

International Conference

RELIGION AND WAR IN UKRAINE

The Political,
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Session: Transnational Dynamics of the Religious
Landscape, Part II

11:00AM MST, March 16, 2024

Between Ummah and nation: The impact of the Ukraine war on the Muslim community(s)

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The Russian-Ukrainian war significantly aggravated a number of problems in the religious communities of the two countries, in particular, the issue of civil and religious identity and the correlation between them. This problem has become particularly acute in the Muslim communities of the two countries, given the alienated nature of the Muslim minorities of Russia and Ukraine from the Orthodox majority. Where is the boundary between patriotism, ethno-confessional nationalism, and religious solidarity? The article examines how Muslim communities in Russia and Ukraine address this problem at the level of behavioral strategies, theological and public discourse. Particular attention is paid to the transformation of the concept of Jihad in Ukrainian and Russian Muslim communities, as well as to the issue of situational identity in the clash of interests of reference groups (religious and civil) to which Muslims in Ukraine and Russia simultaneously belong.

Denys Brylov is a senior researcher at the A. Krymsky Institute of Oriental Studies of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine (Kyiv) and a research fellow at the Leibniz-Zentrum Moderner Orient (Berlin). He is considered the foremost specialist on Islam and Islamic education in Ukraine. His other areas of expertise include Sufi political activism, transnational Sufi movements, religious factors in conflicts, and religion and nationalism. He is a member of the Ministry of Education of Ukraine's commission on the state recognition of higher theological education diplomas, academic degrees, and titles issued by higher theological educational institutions. Brylov has authored some 70 publications in multiple languages and is the co-editor of *Sufism and the Islamic Spiritual Tradition: Texts, Institutions, Ideas, and Interpretations* (2015). In recognition of his expertise, he led a project funded by the United States Institute of Peace on interconfessional conflict in Ukraine after the 2022 Russian invasion.