**Letter of the President** 

Religious fundamentalism most often manifests as a politically-religious ideology that entirely or partially rejects the ideas of cultural globalism. Those ideas being the phenomena of: religious tolerance, ecumenism and neo ecumenism; secularization; modern achievements in science and technology. They are for various reasons not compatible with the doctrines and practices of religious fundamentalists and extremists. Out of all the Universalist religions, Christianity, Islam and Buddhism have shown to be the strongest forces of globalization in the postmodern era. The sudden and constant demographic growth of Muslims worldwide leads us to the assumption that Islam might become the strongest religion of globalization. On the other hand, fundamentalism represents a type of an answer to the challenge of globalization. The idea is to establish a moral system of religious and traditional cultural values. The biggest problem of religious fundamentalism and extremism is the idea that only the cultural traditions of Muslim civilization and Sharia law are acceptable. Furthermore, religious institutions, especially Christian ones, are trying to realize a more universal approach towards the believers of other religions. In this regard, religious communities and groups are trying to practically implement the principles of ecumenism and neo ecumenism, trying to unite believers with different confessional belongings. Instead of starting by emphasizing the differences, using this principle, religious institutions emphasize the common beliefs and religious values that should become common for the entire world in the global era. Contrary to the exclusivity of fundamentalism, ecumenism suggests a plan through which religious tolerance and dialogue could be led by universal religious values and moral norms.

In regards to the religious situation in Europe, the following dilemmas and questions are asked:

* Does religion have a positive or negative role in Europe?
* Is secularization in Europe a myth or reality?
* Is a process of desecularization, or even sacralization, happening in the contemporary European society?
* Are religious organizations becoming more and more profane in their activities?
* Is the process of ethno-religious mobilization taking place in Europe?
* Why does religious fundamentalism reject the practical implementation of the principles of secularization and religious tolerance?
* Is the process of religious universalism happening in Europe through the ideas of ecumenism and neo ecumenism, and if yes, to what extent?
* What is the role of religious tolerance as a principle between religious particularism and religious universalism in Europe?
* To what extent are the religious organizations in Europe practically implementing the principles of religious tolerance?

As the director of CISR and president of the Program Board, I am inviting you to unite our results and analyses of our scientific studies, all with the goal of trying to answer the above-mentioned questions and dilemmas. I am also inviting you to experience the world famous Macedonian hospitality in the magnificent Struga on the coast of Lake Ohrid.

I am expecting you in North Macedonia!

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

*First European Conference of Religious Dialogue and Cooperation*

The role of religion in peace and conflict

**RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE AMONG YOUTH IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA**

**Avirovic Bundalevska Irena**, **PhD[[1]](#footnote-1)**

**Dragovic Ivana**, **MA[[2]](#footnote-2)**

***Abstract:*** *The Republic of North Macedonia is a multicultural country composed by various ethnic and religious groups. Macedonia was the only ex-Yugoslav state to gain its independence without a violent clash within the country or against the other post-Yugoslav republics. However, in 2001 the two major ethnic groups, the Macedonians and Albanians fought against each other in an armed conflict which resulted with the signature of the Ohrid Framework Agreement and promoted minority rights in the republic. Almost two decades after the conflict, ethnic tensions have been limited to sporadic hostilities usually prompted by sport events and political rallies. Today, promoting tolerance among ethnic groups is one of the key issues in the political agenda of the main political parties, both Macedonian and Albanian. However, school remain divided along ethnic lines, thus making it more challenging for pupils to interact and learn about the each other’s’ culture and tradition. This paper will analyze religious tolerance among youth in the Republic of North Macedonia by presenting available data and research from the post-conflict period. Moreover, the paper will present new data from the outcome of a research on religious and ethnic tolerance among students in Skopje conducted in 2019.*

*Keywords: religious tolerance, ethnic groups, youth, Republic of North Macedonia*

**GENERAL PREVALENCE AND FORMS OF MANIFESTING THE RELIGIOSITY AMONG POPULATION IN THE OHRID-STRUGA REGION**

**Bashkimi Bashkim, PhD[[3]](#footnote-3)**

***Abstract:*** *Today, as a result of the socialism failure, we are facing a period of many big changes in the society, as economic and political, as well as social ones, also. In addition, these changes are accompanied with values priorities changes in the social system of values. More precisely, the people are exposed to influences by the social, political and cultural events, so they find difficulties to adapt. In such situation, the religion offers a life philosophy which is compatible to specific confession. The ethnic and religion belonging are basic cohesive factors in the multicultural and multi confessional areas as ours. There are tendencies by individuals and groups for equalizing the national with religions belonging. Religion as one of the key factors of the human consciousness influences not only the building of spiritual system and the values system, but also the lifestyle. Losing the self-confidence in solving the important tasks in life, the man tries to find help, and exactly the religion is the right direction to look for it. It is really important to emphasize the activities of the confessional communities which insist in attracting attention by their organizational structures, to fulfill the gaps the other social institution and organization failed to fill. In this research, the subject of investigation was religiosity of the population in the Ohrid-Struga region, a region that represents ethnic and religion heterogeneous environment. There are two most important religious organizations as the Macedonian Orthodox Church - the Ohrid Archbishopric and the Islamic Religious Community. The target group is consisted of people older than 80. The results obtained by the research show the influence of religiosity, which is on a very high level, on the value orientations of the population in the Ohrid-Struga region.*

*Keywords: religion, religiosity, religious organizations, value orientations, religious tolerance*

**THE SOCIAL MEDIA AND RELIGION – NEW CHALLENGES**

Cukalevska Drakulovska Marija, PhD[[4]](#footnote-4)

Dragovic Anica, PhD [[5]](#footnote-5)

***Abstract:*** *In this paper we analyze the relationship between social media and religion. The subject of the research is to identify the power and the practical relevance of two spheres which are of utmost importance for more adequate understanding recent reality. According to Stewart Hoover ‘’ religion and media seem to be ever more connected as we move further into the twenty – first century ‘’ (Hoover, 2006:1). Today, social media increasingly become part of our daily lives; people will find new ways to interact with religion and spirituality. The main goal is to explore the power of social media, and attend to the ways in which these digital technologies are reconstituting and transforming the religious practices of the modern humans. Increasingly, people are religious or spiritual or inspired by religious texts, but only because they have chosen to plug in and engage with social media. The paper emphasizes the role of social media to represent a new challenge to individuals and institutions. This new challenge will create a networked religion, a networked community; convergent practice; and a multisite reality.*

*Keywords: social media, religion, changes, new challenge, network*

**ANALYSING 'THE BLESSED ENVOY': THE RELIGIOUS DIPLOMACY OF ARCHBISHOP MAKARIOS**

**Constantinou** **M. Costas[[6]](#footnote-6)**

***Abstract****: This presentation will examine the diplomatic activities of Archbishop Makarios, the first President of the Republic of Cyprus (1960 - 1977), both at home and abroad. It will show extracts from official documentaries that show how Makarios utilised his religious office to engage the public, enhance his political and diplomatic capital, and legitimate controversial policies and objectives. By assessing Makarios’ case, it will pose wider questions about the limits and prospects of religious diplomacy today.*

*Keywords: Archbishop Makarios, diplomatic activities*

**CONSTANTINE’S EDICT OF MILAN IN AN AGE OF RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL EXTREMISM**

**Daughrity Dyron, Professor of Religion[[7]](#footnote-7)**

***Abstract****: The Edict of Milan was a document that was ahead of its time. Not only did Constantine allow Christians to live unmolested, but he opened up the twin concepts of religious pluralism and religious tolerance to the vast Roman Empire. The thesis of the paper is that Constantine's core concern of "restoring public order" by issuing the Edict is a brilliant concept that has valuable content for today. While it may be the case that Constantine was becoming a Christian during the preparation of the Edict, his commitment to one faith over another was not punishing to non-Christian religions. It was a brilliant strategy for Constantine that may well have endeared him to the constituents of his empire, but perhaps even more striking was that Constantine's central concepts were so far ahead of their time. He used words and expressions like "free and unrestricted opportunity of religious worship," "for the sake of peace for our times," and "good will may come to the notice of all." It was a sincere document that shows Constantine's desires to liberate his people from religious restrictions. Constantine's Edict of Milan deserves attention at the Religious Dialogue conference, and I would be honored to present the history, context, and meaning of the document for today. I will also issue a renewed call for using this document as a teaching tool in the university classroom.*

*Keywords: Constantine, Edict of Milan, religious freedom, extremism*

**THROUGH DIALOGUE IN RELIGION TO RESOLVING CONFLICTS AND ACHIEVING PEACE**

**Donev Dejan, PhD**[[8]](#footnote-8)

***Abstract:*** *At the base, in the essence of every culture and civilization lies at least one religion that shapes and complements them. The same, in order to be properly interpreted and understood in its totality at different time intervals, there are a number of methods through which it can be understood and best applied. In the concrete example of our Balkan culture, history, civilization, one particularly dominates, and that is the dialogue, since the period of Socrates and his famous method.*

*The dialogue means a radically new consciousness that deeply changes the ways through which we need to understand the holistic approach to life. It is a dialectical way of understanding life. It is not worshiping one religion, but conscious apply of the common set of ethical principles that today have more than one major role in the whole existence.*

*Also, according to the present catalog of conflicts in which religion, religious institutions or ideology are constitutive elements, the main function of the dialogue is to move us into the era of global dialogue, and to help the religions, religious institutions and ideologies to pass faster the transition phases, conflicts and desires for domination, because historically they are an important link in the chain of all human existence.*

*Keywords: religion, dialogue, consciousness*

**THE GLOBAL MIGRANTS AND RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION**

Dragovic Anica[[9]](#footnote-9)

Cukalevska Drakulovska Marija [[10]](#footnote-10)

***Abstract:*** *Our research paper will be focused on global migrations and religion. The research focuses on the religious affiliation of global migrants. Recent studies show, migrants' religious background reflects the religious composition of the world population. Christians and Muslims are the two largest religious groups among migrants as the two largest religious groups in general. Hence, the basic purpose of the paper is to explore the patterns of migration among seven major groups: Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, adherents of other religions and the religiously unaffiliated. The Global data shows that almost half on the world’s migrations are Christians and more than a quarter are Muslims. The remaining quarter are a mix of Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, adherents of other faiths and the religiously unaffiliated (those who identify as atheists and agnostics or say they have no particular religion). The relation between global migrants and religious affiliation is closely connected to the process of globalization and system of values.*

*Keywords: demographic system, global migrants, religious affiliation, globalization*

**MULTIRELIGIOUSNESS IN CAMPS IN REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA:**

**TIMES OF REFUGEE CRISIS**

**Dragovic Ivana, M.Sc [[11]](#footnote-11)**

***Abstract:*** *The refugee crisis in Republic of North Macedonia had the highest intensity in period of 2015-2016. In that period were opened two refugee camps. One of them – „Refugee camp Tabanovce“ is on the border with Republic of Serbia and the „Refugee camp Vino jug – Gevgelija“ is on the border with Greece.*

*The refugee camps were very small and all nations were put together. Because of that the cultural and religious differences it feel the most. Refugees who were accommodated in the camps were from Islamic Faith, than Muslim Kurds and Yezidi Kurds. Although the reason why everyone fled their countries was the war and genocide of many nations, yet that „religious hatred“was felt. Religious intolerance was growing more and more every day.*

*Unfortunately, that influence, which may have been politically driven and imposed, was felt in the lives of those people. And what is imposed by society, with which they grow and develop every day, can be said to be difficult to eradicate.*

*Keywords: refugees, refugee camps, multireligiousness, religious intolerance*

**”US AND THE OTHERS” - ANCIENT RELIGIOUS TRADITIONS IN THE BALKANS AND THE PROBLEM OF CONTEMPORARY RELIGIONS**

**Duev Ratko, PhD[[12]](#footnote-12)**

**Manasievska Marija, M.Sc[[13]](#footnote-13)**

***Abstract:*** *How different does “the different religion” makes someone? And what exactly does that difference means? From the Neolithic period, up until the emergence of Christianity in the Aegean and the Balkans, there are strong beliefs and cults based on the religion of nature. Although, the philosophy of religion of Christianity and Islam was trying to suppress the folk traditions, which was a process far more of a syncretic nature rather than a victory of monotheism. This syncretism has allowed greater religious tolerance throughout the centuries, more so than in other parts of the world. The easier acceptance process that can be witnessed could as well be referred as “religious tolerance” and “peaceful coexistence”. This paper will make a brief review of the said beliefs, cults and monotheistic religions and will try to point out the positive and negative results of the long process of coexistence and syncretism.*

*Keywords: religion, coexistence, tolerance, ancient, present*

**RELIGIONS' DIALOG, CONTINUITY OF SACRED PLACES**

**Filipova Snezhana, PhD [[14]](#footnote-14)**

***Abstract:*** *In our country RN Macedonia there are over 1100 churches and monasteries from the middle Ages up to the 19th century, and 131 Muslim sacral objects registered, built over or in the vicinity of Ancient temples or early Christian basilicas, or near powerful water sources. Sometimes the big churches have been turned into mosques after certain adaptation, and only a small part of them have been given back their primary function in the course of the 20th C. In the socialistic period certain large churches or mosques were used as monuments of culture or touristic sites, or are still functioning as art galleries and part of Archaeological and National museums. Thus religion is powerful part of everyday life in a long period of time, even during the Socialist period of our state, when it was given marginal role. Especially interesting is the phenomenon of dual usage of the same temple for Christian and Muslim communities in several cities in Macedonia. The last decade shows enormous building activity of religious objects (over 100), but only in the villages with dominant or only Muslim population, while the new Christian churches are less than 20. What is striking is that the first group have no artistic aspirations, while the latter engage even foreign artists (Radovish church) and show respect towards art and local especially Medieval art traditions.*

*Keywords: early Christian basilicas, monuments of culture, Medieval art traditions*

**ARABIC LITERATURE AND INTERRELIGIOUS PEACEBUILDING PROCESSES**

**Fischione Fernanda, PhD candidate[[15]](#footnote-15)**

***Abstract****: My presentation aims to provide a draft literature review concerning the relation between literature and peace studies, with special attention to the contemporary Arabic novel. While it can be safely stated, in fact, that war is a widely explored issue in the scholarship dealing with Arabic literature, the same is not true for dialogue and peaceful coexistence. Such topics have never been systematically explored per se, as if conflict and trauma could only come back over and over in a Nietzschean eternal recurrence, and not pave the way to a positive reflection on peacebuilding. Despite their growing popularity, Peace studies have not broken through the wall of Arabic literary studies yet. The history of modern Middle East is essentially a history of war, and war is consequentially a pivotal element in modern and contemporary Arabic literature: contemporary literatures from the Mashreq, for instance, have been almost entirely shaped around the theme of war, by which they seem to be inexorably defined. But is it possible to reverse such a formula and start thinking of such literatures as literatures of peace, at least to some extents? The cliché can be challenged by changing our perspective and highlighting the role of literature as a bridge between different faiths and communities. Moreover, we need to re-think the relation between literature and peace not as an insignificant corollary of the more familiar literature/war pattern, but as a study subject in its own right. It is necessary to point out the importance of reflecting on positive peace in modern and contemporary Arabic literature, and to start building a new critical discourse revolving around peace building.*

*Keywords: Arabic novel, different faiths, peace*

**A POSTPONED POINT OF VIEW ABOUT THE FINAL DOCUMENTS REGARDING PEACE, JUSTICE, AWERSION OF WAR AND DISCRIMINATION, PROVIDED BY THE HOLY AND GREAT COUNCIL OF THE ORTHODOX CHURCH (2016)**

Florescu Marius, Fr. PhD [[16]](#footnote-16)

***Abstract:*** *The Orthodox Church has diachronically recognized and revealed the centrality of peace and justice in people’s lives. The very revelation of Christ is characterized as a*gospel of peace*(Eph 6:15), for Christ has brought* peace to all through the blood of his Cross*(Col 1:20),*preached peace to those afar and near*(Eph 2:17), and has become*our peace*(Eph 2:14). This peace,*which surpasses all understanding*(Phil 4:7), as the Lord Himself told His disciples before His passion, is broader and more essential than the peace promised by the world:*peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you*(Jn 14:27). The Encyclical Letter, The Message of the Holy and Great Council of the Orthodox Church, the document entitled The Mission of the Orthodox Church in Today’s World all speak, for the very first time in history unanimously about some things that are facing the today’s world. Since these documents have been adopted by the Holy and Great Council in 2016 some new facts appeared in world as in the between relations among the Orthodox Churches. In the light of these, we will try to make a postponed point of view about the final documents and how they could be a strong and credible voice in the contemporary world.*

*Keywords****:*** *peace, justice, world, Orthodox, Christianity*

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION, HEALING THE SCARS OF CONFLICT? - TEACHING RE IN POST-CONFLICT NORTHERN IRELAND**

**Gracie Anita[[17]](#footnote-17)**

***Abstract:*** *For three decades Northern Ireland was synonymous with sectarian conflict. The legacy of a divided society is still evident in almost entirely separate school systems and residential areas which are often divided along religious community lines. This paper will examine the challenges and opportunities offered by the teaching of Religious Education in a society emerging from conflict and will show how a common core syllabus and training in shared education is contributing to reconciliation and the building of tolerance and mutual understanding between Christian communities. Another result of the transition to a more peaceful society in Northern Ireland has been increased ethnic and religious diversity with people moving here to live and work from many parts of the world and changing the face of what was previously a relatively homogenous white, Christian demographic. Up to now the RE Core Syllabus has been agreed by the four largest Christian churches in Northern Ireland and has been almost entirely Christian in its content, apart from some teaching of World Religions for three years in the Post-Primary sector. A revision of the syllabus is currently in progress which would see the teaching of World Religions made statutory at all stages from 4-16 years. This paper will look at the implications of this change for teachers of RE and how we at Stranmillis University College are preparing student teachers for the new realities of teaching religious diversity in their classrooms.*

*Keywords: Religious Education, RE Core Syllabus, World Religions*

**WILL ISLAMOPHOBIA BRING AN END TO THE MULTICULTURALISM?**

**Grizhev Aleksandar PhD, Assistant professor[[18]](#footnote-18)**

**Taneski Nenad, PhD, Associate professor[[19]](#footnote-19)**

**Stojanovska Ivanova Tatjana, PhD, Associate professor[[20]](#footnote-20)**

***Abstract:*** *Having started after WWII, the immigration of foreigners into Europe started challenging the homogeneity of the European states. The predominantly Christian Europe’s countries became tempted by the values of the Islam, the religion brought by immigrants. In order to facilitate the accommodation and adaptation of the newcomers, different European countries adopted different approaches to this challenge to the national identities. The concept of multiculturalism as possible solution to the peaceful coexistence of different cultures became particularly popular in the last two decades. However, the concept itself has been challenged by the growing racism and xenophobia in Europe. As the most visible manifestation of these sentiments toward immigrants is islamophobia. Many factors contributed to the rise of this phenomenon in Europe, among them the migration, terrorist attacks on European soil in the new millennium and the rise of the Islamic Caliphate in Iraq and Syria. Those events brought to the surface different values of the Islam and put into question their compatibility with principles of the secular states in Europe.The prescriptive nature of Islamic religion has brought many hardships to the liberal democracies throughout Europe. The long debate about the compatibility of the Islamic beliefs and values with the modern and secular states continues in Europe. The rising islamophobia in Europe is threatening to bring an end to the concept of the multiculturalism. The co-existence of the Christianity and Islam in the contemporary secular and liberal states of Europe is challenged by the fear from Muslims and it remains to be seen will this phenomenon collapse the multicultural projects in many European countries.*

*Keywords: Islamophobia, multiculturalism, religion, Islam*

**THE THREE BASIC FALLS OF CHRISTIANS:**

**IDENTIFICATION WITH A STATE, A NATION AND A POLITICAL PARTY**

Ilievski Naum, Prof. Dr.[[21]](#footnote-21)

***Abstract:*** *The idea of spreading Christianity is based on Christ’s commandment for loving the enemies, not repaying anyone evil for evil, but good and love; by undergoing martyrdom – the testimony of Christ’s love in this world. In order to fulfill this commandment, it is necessary for Christians not to attach to anything worldly and identify themselves with it: neither through self-love, family or through the state and the nation to which they belong, nor through any other type of an earthly human organization because of which they would be forced to draw a sword and repay evil for evil. Christians, along the history, experience this fall through three main temptations:*

*1) Identifying oneself with a state. When the Church was persecuted by the state, there was no resistance on part of Christian martyrs to protect themselves and their families; however, when the Church received recognition by the state, nominal Christians started to commit murders with the excuse that they were defending their Christian state and the Church, their families and themselves from non-believers.*

*2) Identifying oneself with a nation. When nominal believers identify themselves with their “nation,” Christian Orthodox brothers start to kill each other, with the blessing of the highest ecclesiastical authorities.*

*3) Identifying oneself with a political party. The greatest absurd is when nominal Christians identify themselves with a political party; for example, Orthodox Macedonians hate and murder Orthodox Macedonians. This evil is obvious even to the atheists.*

*Love is not about sacrificing the enemy’s soul for one’s neighbor, but what Christ says, “There is no greater love than this: to sacrifice your own soul for your neighbor.” There is no greater love than that – by testifying Christ’s love to the level of martyrdom for Him – one to sacrifice even his own life for the salvation of his “enemies.”*

*Keywords: identification with a state, identification with a nation, identification with a political party, love towards the enemies*

**SOKA GAKKAI IN EUROPE: THE PEACE AND CONFLICT STRATEGY OF A BUDDHIST MOVEMENT**

**SOKA GAKKAI IN ITALY: SUCCESS, PEACE ACTIVITIES, AND CONTROVERSIES**

**Introvigne Massimo[[22]](#footnote-22)**

***Abstract:*** *Soka Gakkai started operating in Italy in 1961, and was formally established there in 1963, but the first members were expatriate Japanese. The first Italian member joined in 1966. From then on, the growth has been almost unique among Eastern religious movements that came to Western Europe. In 1993, members were 13,000, and they reached 90,000 in 2019. Soka Gakkai attracted the attention of Italian media as among those who joined were well-known soccer stars, actors, and singers. Its activities for peace and against nuclear weapons attracted an even larger audience, despite controversies generated by vocal ex-members. In 2015, Soka Gakkai entered the elite club of religious minorities that signed a Concordat with the Italian government. It was ratified by the Parliament in 2016. The paper explores the reasons of the singular growth of Soka Gakkai in Italy, based both on qualitative interviews and on a survey among a representative sample of Italian members.*

*Keywords: Soka Gakkai, Italian government, religious minorities*

**ETHNIC VIOLENCE AND WOMEN IN ASSAM: COPING STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY WOMEN**

**Jahnabi Deka[[23]](#footnote-23)**

***Abstract****: The North-eastern part of India has been in a state of ethnic tensions for long. Ethnic tensions tend to erupt abruptly overnight or manifest themselves gradually. The causes of such violence are multi-dimensional, i.e economic, social and natural. The resentment caused due to encroachment of resources, identity loss and displacement by perennial floods has manifested itself several times through chronic violence inflicted upon the ‘other’. Ethnic violence is inevitably detrimental to human development, be it men or women. This violence changes the demographic scenario in which the society survives. Women are left behind to take the fall of the entire household activities as well as bear the financial burden. Women are not just victims of physical or sexual violence, they are equally effected emotionally and at the societal level. The researcher seeks to investigate and portray the role and negotiations carried out by the women in such situations. In the North-eastern scenario, there is much scope for academic studies to be carried out. Some research has been conducted with Bodo women being the subject of attention. However, the research conducted in the Northeastern region is in its nascent stage, therefore the study to fill the gap of an in-depth sociological narrative of the Bodo, Santhali and Bengali Muslim women effected by ethnic violence at different time-periods. These religious groups have been in conflict long in the Indian history. This study will attempt to narrate and explore the ‘doing, experiencing and negotiating with everyday life’ for the Bodo, Santhali and Bengali Muslim women in the aftermath of widespread ethnic violence in the region.*

*Keywords: ethnic violence, India, woman, man*

**TOWARDS A SECOND ENLIGHTENMENT?**

***MIGRATION AND ‘THE NEW EUROPEANS’***

**Kester Gérard[[24]](#footnote-24)**

***Abstract:*** *The challenge of the 21st century is to build a vibrant Europe, free, peaceful, prosperous, equitable, solidary and tolerant. Europe has to overcome immense problems before it will become the united federation of countries which make up the continent. Neoliberalism has promoted individual freedom of choice in a world of free markets but the individual has not become King and the economy does not lay at his feet as had been the promise. The autonomous and commercialised individual no longer has a reference of a system of shared values, be they religious or ideological – which demands a complete re-orientation of democracy, writes Marcel Gauchet in Le Nouveau Monde. The Enlightenment culminated in thetumultuous year 1789 which remains engraved as the pivotal year that was the breaking point between feudalism and absolutism on the one hand and democracy on the other. However, also the three cardinal principles liberté, égalitéfraternité of the French Revolution have not resulted in durable institutions that gave flesh and soul to these principles. European society can re-invent itself by making the cardinal values of the French Revolution the very foundation of its concept of democracy but will have to take into account thatliberté, égalité, solidaritéconstitute an intrinsically related package, and should be explicitly related to a combination of political, social and economic democracy. It is an excellent frame that can serve as a common basis of a multicultural society in which migrants are expected to respect the culture of Europe and the Europeans to respect the culture of the migrants. That is where the search for common denominators begins: embracing new diversity and accepting flexible identity. The underlying philosophy lies in the ultimate humanism that can be found in all cultures and can be elaborated now as a common good.*

*Keywords: neoliberalism, cardinal values, ultimate humanism*

**PIRS (SACRED PLACES) IN AZERBAIJAN: BASKAL KHANAGAH**

**KHALILLI Fariz, Dr[[25]](#footnote-25)**

**KHALILLI Shehla[[26]](#footnote-26)**

***Abstract:*** *Currently, the oldest architectural monument of Baskal settlement in İsmailli region in Azerbaijan Republic is the Sheikh Mohammed Mosque. The inscription on the slab of the mosque mentions the names of Sheikh Mohammed and his son Sheikh Safayi. This inscription was drawn up in 1568 and is attached to the wall of the mosque. From the names of the mosque preserved in the memory and from the mention of the names of two sheikhs on the inscription it is clear that this place belonged to the khanagah (chapel) of one of the Sufi schools sponsored by the Shirvanshahs. Our opinion is confirmed by another inscription of the mosque provided by Novruz Asadov, a representative of the district executive authority in the village and a history teacher in the Baskal. The inscription typical of the Shirvanshahs period, which is one of the varieties of the Arabic script, executed by naskh and sols, speaks of the order for the construction of a mosque and of Sufi and Dervish, who are carriers of truth and transmitting truth. As it turned out, the mosque was built as part of the khanagah. It is likely that in the future, during archaeological research, rooms (or corners) of dervishes found in other mosques of the Shirvanshahs period will be revealed here. The second element of the chapel is an ancient plane tree - a plane tree. Interestingly, in the book of Professor Evgeny Pakhomov on coins, it is noted that the coins found in Baskal were found in Pir Chinar and Pir Bulak. It is also interesting that there are no other old plane trees in Baskal except this plane tree. Unfortunately, apart from a note by Evgeny Pakhomov, we have no source about this plane tree. The name Pir Chinar is also confirmed during a conversation with older locals. The large hollow of Pir Chinar reminds us of a chapel owned by Pir Omar, the founder of the Sufi school of Khalvatiya Shirvan in the village of Avakhil. Sufis often retire in the hollow of such trees for prayer for 40 days. There are also medieval miniatures associated with this ritual. In Shirvan, most Sheikh Khalvatiya have similar stories and stories related to the tree. The third element of the chapel is the presence of a cemetery around the mosque. The founders and leaders of these pedagogical and psychological centers are buried in these cemeteries in all Sufi khanagahs. After them, other dervishes and murids were buried around the tomb. The stories of locals about the discovery of Muslim graves in the courtyard of the mosque, the environs of Pir Chinar, the Bazaar Square and the Kharabiyan area also reveal the reality of the khanagah. It is likely that the tomb of the founder of the chapel will be discovered in the future in the same area during the study. As a historian who researched a large number of khanagahs and observed most of the khanagahs in the world, I can say that there was a khanagah in Baskal's history, and that Sheikh Mohammed's mosque, Pir Chinar, Pir Bulak and the Kharabiyan cemetery are parts of this khanagah.*

*Keywords: Khanagah, Pir, Baskal, Azerbaijan, Sufi*

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION POTENTIAL TOOL FOR SOCIAL COHESION**

**Koceva Daniela, Ass. Professor[[27]](#footnote-27)**

***Abstract:*** *The past decades have witnessed the reintegration of religions into the public arena, involving the emergence of new religions, as well as significant changes in old religions. This religious revival and this religious transformation are largely conditioned by the rapid growth of immigration and the creation of new "diasporas" - communities that are globally networked. Religion plays an important role in the constitution of collective identities and in the shaping of both national and international cultural characteristics and boundaries. The frequency of tensions and conflicts related to religion has especially increased in the world, their motives can also be reflected on cultural, political and socio-economic spheres. The heterogeneity, conditioned by the new migration movements, essentially changes the old religious pluralism - it turns into a cultural and ethnic pluralism. Faith is in some way closely related to culture; and, in today's world, people with different cultures come in contact as never before. Whether it creates harmony or discord, depends on our way of thinking - open or closed. Whether the strong religious faith can coexist in today's pluralism and whether its coexistence is facilitated through the institutions of education, we will see in the further analysis of this paper. However, education and the media play an important role in shaping the perceptions of religion. Regarding education, we should try to bring diversity into the education system. Young people, even from early childhood, should be able to learn about intercultural realities and communicate with people of different backgrounds. Intercultural exchange can be an effective instrument for teaching religion - it needs to be reformed to include pluralism and put an emphasis on interfaith dialogue.*

*Keywords: religious education, social cohesion, integration, tolerance, intercultural dialogue*

**THE PROGRAM „JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION OF THE WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES – A PARADIGM OF THE ECUMENICAL SOCIAL TEACHING**

**Kopiec Piotr, prof. KUL[[28]](#footnote-28)**

*Abstract: One of the key tools of the teaching and activities of the contemporary ecumenism is the paradigm „Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation” (JPIC). The term was coined by the Faith and Order Commission of the World Council of Churches in 1982 and was applied to the inter-Church and international program for developing ecumenical, Christian response on the ecological, political and social challenges of the then world. The main assumption of the paradigm was to pay attention on the interdependance of the problems stemmed from the areas of culture, economy, politics and religion, and therefore, on the comprehensiveness of the values of justice and peace. Today the notion is going out the ecumenical boundaries and is becoming important slogan used by the groups that are concerned about the conditions of today's societies, economics, international relations, culture and environement. It seems to be even relevant to speak about emerging of the JPIC movement that gathers many Christian activists involved both ecologically and socially, members of Catholic orders and congregations and various Protestant communities. The JPIC paradigm sparks therefore a political axiology laid on the Christian, ecumenical and interconfessional foundantions.*

*Keywords: Peace and Integrity of Creation, ecumenical boundaries, Christian activists*

**NEXT SUFI GENERATIONS IN WESTERN SOCIETIES**

**Kostovski Dragan [[29]](#footnote-29)**

***Abstract:*** *The present situation of Sufis on the West was achieved through promotive approach in various universal teachings that were focused on personal spiritual development. This effort was accomplished through successive cultural improvement considering the multicultural coexistence, and as a global process wasn't ignored by the Western sociologists. This cultural shift was based on the present demographical tendencies in the population of Western societies starting with the migrations of the Muslim Sufi teachers originating from the Middle East around the 80s and in continuation with the second and third generation of young Muslims whose parents are often immigrants. The quest for what will be called Authentic Islam, more precisely the knowledge that is transmitted through religious practice and in this aspect considering the two most relevant elements: Islamic law or Fiq, and Islamic ethics or Adab respectively at the second generation Muslims in the West was developed facing towards emotions and affects as a medium of social cohesion of the Muslims that were Sufi influenced and partly possessed a post Tariqa elements, but with their religious practice were directed towards Sufi teachings.*

*What was triggering the researcher's curiosity was the recent detour towards emotions and affects of the pro-Sufi movements established in the West as for example is Celebrate - Mercy in the USA.These societies emerged resulting in the acceptance of the Islamic authenticity based on the knowledge and practice of the Islamic jurisprudence promoted by pro-Sufi teachers that were pretty popular through Western youth like Hamza Yusuf Hanson etc.As much as these affective Sufi were promoting some traits of counter-public, they experienced a high level of acceptance and integration but also and amount of potential for public influence considering the larger Muslim organizations.*

*Keywords: Sufism within Western societies, Islam in the West, spirituality in the West, counter-public, Islam and the public sphere*

**“ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF THE MULTI-ETHNIC COMPOSITION OF THE POPULATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA ON WATER CONFLICTS”**

**Krstevska Evgenija, PhD Student,[[30]](#footnote-30)**

# ***Abstract:*** *The Republic of North Macedonia is a multi-ethnic state in which the mutual dialogue is still developing. Therefore, decision-making in many areas can easily be turned into conflict. Water as a resource has a particular significance in the two religions that dominate in this country. The right to water as a human right is a source of conflict in North Macedonia. In the western part of the country, conflicts arise due to increased competition for water utilization. Characteristic of this region is the large distribution of water plants, complicated interethnic relations, the local character of conflicts and the occupation of water sources. While in the eastern part of the country, the population is mostly ethnically pure and conflicts arise due to poor water management and contamination. One of the analyzed conflicts is an act of terrorism, where all characteristics of water conflicts are most drastically expressed. By analyzing the conflicts in July 2001 (Lipkovo dam) and August 2001 (Radusa), the impact of such conflicts on the violation of human rights to water and other basic human rights will be demonstrated. These two conflicts are suitable for analysis from the aspect of religious and multiethnic dialogue, but also from the aspect of the influence on basic human rights and the involvement of the international community in their resolution. The aim of this paper is to make a concrete analysis of the impact of conflicts on the realization of the right to water and other basic human rights in this country. This paper will explain how the decentralized management of water resources in North Macedonia contributes to the emergence of water conflicts. The foregoing will prove why the right to water should be prescribed as a basic human right and the management of water resources should be centralized in a separate body.*

*Keywords:**multi-etnic relations, impact, water conflicts, terrorism, human rights.*

**THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE PROCESS OF RECONCILIATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA**

**THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL POSSIBILITIES**

**Kuburić Zorica [[31]](#footnote-31)**

**Zotova Ana [[32]](#footnote-32)**

***Abstract:*** *The paper will show the results of several research on the role of religion in the reconciliation process that took place on the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina from 2013 to 2018. The first part of the paper will show the views of the general population from 2606 respondent, with particular reference to the relationship between minority and majority status at different localities. The second part show a qualitative analysis of the content of the interview with the representatives of three traditional religious communities in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The interview was conducted from the summer of 2018 unitl spring 2019. with people who are prominent in their public role in society with religious as professors of religious universities, religious school directors and religious teachers who were part of this sample, patrons of Orthodox, Islamic, Roman Catholic, Judaism and Protestant theologians. Results of the survey show that there are potentials for building a stable society. Primarily option is for common good of all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina in order to create an atmosphere of acceptance, understanding and respecting differences of members of different national backgrounds and religious traditions. There are many ways to realize the process of reconciliation, and those that are recognized are open dialogue about the past, admitting and apology, recognizing the victims and respecting their side, special attention to minority groups that feel vulnerable in certain areas. Religion has potentials for reconciliation if it accepting both differences and commonalities of others. Religious leaders, more than lay people, are in a position to contribute to reconciliation. There are undoubtedly two key aspects of different relations: a position of being a religious majority in a certain area, and a position of being a religious minority.*

*Keywords: Bosnia and Herzegovina, religion, politics, reconciliation*

**DE-PRIVATIZATION OF RELIGION AS A FORM OF RELIGIOUS REVIVAL**

**Kurtishi Amel PhD[[33]](#footnote-33)**

***Abstract****: Many social theorists accept the idea that secularization is a simple, inherent, linear process leading to progress, modernization, and development. Adopting what is variously called traditional religion, religious extremism, or fundamentalism is considered to be like other forms of “irrationalism”. On the other side the global resurgence of religion can be seen as part of the larger crisis of modernity. The resurgence of religious faith is a type of cultural critique of the kind of world modernity has brought us. Religion provides safety. Modern society is a society of risk. De-privatization of religion and its reemergence on the public scene as a consequence of its role to solve the dissatisfaction with modernization effects. Religion finds a new social role here – that of suggesting that society is moving in the wrong direction. The return to the sacred/religion is through the satisfaction of two needs which are a part of the conditio humana: security and meaning. De-privatization is the repeated influence of religion on secularized domains and politics. Religion finds roles to play in generating policy decisions, mobilizing moral commitments, defending human rights, legitimating ethnic or national identities, instilling work ethics, and otherwise influencing sociocultural affairs. Religion also involves into new forms like the one of cultural defense, preventing national, ethnic, local or other culture from decay/vanishing in the era of global identities. This reality imposes the need of including the religion in the intercultural dialogue as a way of securing peace and cooperation.*

*Keywords: religion, secularization, modernity, de-privatization, public space.*

**THE IMPACT OF RELIGION ON THE PREVENTION OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN KOSOVO**

**Latifi Shaqiri Arjeta - PhD Student[[34]](#footnote-34)**

***Abstract:*** *The prevention of trafficking in human beings in this study will be treated from a religious point of view in Kosovo. To study this phenomenon, it is necessary to study the causes of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo from the religious point of view. Regarding this phenomenon, the legal infrastructure for management and prevention, treatment and reintegration of victims of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo has been built, which will critically consider its functioning. The thesis of this study will be: How does religion affect the prevention of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo? During the study of this topic will be used the relevant literature which has treated this phenomenon from a religious point of view. To study this phenomenon, knowledge and factual data on the history of development of this phenomenon will be used. The factual data that will emerge from the relevant institutions in Kosovo (which deal with the treatment of this phenomenon in Kosovo) will be used for the assessment, measurement of the prevention of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo. The methodology that will be used to address the phenomenon will focus on the methods; deduction, historical, statistical, comparison, etc. For the estimates and measurements of the development of the phenomenon, secondary data will be used, which will be used by the respective Kosovo institutions. Based on data and assessments on the development of the phenomenon, the results of the efficiency of the functioning and impact of the religious system in the prevention of trafficking in human beings in Kosovo will be derived. The impact of religion which will influence on this phenomenon will be compared with countries in the region. This study is expected to result in findings and outcomes that will serve to evaluate the role of religion in preventing this phenomenon.*

*Keywords: human victims, traffickers, prevention, treatment, reintegration*

**PEACE AND ORTHODOX FAITH - ROMANIAN CULTURAL IDEAS AND VALUES**

**Lăzăreanu Gabriela, Associate Professor, PhD[[35]](#footnote-35)**

***Abstract:*** *This work presents briefly some of the phenomena causing the appearance and deepening of crises, conflicts, for a correct intervention (including that of the church). We also underline the importance of knowing the social inequities, which may generate conflicts reverberating at individual/family level. The Holy Scripture constitutes a permanent spring of spiritual life trying to solve misunderstandings, conflicts and urges to peace. Today’s world is marked by numerous crises and conflicts. Peace must be, first and foremost, a part of every soul, family and society- we are also called sons of God. A crisis of morality (most often mentioned one) may be understood as a “deterioration of the good habits” with a double role: individual and social [Vulcănescu (1996)]. Family crisis targets the relationship between parents and children, between husbands, between genders, authority relationships, etc. We underline that the relations between parents and children are often affected by both individual and social causes. Parents’ jobs abroad (phenomenon of migration-about 20% of population in Romania) have also negative effects in family life. Leaving to work abroad negatively impacts the child’s psychic, which can lastin definitely. Consequently, children may acquire dangerous habits, related to drugs and alcohol use, violence under any shape: (cyber-) bullying or grooming within/outside the school. Domestic violence is a common phenomenon of the nowadays Romanian society, determined, among others, by secondary role of woman in the society, both privately and publicly (giving the man the right to control the woman through violence and economical subordination), to which one may add stress, individual psychological issues, etc. The love of God is a basis for the Christian moral and of the love for the neighbors [Vulcănescu (1996)].The duty of love is a behavioral norm the New Testament substitutes to the Old Law, the law of Talion.*

*Keywords: crisis, peace, violence, moral, love*

**THE CONCEPT OF PEACE AMONG CHRISTIAN FAITH-BASED NETWORKS IN EUROPE**

**Linjakumpu Aini[[36]](#footnote-36)**

***Abstract:*** *There are many different actors and functions in peace activism. Among others, churches, religious communities and organizations as well as individual religious persons have contributed peacemaking in various conflict areas in the world. For example, all major world religions – e.g. Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism - have been engaged in peace issues, especially in the context of the inter-religious peacemaking. However, in this presentation, the attention is focused on reflection on peace issues within Christian faith-based networks in Europe. These include ”Church and Peace”, “The Conference of European Churches”, and “The Conference of European Justice and Peace Commissions”. They are networks which brings together European churches, religious communities and organizations involving in the issues of peace and conflict. The presentation examines how the concept of peace is articulated within these networks. The issue is being studied through three dimensions: how peace is defined among these networks; how peace could be achieved and how peace is articulated through religion.*

*Keywords: Christianity, European Churches, peace*

**RELIGIOUS AND EDUCATIONAL IN BLOCKCHAIN TECHNOLOGY FUNCTION**

**Manasievski Aleksandar[[37]](#footnote-37)**

**Manasievski Kristijan[[38]](#footnote-38)**

***Abstract****: Knowledge is power, especially in the information age, when understanding the "new" can provide an advantage over competition. This is why, barely a year after crypto explodes in the mainstream - and long before it is likely to enjoy its adoption - it is already the subject of a number of university courses. While a small number of them focused on genuine encryption, computer science, and cryptography behind cryptocurrencies, most others sought to provide a detailed introduction to crypto so that more business-oriented audiences would have the basis for deciding whether - and to what extent. - bitcoins and blockchain should be brought. In other words, more profit-oriented universities are trying to capitalize on cryptocurrency by offering public non-technical cryptocurrency courses. However, even if many of them simply teach students how to conceptualize blockchains as opposed to how to code and create them, reports show that students are satisfied with the instruction they received so far. While they do not have to be afforded the opportunity to build decentralized applications and currencies for themselves, the knowledge they receive may be vital if crypto is adopted on a mass scale in the future.*

*Blockchain technology is widely recognized not only in the education system, but in the following cases in France and the Samoa Nation in the Pacific. France after a catastrophic fire at Notre Dame Cathedral a world-class medieval cultural monument. The news was announced by Bloomberg on April 17th. The minister said the same conditions would apply to cryptocurrency donations like those for fiat currencies - organizations should not charge fees, data should be collected for tax deductions, and funds should eventually be transferred through one of the four approved organizations. In April, a church in Samoa, a nation located in the Pacific, became the focus of attention after pastors invited One Coin to speak to worshipers. Namely, the central bank of Samoa banned all activities related to this scheme in 2018, but the representatives managed to join the Samoa Service Center and presented their alleged fraudulent investment products.*

*Keywords: crypto, Blockchain technology, Samoa*

**NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS IN BULGARIA: FROM CONFLICT TO COOPERATION**

**Marinov Mario [[39]](#footnote-39)**

***Abstract:*** *The paper studies the different phases in the development of new religious movements in Bulgaria after 1990. In the beginning of the 1990s there was a stronger presence of “world rejecting new religious movements” according to Wallis. Among them the Unification movement, The International Society for Krishna Consciousness, and The Family. The tendency in this period was the notion of conflict with the rest of society. In the middle of the 1990s were the most difficult years in economic terms and there were favorable conditions for the development of “world accommodating new religious movements” – mainly neo-Pentecostal groups. Their strong presence in public space during this period was widely reflected by media. The new tendency was seeking of legitimating of the activities of “world accommodating new religious movements” in the existing legal order, the applications for registration, and much more active media activities. In the middle and at the end of the 1990s the neo-Pentecostal movements fitted into the more general social tendencies: a strong rhetoric connected to the economic issues, finances, ways of coping with the economic crisis. The clearest manifestation of “world accommodating” was displayed after receiving registration and receiving the possibility of institutional handling of their interests. The third type, the “world affirming new religious movements” was still unpopular in Bulgaria before 2008 in terms of their distribution. There were indicators for their appearance and distribution in society in days of economic progress and after Bulgaria’s accession to the European Union. The tendency during this third period is the attempts for cooperation with the state and the larger society*.

*Keywords: new religious movements, social tendencies, distribution in society*

**THE EFFECT OF ETHNIC SEGREGATION IN PRIMARY EDUCATION ON THE PERCEPTION OF THE ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS OTHER**

**Matevska Dushka, Associate professor[[40]](#footnote-40)**

**Malcev Marjan, Associate professor[[41]](#footnote-41)**

**Petrova Marieta, Associate professor[[42]](#footnote-42)**

***Abstract****: School as an important agent in secondary socialization transfers culture from one generation to the next. Childhood has an important role in the process of building one’s ethnic and religious identity. Students through direct contact with each other can more easily overcome and reject all existing barriers, whether they are based on the difference in religion, language or any other element of culture. In this paper we will try to answer the question of whether ethnic segregation in the primary education of the Republic of North Macedonia leads to integration or disintegration in Macedonian society. We will present the results of our research into the primary schools in the Skopje region as well as our interpretation of them with which we will obtain a clear picture to which degree does the ethnic distance forced upon the students by ethnic segregation in the educational process and disables the direct communication between members of different ethnic groups affect creating prejudices and stereotypes for the ethnic and religious other. Developing multiculturalism and a positive perception of the ethnic and religious other can be realized only if students are taught that society is a spectrum of differences: ethnic, confessional, cultural and others. They should be taught that everyone should live not just next to each other, but together. Because of this we emphasized the role of the teachers in the preparation of students for cooperation, tolerance, equality and solidarity with the ethnic and religious other.*

*Keywords: educational system, ethnic segregation, ethnic distance, multiculturalism*

**RELIGIOUS EXTREMISM AS A FORM OF THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN EUROPE**

Matevski Zoran, Full Professor[[43]](#footnote-43)

**Abstract**: Pseudo-democratic processes in Europe, is a means of governing the majority, and the leaders of those processes manage to manipulate the unthinkable majority under the slogans of Christian values. The religious view of the world is the background through which the masses are mobilized and the fascism of a society in which Christian values ​​become ordinary commodities in neoliberal capitalism. The idea that God is one and that belief in Him is differently set up in different religions can lead some individuals, religious and political institutions to the wrong notion that we are "we" because we are not "them", and we can remain "we" if we delete "they". Therefore religious exclusivity leads to a violent ideology: we true believers have the true and righteous God on our side, and as a battlefield we stand against "those" who believe in God who is not the true one; against unbelievers, atheists and agnostics, and against religious apostates. Religious extremists have the following characteristics:

1. They perceive the current state of religion in the global world as a pale version of their own faith. They are members of a faith that is highly sought after by them, including the physical sacrifice in the name of their own religion.

2. These believers criticize other religions for their adaptive attitude towards modern cultural values. For example, radical Islamists call for violent resistance to Western European cultural values, while radical Christians call for open confrontation with all those who legitimize abortion and homosexual marriages.

3. Religious extremists advocate the destruction of secular states and the establishment of theocracy on a global scale. In theocratic societies there is no separation of the private and the public, but religion completely penetrates both spheres of social life.

Keywords: religious extremism, religious exclusivity, Christian values

**IN THE NAME OF LOVE, IN THE NAME OF GOD:**

**LOVING ‘THE OTHER’ AT THE TIME OF LOVE JIHAD**

**Matta** **Mara[[44]](#footnote-44)**

***Abstract****: The debate over the ‘place of love in law’ has become more relevant during the last few decades, and it appears to have taken on new meanings in this neo-liberal world (Babie and Savić, 2018). The need to address the issue of what is acceptable and what is not in the frame of a religious law has pushed many people to engage in the issue of love, affirming Love as the main law-making principle of every religion.*

*In South Asia and among South Asian diasporas, the legal acts and norms prescribed by the civil law of the States are often in conflict with the cultural praxis and religious rules legitimated by the religious authorities and the community’s elders. South Asian lawyers, activists, artists and religious leaders are increasingly entering the stage of this No Man’s Land arena, where the debate centres around the discourse that religious laws are the Word of God(s), and – as such –everyone must surrender and leave them unquestioned. In this frame, the phenomenon of what has been branded as ‘Love Jihad’ – with Hindu right wing groups attacking and often murdering inter-faith couples where the man is a Muslim and the woman a Hindu – has given rise to counter-movements in support of inter-religious and inter-caste marriages, such as the one led by the Delhi-based ‘Love Commandos’.*

*This paper looks at the ‘ways of love’ to challenge cultural practices normativised as religious law. In particular, it focuses on the creative discourses and representational strategies put forward by the people who are trying to make space for love and acceptance of ‘the Other’ outside the constraints of the orthodoxy, while maintaining (or even reclaiming) a place inside the religious communities.*

*Keywords: religious law, religious authorities, Jihad*

**RELIGION, EDUCATION AND HUMAN CAPITAL**

**Mihajlovska Slavica, PhD[[45]](#footnote-45)**

**Petrusevska Violeta, PhD[[46]](#footnote-46)**

***Abstract****: Occurances and natural forces that cannot be expalined by the science and cannot be controled by man always raise a feeling of powerlessness and fear. Being unable to explain and understand the higher forces, man attributes their existence to a higher power. Some basic principles, beliefs and rituals are almost identical even though their practicing is different. For centuries, religion has played an educational role and influenced human development. Many economic and social phenomena, some positive and some negative, are the result of the religion influence. The progress of the whole society lies in the idea of acquiring greater wealth and higher progress – development, on the individual level as well as on a social level. The main question is whether religion influences on the individual`s decision to invest in education equals to invest in creation of human capital. This paper aims to outline the interconnection and role of religion in education, their interplay and their impact on the creation of human capital.*

*Keywords: religion, education, human capital, economic development*

**RECALLING THE MEMORY OF THE PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE**

**AMONG RELIGIONS IN SYRIA AND LEBANON**

**Monaco Arturo, PhD[[47]](#footnote-47)**

***Abstract****: According to Johnston and Cox (2003), faith-based peace-making is more about reconciliation than about conflict resolution, that is «a restoration of healthy and respectful relationships between the parties». In deeply divided societies emerging from violent conflict, it is important that the concept of reconciliation become a reference point for all sides. Among the modes of intervention are the establishment of a new moral vision of the society; the building of bridges and connections among the involved communities; the healing of the conflict through mediation; and the healing of the wounds of the past. In this view, it seems that the recalling of a past of peaceful coexistence between different communities could work in this direction.*

*Addressing the Syrian-Lebanese area, which have experienced and still experiences the consequences of a sectarian-based violence, this contribution will consider the counter-narrative of a representation of the real or idealized peaceful coexistence of different communities as it emerges from the writings of some Syrian and Lebanese writers and artists from both the past and the contemporaneity. In particular, it will show how the memory of this peaceful coexistence is recalled in two literary expressions, different in kind and time: the poetry and the essays of the Lebanese writer, poet and philosopher Amīn al-Rīḥānī (1876-1940); the tales from a Syrian contemporary magazine for youth.*

*Keywords: conflict resolution, mediation, peaceful coexistence*

**CATHOLIC CHURCH AT THE CROSSROADS: THE POLISH CASE**

**Niezgoda Marian, PhD[[48]](#footnote-48)**

***Abstract****: Poland and Poles were and are strongly attached to Catholicism. In the national tradition, we define ourselves as the "rampart (defensive wall) of Christianity," securing Europe from the dominance of Islam (the Ottoman Empire). During the partition period, confession was the determinant of being a Pole. A Pole was a Catholic, Prussian was a Protestant (Luther), an Orthodox Russian. Only the Austrian was a Catholic. Hence the Catholic Church was perceived as a mainstay of Polishhood, the only institution where Polish language could be used. Similarly, the church was treated during the communist period - it was the mainstay of patriotism, helped the illegal opposition, organized help for the persecuted.*

*No wonder that in the traditional social narrative the church was and is treated as a national institution, and confession as an important (even dominant) component of national identity. Being a Catholic was a source of pride, after all we had a Polish Pope. Why, then, the thesis that it is at a crossroads? I assume, that it is determined by the present conditions, processes that take place on a global scale. Poland, which has been surprised by full churches, currently has the largest decline in dominicantes and communicantes in the whole world, despite the fact that most of the Poles declare themselves to be Catholics. What decides about it? In my opinion, approaching Catholicism and its practices as a shelf in a supermarket - one chooses what is useful to him at a given moment. There is also another aspect of Church activity in Poland - political activity that expresses support for those parties that appeal to nationalism, traditional narrative to the role of the Church in the past and influencing the creation of the law, that religious dogmas / standards (Catholic) should be respected. This testifies to the weakness of the evangelizing and educational mission of the Church.*

*Keywords: Catholic Church, Polishhood, confession*

**NEW WALLS AND NEW BRIDGES**

**THE ROLE OF RELIGION IN THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY**

**AND IN THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**Pace Enzo, PhD [[49]](#footnote-49)**

***Abstract:*** *The hopes for a better world after the collapse of the Berlin Wall were quickly disappointed. Since its fall, actually other walls have sprung up around the world. Freed from the grip of the international order of the two blocks, the newly multi-polar world began a long series of conflicts fomented by political and economic catalysts, which, however, have seen more and more direct involvement of religions. Religions have operated in these conflicts not so much as expressions of representative institutions of particular creeds, but rather for the value that they have brought to the ideological war of minds, which often anticipates and accompanies the actual muscular confrontation that takes place on the battlefield. Even when religion had nothing to do with the actual ground of conflict, in some cases religious semantics reinforced political rhetoric concerning the logic of the war, supported by the politics of identity. Why religions have begun to count in international relations in contemporary world? In addition, why do they seem incapable of fighting conflicts although their potential ability to mobilize civil society to peace from the neighborhood to the world?*

*Keywords: walls, ideological war, politics of identity*

**’PEACE, HOLD YOUR PEACE’. DECENTRALIZED PERSPECTIVES**

**ON THE HISTORY OF TOLERATION IN ‘THE WEST’**

**Pasture Patrick, PhD[[50]](#footnote-50)**

***Abstract:*** *“Tolerance is the soul of Europe”, the German Chancellor Angela Merkel stated in a speech to the European Parliament, Strasbourg, 13 November 2018. It is a view that is deeply encroached in the current European – or EU – self-perception, shared by many contemporary political thinkers, but it is also highly questionable. I will in my lecture discuss the argument from a ‘decentering’ perspective. This offers an alternative view on European history, identifying different histories which put this complacent view into perspective. I hope that I will also be able to suggest some ways to rethink how we may construct a more realistic narrative about toleration, between tolerance, ‘mere civility’ (Teresa Bejan) and embracing diversity ‘beyond toleration’, and promote peaceful coexistence through empowering.*

*Keywords: tolerance, perspectives, peace, European parlament*

**RELIGIOSITY OF THE MACEDONIAN CITIZENS IDENTIFIED BY (THROUGH) THE   
EUROPEAN VALUES STUDY**

**Petkovska Antoanela, PhD[[51]](#footnote-51)**

**Trajkovski Ilo, PhD[[52]](#footnote-52)**

**Popovski Mihajlo, PhD[[53]](#footnote-53)**

**Minoski Konstantin, PhD[[54]](#footnote-54)**

***Abstract****: The findings and analyses presented in this text are based on data obtained from a survey carried out within the framework of the international project European Values ​​Study (including Macedonian citizens) in 2008 and in 2018/2019 (Faculty of Philosophy - Skopje). Looking at the religiousness of Macedonian citizens, the survey showed that a large number of respondents declared themselves as members of a certain religion/religious denomination and self-identified as religious individuals. They generally know and accept the beliefs related to the religion they belong to, but ascribe to religious practices that have a traditional character. Such observations permitted the religious characteristics of Macedonian citizens to be particularly relevant in identifying their attitudes towards important social events. In order to gain in-depth knowledge about the value preferences of the Macedonian citizens, in comparison with the degree and type of their expressed religiousness, additional questions were analysed in which these respondents expressed their attitudes towards a series of social phenomena and processes: trust towards other people, towards others categories of people and towards various domestic and international institutions; family values; ideological-political orientations; attitude towards different types of governance and management; degree of satisfaction with the Macedonian state governance; work ethics; etc. The survey also includes the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents, including gender, age, ethnicity, place of residence, and income.*

*Keywords: religiosness, value preferences, Macedonian citizens*

**DOES THE ROLE OF RELIGIOUS RITES AND RITUALS DIMINISH**

**ITS SIGNIFICANCE FOR MUSLIM FAMILIES IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA?**

**Radulovic Makedonka[[55]](#footnote-55)**

***Abstract:*** *According to the percentage of Muslims in the total population of the country, North Macedonia is on the third place in Europe. With about one third of the Muslim population, our country is right after Albania and Bosnia and Hercegovina. Islam is an Abrahamic monotheistic universal religion and is the second largest religion in the world. The followers of this religion are called Muslims. Muslims believe that God gave his divine word in the form of revelations through various prophets and that Muhammad was the last of God's Messengers. Every religion has its own religious traditions and customs that have existed for countries. Certain sacred practices and rituals are very important to Muslims. They are a significant way that followers of Islam remember history, express conviction, and grow in devotion. Some rituals are practiced daily, like prayer; others are practiced annually, like those aligned with specific Islamic holidays. The Five Pillars of Islam are five practices regarded by all sects of the Islamic religion as essential to the Muslim faith. Although there are important differences between Christianity and Islam regarding the traditions, customs and cultural heritage. However, in both religions, due to the secularism in our country, the impression is that religion diminishes its meaning in everyday life. Young people adapt to the contemporary way of life that brings great changes in the practice of religious rituals and practices. This paper is about religious rituals and customs as religious elements and their meaning for Muslim families in Macedonia. The paper aims to determine whether and how often Islamic rituals and practices are practiced. Specifically, does their practicing reduce the importance for Muslim families. For the purposes of this paper, a quantitative survey of 60 Muslim religious subjects will be conducted to answer questions related to their views on religion and its practice.*

*Keywords: Islam, Muslim families, religious rituals*

**RELIGION AND SOCIAL CAPITAL BETWEEN CONLICT AND FAITH**

**Rizov Miroslav, PhD student[[56]](#footnote-56)**

***Abstract:*** *Truth consists of continuous conflicts and complete faith. Faith which is not found in modernity. We do not live for faith, but we create conflicts. We do not live for ourselves but for the other. The complete utopia has already reached its peak. Religion is an inexplicable phenomenon. Definition of religion cannot be given because it has unique features. Social capital is an important axis of society. Max Weber distinguishes two basic types of religious and metaphysical "pictures of the world" and, accordingly, representations of God. Both presuppose a "dualistic" distance between human and divine essence, world and God, as well as a negative assessment of the human condition to overcome it. These are the theocentric picture of the world and its perception of a transcendent "ethical God". On the other hand, the picture of the world with a world-essential God. Both paintings of the world are related to the Western and to the Eastern culture. Theocentrism has created the metaphysics of history, in which the world is historically conceived, as a story of the salvation of the human race under God's guidance. Religion is related to the purest thoughts and feelings of the individual, and the subjective aspect of religious experience is important and should never be ignored. Every religion is different as a specific pattern of behavior. It is a complex system of ideas, symbols and institutions, through which people shape themselves and integrate and interact with one another. In every religious system there is a strong urge to attract, to bring the individual to an ideal collective. The ideas that the source of religious views should be one whole and should be popular.*

*Keywords: continuous conflicts, faith, theocentrism*

**«VIRGIN MARY IS ALSO A MIGRANT».**

**A CATHOLIC PROCESSION IN LA GOULETTE (TUNISIA) BETWEEN PEACE AND CONFLICT**

**Russo Carmelo[[57]](#footnote-57)**

***Abstract:*** *Virgin Mary of Trapani in La Goulette (a small town near Tunis) is an emblematic case for studying the role of religion in peace and conflict. Worship of Mary arrived in Tunis with Sicilian migrants, chiefly in decades between the 19th and the 20th centuries. During that period, La Goulette was a multi-ethnic and multi-religious town: Tunisian, Sicilian, French, other European people, Christians, Jews and Muslims lived there all together. Since 1885 in La Goulette, there has been a procession on August 15 in which both Jews and Muslims participated. Various monotheistic worshippers attended the church of La Goulette to pray to Virgin Mary of Trapani. There were theological reasons: Mary is in the Qur’an, and is a “Jewish mother”. There was a political meaning: Sicilians and Tunisians emphasized their subaltern position against the French Protectorate: Virgin Mary of Trapani was on the side of discriminated and weak people. Moreover, Mary was protective, a healer; she assisted weak people and carried out miracles in their favor. Tunisian Independence disrupted this phenomenon: since 1962, the procession was forbidden. After the Revolution of 2011, Mary returned to the Tunisian public debate. On August 15, 2017 Virgin Mary’s procession returned to La Goulette after 55 years, an event even shared in by local Muslims. The “new” Virgin Mary of Trapani in La Goulette is the symbol of secularity – in the sense of laïcité – who guards against menaces of Islamic extremism and who sustains the rights of religious minorities in the public sphere. Alongside other contemporary multi-faith sites, La Goulette, Virgin Mary of Trapani and her procession have become less of a movement from the people and is now a larger symbol of the state and society at large.*

*Keywords: Virgin Mary of Trapani, procession, symbol*

**RELIGIOUS SUPERDIVERSITY'S PLACE BUILDING:**

**A PARADIGM TO ANALYZE CONTEMPORARY NARRATIVES OF RELIGIOUS GROUPS**

**Saggioro Alessandro[[58]](#footnote-58)**

***Abstract:*** *The connotation of modern cities as places religiously super-different joins up with some recent researches about development of good practices. Starting from some reflections on the concept of super-diversity (Vertovec) the paper will explore some new insights based on results of a fieldwork conducted in Rome - specifically in a part of Rome, Torpignattara, characterized by the presence of a relevant number of inhabitants from all over the world and by a large number of religious groups. Peace building is strongly determined by representation and narratives related to places of worship and of cohabitation, in which the construction of dynamics of peaceful coexistence is part of the new idea of global citizenship.*

*Keywords: religious group, global citizens*

**NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE:  
THE BAHÁ’Í FAITH CASE STUDY**

**Siarhei Anoshka [[59]](#footnote-59)**

***Abstract:*** *More than a century ago, Bahá’u’lláh addressed the Bahá’í with these words: “Consort with the* followers of all religions in a spirit of friendliness and *fellowship”. The teaching of Bahá’u’lláh on religious unity is very clear and unequivocal: religion is one, all religions come from the same Divine source. In accordance with this principle, from the very beginning of its existence, the world community of the Bahá’ís clearly proclaimed the principle of the unity of religions at all interfaith events, thus contributing to the development of harmony between the religions of the world and their followers. In my paper, I would like to underlight some issues that have a strong connection with the doctrine of Bahá’í – the youngest revealed independent world religion of our times, as it was claimed by the Bahá’u’lláh’s followers. The beginning was made in 1893 when the World Parliament of Religions in Chicago brought together a range of lecturers and other participants representing various religious traditions of the world. For the Bahá’ís, this meeting was of particular importance: for the first time, the Bahá’í Faith was openly presented to the Western world – and this in many ways symbolized the beginning of the interfaith harmony to which the Bahá’í aspire. The Bahá’í community was recognized by the United Nations in 1947, and, like other religious communities, representatives of the Bahá’í Faith played an important role in giving advice and suggestions on the moral and spiritual principles on which the United Nations was based. In 2002, the Universal House of Justice – is the nine-member supreme ruling body of the Bahá’í Faith – issued a special appeal addressed to the religious leaders of the world. This statement was another stage in which the Bahá’í community offered its help in establishing religious unity.*

*Keywords: Bahá’u’lláh, doctrine of Bahá’í, Bahá’í community*

**MARTIN LUTHER’S TRANSLATION OF THE BIBLE –**

**A POPULAR OR POPULIST APPROACH?**

**Simoska Silvana, PhD [[60]](#footnote-60)**

***Abstract:*** *The German Catholic monk Martin Luther (1483-1546), reformer and rebel of the Catholic church in the XVI century, who created a shism into a (Roman) Catholic and a Protestant/Evangelical confession, is also well known for his translation (in Luther’s original “dolmetzschen”, which has the synchronic meaning of ‘interpreting’) of the Bible from Hebrew (original: Old testament) and ancient Greek (original: New testament) into German. In conflict with the then-head of the Roman Catholic Church, later even causing a dispute with the Pope and the Vatican because of its reform topics, he was guided by the premise that the Bible should be understood predominantly by the people, and not only by the clergy and the authorities. Luther’s idea results in a German Bible translation that leaves the sacral Hebrew and Greek, later also Latin (Vulgata), language dogma behind and moves toward a sociolinguistic interpretation that “looks at the crowd’s mouth” (“Dem Volke aufs Maul schauen”). By that he has broken with tradition twice: 1. using primarily the original linguistic codes and registers (Hebrew and Greek instead of Latin as a relay) as basis for a successful “linguistic and cultural translation or adaptation” (Nida/Taber 1969: 134), and 2. breaking free from the sacramental function of the original Bible text by not translating literally (word-for-word), which was the case with all German Bible translations before him, in order to cognitively meet the scope of “the mother in the home, the children on the streets and the common man on the market” (Luther 1530). Finally, Luther’s Bible German united the Germans linguistically and laid the foundation for the so-called German unitary language. This paper will discuss whether the popularization of German (the Bible as a people’s book), in order to establish a greater proximity to the believers, may be viewed as a popular or even populist instrument for asserting its own interests.*

*Keywords: Martin Luther; Luther’s Bible German; populist instrument*

**ISLAM AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA**

**Sinani Abdylnaser, PhD [[61]](#footnote-61)**

**Kadriu Ibish, PhD [[62]](#footnote-62)**

***Abstract:*** *Contemporary man today is faced with religious universalism. Religious and ethnic diversity has become a major concern for all societies. There is almost no single-cultural country, in Western European countries live tens of millions of Muslims, while in the Islamic countries there is a large number of Christians. All great religions preach and aim for similar values and strive to achieve peace and enable coexistence. Macedonia, similar to Europe and the rest of the Balkans, presents a mosaic of cultures that differ essentially from one another. The subject of this essay are the perceptions on cultural differences and cultural points of contact between Christians and members of Islamic religion in RNM, in the context of pluralism, the concept of religious and ethnic freedom for all, together with the commitment to affirm tolerance, acceptance and respect for "the other". In RNM, the two largest religious communities, the orthodox and the Islamic one, often do not follow their theological principles, by showing intolerance and hatred for those belonging to another religion. This paper, based on religious experiences and heritages will initiate the avoidance of prejudice in order to create space for the recognition of the truth, because tolerance and acceptance of political pluralism can contribute to overcome the religious fundamentalism.*

*Keywords: Islam, pluralism, tolerance, differences, Macedonian*

**A COMMUNITY OF VALUES AS A UNIFYING FACTOR FOR THE FUTURE OF A MULTI-ETHNIC AND MULTI-RELIGIOUS SOCIETY: THE POSITION OF THE PATRIARCH OF MOSCOW AND ALL RUS’ KIRILL IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CURRENT SOCIAL CHALLENGES IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

**Składanowski Marcin, PHD [[63]](#footnote-63)**

***Abstract:*** *The Russian Orthodox Church of the Moscow Patriarchate has gained, after the fall of the Soviet Union, an exceptional position in the social and political life of the Russian Federation, which it has never occupied before. Formally, it is separate from the state. The Constitution of the Russian Federation in article 14 guarantees state ideological neutrality and acknowledges the separation of State and Church. At the same time, the Church representatives themselves, such as Patriarch Kirill (Gundyayev), consider this separation beneficial to the Church’s activity. Both the Patriarch as well as the representatives of Church hierarchy emphasise the religious and cultural role of the Church in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society. The Church’s purpose is, on the one hand, to restore religious life which was destroyed in the Soviet period and, on the other hand, to promote traditional values which form the foundation of Russian identity. In the extra-religious dimension, these values are supposed to ensure the stability of Russian society as well as its ability to oppose foreign (mostly Western) cultural, political, and religious influences. The presentation deals with the concept of “traditional values” and “spiritual foundations” as a unifying factor for contemporary Russian society. According to Patriarch Kirill, the Russian Orthodox Church can propose an axiological system, based on Christian beliefs, especially on the Orthodox concept of the human person and human community, which should become a foundation of social unity and peace as well as a factor which strengthens Russian national identity.*

*Keywords: Russian Orthodox Church, Russian identity, Patriarch Kirill*

**PROTOCOL AS A PRACTICAL TOOL FOR PEACE –**

**OFFICIAL APOSTOLIC VISIT OF POPE FRANCIS TO THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA**

**Smiljanov Sande, MBA[[64]](#footnote-64)**

***Abstract:*** *The subject of this paper is the apostolic official visit of the most significant world and religious leader of the Roman Catholic Church, Pope Francis, to the Republic of North Macedonia. The chief thesis of this paper concerns protocol as a practical tool for peace – Official Apostolic Visit of Pope Francis to the Republic of North Macedonia. The crucial arguments supporting the thesis are aimed at clear, step-by-step account of the planning, organization, coordination and putting into place of the official visit of Pope Francis to the RNM. The methods used in the course of treatment of the topic of this paper are the following: practical analysis, i.e. case study conducted during the official visit of Pope Francis of the RNM. The subject of analysis of this paper is protocol – defence diplomacy as a practical tool for peace and the reasons behind its use. The crucial arguments in support of the thesis of this paper are aimed at clear explanation of the three crucial elements – protocol, defence diplomacy and diplomacy used as a practical tool for peace during the official apostolic visit of Pope Francis to our country. The methods used for analysis are the following: practical analysis, i.e. case study conducted during the official visit of our country. The conclusions of this paper are that protocol is a practical tool for peace – promotion of cooperation and of bilateral relations between the two countries and cooperation at various levels is key – in this specific case, those two countries are the Vatican and the Republic of North Macedonia. Furthermore, another significant reason was to pay homage to the saint Mother Theresa as a person who served the poor. Having been expected for half a century, this official visit to our country of one of the most significant world and religious leaders, the world priest, Pope Francis is proof of the affiliation of Vatican to our country, having in mind the joint celebration of Ss Cyril and Methodius. This activity was aimed at affirmation of our small, yet significant country before the whole world.*

*Key words: protocol, diplomacy, defence diplomacy, visit, reception, Republic of North Macedonia*

**SOKA GAKKAI’S CAMPAIGNS FOR NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT**

**SORYTE Rosita[[65]](#footnote-65)**

***Abstract:*** *Soka Gakkai developed in Japan in the aftermath of the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and few causes are dearest to its members than the campaign for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. To promote this aim, Soka Gakkai has developed strategic alliances with United Nations agencies, NGOs, and world leaders of all faiths. Yet, the campaign’s roots are in Soka Gakkai’s Buddhist ethos. The paper investigates the relevance of Soka Gakkai’s European and world activities in the field of nuclear disarmament, and how these campaigns are not peripheral, but central to the movement’s efforts to create a new civilization based on values derived from Japanese Nichiren Buddhism.*

*Keywords: Soka Gakkai, Japanese Nichiren Buddhism, Buddhist ethos*

COMPARISON BETWEEN UNIVERSAL RELIGIONS - WITH A SPECIAL REVIEW TO CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

Sulejmani Emilj 1

Sulejmani Vildane2

*Abstract: After a detailed, analytical and theoretical investigation of the religious phenomenology of universal religions, sociological inferences will follow on the similarities and differences between universal religions with particular application power and the creativity of individual religions with their particular application in different spiritual areas. Of these we will particularly distinguish: religion and morality; religion as globalized religious literature and art; church and mosque art; icons, frescoes, arabesques; religion and sciences: natural, linguistic, humanities and social sciences; religion and philosophy: and finally religion as a civilizational conquest of epochs in world literature. This principle question is crucial: there are no solid, valuable, good and productive ideas unless they come from knowledgeable terms and knowledge. It means that the pure notion exists for itself. The scientific notion exists for everything else. It is very important to have the notions and especially the notion of ideas everywhere. Heavenly architecture is made of more religious ideas and is therefore the work of eternity. The most essential component of the work follows: similarities and differences between Christianity and Islam as universal religions. The practical-utilitarian will be performed with analytical-synthetic provisions and approaches by defining indicators of universal religions with their elements and functions. In the language of great theological phenomenology, which includes both universal religions, Christianity and Islam, many of the world's religions share the same beliefs and practices. Most of them give their believers and followers a moral code of life and try to answer the difficult questions to explain how the world began and what happened to life after life. No matter what the interpretations of the Bible and the Qur'an are, there is a general hope that the future of religion lies in the global creation of a biblical world without war, of world and cosmic ecumenical creation, of great tolerance and understanding among the various religious confessions.*

*Keywords: religion, Christianity, Islam, Bible, Qur'an*

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**RELIGIOUS SYNCRETISM AND SOCIAL INTEGRATION IN THEBALKANS**

**LUBAS MARCIN[[66]](#footnote-66)**

Abstract: The aim of my presentation is show how specific syncretic religious activities endorse interreligious social integration. I will draw on the ethnographic evidence collected during my long time fieldwork in Western Macedonia. I will focus specifically on Muslim’s occasional visits in local orthodox monastery and churches and Orthodox Christian’s consultations with Muslim spiritual experts regarding afflictions resulting from black magic practice. I will argue that religious difference do not preclude spiritual spiritual relationship between Muslims and Christians especially in the time of life and family crises.

Keywords: syncretism; ethnographic evidence; spiritual relationship

**ROLE OF RELIGION AND CONFESSION IN MULTI-RELIGIOUS**

**AND MULTI-CONFESSIONAL SOCIETY: YUGOSLAV CASE**

**Šuvaković V. Uroš, PHD[[67]](#footnote-67)**

***Abstract:*** *Influence of religious and confessional factors to the process of disintegration of the first and the second Yugoslav state is analyzed in the paper. The first Yugoslavia was recognizing religious diversity, but that diversity was one of the reasons for atrocities committed on Serbs during the World War II, primarily in the area of the so-called Independent State of Croatia. Although the second Yugoslavia was a socialist state, secular and ideologically atheistic, but recognizing the religious diversity, even in some cases favoring it (e.g. the case of establishing the Macedonian Orthodox Church), religious and confessional preferences had an important influence also in its disintegration. It is possible to notice that the second Yugoslavia was disintegrated along the lines of religious and confessional borders: a) Western Catholicism (Slovenia, Croatia, a part of B&H), b) Eastern Orthodoxy (Serbia, Montenegro, a part of B&H, Northern Macedonia) and c) Mohhamedan religion (a part of B&H, now trying to separate the southern Serbian province Kosovo and Metohija where Muslims-Albanians are prevailing, and the same is being attempting with the Raska region, a part of Serbia where Muslim believers are prevailing). Only the Catholic part of the former Yugoslavia is comprised with the euro-integrations, while the other parts are in different phases of candidacy, already for the quarter of the century. The conclusion being imposed is that religions and confessions had the extremely conflict and disintegrational role regarding the existence of the first and the second Yugoslav state (1918-1992).*

*Keywords: religion, confession, conflict, Yugoslavia (1918-1992), disintegration*

MIGRATION AND MIMETISM

Tóth Péter[[68]](#footnote-68)

**Abstract:** The issue of the relationship between violence and religion has a crucial relevance in history as well as in our contemporary world. The global presence of terrorism and migration intensifies this problem. Recent representative surveys and statistics clearly demonstrate that there are great tensions caused by international migration all over the world. In Europe, a more recent influx of Muslim immigrants is producing political tensions, however, the majority of immigrants are Christians. Therefore we can claim that religion in itself is not the core factor of generating violence between the different populations. In my opinion, the traditional concepts of violence - such as the violence stems from a kind of difference (e.g. religious, social or economic), or it is rooted in instincts or genetics - fail to grasp the origin of violence and they are insufficient to describe the problem of migration concerning with the issue of violence and religion. I think René Girard's mimetic theory prove to be an adequate framework for understanding deeper this whole issue because his theory deals with human anthropology and symbolic systems regarding the problem of violence. One of his main thesis is that human desire is mimetic, thus when our basic needs are satisfied, we imitate others' desire, which can lead to conflict and rivalry. Since one of the core features of international migration regarding the origins and destinations is that mass population moves from poorer regions to richer countries, Girard's concept of mimetic desire might be a useful approach to analyze the issue of migration. In my paper, I illustrate the current situation and then I propose to interpret this according to Girard's concept.

Keywords: violence and religion, migration, mimetic theory, René Girard

**RELIGIOUS PLURALISM BETWEEN NORMATIVITY AND PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION**

**Tramontano Beatrice[[69]](#footnote-69)**

***Abstract****: There’s no doubt that in contemporary societies, even more complex and mixed, multicultural, religious pluralism is a central matter, connected with problems that derive from the clashes between different groups and identities. Considering the fact that religion and belief continue to play a central role in defining the social, cultural and political structures, even in “secularized” societies, try to solve and mediate the conflicts is the challenge of our century. But how can we face the cohabitation of different necessities, in order to create a homogeneous system but at the same time guarantee the rights and survival of every religious identity? My study would like to analyze some attempts made in these years, at theoretical and political level, to conceive and theorize some rules and principles usable to regulate the problems linked to religious pluralism, underlining how it is difficult to apply normative and abstract rules on an empirical and concrete level, modified by historical and temporary changes and transformations. In particular, I would like to analyze these issues focusing on two Documents, The Principles of Toledo and the Declaration of Abu Dhabi: written the first in 2007, and the second in 2019, both make attention on the importance of education in order to build a more equal and plural society, and they show a kind of “normative project” that societies try to create and observe; is this project enough to respond to the complexity of the social order and changes, linked to religious, ethnic and cultural changes?*

*Keywords: religious pluralism,“secularized” societies; conflicts*

**‘GREEK-ORTHODOX RELIGIOSCAPES IN GERMANY AND GREAT BRITAIN AS SYMBOLIC CONSTELLATIONS OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM’**

**Trantas E. Georgios[[70]](#footnote-70)**

***Abstract:*** *Migration, i.e. de- and re-territorialisation, entails the movement of people, but also of values, ideas, religious convictions, corresponding aesthetics, in short culture. The re-establishment of communities abroad gives rise to the formation of religioscapes and thereby to their intersection with the host culture and its overarching or predominant religioscape(s). Inevitably, in the lapse of time, as the migrant community is exposed to the host culture it endorses and rejects elements of the host cultural paradigm, and in doing so it undergoes hybridisation to some extent. The emergent hybridity is evident in the appropriation of local aesthetic themes and tendencies; such is the case with the Greek-Orthodox religioscapes of Germany and Great Britain, where the most sizable Greek migrant communities in Europe are established. Due to the fact that they have consolidated their place in the host society since their arrival in the 1950s and 60s, and because their communities as religioscapes grew and evolved as intertwined with their churches, their parishes, the historicity and particularity of their migratory narratives has been embedded into their churches in an aesthetic way. This is attested by architectural, iconographical, and linguistic elements in the church-buildings. More to the point, an appropriation of the local culture and an entopic tendency is identifiable in the heterotopia of the church. And this attests to the coexistence and harmonisation of heterodox convictions and their aesthetics that previously constituted symbolic constellations of otherness, and yet through the migratory collective experience they eventually transform into pluralist, mutatis mutandis ecumenist religiocultural symbolisms.*

*Keywords: Religioscapes, migration, identity, re-territorialisation, hybridisation, Greek Orthodoxy*

**CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVE IN HELPING PROFESSIONS**

**Trbojevik Svetlana, Associate Professor[[71]](#footnote-71)**

**Georgievska Sofija, Associate Professor[[72]](#footnote-72)**

**Stanojkovska Trajkovska Natasha, Assistant Professor[[73]](#footnote-73)**

***Abstract:*** *Intervention in helping professions involves lot more than knowledge based methods and skills adopted by helping professionals, often it involves exchange of ideas, feelings, beliefs, and values that may or may not be directly addressed or acknowledged, but have profound influence in the process of recovery or reestablishing the wellbeing of clients. The main focus of this paper will be on elaborating the main aspect of Christian spiritual perspective in individual, group, and community in interventions. We will try to prove the link between Christianity and contemporary society values such as individual freedom, right to service (human right), social justice, human dignity, professional integrity, subsidiarity.*

*Christian spiritual perspective accepts the belief that God exists and that He created the entire universe, including the material and spiritual realms. These spheres are in mutual coexistence, reflecting intelligent creation, and exist in reality independent of humanity. In the created order, humans are ontologically unique, created in the image of God. Common to of all people is their dignity, value, personality, creativity, strengths and rationality. The value of human differences and autonomy is an important ideal that is emphasized in Christian spiritual perspective in understanding human uniqueness and individuality.*

*Christian spiritual perspective will be therefore seen as a resource that promotes client efforts to solve or deal with problems. The Christian spiritual perspective can be used as part of therapeutic approaches in counseling models based on empowering strengths and recognizing the role of life events in the therapy, an interactive processes in which individuals construct their meaning on the basis of life experiences.*

*Keywords: Christianity, spirituality, individual freedom, human rights, social justice, human dignity, subsidiarity, professional integrity*

**THE BULGARIAN CHURCH – FROM THE FOUNDATION**

**OF THE BULGARIAN EXARCHATE (1870) UNTIL THE LIFTING OF THE SCHISM (10.05.1953)**

**Velichkov Georgi, Assist. Prof.[[74]](#footnote-74)**

**Abstract:** The first part of this report will introduce the construction of the Bulgarian Exarchate as autonomic, independent and autocephalous church. The relationship between the Bulgarian exarch and the Ecumenical Patriarchate will be examined in the context of specific conflicts in establishing these relationships. The report will also analyze the complexity of the diplomacy of the High Gate and Russia in the Balkans. The historical prerequisites for declaring the Bulgarian Church as schismatic and the violation of the church canons by the Bulgarian Exarchate in ethnophyletistic context will also be problematized. The final part of the report will make a historical and theological reconstruction of the Bulgarian Church from the Liberation of Bulgaria (03.05.1878) until the lifting of the schism (10.05.1953) and the restoration of the Bulgarian Patriarchate.

*Keywords:* High Gate, Ecumenical Patriarchate – Constantinople, exarch, ferman, schism, ethnophyletism

**AFRICAN TRADITIONAL RELIGION, CHURCHES AND PARTY POLITICS IN ‘NEW ZIMBABWE’**

**Vengesai Chimininge, PhD[[75]](#footnote-75)**

***Abstract:*** *Following the political developments on 15 November 2017 in Zimbabwe that saw the inauguration of a new government, both local and international media expressed sentiments about the birth of a new era in Zimbabwe. The new government has popularized its approach as a “new dispensation” to signal a different approach to governance and modus operadi. A more significant development was the signing of the “National Peace and Reconciliation Commission Bill (NPRC) into law, making operational a Commission that was appointed by Mugabe in 2016. The Church and African traditional leadership were in support of the signing of this bill into law. However, what is worrisome is that despite the signing of this bill into law, Zimbabwe is currently experiencing socio-economic and political crises. It is against this backdrop where this paper seeks to theoretically analyse the role played by religion in promoting peace and reconciliation in ‘new’ Zimbabwe. Thus published documents, newspaper and internet sources shall be used to glean data for this paper.*

*Keywords: Zimbabwe; Reconciliation Commission Bill; African traditional leadership*

**THE LIMITS OF RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN FRANCE:**

**THE CASE OF SOKA GAKKAI**

**Yanis Ben Hammouda, Doctoral Candidate[[76]](#footnote-76)**

***Abstract:*** *Recognized since 1983 as a consultant NGO to the United Nations, Soka Gakkai International (SGI), a lay Buddhist organization, aims at bringing about world peace through educational, cultural and spiritual activities. As such, it can be considered a form of engaged Buddhism, which may be defined as “the application of the Dharma, or Buddhist teachings, to their solution of social problems” (Queen, Engaged Buddhism in the West, Boston, Mass: Wisdom Publications 1995:1). Yet, like all new religious movement that start by being exclusivist and strongly evangelical, SGI had to adapt and thus underwent several changes to conform to Western society, notably by developing a humanistic and pacifist ethos, in order to become the SGI we now know. But despite the tolerant and progressive values it promotes, Soka Gakkai France (SGF), SGI’s French offshoot, is, paradoxically, the victim of religious intolerance in a country famous for its separation of Church and State, as well as for its strict monitoring of minority religions. Contrary to other European countries where SGI has established itself, SGF is often denounced in France as a “cult.” Therefore, the purpose of this paper is twofold: (1) the first is to clarify how the evolution of SGI’s official discourse, from religious exclusivism to universal tolerance, may be a consequence of its acculturation to Western society, and to show to what extent this tolerance is practically implemented in France; (2) the second will be to offer an account of the difficult but perhaps changing relations between SGF and French society – be it with its political representatives, the media, or other French Buddhist organizations.*

*Keywords: Soka Gakkai, pacifist ethos, tolerance*

**THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY IN DEVELOMENT OF**

**RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE AMONG MUSLIMS IN R.M**

**Zaimi Fatmir[[77]](#footnote-77)**

***Abstract****: In this paper we will present the social phenomenon religion, that is, religion and tolerance in a specific population i.e. among Muslims in the Republic of Macedonia. The paper is divided into two parts: theoretical part and empirical part. The paper will contain a presentation of the theoretical knowledge on the tolerance indicators, the possible extremes and drawbacks, simultaneously explaining the concept of living with differences. The development of religious tolerance is considered, by the Islamic Religious Community in the Republic of Macedonia. The emphasis is on the development of religious tolerance in Islam, determination of religious and non-religious Muslims and the role of the Islamic Religious Community in the religious tolerance among Muslims at the level of the Republic of Macedonia. This paper makes an attempt to explicitly explain religious tolerance, that is, what factors have an influence on religious tolerance, and to explain the scope and the role of the Islamic Religious Community in the creation of this tolerance among the Muslim population at state level. Subject of research of this paper will be the influence of the Islamic religious communities on religious tolerance, among the Muslim people, and to present the role of the Islamic Religious Community in the creation of cohabitation and tolerance of Muslims and the other religious communities. This research would have a particular contribution in the obtaining of a clearer perspective for such a phenomenon, simultaneously it would provide perception of the role of tolerance in the integrating processes in the Macedonian society in the period after the independence. This research aims to indicate the importance, however also the necessity of a clear understanding of the phenomenon religious tolerance, degree of religiousness among the Muslim population and the influence of the Islamic Religious Community in the creation of religious tolerance.*

*Keywords: Religion, types of religions, tolerance, degree of religiousness, Islamic Religious Community*

**RELIGION AND ETHNICITY TWO VARIABLES ON MANAGING OF CONTEMPORARY DIVERSE SOCIETIES**

**Zemon Rubin Ph.D[[78]](#footnote-78)**

***Abstract:*** *Scholars are predicting three scenarios on the future development of the contemporary diverse societies : 1) Status Quo - Nothing New on the Front (no improvement of international standards for managing of the diversity); 2) “The Dark” Scenario - the Victory of Xenophobia (nationalism and xenophobia to became - characteristics, by reducing the rights on protection of minorities), and 3) “The positive scenario”- “All Different - All Equal” (Multiculturalism/ Interculturlism, as ideology based on tolerance, peaceful and equal cooperation is slowly being developed). We are more inclined to conclude that in conditions of developed social networks, the dominance of English and strong technological development, the differences between cultural and ethnic groups are rapidly eroded and suppressed. The logical extension of the "End of History", as the final victory of liberal theory and practice, is a debate on the beginning of the end of cultural differences. In this, it is easily ignored that technological developments, advanced forms of communication and modern transport have provoked the "awakening of ethnicity" in the second half of the 20th century, and that ethnicity, as a form of social organization, was ever threatened , showed great vitality, and often developmental and creative aspects in its nature. Also, the process of revitalizing the influence of religions and the significance they have in preserving and the contemporary changes of ethno-cultural identities and their interactions are necessary to perceive. The predictions that the secular liberal state will place religions exclusively in the private sphere and that it will take away their collective significance by recognizing religion as a human right that is the subject of free choice is increasingly subject to re-examination. This is even more because certain groups and communities, especially in the diaspora, develop their ethno-cultural identity around the faith.*

*Keywords:* religion, ethnicity; *ethno-cultural identities*

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