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## Scientific Review

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## SCIENTIFIC REVIEW

Professor **Nadiia Stokolos**, Doctor of Historical Sciences, at the Department of Cultural Studies and Philosophy at the National University of Ostroh Academy provided a Scientific Review for the special issue "Ukrainian Protestants," dedicated to current issues of history and presence of several Protestant communities in Ukraine.

During the decade of Ukraine's independence, significant qualitative changes have taken place in the study of the role of religion and the church in all spheres of its public life, including the formation of positive civic opinion on the religious phenomenon as an integral and significant component of spiritual culture. Domestic scholars, in particular religious scholars, have made great efforts to overcome the negative stereotypes about religion that the totalitarian Soviet state has been asserting in the public consciousness for many decades. Their work on the emergence and formation of Protestantism in Ukraine, milestones in the history of late Protestant movements in Ukraine, the current state, as well as the positive potential of spiritual and moral influence on society can be characterized by unconditional importance and social significance. At the same time, it is obvious that both in the study of their history, the transformations they have undergone over the past decades, as well as the trends inherent in modern development, there are still many gaps. They were at least partially tried to be filled the author's team of the issue "Ukrainian Protestantism, a significant part of which consists of representatives of the young generation of domestic theologians.

The special issue is rich in content and, of course, relevant. The authors of its first thematic block are convinced that to adequately comprehend modern religious processes in Ukraine, as well as their forecasting, a deep analysis of its confessional life in the past, in particular in the Soviet period, is necessary. Articles on the history of some Protestant movements, based on a thorough source base and the use of methodological tools based on interdisciplinary links, emphasize that almost the entire 20th century was a time of repression and catacomb existence for their communities. Many carefully verified and deeply thought-out examples prove that social negativism, political neutrality, and indifference in the then environment of Protestant currents, which are still sometimes evident, were determined by the hostile attitude of the totalitarian state and part of the society. At the same time, pushed to the margins of social life, they were able to develop and practice socio-ethical rules of conduct for members of their communities, particularly about the attitude toward work and the state.

The majority of the authors address the issues related to the reaction of Protestant communities to the armed conflict in eastern Ukraine, including the problems and achievements of volunteer work of their followers in the region, attitudes towards people with disabilities, involvement of community members in digital culture, practice of Ukrainian Protestants business ethics as a means of influencing economic processes in the country, as well as the potential of the visual rhetoric of Protestant architecture--all of these are manifestations of qualitative changes in their mentality. The articles in this issue testify that in the conditions of freedom of conscience of independent Ukraine Protestant denominations appear as dynamic churches with the remarkable spiritual and moral potential of the activity. By taking civic initiative, in particular by creating various foundations and professional associations, they contribute to the involvement of their faithful in the socio-political and socio-economic processes in sovereign Ukraine.

An important segment of the issue is articles on the activities of Ukrainian Protestants during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their prompt study of these issues and preparation for publication of the relevant results with its limitations testify not only to the sensitivity of the Protestant community in Ukraine to the problems of this pandemic but also to make every effort to overcome this scourge, which humanity is trying to overcome.

Thus, the issue "Ukrainian Protestants" offers to readers a valuable contribution to the treasury of domestic Ukrainian religious studies, as it has the potential to promote the consolidation of Ukrainian society as a prerequisite for its further successful development.