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Post

Ukraine's Orthodox Churches as a Battleground in Russia's Invasion — The Revealer

By Nicholas Denysenko

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> **In Odessa, [a missile strike](#) in July 2023 sent fourteen people to the hospital, including four children. The attack pulverized a sacred site – Holy Transfiguration Cathedral, the spiritual center of Odessa's Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine (ROCU). And while Russia's assaults on Ukraine have taken civilian lives, the attack on the cathedral was a warning shot – they were taking aim at Ukraine's Orthodox soul.**
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> **[Russia claims](#) there is no difference between Ukrainians and Russians. Russian political elites point to their common spiritual heritage as a symbol of their unity. So, why would Russia attempt to destroy a cathedral they claim as their own? The reason: Russia believes Ukraine has betrayed its ancestral unity by creating its own independent Orthodox church.**

> *Besides this feeling of religious betrayal, many factors motivated Russia's invasion of Ukraine: Putin's desire to make Russia into a worthy successor of the imperial and Soviet eras; Russia's dislike of the West and America in particular; Putin's hope to reconfigure the [energy market](#) to strengthen Russia and punish Europe; and, Russia's desire to punish Ukraine for its aspirations to distance itself from Russia and establish an anchor in Europe.*

Source: [Ukraine's Orthodox Churches as a Battleground in Russia's Invasion — The Revealer](#)