

## **5. Howard L. BIDDULPH, Laurel C. BIDDULPH. Toleration of new Faith in Ukraine: a Study of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints**

*Howard L. Biddulph:* This study briefly presents our personal observations of how a religious faith new to Ukraine has sought and obtained legitimate standing in the Ukrainian state. We are both American members of that faith—The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church) -- who now reside in Ukraine.

Twenty-five years ago, on July 1, 1991, I began a three-year mission in Kyiv to preside in Ukraine over the religious denomination, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (hereafter cited as LDS Church), which was just being introduced to the country. I was accompanied on this mission by my wife, Colleen C. Biddulph (since deceased).

On several occasions prior to 1991, I had visited Ukraine, Russia, and some other republics in the USSR as a research and teaching scholar of Soviet politics. This was done over a more than thirty- year career which began at Indiana University and Rutgers University in the United States, and concluded at the University of Victoria in Canada. I served for six years as Chair of the Political Science faculty at Victoria, and then became an Emeritus Professor at retirement in 1991.

Colleen and I returned to the United States in July 1994 after overseeing the initial stages of organization, registration, and early rapid growth of the LDS Church in post-Soviet Ukraine. We returned frequently to Ukraine during the years 1999-2004 as coordinators of an agreement of cooperation between Brigham Young University (BYU) in the United States and the Institute of International Relations of the Ukrainian National Shevchenko University (UNSU) in Kyiv. We hosted Ukrainian graduate students at BYU, and annually taught BYU Study Abroad students for semester-long programs in Kyiv. We also taught Ukrainian students in Kyiv, and presented papers at various scholarly conferences throughout Ukraine. We returned to Kyiv during the entire month of August, 2010, for the celebration of the erection of the Ukrainian LDS Temple.

After Colleen's death, I married Laurel Backman Riddle (now known as Laurel C. Biddulph), an attorney (Juris Doctorate). Laurel and I are currently residing in Kyiv in accordance with an agreement of cooperation between the Religious Studies Department of the Skovoroda Philosophy Institute of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences and the International Center for Law and Religious Studies of the J. Reuben Clark Law School at BYU.

**Part One: Basic Concepts of Religious Toleration.** The litmus test of religious freedom in a society is its treatment of religious minorities (Durham: 1995; Biddulph: 1996b, 59). Religious toleration denotes the official recognition or sufferance by the state of the rights of individuals or groups to hold nontraditional or dissenting religious beliefs and to manifest them in religious practice. It is possible for a minority religion to achieve official toleration and yet to experience considerable intolerance within society, and conversely for a nonconformist denomination to find significant social acceptance without achieving recognition or sufferance by the state.

Governments respond to nontraditional religious confessions in five ways: (1) by legislation (such as an act of Parliament or an amendment to the same); (2) executive reinterpretation of legislation, legal registration of a sect or rejection of the same; (3) law enforcement actions, (such as arresting or detaining participants, opening or closing premises for religious worship); (4) judicial response, (for example, court decisions, charges brought in behalf of, or against religious participants); (5) responses at provincial or local levels of government, which might vary from the national level (Homer and Uzzell:1998; Biddulph, 2016: 2-3).

It is useful to distinguish three possible perspectives of state policy toward non-traditional denominations. The first perspective may be designated as “non- toleration,” inasmuch as official recognition and registration are withheld, and religious participants are denied the right to publically manifest their beliefs. Second, “limited toleration,” denotes the granting of legal recognition and official registration by the state, but adherents are allowed significantly reduced rights to publicly manifest their beliefs (such as to engage in evangelical work) in comparison to the

predominant traditional churches. Third, “full toleration” is the granting of the complete right to publicly manifest the sect’s teachings as well as to enjoy official legal standing (Biddulph, 2016: 2-4).

Individual officials and other political actors may find their personal convictions to be at odds with official legislation on religious freedom, leading them to apply or interpret the law variously. Therefore, the establishment of religious freedom will depend not only upon the legislative enactment of appropriate legal safeguards, but also upon the emergence of a broad “culture of toleration” in which there is wide acceptance of pluralism, heterodoxy, and the autonomy of religious confessions.(Biddulph, 1999: 11).

## **Part II: Stages in the Ukrainian State Toleration of the LDS Church.**

### **1. State Toleration of Religion in the Last Days of Gorbachev’s USSR.**

Colleen and I arrived in Kyiv during the last months of Gorbachev’s *Perestroika* and *Glasnost*’ reforms. *Perestroika* stimulated a new spiritual awakening, because it unleashed many new opportunities for autonomous association, a phenomenon which political scientists and sociologists identify as the emergence of civil society, one of the prerequisites of genuine democracy (Shils, 1991: 3-20; Rigby, 1991: 107-22; Fish, 1995; Biddulph, 2000: 4-5).

In Kyiv and other cities I met a number of educated and professional people as well as other citizens who had begun to investigate various religions: three branches of Eastern Orthodoxy, both Greek and Roman Catholicism, a number of Protestant denominations, the LDS (Mormon) Church, Judaism, Islam, and a variety of Asian sects. The world headquarters of the LDS Church in Salt Lake City, Utah forwarded to me several hundred letters from citizens throughout Ukraine which requested Mormon missionaries and church literature to be sent to them (Biddulph, 1996a: ch 2). Foreign missionaries were able to respond to this outpouring of requests after “The Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations” was adopted by the USSR Supreme Soviet in 1990, which legalized missionary service (Ramet: 1993; Biddulph 1996a: 61-63). I endeavored to answer all of the letters addressed to the LDS Church and to send each some church literature, but with only a few missionaries available in the beginning, personal visits had to be confined initially to the greater metropolitan area of Kyiv.

“The Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations” established no state church, but proclaimed the equality of all faiths. Freedom of conscience expressly included the right to change religions and to teach religion to one’s children. The new law guaranteed an unrestricted right to engage in missionary and charitable work, provide religious education, to publish and disseminate religious literature, and to use the media for religious purposes. The right to own property for religious purposes was guaranteed, as well as to conduct open international relations in religious affairs (Ramet: 1993; Biddulph, 1996a: 61-63). In short, this principal enactment of the Gorbachev era took a decidedly “full toleration” perspective towards religious freedom.

President Gorbachev held a meeting of reconciliation with Patriarch Pimen and five prelates of the Russian Orthodox Patriarchate in Moscow during 1988, and also with Pope John Paul II in the Vatican in 1989. These meetings led to the rehabilitation of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Greek Catholic (Uniate) Church.

During the final two years of the USSR, 1990-1991, the Supreme Soviets of the Russian and Ukrainian Republics enacted similar statutes to the USSR legislation: Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarchate was established, the Autocephalic Ukrainian Orthodox Church was rehabilitated, and parishes or congregations of a variety of Christian, Jewish, Islamic, Asian, and other faiths were registered.

A branch of the LDS Church was registered in Leningrad in 1990, and the LDS Russian National Association was approved by the Russian Ministry of Justice and announced by Vice President Rutskoi in 1991 (Biddulph, 2000: 8-9). The Kyiv Branch of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church) was organized in April 1991, with 40 members, on the same month in which “The Law on the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations” was approved by the *Verkhovna Rada* (the Ukrainian Parliament). The Kyiv Branch of The LDS Church was officially registered by the Kyiv City Soviet on September 9, 1991, at midnight, in response to a petition I made to Viktor Cherinko, a deputy of the Soviet, who introduced it to the Assembly (Ibid., 10). Two days later, Elder Boyd K. Packer and Elder Dallin H. Oaks, both of the Quorum of

Twelve Apostles, and Dennis B. Neuenschwander, of the Seventy, arrived in Kyiv to officially dedicate Ukraine to the Lord Jesus Christ. I was asked to conduct this service at the statue of Volodymyr the Great.

## 2. *The Post-Soviet Continuation of “Full Toleration,” (1991-1993).*

Newly independent Ukraine and the RSFSR inherited the “full toleration” religious policies of the Gorbachev era, and initially continued them under the provisions of each Republic’s version of “The Law on the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations.” This legislation, combined with official registration of a number of faiths new to Ukraine, resulted temporarily in a cordial relationship between Ukrainian officials and representatives of these nontraditional confessions.

Such friendly “full toleration” policies combined with the demand created by the remarkable spiritual awakening spreading among the citizenry, resulted in a veritable onslaught of foreign missionaries arriving in Ukraine and other republics of the former USSR during the period, 1990-1993. Protestant evangelists and Jehovah’s Witnesses conducted mass rallies in stadiums with campaign style media blitzes unlike anything Ukrainians or Russians had previously experienced. Roman Catholic and Lutheran missionaries came in large numbers, as well as representatives of the Reverend Moon’s Unification Church, Scientologist disciples of Ron Hubbard, Hare Krishnas, Sunni, Sufi, and Shiite Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Rastafarians, and apocalyptic emissaries of the Japanese Aum Association, Chimnoy and Rerikh Movement, as well as more indigenous groups such as Orthodox ‘Old Believers’ and ‘The White Brotherhood’ (Beloe Bratstvo) (Biddulph: 2000, 10).

As with the representatives of other confessions, the quantity of Mormon missionaries grew significantly during the years, 1991-1993. There were eight full-time missionaries in Kyiv in June 1991. By July 1, 1993, these numbers had grown to 140 in Ukraine, one-half of which were assigned to the new mission just beginning in Eastern Ukraine, named the Ukraine Donetsk Mission, and the remainder retained in the Ukraine Kyiv Mission (ibid. 10-11).

The number of baptized converts to Mormonism also grew rapidly. From a single branch of 40 members in mid-1991, the church membership in Kyiv by mid-1993 had grown to approximately 1,800 baptized converts organized into sixteen branches. Each branch was presided over by a local Ukrainian Branch President, and the sixteen branches were divided into three districts directed by local Ukrainian District Presidents. Each local leader was encouraged to assign every active adult member of the Church to a specific calling involving service to others. There were almost as many unbaptized investigators attending church services in each branch as the number of baptized converts.

In March, 1992, we received approval to go to Donetsk. On March 18, four missionaries arrived by train in this hub city of the Donbas Coal Basin. They immediately met with and were welcomed by local government officials, including the State Council for Religious Affairs (CRA), establishing a cordial relationship. By July 1, 1993, when the Ukraine Donetsk Mission was created, there were six new small branches, four in the City of Donetsk, one in nearby Gorlovka and one in Makayevka, for a total of approximately 350 baptized converts. Local officers were directing all branch activities. Official registration for the LDS Church was applied for in November 1992, and was granted by the governments of Donetsk and Gorlovka in May 1993. The leadership of the Donetsk City Government offered the LDS Church a beautiful site for a future large chapel to be erected, which the Church gratefully accepted (Biddulph 1996a:63-64).

Four missionaries opened the City of Kharkov (the second largest city in Ukraine) at the end of September 1992. Nine months later on July 1, 1993, there were seven new small branches with a total of 350 baptized converts and all directed by local Ukrainian Branch Presidents under the direction of a Ukrainian Kharkov District President. Official registration of the LDS Church in Kharkov was rejected in 1993, as Ukrainian religious policy toward new sects was already changing fundamentally. After Kharkov had been assigned to the new mission based in Donetsk, a court case supported the Church’s application for registration against the State Council for Religious Affairs (CRA) and success was achieved (ibid., 64).

## 3. *Restrictive Legislation and “Limited Toleration” in Ukraine (1993-1995).*

The dramatic rise of religious movements new to the people of the former Soviet Republics, supported by an unprecedented foreign missionary force, was bound to produce a major negative response from the predominant traditional confessions. The political power of Russian and Ukrainian Orthodoxy, in turn, generated negative state responses to the newer religious movements, which would have a significant effect on the work of LDS missionaries.

The predominant Orthodox Churches of both the Moscow and Kyiv Patriarchates viewed the missionary work of the indigenous and foreign based nontraditional confessions as a direct attack and competition with them for the souls of their own flocks, in spite of the fact that only 30 % of former Soviet citizens considered themselves to be even nominal believers in 1990 (Filipovych, 1999: 3). Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk and Kaliningrad (the second most prominent Russian Orthodox cleric of that time) accused both the Catholic and the nontraditional faiths of being “*spiritual colonizers who by fair means or foul try to tear the people away from the church*” (Witte, 1998: 5).

Patriarch Aleksii II responded in a similar accusation: *It is our obligation to battle for people’s souls by all legal means available. We must react to the continuing intensive proselyting activity by Catholic circles and various Protestant groups ...to the growing activity of sects, including those of a totalitarian nature . . . for it is largely our own brothers and sisters who fall victim to these sects*” (ibid., 1).

Natan Lerner has perceptively described the resulting conflict over the missionary activity of the nontraditional religions: “*What constitutes the sacred duty of evangelization for one group is seen by another group as improper proselyting ... Some groups would consider a given act as a normal exercise of freedom of expression . . . while others would view the same act as an illegitimate intrusion into their group identity and a violation of their freedom of conscience*” (ibid, 15).

Amendments to both the Russian and Ukrainian versions of “The Law on the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations,” were adopted in the Parliaments of both countries which were designed to significantly restrict the legitimacy and activities of nontraditional denominations. The most controversial provision of the amendments to the Russian law was the requirement that a religious confession had to be certified by the local government to have existed in the territory for at least fifteen years to enjoy the rights of a “religious organization.” Otherwise they existed as unregistered “religious groups” that were denied the right to engage in missionary work, or to publish religious material, or to engage in other activities associated with registered legal status (Durham and Homer: 1998, 6; Homer Uzzell 1998: 1-29; Gunn 1998: 1-22; Witte 1998: 1-19).

The Amendments of 23 December 1993 to the Ukrainian 1991 “Law on the Freedom of Conscience and Religious Organizations,” were adopted by the Verkhovna Rada and received the signature of President Leonid Kravchuk in January 1994. Unlike the legislative changes proposed in Moscow, the Ukrainian Amendments did not reduce the liberties of Ukrainian citizens participating in the smaller indigenous confessions. The restrictions in the 1993 Amendments applied directly to foreign religious representatives, requiring that they serve in Ukraine only by an official invitation of a registered local religious body approved by the local responsible government body. Furthermore, the invited foreign missionaries could only serve in the specific location where the hosting religious body had jurisdiction (cf. consult especially Article 24, discussed Biddulph: 1995, 339-41).

It was evident by 1993 that President Kravchuk supported the establishment of the new Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP) as the de facto state confessional church of Ukraine. To this end, the State Council for Religious Affairs (CRA) of the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers, under its Chairman Zinchenko, became the main instrument for accomplishing this objective (Plokhly: 1998, 10-13; Kuzio: 1997, 10-12). Its actions were directed against both the Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP) and other smaller confessions.

In a report to the international supervisor of our mission, dated April 20, 1993, I wrote: “*For several months we have observed a change in official attitude toward Western based religious groups. Prominent members of the intelligentsia and some political figures have made speeches and public statements objecting to the increasing evangelical activities of the so called Western churches ... [which are] attacking and subverting the flowering of Ukrainian culture ... My friend*

*who holds a high position in the Ukrainian government . . . has confirmed [this opinion] and expects some form of official curtailment or restriction is now politically inevitable for the government”* (Biddulph 1993: 2).

Learning what the new amendments to the 1991 Law would likely be by late 1993 or 1994, we responded proactively in advance before they were officially promulgated. Missionary work was opened quickly in Odessa, Dnepropetrovsk, and Simferopol with the objective of baptizing sufficient converts to officially establish a small branch in each city that would then be able to invite foreign missionaries according to the provisions of Article 24 to be proposed in the December 1993 Amendments. This was successfully accomplished. The new LDS Branches in Odessa and Simferopol were approved in November and December, after successful lobbying of the local governments by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education in opposition to the Council for Religious Affairs. The approval of the LDS Branch in Dnepropetrovsk was initially rejected by the local government which supported the opposition of the Council for Religious Affairs, but, like the situation in Kharkov, was eventually approved by judicial action after the national religious policy again began to radically change (Biddulph 1996a: 65).

The Council for Religious Affairs (CRA) also tried to curtail LDS activity by refusing to renew the short term visas of foreign missionaries already in Ukraine as well as rejecting visas of prospective missionaries approved by local LDS branches. This CRA approach toward restriction was appealed to the U.S. Embassy and Ambassador, who tried unsuccessfully to intervene with the Ukrainian government. Those missionaries serving in Ukraine whose visas expired before their two-year mission completion received official notes from the U.S. Embassy to be kept with their expired visas declaring that they had applied for visa renewal and were awaiting acceptance by the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry. This action successfully deterred the police and CRA from arresting and expelling any missionaries during 1993 or 1994.

Another policy we put in place to oppose the curtailment of LDS missionaries was to invite and train Ukrainian young adult members of the Church to serve as missionaries. In every city where an LDS Branch existed there were at least a few of these Ukrainian “District Missionaries,” and in Kyiv there were 30 impressively trained youth, each serving 20 hours per week. Ten of these went to Odessa to replace ten American missionaries for thirty days, while the latter had to temporarily leave Ukraine to renew their visas. These left 25 investigators for the Ukrainians to teach and prepare for baptism. One month later I visited them in Odessa and interviewed these investigators and 23 out of the 25 were ready and we witnessed their baptism. I was so impressed with the work of these Ukrainian missionaries! (Biddulph 1996a: 117-19).

#### 4. *The State as Mediator of Religious Accommodation Since 1995.*

The beginning of change in Ukrainian religious policy came with the defeat of President Kravchuk by Leonid Kuchma in the presidential runoff election of June 1994. Kravchuk’s re-election bid had been openly endorsed by the Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Kyiv Patriarchate (UOC-KP) and its leader, Metropolitan Filaret (Denysenko), a close friend of the President. Leonid Kuchma’s base of support came from the Eastern and Southern provinces, where he appealed to the culturally Russified population who were also predominantly members of the Ukrainian Orthodox Church - Moscow Patriarchate (UOC-MP). The UOC-MP responded by publically supporting Kuchma in the election for President.

President Kuchma acted quickly to support his main religious ally. The Council for Religious Affairs (CRA) which had supported the UOC-KP and Metropolitan Filaret was abolished by the new President. The administration of religious affairs was given to a new Ministry of Nationalities, Migration, and Cults, and put directly under the control of Vasyl Sereda, a high official strongly favoring the UOC-MP (Ploky: 1998, 18).

Until the bloody clashes of “Black Tuesday” on 18 July 1995, President Kuchma’s religious policy, like that of his predecessor, involved choosing a de facto state confessional church, although now it was a rival body to that chosen by President Kravchuk. This policy may be designated as “limited toleration” in state treatment of large rival confessions and indigenous minority faiths. Even lesser “limited toleration” towards the activities of foreign based religious confessions was continued initially by President Kuchma. In an address to religious leaders on 29 July 1994, he emphasized the importance of the 1993 Amendments for “regulating foreign religious influence”

(Biddulph 2000: 26). Relations among large churches were “non-tolerant,” exploding into violence on “Black Tuesday.”

“Black Tuesday” involved a confrontation between the funeral procession of UOC-Kyiv Patriarch Volodymyr and the police, who prevented his burial in the famous shrine St. Sophia in Kyiv on 18 July 1995. The government had taken no notice of Volodymyr’s death, who was regarded as a saint, not only by the Kyiv based Orthodox Church, but also by Western Ukrainian national democrats, because of his opposition to Communism during the Soviet era. The government was not about to grant the burial of Volodymyr in St. Sophia, the control over which was hotly contested between UOC-KP and UOC-MP. Therefore, a pitched battle with police troops ensued involving many casualties. Before authorities could prevent it, members of the funeral procession had dug a grave in the square facing St. Sophia and buried the body of Volodymyr.

“Black Tuesday” was a media and public opinion disaster for the new President and his religion policy. It induced the government to normalize relations with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church-Kyiv Patriarchate and other religious bodies in Ukraine. Vasyl Sereda, chair of Kuchma’s religious policies favoring UOC-MP, was removed, sacrificed for the purpose of accommodation between the major branches of Orthodoxy. The Ministry for Nationalities, Migration, and Cults was dissolved and replaced by a new State Council for Religious Affairs (CRA) with full representation in the Cabinet of Ministers. Anatoly Koval was appointed its first head in the latter part of 1995 (Ibid., 18-19; Biddulph: 2000, 25-26).

The long awaited Constitution of Ukraine was promulgated in 1996. With respect to religion, the Constitution is a democratic and egalitarian document for those who hold citizenship. Article 35 does not establish a state confessional church, nor does it offer any special status to any religious denomination. “No religion shall be recognized by the state as mandatory.” All citizens of Ukraine are guaranteed “freedom to profess or not to profess any religion, to perform alone or collectively and without constraint religious rites and ceremonial rituals, and to conduct religious activity.” Religious bodies are separated from the state and also from the school (Constitution of Ukraine: 1996, art.35). Noncitizens are not offered any of these guarantees.

In spite of a continuing lack of full inter-confessional tolerance among major, as well as smaller religious bodies, the State Council for Religious Affairs (CRA) has generally acted in basic harmony with international conventions of religious liberty since 1995, with the important exception of the rights of noncitizens (Biddulph: 2003a and 2003b; for the nature of these conventions, cf. European Convention: 1950, art.9; Vienna Concluding Document: 1989).

One of the indicators of the degree of toleration is the large universe of differing confessions which achieved legal registration in Ukraine after 1995. In the early 1990s, nine distinct religious bodies were legally registered, whereas by 2001, this number had reached 105, including a large variety of new religious movements from many Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Oriental and other tendencies (Kolodny: 2001, 124). The total number of registered religious communities reached 24,311 in 2001. The rate of registered religious bodies in comparison to the total population in Ukraine reached approximately the level of Poland, but was twice as high as Belarus and four times as high as in the Russian Federation (Kolodny: 2001, 124).

There have been a few actions by regional or local officials to prevent registration of specific new religious movements, but such actions seem to have contradicted the policy of the national committee, because these groups were registered without difficulty in other regions of Ukraine (Biddulph 2003a). Only one or two applicants seem to have been rejected by national action.

A second indicator of religious toleration is state action or inaction to deregister or penalize religious groups. There have been no such actions since the encounter of state security organs with “Beloe Bratstvo” in 1993. That group was deregistered because they were believed to be involved in actions that violated national security.

A third indicator is the positive relations which the State Council (CRA) has established with all registered traditional and nontraditional confessions. The grievances of some religious bodies against actions of the State Council for Religious Affairs, such as Latter-day Saints and Jehovah’s Witnesses, were ameliorated after 1995 (Biddulph: 2000, 27). The State Council has been a patient, persistent mediator in trying to resolve conflicts, to treat each side with respect, and

to foster tolerant relations among differing religious communities. Some religious property issues remain unresolved, but considerable progress has been made in accomplishing this objective.

The present State Council's (CRA) most important achievement has been its respect for the liberty of minority faiths, in spite of the opposition of some political and religious forces in the country. The impartial mediation role of the government and full toleration policy toward nontraditional confessions continued during the authoritarianism of the Yanukovich presidency and beyond (Wilson 2005:chs.4-8).

**Laurel Biddulph:** The state "toleration" of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was further facilitated by the transition of the Church to greater local direction. With the Church registered in Kyiv, Donetsk, Kharkov, Odessa, Simferopol, and Gorlovka, and pending applications in Dnepropetrovsk and Makayevka, the Latter-day Saints were entitled to apply for the registration of a National Center for the Church. This action was proposed to the government on 6 April 1994, by a meeting of Ukrainian Branch Presidents which elected Dr. Aleksandr Manzhos, a biological scientist and an LDS District President in Kyiv, as its National President. After a number of direct negotiating sessions, President Manzhos obtained the full confidence of the CRA. Professor Anatoly Kolodny, Director of the Religious Study Department of the Skovoroda Institute of Philosophy in the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences, was consulted by the government, and he gave a strong positive recommendation in favor of granting full legal status to the National Center of the LDS Church (Biddulph 1996a: 65). In 1995 the National Center of the LDS Church in Ukraine was officially recognized.

The international headquarters of the LDS Church recognized the full maturity of the LDS Church in Kyiv by proclaiming it as a new Stake of Zion in 2004, the first in all the territory of the former USSR or in East Europe. In addition to a local Ukrainian Stake Presidency, Patriarch, and High Council, the sixteen branches were combined into seven larger congregations known as wards, each directed by a local Ukrainian Bishop. All church officers were local Ukrainians, called and directed by the Ukrainian Stake Presidency or by an Ukrainian Bishop, rather than by a foreign Mission President.

The Kyiv Temple is the 134<sup>th</sup> Temple in the world erected by the LDS Church, but except for the beginning years of the Church, the only temple built within 20 years of the arrival of the first missionaries in the area. This temple serves Latter-day Saints living in nine nations: Ukraine, Russia, Belarus, Moldova, Kazakhstan, Armenia, Georgia, Romania, and Bulgaria. The decision to erect this temple was announced in 1998, but it took nine years to locate and receive approval of the government for the 12.35 acre site in the Southwest edge of Kyiv. The groundbreaking occurred on June 23, 2007; the edifice was completed on the day of dedication, 29 August 2010. The Kyiv Temple has won several national awards for its stunningly beautiful architecture (Hawkins, 2016: 270-71). The government approval for the visible site in Kyiv and the erection of such a large, beautiful edifice for religious purposes symbolizes the "full toleration" of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Ukraine.

### **Part III: Explaining Ukrainian State Religious Policy.**

**Howard Biddulph:** On most of the major goals of post-Communism, Ukraine's performance has not been unusual compared to other new states of East Central Europe and Eurasia. The record of Ukraine on economic reform, state control of corruption, political democratization, and general human rights has not been impressive in comparison to the others (D'Anieri. et. al: 1999, 3-6; Motyl 1993: 31-75). Why, then, has Ukraine had a more positive record on religious liberty and full state toleration of religious minorities in comparison with most other new states of the former Soviet Union?

After more than two decades, the status of religion has changed significantly in all of these countries, yet most have not yet established a clearly positive record on religious human rights. At least since 1995, Ukraine has been one of the minority which have consistently given liberal support to the freedom of a broad spectrum of religious orientations. Why has Ukraine had a record of relatively "full toleration" with respect to nontraditional confessions, whereas its near neighbors Russia and Belarus have not?

Ukraine shares with Russia and Belarus a common Eastern Slavic cultural tradition, a history of inclusion in both the Tsarist and Soviet empires. Yet in contrast to Ukraine's relatively

full toleration of religious minorities since 1995, post-Soviet Russian elites have been polarized between the perspectives of limited toleration and authoritarian suppression of nontraditional confessions (Biddulph 1999: 10). The new “anti-extremism” so called “Yarovaya Law” which went into effect in Putin’s Russian Federation on July 20, 2016, appears to be as repressive as Stalin’s 1929 legislation on religion (Lucas 7/20/2016; Woods 7/22/16; Shellnut 2016). Annual reports of international monitoring agencies would seem to conclude that the authoritarian perspective against nontraditional confessions has been dominant also in Belarus (Biddulph: 1999, 10; Biddulph 2003c).

I believe that there are at least two important factors that explain Ukraine’s greater success in maintaining a full toleration of nontraditional confessions, at least since 1995. First, as some scholars have observed, there is a lack of specific religious identity in Ukrainian nationalism. When one speaks of Russian or Belorussian nationalism, it is understood to include a specific religious identity — Eastern Orthodoxy. This is not the case with Ukraine for historical reasons and present realities. The nineteenth century “Ukrainian project” of the Galychyna thinkers deliberately abstracted religious differences between Orthodox and Catholic to create a united Ukrainian identity. Unlike Russia or Poland, nationalism in Ukraine is not so identified with one particular religion (cf. Yelensky 2002: 474; Wilson 2002: 108-18). The splintering of Ukrainian Orthodoxy into three churches creates a present reality in which all confessions in Ukraine are minorities. This has made it easier for the secular political elite to be even handed among religions (Wilson 2002: 249-52). The lack of a strong specific religious identity in Ukrainian nationalism means that Ukrainian leaders can pursue “national rebirth” without feeling the need to curtail the expression of minority religious freedom rights.

The second factor is the effect of religious cleavage among major confessions upon political stability, because they reinforce political and territorial cleavages. The major Orthodox and Catholic confessions occupy relatively separate territories and they have strong intolerant attitudes toward one another. After the “Black Tuesday” violent religious clashes at St. Sophia Cathedral, the Kuchma leadership realized that religious conflict could be politically destabilizing. Inter-confessional intolerance, therefore, motivates the state towards religious neutrality and conflict resolution as well as careful recognition of the rights of all groups. The secular political elite realizes that inter-confessional conflict is best controlled to prevent instability by the state functioning as an impartial referee who conscientiously protects the rights of each religious group (Biddulph: 2003c) Together, these two factors explain show why religious liberty is protected in post-socialist Ukraine.

This is not to confidently predict that religious freedom for traditional and minority religions is secure in Ukraine’s future. Ukraine has not yet become a culture of harmonious religious denominationalism in which each group accepts and respects the rights of others. There are still powerful political forces that might try to hitch the Ukrainian “national carriage” to the “race horse” of an officially established religion. If Ukrainian policy makers are wise, however, they will continue to resist this siren call, realizing that “national renaissance” is fully consistent with religious pluralism and respect for the freedom of all confessions. They will realize, too, that this existing policy will be more likely to ensure the safety and stability of the Ukrainian “national carriage,” than the alternative. In the meantime, perhaps those organizations such as CERIF, which are dedicated to educating the Ukrainian public in societal and inter-confessional tolerance will succeed in the long run with their great mission.

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## **6. Мар'яна ТАТАРЧУК. Релігійні меншини України в соціально-культурному і правовому аспектах**

З наявною із 1970-80-х років тенденцією до все більшої глобалізації світу, до мультикультуралізму та плюралізму у всіх його виявах немає нічого дивного у тому, що релігійні, етнічні, національні, мовні та інші протиріччя і конфлікти виникають між представниками тих чи інших соціальних груп. Релігійні та національні протиріччя є найбільш характерними і набувають найгостріших форм розв'язки в поліетнічних і поліконфесійних країнах у випадку приналежності більшості населення до однієї національної, релігійної та іншої групи, в той час як решта складають меншість за тим чи