

2-2022

Religious Beliefs of World Boxing Champions as a Factor of Influence on Ukrainian Society in the Context of Social Responsibility

Bogdan Sychak

Ukrainian Institute of Arts and Sciences

Petro Livak

Ukrainian Institute of Arts and Sciences

Olga Kuvaldina

Admiral Makarov National University of Shipbuilding, Mykolaiv, Ukraine

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree>



Part of the [Christianity Commons](#), [Eastern European Studies Commons](#), and the [Sports Studies Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Sychak, Bogdan; Livak, Petro; and Kuvaldina, Olga (2022) "Religious Beliefs of World Boxing Champions as a Factor of Influence on Ukrainian Society in the Context of Social Responsibility," *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*: Vol. 42 : Iss. 1 , Article 6.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55221/2693-2148.2319>

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.georgefox.edu/ree/vol42/iss1/6>

This Article, Exploration, or Report is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ George Fox University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ George Fox University. For more information, please contact arolfe@georgefox.edu.

RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OF WORLD BOXING CHAMPIONS AS A FACTOR OF INFLUENCE ON UKRAINIAN SOCIETY IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

By **Bogdan Synchak, Petro Livak and Olga Kuvaldina**

Bogdan Synchak, PhD student in the Department of Journalism at “Kyiv University of Culture,” Teacher, Department of Journalism of Ukrainian Institute of Arts and Sciences, Bucha, Ukraine. Scientific interests: Religion in Ukraine, Deontology, Ethics in the Media. E-mail: bsynchak@gmail.com ORCID: 0000-0002-8186-5692

Petro Livak, PhD, Candidate of Law, Associate Professor of Theory and Methods of Physical Education of Ukrainian Institute of Arts and Sciences, Bucha, Ukraine. Scientific interests: Physical Education, Rehabilitation and Massage, Christian Leisure. E-mail: livak777@meta.ua ORCID: 0000-0002-0136-2607

Olga Kuvaldina, PhD, Candidate of Sciences (Physical Education and sport), Associate Professor of the Department of the Theoretical Basics of Olympic and Professional Sports, Admiral Makarov National University of Shipbuilding, Mykolaiv, Ukraine. Scientific interests: aspects of the development of Olympic sports, the study of functional and physical characteristics of athletes of different qualifications, the study of the training of athletes. E-mail: rybakrally@yandex.ru ORCID: 0000-0002-3402-2369

Abstract

The issue regarding the influence of mass media on the public consciousness is one of the priorities in the times of the digitalization of the information space. Great sports such as professional boxing are world-famous and have a wide resonance in the media. As a result, scientists are paying attention to the study of factors of influence that arise during the information coverage of sporting events. Religious beliefs are a conditional plane of differentiation of different worldview systems, but in the 21st century, they are harmoniously integrated into the colors of different cultures, nationalities, and states. Celebrities' religious beliefs can be influential factors that have certain results and consequences for society. This article considers the issue of social responsibility of world boxing champions for the public demonstration of their own religious beliefs as the example of the Ukrainian experience. The latter is relevant for the international community in the context of the rapid movement of Ukraine towards European integration and accession to NATO. The stated issues are considered in the example of media activity of Ukrainian world boxing champions, O. Usyk and V. Lomachenko. The problem is exacerbated against the background of the current Russian-Ukrainian hybrid war, where the plane of the religious worldview is actively used as a destructive factor of informational influence. In this context, this paper presents the data of the study of the coefficient of possibilities of informational influence of the Russian Federation on neighboring countries. The most resonant examples of media activity of Ukrainian world boxing champions on the topic of covering their own religious beliefs are demonstrated. Indicators of media potential of the influence of athletes' religious worldviews on society are analyzed.

Keywords: influence of religious worldview, public consciousness, famous athletes, thought leaders, Ukrainian boxers, media influence on society.

Formulation of the Problem

The religious beliefs of each individual are sovereign in the traditional democratic social order. However, the religious worldview, despite its alleged "alienation" from other social spheres, is often intertwined with state mechanisms. That is why the issue of the influence of the religious worldview of famous athletes on the public consciousness needs the attention of researchers of social communications. The purpose of research in this area is to determine the relationship between the public demonstration of the religious worldview of famous athletes, and its impact on public consciousness. The main problem in this context is the possible encroachment on a free religious worldview using celebrities, including famous athletes, as leaders of thought and role models. Sports are another plane that position its "alienation" from other social spheres. However, as in the case of religion, as a cultural component, it does not stay away from state mechanisms, particularly the formation of image and authority in the international arena. These two completely different fields are combined in the information space by one ideology, which carries their symbiosis—hence the attention to the social responsibility of the influence of the religious worldview of famous athletes on public consciousness.

Analysis of Recent Publications

The modern experience of approaches to the study of concepts of the influence of the religious worldview of famous people on the public demonstrates the specific nature of the problem. For the most part, in recent studies regarding this problem, scientists focus on various problem areas. For example, H. Fahmy, looking at the power of sport in American culture through the prism of the media, notes that sports and religion are theoretically "soul mates." According to him, athletes, fans, and believers alike "recite such liturgies." They are characterized by "the division of the world into winners and losers," the requirement of complete devotion to body and mind, "and attention to the myths supported by rituals."¹ A. Moretão, studying Iranian professional athletes regarding the relationship between religion and sports, notes that the interviewed "athletes have different views on the Islamic religion, and some of them said they do not want to wear the hijab and prefer the separation between state

¹ H. Fahmy, "The Power of Sports: Media and Spectacle in American Culture by Michael Serazio (Review)," *The Velvet Light Trap University of Texas Press*, no. 87 (2021): 87–89.

and religion."² In the context of the study of the relationship between sports and religion, Sirvent and Reyburn note that scholars uncritically use terms such as "religion" and "bigotry" in both politics and sport. The main thesis here is the need to understand "the meaning of these words and their role in making sports an exceptional practice that perpetuates class, gender and racial inequality."³ Examining the relationship between sports and religion, N. Ronkainen, T. Ryba, and D. Tod note that "religion, as a source of basic world ideas and values, provides a broader structure of meaning and continuity of sports life."⁴ Collectively, recent foreign studies show indifference to the interaction of religious worldview and sports.

Ukrainian scientists in their works also pay attention to this issue. For example, in consideration of the religious worldview concerning the church's attitude to sports, V. Buguychuk, V. Shuba, M. Ostryansky, and V. Martin emphasize that the principle of combining these two areas is "knowledge of moderation in sports so that a person doing sports does not lose their moral qualities."⁵ Instead, L. Filipovych and V. Tytarenko, researching religion as a value, note the "tendency to know the changing conditions of society, in particular, that the younger generation is not indifferent to issues of religious and political nature." According to scholars, this topic is characterized by a "gradual propensity, especially among young people, to the universalization of religious values as a desire to expand the boundaries of their understanding of spirituality."⁶ Here we see the importance of the influence of religious values on the younger generation. In the context of the study of sports as a means of promoting universal humanistic values, A. Belous writes that "the problems and shortcomings of modern society are reflected in sports." According to him, "excessive politicization and commercialization, corruption and doping scandals—all this exists, but the very fact of their perception as an anomaly, unacceptable and inappropriate in sports, proves its significant moral

² A. Moretão, "Religion and Sports: Experiences of Iranian Professional Female Athletes," in *IV ISA Forum of Sociology*, 2021.

³ M. Fontanilla, "Gods, Games, and Globalization: New Perspectives on Religion and Sports," ed. Rebecca Alpert and Arthur Remillard, *Journal of Sport History University of Illinois Press* 47, no. 3 (2020): 296–97.

⁴ N. Ronkainen, T. Ryba, and D. Tod, "Don't Ever Mix God with Sports: Christian Religion in Athletes' Stories of Life Transitions," *Sport in Society* 23, no. 4 (2019): 613–28, <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2019.1599199>.

⁵ Віталій Бугуйчук et al., "Релігійний світогляд та ставлення церкви до фізичної культури і спорту," in *Педагогіка, психологія та медико-біологічні проблеми фізичного виховання і спорту: Збірник наукових праць*, ed. С.С. Єрмакова (Харків-Львів: ХДАДМ (ХХІІ), 2003), 33. [Vitaliy Buguychuk et al., "Religious worldview and attitude of the church to physical culture and sports," in *Pedagogy, psychology and medical and biological problems of physical education and sports: Collection of scientific works*, ed. S.S. Yermakova (Kharkiv-Lviv: KhDADM (KhKhPI), 2003), 33.]

⁶ Л. Филипович and В. Титаренко, "Релігія як цінність і релігійні цінності: релігієзнавчі і соціологічні виміри," *Мультиверсум. Філософський альманах* 1, no. 1 (2021): 82. [L. Filipovich and V. Tytarenko, "Religion as a Value and Religious Values: Religious and Sociological Dimensions," *Multiverse. Philosophical Almanac* 1, no. 1 (2021): 82.]

and value potential."⁷ However, in the current publications of scientists, the main direction is not the issue of the influence of the religious worldview of famous athletes on public consciousness. Therefore, this study aims to determine the relationship between the public demonstration of the religious worldview of famous athletes, and its impact on public awareness.

The Main Results of the Study

The issue of the influence of public positions of opinion leaders on the public consciousness becomes especially relevant in the context of the active functioning of information wars in the media. The main layers of the struggle for the minds of society are usually the categories of politics, culture, and religion. The latter attracts our attention, as in the media space, there is an increasing idea of separating these components from each other. Since religion is for peace, it is abstracted from political and other informational battles. However, in the public consciousness, these planes are closely interconnected and cannot be completed separately. In this context, the study of the influence of the religious worldview of famous athletes on the public consciousness needs attention, including the example of specific athletes. This is because the category of sports has international coverage for athletes from any country to spread the message of their worldview to the world.

Every person's religious worldview is based on their ideas about supernatural forces. These ideas exist within the so-called religious picture of the world, "a set of general views of the world in light of its religious worldview (structure, origin, development, and place of the human in it)." Each religion offers its religious picture of the world.⁸ Thus, the dominant religion in the state is closely linked in value to the public consciousness. Against the background of the struggle for European integration, joining NATO, and state reincarnation into more civilized society, the Ukrainian experience is increasingly attracting the attention of scholars. Its projections are relevant to the general European space. It is worth noting that, unlike Catholic and Protestant Europe, Ukraine is one of the largest Orthodox countries in the world.⁹ This means that the value dominance among the population is in tune with the basic

⁷ A. Bilous, "Sport as a Means of Promoting Universal Humanistic Values," *Journal of Education, Health and Sport* 11, no. 12 (2021): 76, <https://doi.org/10.12775/JEHS.2021.11.12.006>.

⁸ "Релігійна картина світу," Українська релігієзнавча енциклопедія, 2015, <https://ure-online.info/encyclopedia/religijna-kartyna-svitu/>. ["Religious picture of the world," Ukrainian Encyclopedia of Religious Studies, 2015.]

⁹ Павло Солодько, "Історія і сучасність українського православ'я," *Історична правда*, 2013, <https://www.istpravda.com.ua/articles/2013/07/25/131816/>. [Pavlo Solodko, "History and Modernity of Ukrainian Orthodoxy," *Historical Truth*, 2013.]

postulates of this religious trend. According to V. Yelensky, "Orthodoxy is becoming a leading driver of the awakening of collective identity for communities that compete with others, especially if they are the bearers of other religions."¹⁰ Here we see signs of ideological confrontation because representatives of religious denominations can support certain events and views, thereby motivating the general public to think in the same way in a particular direction.

A striking example of this kind of informational confrontation is the acquisition by the Orthodox Church in the Ukraine of *Tomos*, and the conflict with the Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the Russian Patriarchate (RP) for social affiliation with the religious worldview.¹¹ In the media space, various postulates of their religious authorities can be publicly supported by public opinion leaders: famous artists, sportsmen, artists, public figures, etc. For example, Ukrainian boxer O. Usyk is "the current world heavyweight champion in the IBF, WBA Super, IBO, and WBO."¹² V. Lomachenko is an "ex-world champion in lightweight according to the WBA, WBO." Both athletes are representatives of Ukraine not only as athletes, but also as opinion leaders, role models for many young generations, and potential examples of the Ukrainian worldview for the international space. Both, in addition to their championship titles, are known for publicly expressing their sympathies for Russia in various forms during the current Russian-Ukrainian hybrid war. These boxers in 2020 starred¹³ in a "propaganda video released by a Russian Orthodox Church monastery praising the Orthodoxy of the Moscow Patriarchate and the unity of Ukraine and Russia—during Russia's current hybrid war against Ukraine and on the battlefield, and in the church sphere. "It is significant that in this film under the [term] 'canonical' in Ukraine, its authors mean the Ukrainian branch of the Russian Orthodox Church - UOC (MP), although the only canonical in Ukraine is the local¹⁴ Ukrainian Orthodox Church, Orthodox Church of Ukraine, which is recognized by the Ecumenical

¹⁰ Віктор Єленський, "Православ'я в процесі політичних трансформацій посткомуністичного простору," *Політичні дослідження* 1 (2021): 123. [Victor Yelensky, "Orthodoxy in the Process of Political Transformations of the Post-Communist Space," *Political Studies* 1 (2021): 123.]

¹¹ Д. Горєвой, "Від 'кузні кадрів РПЦ' до томосу ПЦУ: як змінився релігійний ландшафт України за 30 років Незалежності?," *Радіо Свобода*, 2021, <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/relihiynyy-landshaft-ukrayiny-za-30-rokiv-nezalezhnosti/31423954.html>. [D. Gorevoy, "From the 'forge of ROC cadres' to the tomos of the PCU: how has the religious landscape of Ukraine changed during the 30 years of Independence?," *Radio Svoboda*, 2021]

¹² А. Журба, "Олександр Усик у важкому поєдинку переміг Ентоні Джошуа," *Zaxid.net*, 2021, https://zaxid.net/biy_usik_dzhoshua_25_veresnya_2021_ho_peremig_u_londoni_n1526846. [A. Zhurba, "Alexander Usyk defeated Anthony Joshua in a difficult fight," *Zaxid.net*, 2021.]

¹³ hromadske, "Українські боксери Усик та Ломаченко знялися в російському фільмі про 'дружбу народів,'" *Детектор медіа*, 2020, <https://detector.media/medialife/article/176932/2020-05-06-ukrainski-boksery-usyk-ta-lomachenko-znyalysya-v-rosiyskomu-filmi-pro-druzhbu-narodiv/>. [hromadske, "Ukrainian boxers Usyk and Lomachenko starred in a Russian film about 'friendship of peoples,'" *Media Detector*, 2020]

¹⁴ In ecclesial terminology the word "local" means the official church of a territory, such as a state.

Patriarchate."¹⁵ Such worldviews are supported in other backgrounds, such as the participation of O. Usyk in the fight in Moscow, which the then Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine V. Kyrylenko commented on the following words: "Usyk is, without a doubt, a great boxer. But there are several more similar events in Moscow with the participation of Ukrainians, and no one in the world will believe in Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Only in 'friendship.' And this is serious."¹⁶ After the recent boxing match, V. Lomachenko "wrapped himself in the flag of his native Belgorod-Dniester, which he prefers to call Ackerman. This caused a flurry of surprise, everyone asked why it was not the flag of Ukraine, many mentioned that after the fights against Teofimo Lopez and Masayoshi Nakatani, Lomachenko also did not have a yellow and blue flag."¹⁷ Former world champions V. Senchenko and V. Klitschko also expressed their surprise in this regard. In particular, the former believes that the flag of Ukraine should have been on the athlete's back at international competitions.¹⁸ And the second expressed doubts about which country the athlete represented, saying "V. Lomachenko won, congratulations, but did he represent his country without using its flag?"¹⁹ All these precedents undoubtedly affect the public consciousness through the media. Against the background of possible aggravations in the form of the negative impact of public behavior of famous people on public awareness, there are potential threats that could exacerbate the situation (see Fig. 1).

¹⁵ "Боксер Усик: від 'козака з оселедцем' до підтримки МП і дружби з Росією в час війни," Радіо Свобода, 2020, <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/oleksandr-usyk-i-rosija/30597900.html>. ["Boxer Usyk: from 'Cossack with herring' to support for MP and friendship with Russia during the war," Radio Svoboda, 2020]

¹⁶ "Член уряду засудив Усика за бій у Москві," Радіо Свобода, 2018, <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news/29384711.html>. ["A member of the government condemned Usyk for the fight in Moscow," Radio Svoboda, 2018,]

¹⁷ "Багато українців відходять від нього як фанати, не люблять його". Ломаченка наздоганяє критика за прапор Аккермана," XSport, 2022, https://xsport.ua/ua/boxing_s/news/bagato-ukrayintsiv-vidkhodyat-vid-nogo-yak-fanaty-ne-lyublyat-yogo-lomachenka-nazdoganyaie-krytyka_7204293/. ["Many Ukrainians leave him as fans, they don't like him." Lomachenko is catching up with critics for the Ackermann flag, "XSport, 2022]

¹⁸ "Сенченко: 'у Ломаченко повинен був бути на плечах прапор України,'" XSport, 2021, https://xsport.ua/ua/boxing_s/news/senchenko-u-lomachenko-povynen-buv-buty-na-plechakh-prapor-ukrayiny_7020992/. [Senchenko: 'Lomachenko should have had the flag of Ukraine on his shoulders,' "XSport, 2021,]

¹⁹ "Що за фігня?" Володимир кличко сумнівається, що в бою з Комі Ломаченко представляв Україну," XSport, 2021, https://xsport.ua/ua/boxing_s/news/shcho-za-fignya-volodymyr-klitchko-sumnivaetsya-shcho-v-boyu-z-komi-lomachenko-predstavlyav-ukrayinu_6859557/. ["What kind of bullshit? 'Volodymyr Klitschko doubts that he represented Ukraine in the fight with Komi Lomachenko," XSport, 2021]

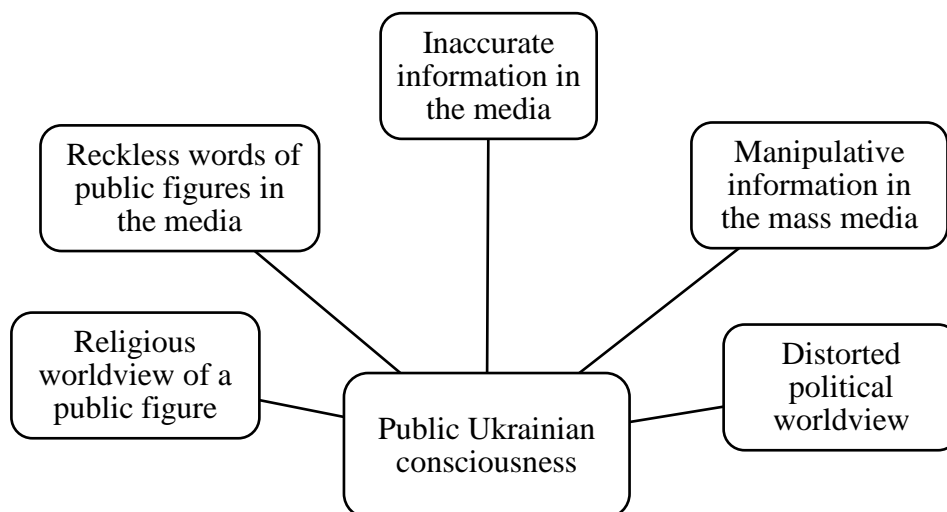


Figure 1. The alternative model of negative impact on the public consciousness of related information areas

Figure 1 shows a set of related information directions that can negatively affect the public consciousness. Emphasis is placed on the fact that the religious worldview is often produced in combination with the political, the latter in turn affects the culture. Inaccurate and manipulative information also differ from each other, while the former can be false, the latter is intended to influence someone to persuade in their interests. According to a study by the Media Detector NGO, five years ago, Ukraine was in third place in the ratio of opportunities for effective informational influence of the Russian Federation on neighboring countries (see Figure 2).

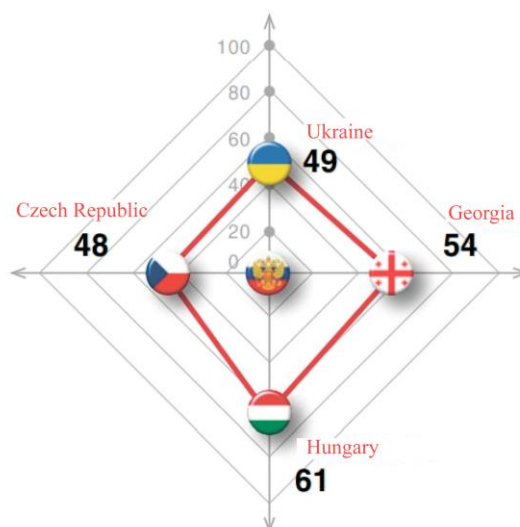


Figure 2. Coefficient of information impact of the Russian Federation on neighboring countries²⁰

The data shown in Figure 2 indicate a high probability of purposeful informational influence on the public realization of Ukrainians by the Russian Federation, including the religious worldview. The impact on religious public consciousness is one of the components of the Russian-Ukrainian information war. This is proved by the information field around boxers, O. Usyk and V. Lomachenko. After the recent victory, he was the first to dance the traditional Ukrainian *hopak* dance in the ring with the Ukrainian flag. What is the religious worldview for? Famous people have publicly greeted the boxer in various ways, the subject is a greeting from S. Markov, a proxy of the President of the Russian Federation. In the text of the greeting, he called O. Usyk "a real Russian man" and stressed that before the battle he "visited the church of the Moscow Patriarchate in London."²¹ Earlier, O. Usyk himself called his "uncoordinated" participation in another propaganda religious film "Pilgrim." The athlete stated, "Stupid. I understand that this is the information war."²² On using famous people to their advantage in the information war, sports journalist I. Verbitsky emphasizes, "Our top athletes must be aware: their every action can be used in the best interests of the enemy. And in order not to be useful idiots, our athletes need to weigh words and actions, perhaps even more than politicians."²³ Thus, sports are no less a socially responsible profession than politics, journalism, and many others. However, its peculiarity is that the main craft of athletes is not public performances, which are informative, but the specific discipline in which they perform. Instead, the media increasingly mentions well-known athletes in the context of their behavior, statements, or resonant actions. This is because the image and marketing strategies of the team of athletes are sometimes built on attracting attention to the person at any cost. However, more often than not, the storytellers themselves, being great athletes, are not professional media

²⁰ "ГО 'Детектор медіа' презентувала Індекс інформаційного впливу Кремля," ДМ. Media sapiens, 2017, <https://ms.detektor.media/mediadoslidzhennya/post/18914/2017-05-16-go-detektor-media-prezentuvala-indeks-informatsiynogo-vplyvu-kremlya/>. ["The Media Detector NGO presented the Kremlin's Information Influence Index," DM. Media sapiens, 2017]

²¹ О. Лашченко, "Гопак Усика і 'собаче' запитання 'чий Крим?' Соцмережі коментують перемогу боксера. Радіо Свобода," Радіо Свобода, 2021, <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/usyk-boks-krym-rosiya-viyna/31479018.html>. [O. Lashchenko, "Hopak Usyka and the 'dog' question: whose Crimea? 'Social networks comment on the boxer's victory. Radio Svoboda," Radio Svoboda, 2021]

²² "Це інформаційна війна": боксер Усик відреагував на свою появу у фільмі Оксани Марченко," 5 канал, 2021, <https://www.5.ua/suspilstvo/tse-informatsiina-viina-bokser-usyk-vidreahuvav-na-svoiu-poiavu-u-filmi-oksany-marchenko-239570.html>. ["It's an information war ': boxer Usyk reacted to his appearance in Oksana Marchenko's film," Channel 5,]

²³ І. Вербицький, "Спорт й інформаційна війна," Український тиждень, 2018, <https://tyzhden.ua/Society/223825>. [I. Verbitsky, "Sports and Information Warfare," Ukrainian Week, 2018]

personalities. Sports celebrities need to remember that they represent not only themselves in public, but also their fans, and ultimately their country. Therefore, during press conferences and other media activities, they should be more restrained, correct, tolerant, and ethical. The issue of the influence of the religious worldview in the Ukrainian experience includes examples of propagandistic influence on the public consciousness through the religious worldview. The latter positions itself "outside politics," but the information war is undoubtedly closely intertwined with political and cultural trends. Indicators of media influence on society demonstrate probable effective influence (see Table 1).

Table 1. Indicators of media potential of the influence of religious worldview on society

№	Boxers	Sport achievements	Religious affiliation	Indicators of the potential of the media influence of the religious worldview of athletes
1.	Alexander Usik	Current world heavyweight champion in the IBF, WBA Super, IBO, and WBO.	UOC (RP)	1. Personal Instagram - 1.6 million subscribers ²⁴ ; 2. The film "Hello, brother! Christ is risen" - 308,523 views ²⁵ ; 3. Usyk's response to the public's hatred about participating in the film "It is enough to divide the people of Ukraine" - 472,664 views. ²⁶
2.	Vasil Lomachenko	Ex-world champion in lightweight according to the WBA, WBO.	UOC (RP)	1. Personal Instagram - 2 million subscribers; 2. The film "Hello, brother! Christ is risen" - 308,523 views; 3. Video "The power of the Orthodox spirit." Lomachenko posted a video from the ROC website with Russian special forces - 728,911 views. ²⁷

²⁴ О. Павлова, "Вірастюк – глибо! Якими рекордами запам'ятаємо Василя-спортсмена," Сьогодні. Спорт, 2021, <https://sport.segodnya.ua/ua/sport/others/virastyuk-glyba-kakimi-rekordami-zapomnim-vasiliya-sportsmena-1516901.html>. [O. Pavlova, "Virastyuk is a block! What records do we remember Vasily the athlete?" Today. Sport,]

²⁵ Корсунская пустынь, "Премьера! фильм – Здравствуй, брат, Христос Воскресе!," YouTube, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URGDmfubwEQ>. [Korsun Hermitage, "Premier! film – Hello brother, Christ is Risen!," YouTube, 2020,]

²⁶ USYK17, "Ответ Александра Усика. 'Хватит разделять народ Украины,'" YouTube, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=SmyLmlOYJs8>. [USYK17, "Answer of Oleksandr Usyk. 'Stop dividing the people of Ukraine,'" YouTube, 2020]

²⁷ Iomachenkovasiliy, "Сила православного духа," Instagram, 2020, <https://www.instagram.com/p/B7GFtmilnYL/>. [Iomachenkovasiliy, "The power of the Orthodox spirit," Instagram, 2020,]

3.	Vitaliy Klitschko	Honorary world champion in boxing in the WBC version. Former world champion in professional boxing according to the WBO (1999-2000), The Ring (2004-2005), and WBC (2004-2005, 2008-2013) ²⁸ .	UOC (RP)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Personal Instagram - 158 thousand subscribers; 2. In an interview, Klitschko commented on Usik's patriotism and the fact that he baptized children in the UOC (RP) - 193,582 views.²⁹
----	-------------------	---	----------	--

Table 1 shows the relationship between athletic achievement, religious beliefs, and the potential media impact of a religious worldview on the societies of three well-known Ukrainian world boxing champions. Indicators of the media potential of the influence of religious worldview on society are based on the following logic: a) coverage of the mass audience by the athlete—the number of subscribers to social media; b) the number of views of those videos in which the athlete publicly demonstrates his religious worldview. For comparison, we take two popular media platforms, namely, Instagram and YouTube. According to the data in Table 1, the approximate total potential of the influence of the religious worldview of certain athletes on the public consciousness through these two information platforms is about one million audiences for O. Usyk and V. Lomachenko, and 200,000 for V. Klitschko. The latter is not a clear example of a public demonstration of the religious worldview, but in this interview, when asked by the interviewer whether he thinks O. Usyk is a "quilted jacket" (a man with a Soviet worldview), he objected, saying that due to his religious beliefs, O. Usyk remains a patriot of his country. As an example, he cited personal experience, saying that he also baptized his children in the Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra (UOC), but this is not a determining factor in characterizing his worldview in the anti-Ukrainian vector. Thus, the media influence on the society by religious beliefs of athletes on the example of Ukrainian world boxing champions is important for Ukrainian society and the world community. This is due to the media potential, which demonstrates the connection between the public demonstration of the religious worldview of famous athletes, and its impact on public consciousness and an estimated 200,000

²⁸ Klitschko museum, n.d., <https://klitschkomuseum.com/ua/about>.

²⁹ 5 канал, “‘Все це х*рня!’: Віталій Кличко в Рандеву з Яніною Соколовою,” *YouTube*, 2021, https://youtu.be/H_1xoN-k914?t=2539. [Channel 5, ‘All this is bullshit!’: Vitali Klitschko in Rendezvous with Yanina Sokolova, “YouTube, 2021]

to one million audiences on only two news platforms of Instagram and YouTube. These figures are much higher considering reposts and various kinds of feedback from journalists, bloggers, columnists, etc., —public reproducers and disseminators of information. We can assume that in different interpretations, the information about the religious worldview of the Ukrainian boxing world champions, O. Usyk, V. Lomachenko, and V. Klitschko was displayed in large numbers in the media space of Ukraine, Russia, and other countries where sports fans are the target audience.

Conclusion

Social responsibility is the plane in which the relationship between the public demonstration of the religious worldview of famous athletes and its impact on public consciousness lies. Opinion leaders need to keep in mind that their public actions have an impact on society in one way or another. Ukrainian experience shows that even the most titled boxers can be used against their state on the information battlefield. Working on one's own media literacy skills can help crystallize athletes' media behavior. In a democratic society, everyone has the right to their own religious, political, cultural, and other beliefs. However, by analogy with the well-known thesis, the information freedom of one person ends where the information freedom of another begins. Given the high component of social responsibility of famous athletes, in addition to sports, they should take a more careful approach to the quality of their public activity. The issue of the influence of the religious worldview of famous athletes on the public consciousness needs the attention of scientists and further research.

Published Sources

Bilous, A. "Sport as a Means of Promoting Universal Humanistic Values." *Journal of Education, Health and Sport* 11, no. 12 (2021): 69–79. <https://doi.org/10.12775/JEHS.2021.11.12.006>.

Fahmy, H. "The Power of Sports: Media and Spectacle in American Culture by Michael Serazio (Review)." *The Velvet Light Trap University of Texas Press*, no. 87 (2021): 87–89.

Fontanilla, M. "Gods, Games, and Globalization: New Perspectives on Religion and Sports." Edited by Rebecca Alpert and Arthur Remillard. *Journal of Sport History University of Illinois Press* 47, no. 3 (2020): 296–97.

hromadske. "Українські боксери Усик та Ломаченко знялися в російському фільмі про 'дружбу народів.'" Детектор медіа, 2020. <https://detector.media/medialife/article/176932/2020-05-06-ukrainski-boksery-usyk-ta-lomachenko-znyalysya-v-rosiyskomu-filmi-pro-druzhbu-narodiv/>. [hromadske. "Ukrainian boxers Usyk and Lomachenko starred in the Russian film 'Friendship of Peoples.'" Media Detector, 2020]

Klitschko museum, n.d. <https://klitschkomuseum.com/ua/about>.

lomachenkovasiliy. "Сила православного духа." Instagram, 2020. <https://www.instagram.com/p/B7GFtmilnYL/>. ["The power of the Orthodox spirit."]

Moretão, A. "Religion and Sports: Experiences of Iranian Professional Female Athletes." In *IV ISA Forum of Sociology*, 2021.

Ronkainen, N., T. Ryba, and D. Tod. "Don't Ever Mix God with Sports: Christian Religion in Athletes' Stories of Life Transitions." *Sport in Society* 23, no. 4 (2019): 613–28. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2019.1599199>.

USYK17. "Ответ Александра Усика. 'Хватит разделять народ Украины.'" YouTube, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=SmyLmIOYJs8>. [USYK17. "Answer of Oleksandr Usyk. 'Stop dividing the people of Ukraine.'"]

5 канал. "'Все це х*рня!': Віталій Кличко в Рандеву з Яніною Соколовою." YouTube, 2021. https://youtu.be/H_lxoN-k914?t=2539. [Channel 5. "It's all bullshit!": Vitali Klitschko in Rendezvous with Yanina Sokolova. "]

"'Багато українців відходять від нього як фанати, не люблять його'. Ломаченка наздоганяє критика за прапор Аккермана." XSport, 2022. https://xsport.ua/ua/boxing_s/news/bagato-ukrayintsiv-vidkhodyat-vid-nogo-yak-fanaty-ne-lyublyat-yogo-lomachenka-nazdoganyaie-krytyka_7204293/. ["Many Ukrainians leave him as fans, they don't like him." Lomachenko is catching up with critics for the Ackermann flag. " XSport, 2022.]

Боксер Усик: від 'козака з оселедцем' до підтримки МП і дружби з Росією в час війни." Радіо Свобода, 2020. <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/oleksandr-usyk-i-rosija/30597900.html>. ["Boxer Usyk: from 'Cossack with herring' to support for MP and friendship with Russia during the war." Radio Liberty, 2020.]

Бугуйчук, Віталій, Віктор Шуба, Микола Острианський, and Володимир Мартин. "Релігійний світогляд та ставлення церкви до фізичної культури і спорту." In *Педагогіка, психологія та медико-біологічні проблеми фізичного виховання і спорту: Збірник наукових праць*, edited by С.С. Єрмакова, 24–34. Харків-Львів: ХДАДМ (XXII), 2003. [Buguychuk, Vitaliy, Viktor Shuba, Mykola Ostryansky, and Volodymyr Martin. "Religious worldview and the church's attitude to physical culture and sports." In *Pedagogy, psychology and medical and biological problems of physical education and sports: Collection of scientific papers*, edited by S.S. Yermakova, 24–34. Kharkiv-Lviv: KhDADM (KhKhPI), 2003.]

Вербицький, І. "Спорт й інформаційна війна." Український тиждень, 2018. <https://tyzhden.ua/Society/223825>. [Verbytsky, I. "Sports and Information Warfare."]

Ukrainian Week, 2018.]

“ГО ‘Детектор медіа’ презентувала Індекс інформаційного впливу Кремля.” ДМ. Media sapiens, 2017. <https://ms.detector.media/mediadoslidzhennya/post/18914/2017-05-16-go-detektor-media-prezentuvava-indeks-informatsiynogo-vplyvu-kremlya/>. ["The Media Detector NGO presented the Kremlin's Information Influence Index." DM. Media sapiens, 2017.]

Горевой, Д. “Від ‘кузні кадрів РПЦ’ до томосу ПЦУ: як змінився релігійний ландшафт України за 30 років Незалежності?” Радіо Свобода, 2021. <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/relihiyny-landshaft-ukrayiny-za-30-rokiv-nezalezhnosti/31423954.html>. [Gorevoy, D. “From the ‘forge of ROC cadres’ to the tomos of the PCU: how has the religious landscape of Ukraine changed during the 30 years of Independence?” Radio Liberty, 2021.]

Єленський, Віктор. “Православ’я в процесі політичних трансформацій посткомуністичного простору.” *Політичні дослідження* 1 (2021): 123–41. [Yelensky, Victor. "Orthodoxy in the Process of Political Transformations in the Post-Communist Space." *Political Studies* 1 (2021): 123–41.]

Журба, А. “Олександр Усик у важкому поєдинку переміг Ентоні Джошуа.” Zaxid.net, 2021. https://zaxid.net/biy_usik_dzhoshua_25_veresnya_2021_hto_peremig_u_londoni_n1526846. [Zhurba, A. "Alexander Usyk defeated Anthony Joshua in a difficult fight." Zaxid.net, 2021.]

Корсунская пустынь. “Прем’єра! фільм – Здравствуй, брат, Христос Воскресе!” YouTube, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URGDmfubwEQ>. [Korsun desert. "Premiere! film - Hello, brother, Christ is Risen!"]

Лашенко, О. “Гопак Усика і ‘собаче’ запитання ‘чий Крим?’ Соцмережі коментують перемогу боксера.” Радіо Свобода, 2021. <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/usyk-boks-krym-rosiya-viyna/31479018.html>. [Lashchenko, O. “Hopak Usyka and the ‘dog’ question ‘whose Crimea?’ Social networks comment on the boxer’s victory.” Radio Liberty, 2021.]

Павлова, О. “Вірастюк – глиба! Якими рекордами запам’ятаємо Василя-спортсмена.” Сьогодні. Спорт, 2021. <https://sport.segodnya.ua/ua/sport/others/virastyuk-glyba-kakimi-rekordami-zapomnim-vasiliya-sportsmena-1516901.html>. [Pavlova, O. “Virastyuk is a block! What records do we remember Vasily the athlete?” Today. Sports, 2021.]

“Релігійна картина світу.” Українська релігієзнавча енциклопедія, 2015. <https://ure-online.info/encyclopedia/religijna-kartyna-svitu/>. [The religious picture of the world.” Ukrainian Religious Encyclopedia, 2015.]

“Сенченко: ‘у Ломаченко повинен був бути на плечах прапор України.’” XSport, 2021. https://xsport.ua/ua/boxing_s/news/senchenko-u-lomachenko-povynen-buv-buty-na-plechakh-prapor-ukrayiny_7020992/. ["Senchenko: 'Lomachenko should have had the flag of Ukraine on his shoulders.'"]

Солодько, Павло. “Історія і сучасність українського православ’я.” Історична правда, 2013. <https://www.istpravda.com.ua/articles/2013/07/25/131816/>. [Sweet, Paul. "History and modernity of Ukrainian Orthodoxy." *Historical truth*, 2013.]

Филипович, Л., and В. Титаренко. “Релігія як цінність і релігійні цінності: релігієзнавчі і соціологічні виміри.” *Мультиверсум. Філософський альманах* 1, no. 1 (2021): 71–86. [Filipovich, L., and V. Titarenko. "Religion as a Value and Religious Values: Religious and Sociological Dimensions." *Multiverse. Philosophical Almanac* 1, no. 1 (2021): 71–86.]

“‘Це інформаційна війна’: боксер Усик відреагував на свою появу у фільмі Оксани Марченко.” 5 канал, 2021. <https://www.5.ua/suspilstvo/tse-informatsiina-viina->

bokser-usyk-vidreahuvav-na-svoiu-poiavu-u-filmi-oksany-marchenko-239570.html. ["It's an information war ': boxer Usyk reacted to his appearance in Oksana Marchenko's film." Channel 5, 2021.]

“Член уряду засудив Усика за бій у Москві.” Радіо Свобода, 2018. <https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/news/29384711.html>. ["A member of the government has condemned Usik for fighting in Moscow." Radio Liberty, 2018.]

“‘Що за фігня?’ Володимир кличко сумнівається, що в бою з Комі Ломаченко представляв Україну.” XSport, 2021. https://xsport.ua/ua/boxing_s/news/shcho-za-fignya-volodymyr-klychko-sumnivaetsya-shcho-v-boyu-z-komi-lomachenko-predstavlyav-ukrayinu_6859557/. [“ ‘What kind of bullshit? ’Volodymyr Klitschko doubts that he represented Ukraine in the fight with Komi Lomachenko.”]