead competition and attempt to widen their own spheres of influence. This has resulted in a risk of new conflicts in the religious sphere and in conflicts between religious and secular groups. To mitigate such risks, society needs a balanced strategy to deal with the manifestations of public religion, which respond to the needs of Ukrainian society, and yet will not crosscut the creation of new moral codes in the sphere of law and government.

The case of the return of the religious component to the public sphere in Ukrainian protests is demonstrative of a resource for the development new social structures. The key conclusion here is the need for a balanced strategy, which will unite the liberal practice of public religion through ecumenism, while not denying each religious community's traditional spiritual function. Still, such cooperation between secular and religious domains requires a systematic approach as well as a response to strong demands from society. Religious activists are not yet ready to respond to all these public demands and to fill the gaps, because they too need to change.

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⁵³ P.Beyer, p. 108.

⁵⁴ Davie, p. 83

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