FORMATION AND CURRENT STATE OF MILITARY CHAPLAINCY IN UKRAINE

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Abstract

Building state-confessional relations in Ukraine includes the interaction of various subjects. An analysis of the parameters and intensity of such interaction can help understand the trends and challenges that arise on the path of the nation's political development. We used the example of military chaplaincy institutionalization to determine the subjective attitudes of interaction participants. The institutionalization of military chaplaincy in Ukraine went through three stages: from the beginning of cooperation between religious organizations and the Armed Forces of Ukraine to the adoption of the Law of Ukraine 'On Military Chaplaincy'. These stages only partially coincided with the process of the formation of Ukrainian statehood but, nevertheless, reflected the role of milestones in the modern history of Ukraine (Proclamation of Ukraine's independence in 1991, Orange Revolution in 2004, Revolution of Dignity 2013-2014, the war in eastern Ukraine from 2014 to the present time). The legal support for the chaplaincy service functioning in the Armed Forces of Ukraine from 2021 has been based on the Law 'On the Chaplaincy Service' adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine. By-law legal acts will be changed following the norms of the said Law and will include issues of social security, training of chaplains, provisions of admission to military units, and so forth. The analysed practice of spiritual mentoring has shown that the interfaith nature of the chaplaincy service is a positive factor contributing to the consolidation of Ukrainian society and creating a basis for the formation of tolerant relations between citizens. The 'institutional matrix' we used showed that the level of interaction between religious communities and authorities by qualitative and quantitative indicators has constructive dialogue-oriented nature. Both individual religious entities (Churches, communities, Ummahs) and the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (UCCRO) are committed to deepening cooperation with the state, which is reflected in the participation of UCCRO representatives in international events aimed at raising Ukraine's prestige at the global level. The priority tasks for the introduction of professional chaplaincy are the professional training of chaplains, the attraction of young priests to the chaplaincy, closer cooperation with the authorities, purposeful work of the state to raise the social status of military chaplains, and support for the aspirations of the Ukrainian people to create a political nation on the part of religious organizations.

Keywords: chaplains, military priests, religious, organizations, Armed Forces of Ukraine

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1. Introduction

Modern research on the interaction of religious and political environments is becoming relevant after significant changes in the Ukrainian religious landscape caused by the proclamation of the autocephaly of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine (OCU). These important processes influenced not only Orthodox life in general but also the essence and structure of interfaith relations, the form and methods of meeting the religious needs of the Ukrainian citizens. Article 35 of the Constitution of Ukraine guarantees the religious rights of individuals, and therefore the issue of military chaplaincy is also in the sphere of state obligations, because "the establishment and protection of human rights and freedoms is the main duty of the state" (CU, Paragraph 3 of Art. 3) [*The Constitution of Ukraine*, https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/254%D0%BA/96- %D0%B2%D1%80#Text]. The need for a thorough study of "the processes of formation of spiritual, moral, patriotic, military-psychological, and ethical values of the personnel of the Armed Forces and other military formations of Ukraine" [S.I. Zdioruk, *Service of military chaplains in the military organization of the Ukrainian state: necessity, opportunities and prospects*, https://niss.gov.ua/ sites/default/files/2014-07/Kapelany-3aa20.pdf], announced way back in 2014, is still relevant. In 2016, the Department of Military Education, Science, Social and Humanitarian Policy of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine (MDU) announced its intention to introduce the Institute of Military Clergy in the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) [Department of Military Education and Science of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, https://www.mil.gov.ua/ministry/ struktura-aparatu-ministerstva/departament-vijskovoi-osviti-i-nauki-ministerstva -oboroni-ukraini.html]. Having a long experience of dialogue between the Church and the state, religious organizations and communities have been cooperating for 15 years with the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine in the development, implementation, and legal regulation of pastoral care practices [*On approval of the Regulations on the service of the military clergy (chaplaincy) in the Armed Forces of Ukraine*, https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/z0010-17# Text]. The pastoral service of Ukrainian chaplains during the peacekeeping operations of Ukrainian soldiers in Iraq and Kosovo testified to the significant role of this institution in the spiritual support and moral and psychological assistance to the personnel of the Ukrainian military formations. As we can see, the actualization of the subject of military chaplaincy is directly related to the trends in the modern religious and political landscape of Ukraine.

As shown in our study of the religious and political space, this phenomenon should be considered as a social institution, which includes religious and political subjects functionally connected at the local, regional, and national levels [1]. To analyse the organization of the process of functioning of religious and political entities, we will apply the approach proposed by Elena Bortnikova in her 'Interaction of religion and politics: theory and methodology' monograph [2]. The author of the monograph proposes to use the model of the 'institutional matrix' reflecting the structural elements of the religious and

political space, the process of interaction of these elements, and their interrelationship. The structural elements of the religious and political space include two aspects. The first is religious institutions, i.e. "the variety of subsystems of religious space" [2, p. 43] (religious communities, centres, administrations, monasteries, missions, theological schools, etc.). The second is political institutions (authorities, political parties, public organizations, etc.). The interaction of structural elements of the religious and political space is characterized by the movement of certain information, "direct and follow-up connections between its constantly changing elements" [2, p. 67]. In this dual system, three spheres are clearly represented: public-political, social, and religious.

The 'institutional matrix' model proposes to consider the parameters of interaction between religious and political subjects taking into account quantitative and qualitative parameters. Quantitative parameters can be traced by actually observing the density and intensity of contacts between the subjects, as well as sociological data on the trust/distrust of citizens in the Church or state. The qualitative parameter includes the so-called conceptual and ideal resources, each of which has its own indicators, which allows us to assess the model of attitudes in the relationship between the subjects of the religious and political space and characterize them as open/closed and active/passive. These are possible attitudes for dialogue, surrender, isolation or aggression. For such an approach, the factor of the subjective attitude of the communication participants becomes extremely critical. This socio-psychological factor is determined by the basic principles on which cooperation is focused and the strategy of interaction, the success of which depends on the recognition of the legitimacy of its principles. We will analyse the phenomenon of institutionalization of chaplaincy to identify the key attitudes of the subjects of the religious and political space in the process of formation of the political nation. Examples of such interaction are given below where the issue of interfaith in the structure of the chaplaincy is discussed.

It is worth mentioning here the fact of active participation of religious institutions, namely the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (UCCRO), in socially significant events of 2013-2021 [Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations (UCCRO), https://vrciro. org.ua/ua]. Since the Revolution of Dignity and until now, in its joint statements and appeals, the UCCRO testifies to the importance of dialogue in Ukrainian society and promotes the formation of new institutions of religious and political space, such as chaplaincy. No less remarkable example is contained in the 'Social Concept of Muslims of Ukraine'. In the 'Islam and patriotism' section, we find a very important thesis that Ukraine is the common homeland of all its citizens, and therefore "Muslims of Ukraine stand for the preservation and development of national identity and language. They support the Ukrainian language as the only state language, and the Crimean Tatar language as the language of the indigenous people of Crimea; they support the culture and traditions of national minorities of Ukraine. To defend the homeland is a civic

duty of a Muslim because he serves the interests of protecting his honour, property and family." [*The social concept of Muslims in Ukraine*, https://umma.in.ua/ua/node/1890] As we can see, "subjective attitude of counterparties to interaction" [2, p. 143] in the process of forming the religious and political space can optimize the process of consolidation of Ukrainian society and contribute to the formation of a modern political nation, open prospects for dialogue and cooperation in various spheres of public life. A critical share of responsibility for this lies with the state, which implements policies in the field of religion in accordance with applicable law and with a guarantee of freedom of conscience and other rights of citizens.

2. Legislative acts regulating the activity of the military chaplaincy

The limits for involvement in spiritual and humanitarian activities carried out by chaplains are set in accordance with the law stating that only those representatives of religious organizations may be represented in chaplaincy whose "leadership centres are officially registered in the state body of Ukraine with the status of *Local Church* (our italics)" [https://niss.gov.ua/sites/default/files/2014-07/Kapelany-3aa20.pdf]. There is a problem of interpretations in this formulation because the UOC (of the Moscow Patriarchate), according to the laws of Ukraine, must re-register and reflect its belonging to the Russian Orthodox Church in its name but this organization's spiritual centre is outside Ukraine, in a country recognized by the Verkhovna Rada the aggressor state. When analysing the current situation, we noticed that representatives of the UOC-MP are actively opposing the presence of the OCU, which is Local in Ukraine [The Orthodox Church of Ukraine, https://www.pomisna.info/uk/]. Thus, although the public attitude to the introduction of military chaplaincy is quite positive, citizens have different views on the presence of the UOC-MP priests in the Armed Forces, linking it with the possibility of transferring interfaith conflict to the Military Organization of Ukraine [*Methodical recommendations to heads of military administration bodies, commanders (chiefs) of military units, military educational institutions, establishments and organizations of the Armed Forces of Ukraine on improvement of military-religious interaction*, https://www.mil.gov.ua/diyalnist/zvyazki-z-gromadskistyu/rada-u-spravah-dushpastirskoi-opiki-pri-ministerstvi-oboroni-ukraini/normativni-dokumenti-ta-metodichni-rekomendaczii/2014/07/08/metodichni-rekomendaczii-(2013-roku)/]. During 2020, representatives of law enforcement agencies, religious organizations (except the UOC-MP), and deputies of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine developed a draft of the Law on the Military Chaplain Service.

Although the chaplaincy service in Ukraine is very young, in 2021 discussions began on the need to reform it. The reason for this is that over the past six years, the conditions of military service, social demands, and needs of citizens have changed significantly, and new threats have emerged, such as the spread of coronavirus. An important condition for such reform is the Law of Ukraine 'On the Service of Military Chaplains', which ensures the military

chaplain's status as a serviceman, with guarantees of social protection for him and his family members. Assessing the adoption of the Law in May 2021 as a significant factor in the institutionalization of chaplaincy, we can say that it contributes to the spread of NATO standards, accession to which is a strategic goal of Ukraine, which is enshrined in the Constitution (Preamble, Article 102 and others). We should note that the Law provides for the establishment of an interfaith council on pastoral activities in the Armed Forces of Ukraine under the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Internal Affairs [*The Draft Law of Ukraine 'On Military Chaplaincy in the Armed Forces of Ukraine'*, http://w1.c1. rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc41?pf3511=70044]. This advisory body will assist in organizing interaction with the state, focus its activities on generalizing the experience of cooperation and develop forms of further interaction.

At the same time, the system of state-confessional interactions faces some challenges. In summarizing the development of state-confessional relations in Ukraine, the Razumkov Centre points out that the country does not fully adhere to the principle of "equal distance of the state from all Churches and religious organizations". According to experts, the Orthodox Church of Ukraine is given special consideration, as "it has increased its presence in state structures - law enforcement, medical, educational, etc. The Church pays special attention to military chaplaincy." [*Ukraine 2020-2021: unjustified expectations, unexpected challenges (analytical assessment)*, https://razumkov.org.ua/uploads/other/2021-PIDSUMKI-PROGNOZI-UKR-ENG.pdf] Viktor Yelenskyi, a former member of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, also warned against the possible escalation of the interfaith conflict as a result of the chaplaincy institutionalization. "Religion has become a serious factor in anti-Ukrainian political and military mobilization, and the structures of the Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine are one of the most organized and legally existing forces that have demotivated resistance to aggression, spread the Kremlin's narrative, and capitulatory sentiments", he said [3].

3. Some statistics on the assessment of religious freedom and the level of trust in social institutions

According to the Pew Research Centre report, for the majority of Ukrainians, religion is a component of national affiliation, so being an Orthodox Christian is an important factor in shaping national identity [*Religious Belief and National Belonging in Central and Eastern Europe National and religious identities converge in a region once dominated by atheist regimes*, https://www.pewforum.org/2017/05/10/religious-belief-and-national-belonging-in-central-and-eastern-europe/]. At the same time, other Christian denominations (Greek Catholics, Roman Catholics, Protestants) are also represented in Ukraine. The 2015-2016 poll showed that the 'National Patriarch' (46%), the Moscow Patriarch (17%) and the Patriarch of Constantinople (7%) are recognized as the spiritual leaders of Orthodox Christians, the highest authority of the Orthodox Church, the 'highest body of Orthodoxy' in Ukraine. In this context, the fact that

after Ukraine lost control of its sovereign territories of Crimea, as well as parts of Donetsk and Luhansk regions, 38% of respondents answered in the affirmative to the question 'Should Russia protect Orthodox Christians abroad?' We can also draw an ambiguous conclusion based on the results of a sociological survey on the attitude of Ukrainians to democratic institutions, 36% of which allow the undemocratic government in certain circumstances against 31% who do not. We present these statistics in order to highlight the social background in which the military chaplaincy institutionalization takes place. According to the Razumkov Centre, the army and the Church in Ukraine are the institutions that citizens trust the most. More than 62% of the Church and more than 66% of the army enjoy full or partial trust [*Features of religious and ecclesiastical self-determination of Ukrainian citizens: trends of 2000-2020*, Information materials prepared for the regular round table 'Religion and power in Ukraine: problems of relations', November 25, 2020, with the assistance of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Ukraine, https://razumkov.org.ua/uploads /article/2020_religiya.pdf; *Citizens' assessment of the situation in the country, level of trust in social institutions and politicians, electoral orientations of citizens (October-November 2020)*, https://razumkov.org.ua/napriamky/sotsio logichni-doslidzhennia/otsinka-gromadianamy-sytuatsii-v-kraini-riven-doviry-d o-sotsialnykh-instytutiv-ta-politykiv-elektoralni-oriientatsii-gromadian-zhovten-lystopad-2020r].

At the same time, according to the Razumkov Centre, in the current 2021, we can observe a certain complication of relations between the state and the Church, as well as aggravation of interfaith relations, which is evident, for example, in the conflict between the UOC and the OCU of the Kyiv Patriarchate. According to the source, "the contradictory positions of local authorities on the registration of changes in the Orthodox communities' jurisdiction destroy the integrity of state policy in the church-confessional sphere" [https://razumkov. org.ua/uploads/other/2021-PIDSUMKI-PROGNOZI-UKR-ENG.pdf]. The arti-cle also emphasizes that the lack of a consolidated state policy on this issue sets precedents for a certain involvement of local authorities and protectionism in favour of certain religious associations. We believe that this situation can be overcome if we use an important component of the 'institutional matrix' model in its analysis, namely the subjective attitude to interaction.

Spiritual and humanitarian guardianship, on which military chaplains focus, is a substantial component of maintaining the moral and psychological condition of the military. According to Larysa Vladychenko, the activities of religious organizations that enjoy a high level of trust among the citizens of Ukraine contribute to the realization of rights and freedoms in religious matters of all members of society, including the military [L. Vladychenko, *Dosvid zaprovadzhennia viiskovoho kapelanstva u Zbroinykh Sylakh Ukrainy (Experience of introduction of military chaplaincy in the Armed Forces of Ukraine)*, https://risu.ua/dosvid-vprovadzhennya-viyskovogo-kapelanstva-u-zbro yni-sili-ukrajini_n81624].

The issue of implementation and legal support of the functioning of the military chaplaincy was considered in the works of Humenny, Afonin, Yarmus, Sytnyk, Semin, Yelensky, and Yaremchuk [4-9; V. Yelensky, *Duhovnoe sluzhenie v Vooruzhennyh silah Ukrainy: diskussii i perspektivy (Spiritual service in the Armed Forces of Ukraine: discussions and prospects)*, https://risu.ua/duhovne-sluzhinnya-u-zbroynih-silah-ukrajini-diskusiji-i-perspek tivi_n17553]. They emphasized the importance of spiritual and humanitarian policies, the Church's role in solving socio-political problems, and the importance of establishing links between the military leadership and religious organizations. These studies also discussed the advisability of a theoretical distinction between the stages of formation and development of the institution of pastoral care in the Armed Forces.

4. Periodization of the formation of modern military chaplaincy in Ukraine

The ancient history of religion in Ukraine knows examples of chaplaincy in the Legion of Ukrainian Sich Riflemen, in the armies of the Ukrainian People's Republic and the Ukrainian Insurgent Army but the current stage of religion's presence in the armed forces has other legal, social and economic grounds. Moreover, while the society was previously outside the traditional discourse of state-confessional relations, the situation in Ukraine's religious landscape has changed dramatically in the last five years, raising the topic of the clergy's involvement in the Armed Forces.

The history of chaplaincy in Ukraine needs a separate and detailed study. We will focus on the analysis of the current development stage of this institution, considering the basic interaction parameters of religious and political subjects in the process of forming the political nation, in order to test the research tools, namely the application of the institutional matrix in the study of state-confessional relations.

The process of institutionalizing relations between the Armed Forces of Ukraine (AFU) and the Church began in the 1990s and is divided into three periods [10]. There has been a Council for Pastoral Care under the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine (MOU) since the 1990s, and it was with its help that work on institutionalizing the chaplaincy began [The First Ukrainian Battalion of Military Chaplains, https://chaplain.net.ua/]. Therefore, this first period (dubbed 'preparatory') is characterized by the initial establishment of ties between religious organizations and military units, which have become more systemic since 2000, when representatives of Christian communities of various denominations and Muslims united to promote the idea of closer interaction with the state in military and religious matters. An advisory body to the MOU was established at the same time, but its activities were sporadic and yielded poor results, given that there were no grounds for consolidation within the religious community of that time and interfaith conflicts hampered the development of a joint (intra-religious) strategy for the implementation of pastoral work projects in the Ukrainian armed forces. In the 2000s, the internal structures of religious

groups began to develop, forming units responsible for interacting with law enforcement agencies. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP) has established the Synodal Department for Interaction with the Armed Forces and Other Military Units of Ukraine [Synodal Department of the Military Clergy of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. Official website, https://www.suvd.com.ua/; Synodal Department of the Military Clergy of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. Facebook page, https://www.facebook.com/suvd.pcu/]. The Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP) has established the Synodal Department of Spiritual and Patriotic Education of the UOC-KP in Relations with the Armed Forces in Other Military Formations of Ukraine. The Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church (UGCC) has organized the Department of the Patriarchal Curia of the UGCC for the Pastoral Care of the Power Structures of Ukraine [Department of Military Chaplaincy of the Patriarchal Curia of the UGCC, https://www.kapelanstvo.ugcc.ua/pro-nas/]. Other religious organizations in this preparatory period of institutionalization, which lasted from 1992 to 2008, were limited to the appointment of persons responsible for the pastoral care of servicemen (Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Ukraine (SAMU)), the Ukrainian Autocephalous Church (UACC), the Roman Catholic Church (RCC), and the All-Ukrainian Union of United Evangelical Baptists (AUUUEB) [https://www.kapelanstvo.ugcc.ua/pro-nas/; The Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Ukraine, https://islam.ua/]. At the same time, the All-Ukrainian Interfaith Religious Christian-Military Brotherhood, an interfaith organization that was later reformed, began to operate [All-Ukrainian interfaith religious Christian-military fraternity, http://www.virai chest.com.ua/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11:2011-05-09-16-48-50&catid=1:bratstvo&Item id=8].

The second period of institutionalization (from 2008 to 2014) distinguished by researchers is "a period of consolidation and effective interaction between representatives of Churches and religious organizations and the Armed Forces" [https://risu.ua/dosvid-vprovadzhennya-viyskovogo-kapelan stva-u-zbroyni-sili-ukrajini_n81624]. The Council for Pastoral Care at the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, founded at that time, took part in the formation of mechanisms of interaction in the military-religious sector and contributed to the creation of the corresponding 'Concept of Pastoral Care in the Armed Forces of Ukraine' [*The concept of pastoral care in the Armed Forces of Ukraine*, https://www.mil.gov.ua/diyalnist/zvyazki-z-gromadskistyu/rada-u-spravah-dush pastirskoi-opiki-pri-ministerstvi-oboroni-ukraini/normativni-dokumenti-ta-meto dichni-rekomendaczii/2014/07/08/konczepcziya-dushpastirskoi-opiki-u-zbrojni h-silah-ukraini/]. As far back as 2016, a research and practice conference 'Military chaplaincy in Ukraine: the results of the first stage of institutionalization 2014-2016' took place to reflect the experience of chaplaincy in Ukraine. The conference's participants discussed the process of the chaplaincy creation and operation, pastoral work, spiritual and psychological support in various types of troops, rehabilitation activities, the Church's wide

involvement in humanitarian projects, interfaith and interreligious cooperation, and various forms of social service.

The third period lasts from the beginning of the conflict in the Donetsk and Luhansk regions (since 2014) to the present, and a significant achievement of this period was the adoption of the Law of Ukraine 'On Military Chaplaincy'. The institutionalization process was completed in this way, which included not only the adoption of the relevant law but also other bylaws. Although in previous years the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine (MOU) had an advisory body, which was essentially designed to promote the institutionalization of the chaplaincy, this task became relevant only after the start of the Anti-Terrorist Operation (ATO). In the third stage, the institutional implementation of military chaplaincy in the Armed Forces began with the submission of the Draft Law 'On Military Chaplaincy in the Armed Forces of Ukraine' [http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/ pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=70044], which was to regulate the system of legal relations arising from clergy care for servicemen. For a long time, attempts to legislate the status of military chaplains did not end with the adoption of a law. For example, in September 2020, a bill was submitted to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine, and after the first reading, in November 2020, it was withdrawn. At the same time, the process of legal regulation of the military chaplaincy continued when the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine adopted in the first reading the draft Law of Ukraine No. 4626 'On the Service of Military Chaplains'. This Bill became important for the training of professional military chaplains and considers the experience of the military and the clergy on the need for spiritual support. In addition, the law aims to protect the existing chaplaincy in social terms, related to the risks and issues it faces during spiritual service in the combat zone, namely: the risk of loss of life or health, provision of vital necessities, means of protection and clothing, medical life insurance, material support, social protection of families in case of loss of a breadwinner, food during the stay on the territory of the military unit, etc. All these are aspects that were not resolved before the Bill's adoption [https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/ show/254%D0%BA/96-%D0%B2%D1%80#Text]. Thus, the adopted Law not only regulates the organizational and legal principles of interaction between the MOU and religious organizations in terms of meeting the religious needs of the military but also introduces a number of social guarantees for the chaplains themselves.

The urgent need for chaplains arose during active military operations. Their devotion affects the moral and mental health of the military. In this regard, the Department of Moral and Psychological Support of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, together with representatives of religious organizations, initiated interaction aimed at offering moral support to soldiers, promoting a healthy lifestyle, and so on. Chaplains are also involved in creating a 'spiritual dimension of military organization' that, in a 'leadership' format, facilitates the interaction of the physical, emotional, and intellectual components of the individual. Such cooperation contributes to the discipline and motivation of combat units, moral and psychological support and national-patriotic education,

the creation of a positive image of the armed forces and the education of respect for servicemen.

5. Examples of work of military chaplains in the Armed Forces

Another significant factor to consider while adopting chaplaincy in Ukraine is the country's multi-religious nature. Inter-confessionalism is a challenge for the new chaplaincy, because a chaplain's primary role is not to preach his confessional dogmas exclusively. His mission is to bring spiritual peace to all servicemen, regardless of their religious affiliation. The chaplaincy fraternity is already presenting itself as interfaith, as proven by many examples of collaboration between Christians, Muslims, and Jews.

In recent years, representatives of the Roman Catholic Church, charismatic movements, and Ukrainian Protestants have expressed their views on the role and importance of pastoral care for militants. Individuals from these groups were actively involved in the development of an interfaith chaplaincy service. The missionaries of the ecumenical Christian Salvation Service (CSS), created in 2013, have been actively ministering as volunteers and chaplains throughout this time [The Christian Salvation Service, http://crs-center.org]. This activity resulted in the formation of the CSS Military Chaplain Corps. As Andriy Zelinsky, who supported the Marines as chaplain of the UGCC, writes in his memoirs, "It is important to strive for victory and understand that the most important victory is victory over oneself… One must believe in the invincible power of the good all of the time." [11]

Another example of interreligious interaction can be seen in the activities of the UOC-KP. On the anniversary of the liberation of Mariupol on June 13, 2021, His Holiness Patriarch Filaret presented the Order of St. Prince Volodymyr III to Rabbi Nathan Khazin, one of the founders of Ukrainian aerial reconnaissance.

According to data, the Armed Forces chaplaincy department currently employs around 130 full-time personnel, and 90 of them are clergy from various Christian religious organizations. Thus, according to the Centre for Moral and Psychological Support of the Ukrainian Armed Forces, among the religious organizations that are part of the staff chaplains, there are representatives of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, the Ukrainian Evangelical Church, the Tabernacle Church (Evangelicals), and the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate. At the same time, most experts point to a shortage of chaplains, which makes it hard to provide spiritual and psychological support to personnel from combat units along the line of demarcation. This circumstance is partially compensated by the high authority of the clergy, whose activities become an important factor in the unity of military units. It should be noted here that the Armed Forces need to further increase the number of military chaplains by 5,000 people, as provided by the staff of military units with chaplaincy roles. This is due to legal changes resulting from the passage of the Law of Ukraine 'On Fundamentals of National Resistance'

and the registration in the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine of the Draft Law on amendments to Article 1 of the Law 'On the Number of Armed Forces of Ukraine' [*The Draft Law on Amendments to Article 1 of the Law of Ukraine 'On the Number of the Armed Forces of Ukraine' to Increase the Number of the Armed Forces of Ukraine in Connection with the Adoption of the Law of Ukraine 'On the Fundamentals of National Resistance'*, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zweb2/webproc4_1?pf3511=72036]. On behalf of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, the activities of military chaplains are handled by the Department of Military Education and Science [Department of Military Education and Science of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine, https://www.mil.gov.ua/ministry/struktura-aparatu-ministerstva/departament-vij skovoi-osviti-i-nauki-ministerstva-oboroni-ukraini.html]. The official MOU's website contains more than 200 materials about meetings of military chaplains with representatives of the Joint Centre for Civil-Military Cooperation and International Military Pilgrimage, educational events, trainings, all-Ukrainian congresses of military chaplains, etc. [https://www.mil.gov.ua/ministry/struktura -aparatu-ministerstva/departament-vijskovoi-osviti-i-nauki-ministerstva-oboroni -ukraini.html].

Military chaplains also play a significant role in the safe reintegration of veterans into society, promoting social cohesion, and helping family members of participants in the Joint Forces Operation (GFO) in the Luhansk and Donetsk areas, among other things [Association of Professional Chaplains of Ukraine, https://www.facebook.com/ukrainechaplains/]. In addition, it is groundless to claim that the spiritual ministry of chaplains has not yet formed into a general concept, as researcher S. Zakirova says [S. Zakirova, *Bill 'On Military Chaplaincy in the Armed Forces of Ukraine': a step towards legal regulation of the institute*, http://nbuviap.gov.ua/images/dumka/2020/17.pdf]. We can provide numerous examples to support this claim. As a result of the hard work of representatives from Protestant churches, the First Ukrainian Battalion of Military Chaplains was formed in November 2014, with its activities including volunteering in the GFO zone, rehabilitation and adaptation activities, assistance to bereaved families, and other things [11, p. 88; https://chaplain.net.ua/].

Another positive example is the activity of the Synodal Department of the Military Clergy of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine. During the period 2013-2014, when important socio-political developments occurred in Ukraine, the 'prayerful' presence of spiritual mentors among their followers became a symbol of the Church's unity with the people. This was demonstrated not only by the Ukrainian Council of Churches and Religious Organizations' unified statements, but also by the practical actions of priests. Chaplains have visited military units with members of their own families, who sang in the liturgy as a spiritual choir, or provided humanitarian aid from civilians to soldiers in the Armed Forces [*The interview of Chaplain Father Valery: how he escaped from the militants, the capture, aggression of the UOC-MP and farewell of soldiers*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xf0MVVk-dyg; *Our task is to incline Heaven! -*

chaplains. A broadcast, http://radiomaria.org.ua/nashe-zavdannya-prihiliti-nebo-kapelani-10125; 10].

The Muslim community of Ukraine also contributed to the construction of the chaplaincy institute. As is known, Islam is the most widely practiced religion among Crimean Tatars, who in June 2021 were recognized as indigenous by the Law of Ukraine 'On Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine'. The Crimean Tatar population has awaited this recognition for nearly 30 years. This law's ratification should contribute to the 'consolidation and development of the Ukrainian nation, as well as the development of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and religious identities of all indigenous peoples of Ukraine' [*The Law of Ukraine 'On Indigenous Peoples of Ukraine'*, http://w1.c1.rada.gov.ua/pls/zwe b2/webproc4_1?pf3511=71931]. Unfortunately, a huge number of Crimean Tatars have left the peninsula since 2014. There are around 49,000 internally displaced persons (IDPs) from Crimea, according to the Ministry of Social Policy. It is not known for sure how many Crimean Tatars are among the IDPs but given the various projects being implemented in Ukraine to assist them (for example, an agreement signed in April 2021 between Ukraine and Turkey on the construction of housing (500 apartments) for Crimean Tatars), we can assume thousands. Churches, as well as state and non-governmental public groups, are working to adapt to and create relationships with host citizens. According to the report of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe's (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, the Church participates in providing humanitarian assistance and living arrangements, promoting the integration and employment of IDPs, and other activities through its volunteers and clergy [*Thematic Report of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe 'Internal Displacement as a Result of the Conflict in Ukraine: Increased Vulnerability of the Affected Population and Factors of Tensions in Communities'*, https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/c/6/261206.pdf].

Individual IDPs have also volunteered as chaplains, according to the information available. Among the measures that can help IDPs integrate into society, it is suggested that they be involved not only in making long-term decisions but also in the implementation of the Patriotic Education Strategy for those "who have received appropriate training and qualifications" and participation in administrative organizations and institutions, in particular related to the chaplains' activities [A. Solodko and T. Doronyuk, *Development of a policy on internally displaced persons in Ukraine. Prepared with the support of the Renaissance Foundation*, https://www.irf.ua/content/files/dp-2015-7.pdf]. Religious representatives have also worked with the Tripartite Contact Group, which is tasked with finding a peaceful solution to the conflict in eastern Ukraine, as well as providing pastoral care to IDPs.

The participation of representatives of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Ukraine 'UMMA' in joint events organized by the Department of Civil-Military Cooperation of the Land Forces Command of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and the Department of Social Service and Charity of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine is another example of interfaith cooperation.

The idea of creating a military chaplaincy of Muslims of Ukraine arose in 2014 when the conflict in Donbas killed the first Muslims who served in the armed forces of Ukraine, and there was a need to bury them according to Islamic rites. Mufti of the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Ukraine 'UMMA' (DUMU), Sheikh, military chaplain Said Ismagilov once said that a new Ukrainian society was born on the Maidan and in the war [*'It doesn't matter how a person prays when he is defending his homeland next to you and you entrust your life with him.' A Said Ismagilov's interview for the 'Good day' program*, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QH7C5gw4QC0]. The new nation's armed forces and volunteer battalions need more than just spiritual support, so Muslims are among the medics and paramedics, servicemen, and volunteers, and meeting their spiritual needs is an important part of successful service. The position of spiritual mentors in the army, according to Ismagilov, promotes the unity of people. Paraphrasing his opinion, we can say that if in previous times the perception of people of other faiths was quite ambiguous and alarming, now "it does not matter how a person prays, in what language he prays - if he defends his native land next to you, you trust this person with your life… This person becomes the dearest and closest, and it does not matter what he admits – it is important that he becomes your sworn brother." [Military chaplaincy of Muslims in Ukraine, https://umma.in.ua/ua/viyskove-kapelanstvo-musulman-ukrayiny] In our opinion, this position is due to the fact that the average age of imams is 40 years, which is much less than in other denominations. The Mufti also noted that all Ukrainian citizens have the right to protect their identity, language, culture, and national sovereignty, which we believe testifies to the desire of Islamic spiritual leaders to promote the formation of the Ukrainian political nation.

Another example of interfaith interaction is the relationship between representatives of local Islamic centres and activists of Christian communities. Thus, the head of the Military Chaplaincy of the Muslims of Ukraine Murad Putilin, commenting on such cooperation, noted that it contributes to the social consolidation and development of good neighbourly relations between representatives of different religious views. At the same time, the imam-chaplains also support the fighters of the Sheikh Mansour Battalion, who were on the sanctions list of the National Security and Defence Council of Ukraine (NSDC) in June 2021. According to chaplain Yevgeny Glushchenko and Murad Putilin, this situation destroys the authority of volunteers and soldiers, who without a public announcement of sanctions found themselves in a situation where being on the sanctions list "provides, among other things, the extradition of Ukrainian defenders to the enemy" [https://risu.ua/imami-kapelani-vistupili-na-zahist-bijciv-bataljonu-im-shejha-mansura_n119059]. This undermines the credibility of trust between society and government. Concurrently, according to one of Father Valery's interviews, troops from this Chechen unit fighting on the Ukrainian side recovered Christian holy books (Gospels) and liturgical manuscripts from the Shirokino church that was burned [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= xf0MVVk-dyg].

Among the participants in the chaplaincy formation process, we should mention the Christian Public Platform (CPP), an initiative of Ukrainian Catholic organizations. One of the CPP's activities is to cover the issue of military chaplaincy in the context of the development of the Ukrainian state and the formation of a political nation. These CPP's tasks began to be implemented in 2016, and since then more than 300 materials on Christian service were published - ranging from ecumenical service in the anti-terrorist operation zone to the establishment of a network of volunteer centres in the so-called 'grey zone' (the area between the demarcation lines in the GFO zone). Christian ministry here includes the activities of chaplains, volunteers, psychologists, social workers, and lifeguards. Let us note that the primary purpose of the rescuers in 2016 was "the implementation of evangelistic, humanitarian, educational, and social mission on the front lines" [http://crs-center.org]. At the same time, rethinking its mission's priorities, the CPP identified social and humanitarian aspects among its first tasks in 2017. The active work of Roman Catholics and Protestants, united by a joint CPP mission, also helped overcome what Franciscan Father Mykola Orach called 'pro-Russian sentiment'. In one of his interviews, he noted that the CPP volunteers and rescuers convince people that 'Ukraine is not fascists or punishers' thanks to the practical compassion demonstrated by the chaplains in their daily job.

The Military Chaplains Corpus (MCC), established in March 2016, has become the successor to the Interfaith Battalion of Military Chaplains. According to MCC information officer Oleksandr Kryvenko, the CPP's chaplains work in military units as volunteers on a contractual and rotational basis. Chaplains work 'to promote knowledge and skills among military and civilians to boost preparedness for survival in combat and other extreme situations', in addition to their ordinary pastoral ministry.

The Spiritual Front of Ukraine, which covers the activities of the OCU's military chaplains, not only pays attention to the pastors' preaching and messianic work in difficult physical and psychological conditions with a high level of workload but also discusses the differences in their training and education. This information-analytical platform's website [The spiritual front of Ukraine, https://df.news/] contains more than 500 materials (from 2019) on chaplains' work in the Armed Forces, interfaith collaboration, the vicissitudes of cooperation with authorities, and more. For example, Metropolitan of Kyiv and All Ukraine Epiphanius emphasized the solution to the problem of chaplains receiving military training, which became possible with the assistance of the rector of the National Technical University of Ukraine 'Kyiv Polytechnic Institute named after Igor Sikorsky', where chaplains will be trained at the military department.

On the part of the state, to honour the work of military chaplains, the National Museum of the History of Ukraine in the Second World War implemented the 'Ukrainian East' project, which highlighted the pastoral activities and messianic work of representatives of various denominations. Calling military chaplains of different denominations and nationalities 'spiritual

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advisers and mentors', 'brothers and sisters', Archbishop Vyshhorod (UOC) emphasized that more than 700 people are involved in the spiritual mission, which is intended to bring "peace in the souls of the people". [*Ukrainian imams among the heroes of the exhibition 'Chaplains' at the National Museum of History of Ukraine*, https://islam.in.ua/ua/novyny-u-krayini/ukrayinski-imamy-sered-geroyiv-vystavky-kapelany-v-nacionalnomu-muzeyi-istoriyi#slideshow-4]

There are also women chaplains-volunteers. Lora Kohut, a volunteer chaplain and a member of the Association of Professional Chaplains of Ukraine, says in her interview that chaplaincy is interfaith, and therefore if one of the fighters needs an imam, he is found, and the chaplain's wife, like her husband, can be a servant of the spiritual needs of soldiers [*The story of chaplain-volunteer Lora Kohut*, https://www.msp.gov.ua/news/16556.html]. Asked what the Church could offer to the army, she said the need to develop a program for the demobilized was urgent. Another volunteer of pastoral care, Olena Mokrenchuk, a member of the Evangelical Baptist community and an officer at the press centre of Operational Command North, said: "A large number of soldiers have found God at the forefront. They return home, but the Church, with its old stereotypes about weapons prohibition and questions about killing enemies, is not ready to accept them… These people require assistance in returning to a peaceful life and attending Church. At the front, each of them is a hero… And at home no one needs them. They are superfluous, they are treated as 'injured'… Everyone is attempting to restore them to their pre-war state but this is impossible. People who have survived attacks and shelling and lost comrades divide the world into 'vital' and the rest. However, society is fearful of and unwilling to accept those who have a different worldview while also being strong, brave, and courageous enough to go to the end and offer their life for loved ones. If the Church does not give them the opportunity to join a peaceful society, … suicides and negative things will soon follow, because a person cannot be left alone." [*The interview with Olena Mokrenchuk, senior officer of the Operational Command 'North' press centre*, https://www.msp.gov.ua/news/16742.html]

Chaplains' professionalism is ensured by their knowledge of military affairs. The training and compliance of chaplains with their professional activities require the attention of the state, which should assist in the training of seminarians, i.e. young individuals who support senior chaplains in carrying out their pastoral ministry. One possible way is to create a single training centre for all religious groups and organizations, which would train professionals by Western standards who will be capable of providing proper spiritual and religious assistance to the military.

6. Conclusions

In Ukraine, the process of institutionalizing military chaplaincy can be split into three stages. The passage of the applicable law, which controls the service of clerics in the Armed Forces, is driving the current condition of this

process. Both the state and the Church, as evidenced by practical expressions of ministry, not only open up prospects for continuing the dialogue, but also provide conditions for the professionalization of the chaplaincy. Representatives of religious organizations play a vital role in this process, as they assist the state's efforts to improve its combat efficacy. Such interaction can be called an attitude to open and active dialogue. Military chaplain issues, such as social and psychological rehabilitation, crisis assistance, adaptation in a peaceful environment, moral and psychological support, and patriotic education, cannot be resolved without adequate training, which should be conducted not only in consideration of military needs but also in close collaboration with psychologists, theologians, historians and political consultants. Such humanitarian policy in the Armed Forces will contribute to the formation of a powerful factor in ensuring the military's morale, psychological health, and combat readiness. The training program may include topics such as the basics of military psychology, military training and education, the organization of psychological assistance, social processes in military units, modern world religions, interfaith relations, the basics of primary care, stress management, basic skills of officers, field (practical) training, etc. Such training should contribute to the professionalization of pastoral ministry on the theoretical and professional basis, as well as allow the active use of the chaplain's personal skills in delivering pastoral care to servicemen and members of their families.

Because achieving a high level of professionalism in the chaplaincy takes time, we believe that the first stages of this process should be undertaken immediately. According to institutionalization experience, engagement of spiritual mentors in military collaboration only began to expand in 2014, after a thirty-year period of development of the Armed Forces. In our sincere conviction, this process should continue and the interaction should deepen, because providing psychological and spiritual support to the Armed Forces is one of the most critical conditions for their success.

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