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Originalni naučni rad

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UDK: 316.72:2;271.2(497.7);299.5

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## **RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AND TOLERANCE – THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES OF DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES**

When people find itself in crisis in him grow interest for himself. Crisis is open process which necessity involves hope. Religion is on of the answers of the real challenge – crisis -, which is symbolic force with which help jounq individuals and groups of the person of the same age are solving their problems, or they easily adjust. The crisis is teaching youth to pray not just to think. Golden era of faith is time of terrible nature catastrophes and social disasters. Then revival of holy can come: hopeless time and its revival are going together. When man is in crisis he began to question not just the world around him but also inside him: He ends to live in security of his experience and knowledge. Except a prayer for his what else left?

Faith is teaching youth to made distinction between the feeling of fear, which comes from unpleasant, and danger natural and social phenomenon's from feeling of difficulty which sources is not known and clear. Fear is here to warn youth and to push them to act: in fear is beginning of wisdom! The felling of difficulty is all over the soul, depression, restless that stream from the depth of unconscious. That is some inner mood in front of insecure of tomorrow day, which can overcome only with faith. (Susnic, 2002)

Jesus instead of low offered something more useful: He, who lands on the bottom of human's difficulty, offered salvation through love, faith and hope. If man in what kind of dark moods find himself, hope doesn't leave him. Difficulty is feeling

of weight, which can't fulfil any opportunity in human's life. On this existentialistic situation of worry young people can respond like nihilistic philosophy of life does, or like the way of Christian Faith do with resurrection. Existentialistic difficulty is a way that lives only human because he has opportunity to choose, and every choice is connected with uncertainty.

In every people, the believer is hidden side of self, part that in crisis situations tends to union with absolute and mystical power. How else to explain the fact that in the begging of 21 century in the era of science and technology and rationality, world which follows black and white magic, reading fortune, predicting etc. There is a feeling that we are back in middle age. So, that is not only returning of the church, but also on folk religion and superstitious. In the time of tensions and extreme crisis the society is divided on two confronted sizes, some are believers and others nonbelievers.

Social crisis disturbs stability and with it is calling every individual to think about itself and community in which he lived. In the time of crisis differences are begging to hinder – who is different is danger! Crisis is suitable for racial, national and religious conflicts. Instead of supplementing each other, denying the other becomes characteristic in social relations.

In crisis time young people are losing orientation, but not the need from it. Seeking without purpose is vagrancy: there isn't objective determination in events, nor subjective believe in their outcomes. In crisis situations even the nonbelievers are inclined to faith if they don't see help from other side. In that moments we are reaching for something that we doesn't now that we had. In front of us reveal hidden experiences and customs for which we wasn't conscious and aware that live inside us. Young people does what they can and what depends from them power (Gidens, 2000)

When suffers society we speak for society crisis, and when suffer individual we speak for personal suffer. What else we can expect in unexpected and rationally unsolved circumstances but human to set on faith and try to find some exit. The life set questions, and symbolic systems give answers. People can choose between different answers, but most often they choose answer that physiologically fit, without difference is it true or false, good or bad, its important that gives promise. Faith is experience to be brave when everything and everyone sinks.

People lose orientation, but still they believe that there is some way out, it's a matter of time when will be found. In that search for way out, young people face with ideas, believes and values which are traditionally connected with religion and church. True opportunity they feel as personal hope.

Social crisis as it's said creates uncertainty and fear in individuals: that which is structurally shake is felt like inner soul shock. Crisis that shakes the basis of the society can't spare inner peace in individuals, which are seeking way out from it.

In relation of faith it is difficult to compare orthodox nations with non-orthodox: they are less attached to faith. If in homes of ordinary people is seen cross, candle or church calendar that isn't measure of faith, because this symbols are kept more as memory instead as symbols of faith. If it's pointing out that our people are believers, than it's hiding that there are deep roots of their faith individually, collectively nor in theological culture. Our young people believe, but not only in Christianity also in other shapes of believing (fortune, stars, ghosts etc).

There are tree main reasons, and what is important is how they are understand in frames of some theory:

1. Stratum of religious-mythical opinion didn't disappear and didn't disappear from human soul. Forgetting of God isn't same with the death of God, because God can be back in life from temporary or occasionally forgets in human soul. That which human in the time of his life in community has seen, heard, feel, believe and do, doesn't die but only goes back deeper strata in unconsciousness, so in some circumstances to goes up from bottom to the surface of conciseness. In big economic, political, moral and physiological crisis can come to revival of suppressed and temporally forgotten ideas, believes and values. In moments of crisis man goes back on some ancient believes to find his identity. In that moments the holy is accepted less rationally but more emotional. The bigger labor divides and specialization of roles must on some way to reflect on religion: believers now choose from system of faith those truths and value which fits on their place in society. They didn't accept hole system of faith but some parts of it. On all that church must adjust and change all traditional preaching of religious truths, and to pay attention on different needs and wishes of believers. Because, now they choose what from all content of faith will enter in their cognitive and value frame. Instead of question "in what should people believe?" now much more the question is "in what people can believe?" on this level of social and spiritual development.
2. It's true that religion has lose authority, power and influence in public life (with separation the church from the state), but this doesn't change church influence in private life (which can seen with strengthens of faith individualism). Religion doesn't disappear, it just move from public to private sphere of life, where without difficulties can fulfill needs of believers. Religion is special quest for holy, not just group ceremony.

Philosophy of individualism and the way of life have threatened collective way of worship-church ceremony: here comes to expression value of self-experience against collective conciseness. If some believer can achieve salvation than that faith in self has universal hope, not just hope for chosen people. Because of this hope Buddhism originate in India, and become one of the three religions in the world with most followers. Its truth when we said that east doesn't admit churches, because salvation is personal thing.

3. The number of believers, which make faith ceremony, falls, but that doesn't mean that they stop believing. Committing faith ceremony is not proof for faith, there are a lot of people, which commit them but don't believe. In past Sunday faith ceremony has wider sociological meaning then religious content. Church service in villages was drama, opera, school and everything, which fulfill human needs. When that functions has separated and get cultural independence, all of the people which are seeking for something else except fulfilling the faith obligations, has distant from the church.

The holy loses social but not private meaning. Social can act without the holy, individual can not. The fact that religion is excluded from the public life doesn't mean that is cut off from the society but it is on the new level in the personal sphere. Now the quest for meaning and values of the life is moved from society to individual. Where religion is personal thing, society is secular. Religion from visible becomes invisible, but still remains religion. If it's told that the number of the believers in the churches is smaller, than can respond that they are higher in their homes: If the number of the believers in churches falls than they move somewhere else, but they didn't discontinue with their faith. (Greeley, 1972)

The weakening of the church form of faith expression doesn't mean disappearing of the faith: it's changing the place, which proof constant human need for the holy but in different shape. Abandoning the old ways of faith expression human is finding new one's. If we speak for the revival of the religious faith, then we assume some thoughts:

- Idea that the religion is dying supposes some golden era of faith.
- Religious faith in some ways was neglected, abandon and forgotten, but there are possibilities for revival.
- If there is revival of this faith it's not clear that will come revival of traditional church faith or resurrection of old forms of believing and maybe of opening new faith horizon's.
- There is assumption that the faith didn't dyed, but is suppressed deep in sub-conciseness and is waiting a good moment for revival.

- If religious faith today is in crisis, than it's sure that this is not a new experience, it was happened in other times too.
- It is not clear is it in crisis just the faith or some historical form of faith.
- How can we speak for crisis of faith when hers values and norms are deep in the consciousness of 4/5 of humanity.
- Does the revival means returning of those believers that are abandoned, or is concerning some new believers.
- Is the revival of faith maybe means returning of religious institutions with past influence and power, and with role not just in integration and legitimization of society, but in moral life of individuals.
- If old societies weren't connected with religion, the teases for secularization and revival of faith are contestable etc.

There are a lot of relations between religion and social changes. Sometimes religion is obstacle for social changes, and sometimes helps for their appearances. In fact changes in society brings changes in religion.

The process of secularization is spreading of the holy and in the same time drawing border against ordinary world. Influence of holy is spreading when some places, persons, object are becoming holy. From that moment they are forbidden for use in ordinary world because is fill with Holy Spirit.

Borders of ordinary world are changeable: sometimes thy are spreading, sometimes they shrink, but they are always here. When the church is present as holy institution, always are here unholy institutions. This difference is coming clear with appearance of professional priests. With that was made division between "this" and "other" world, which isn't finish: around the borders there is always struggle.

Usually the holy corresponds with church. But, in that case thing which are not connected with the church isn't holy. On any other form of believe church look as superstition, not as a way for searching for holy, remembrance of it or some sorrow. The church makes choices from all that which is in the ordinary world. Orthodox Church has spread the influence of the holy including some pagan believes, giving them new functions and meanings.

Theologies theoretically define holy, church practically decides where the holy is spread and where stops. If the church alone decide what is holy and where is spread, than she has monopoly over holy knowledge and holy places. If the church is in state to be one of many who gives holy meanings on the market of ideas and believes, than she looses monopoly and must give effort for better

approach to the believers. It is with reason the attempt of the church strictly to define what is holy which is equalizing with itself, and all outside the church is unholy. (Hamilton, 2002)

Secularization is not a new phenomenon which is characteristic for our time, but it is constant process in every religion tradition, which consequence isn't dying of religion, but slow process of losing power and influence which the religious institutions have. That which usually is secularization actually denote transformation of one kind of believe to another, doesn't mean dying of religious ideas, believes, values etc. Term secularization is controversial: this term sometimes is use for some communities of believers that separate from official church to save their original faith. Everything, which is outside of church faith, goes in favor of secularization, almost never in favor of changes made in form of faith. Secularization doesn't mean dying of religion, but moving from public to private life: nothing can do in public, but means a lot in private. Moving from public towards private life can't proof teases of secularization, because faith just changes the place of existing and gets new forms.

On what basis stand idea of secularization of society?

**Knowledge:** explanation and understanding of all nature and social phenomenon with nature and social reasons and motives, not with supernatural forces.

**Ethical:** source of moral ideas, believes and values is human not God, so is necessary autonomous moral to change.

**Law:** for arrange of social community are necessary norms which are take out from system of values concrete society, on other side church law is worth just for arranging relations inside the church community.

**Political:** dividing the sky from earth goes in favor of dividing the church from state, which mean that church is exclude from creating decisions for all society.

**Educational:** the process of socialization is in manner of society norms and value, so for catechism there is no place in schools or isn't obligatory.

**Economic:** if the church sometimes was enormous rich, now is different.

First sign of secularization is appearance of religious pluralism: bigger number of religious communities just affirmative weakening of religion as social power. Second sign for secularization is retreat of religion in private life. Third is connected with social differentiation. Last one is connected with rationalization on social life and belief that all phenomenon can explain and understand rational.

Turning from institutions to individual, from ritual to experience is road to true faith and spirituality which moves from old forms to new ones. Fact is that number of believers in church falls, but that doesn't mean that they didn't believe. (Stanovicic, 2003)

Secularization is ideology which depend on loosing the power of church institutions, but doesn't see that personal believe remain untouched from that process of weakening of classical religion. Secularization is on the level of ideology: there isn't need for something absolute and mystical.

Humans use more mechanisms through which they try to find and keep their identity. Certainly, religion and nation are two powerful forms for belonging and identifying. According to number of sociologists for creating one nation very important is common and long lasting life of different ethnic communities on same geographic place. But, this fact does not have sentence role for weakening or loosing of national interests and feelings. Besides long, mutual experience, usually national specifics are kept in certain ethnic communities.

According to it, nation doesn't live only from memories about its past, but also from its determination about future that collects the will of all its members and make it more unified. Conscience for their common past usually is completed with the desire for common future. Past can not be changed, but can be learnt. Future can not be learnt, but can be changed. Therefore when determining ethnic identity we must take into consideration volunteer act of mutual life that is based on historical and social conditions. Certainly, national sense of identity is followed by religious sense of identity. The religion is classic saint "love all of the other nations as you love your own". Number of sociologists of religion emphasize that in fact nation is act of faith and believing. Trough faith persons understand better characteristics of its own nation. Therefore in Balkan region, as a rule, representatives of one nation follow one faith. But, there are cases when representatives of different communities follow some faith. For example: Macedonians, Serbs, Bulgarians, Russians have same faith, even they belong to different nations. Also, it happens more then one faith to be present in the frames of on nation (for e.g. Most of the Macedonians are Orthodox, but still there are Macedonians who are Muslims). On Balkan Peninsula very typical is the situation with Albanians who are three faith: Islam, Orthodox and Catholic. All of this tell us that nation and religion should not be identified. Therefore we'll make sharp division between religion and nation, since faith is one and only, while there are more nations. In the world there are orthodox believers Macedonians, Russians, Arabic, Serbians what means that faith is up-national i.e. universal.

Even religion and nation are two powerful forms of belonging and identifying: in order to strengthen national feeling, religious one has to be weakened. On the question "Who are you?" none would answer I'm Orthodox, Catholic, Muslim or

Protestant. Almost everybody would answer "I'm Macedonian, Serbian, Bulgarian, Albanian". It leads us to the fact that during last several centuries situations has been changed in its root. But, basic characteristic of modern time is the following rather paradox act. 15 years ago when religion came back in social and every-day life, everybody expected that people would find themselves as subjects of their own faith. But, opposite had happened: necessity for belonging and identifying with the nation appeared to be much stronger then religious identification and participation. (Susnjic, 1998)

Appearance of so strong emotions, conscience and interests can be so expressed only if religious feeling is weakened. That is what is happening in the last 15 years in Macedonia; even influence on its basic religious institutions (Macedonian Orthodox Church). In the past, pain role in the history of Macedonian nation was done by Orthodox religion. It kept and secured Macedonian identity in the most difficult moments. It seems that in 1991 it was forgotten and suddenly everybody in Macedonia were proud of being subject of Macedonian ethnic community. In that moment Macedonian state as a world institution took the leading role from MOC, as a saint institution.

In the context of this topic we'll make a short discussion about the relation between religion and nation. At the beginning we'll emphasize doubtless fact that religion and nation are two forms of identification. These are strong mechanisms through which each young person seek for its identity. Sense of identity is very important for both, Macedonian and Albanian ethnic groups in Republic of Macedonia. But these two forms of identity cannot have same identity in same time. In certain period religious sense is stronger, while in other periods the national one, no matter whether we talk about members of Macedonian or Albanian ethnic community in Republic of Macedonia.

Solovjev is completely right when he says that religion is classical saint, while nation is modern saint. Those who prefer religious feeling are lead through life by the following idea: "Love all nations as you love your own nation". Those who prefer national feeling is lead by the following thought: "Love your own nation, before and above all". I agree with the constellation that youth in Republic of Macedonia turn themselves more towards their historical past, but also with a high level of approximation about its future. Determination of its own future gathers the will of the members of certain ethnic community and makes them deeply united. Usually consciousness about mutual past is made complete with the wish for mutual future. Past can not be changed, but it can be acquired. Future can not be completely known, but can be changed.

Great numbers of sociological examinations, which refer to the subject, indicate an interesting data. Believe it or not, they show that religion and nation do not have logical connection. Additionally, here is the fact that religion is national

and universal category. But, besides these strong facts, this social phenomena are in an unbreakable psychological connection and secret union! Only in period of national conflicts religious impatience is strengthened. Only in such cases, certain identification of nation and religion that is difficult to understand appears. That's not the case in the rest of "peaceful" times.

Best soil for introducing religious and ethnic tolerance is civic society. It is supranational society in which basic measure is the citizenship. In the frames of this type of society basic human values become more general. Generalization of the values and norms goes towards the level of creation of universal human rights and values. With this, inherited ethnic rights and linked habits, moral and legal norms fall. Universal values and norms, followed by human rights and freedoms, are wider then the values of the special ethnic community. However, the system of norms and values has be risen on universal level. As well as there is separation of the state from the church, also it is possible to separate citizenship from national feature.

All members of youth are equal in front of God, therefore religious and politics institutions should have equal attitude towards them. In this constellation, pretty adequate element is the fact that in Christian and Islamic holy books (Bible and Koran) there are mutual messages for valorization of human behavior. These are messages that cause action in the young members of Islam, as well as young members of Christianity and they have universal and general human character. Basic moral principle that is part of the Pentateuch can be found almost in the same form in The Koran. Islam and Christianity, as two universal religions, give perfect chance for creating general human religious values, which in case are respected would make any kind of religious conflict impossible.

This implies that nation is historical fact, while religion is supra-historical and eschatological category. For the religion and church as its most important institution, the personality of the believer is most important, while for the nation most important is the spirit of belonging. If we try to make distinction between nation and religion, then we should say first that from temporary point of view, religion is before nation. The existence of religion is linked to the appearance of the human being, while nation exists in the last two hundred years. Therefore we can say that religion is constant social phenomena, while nation is temporary social phenomena. Secondly, religion is more important then the nation, because it is more general. If you want to say that somebody is good person, you'll say that he is good Christian or good believer – belonging to Islam. Illustrating such constellation, in this situation you'll rarely say, that he is good Macedonian or good Albanian. The expression good believer creates picture of perfectly moral person. Thirdly, from ethic point of view, religion stays above the nation. Religion is ethic category, while nation is ethnic category.

I would like to finish this part with Hajnc's thought, who says that equality of faiths and religious institution gives more chances for integration of the society; but the idea for creating one religion gives less chance for realization of integration in all segments of social life. If we succeed to actualize this in temporary dimension, we might conclude that in Republic of Macedonia there have never been any religious conflicts, since those were ethnic conflicts, caused by political aims.

Now, we can discuss about the question: is national interest's stronger than ecumenical consciousness? If we want to answer this question we should find some kind of balance between the views that Macedonia is flowery garden in which peace and good will of young people from different religions reign and next view that in our country reigns the law of opposite and sometimes sharpened relations.

Basically, Macedonia is country that carries the burden of its past and history. That's the destiny of small countries which want to be big, at least in the history. In there two heavenly kingdoms meet and mix: Christian and Muslims. Also it is place of crashing two civilization. Orthodox culture and Byzantium civilization, from one side, and Islamic culture and Muslims civilization, on the other side. Shall we expect conflict of the civilization, on this piece of ground, or multiculturalism, multiethnic living and the treasure of the differences will reign in the future. Speaking about this we shouldn't forget that Macedonia is part of wider region (Western Balkan) which carries the burden of previously mentioned issues. Macedonia is an area of religious, cultural, ethnic, social and ideological difference between Macedonian and Albanian youth and therefore it is not strange if misunderstanding, disputes and accidental conflicts are not only of religious character, but also from political, ethnic, cultural, historical, ideological and psychological character.

Islam and Christianity are part of the Eastern faiths, but they do not exclude each other. Judaism, Christianity and Islam use different names for same God. Probably, that's because they want to show and prove their difference. But, also they allow young believers of different religious to pray and confess in same Holy Temple. Believe it or not, problems appear when internal misunderstandings and conflicts occur inside these religious and ethnic communities. Due to economic, political, social and cultural reasons, problems and difficulties that can not be solved inside the community, do appear. In that moment as a kind of rule, they seek for the scapegoat. Who would that be? Certainly, in these cases, they are searching for the victim in someone from the members of ethnic community that is near them. In that way real reasons for social crises are successfully hidden and also dislocates the attention of its members who are really guilty and should be expelled and punished. Therefore, highly accepted maxim is the one that says that

one who can not converse, humanly with the believer of its own religion, would be even less able to do it with the member of another faith.

On this point, Dikram's sociological thesis is pretty actual. Paraphrased it would be as follows: if inside certain social community there is negative, demolishing energy that can disintegrate this community, then, this negative energy is directed towards neighboring social community. In that case "my" community is free of disintegration and internal conflicts. In order to save own tribe, the best thing to do is to attack the neighboring one.

In Republic of Macedonia happened something that for somebody has been expected, while for the others was completely unexpected. In the period of early development of political pluralism, in the frames of this "young" country most of the political subjects disagreed about state's main issues. Politic parties from right, left and central block always had different attitudes about constitutional, politic, economic, social and cultural issues. Than, that's what happened: in the dispute with Serbian Orthodox Church all state's politic subjects stand on Macedonian Orthodox Church side. For the first time in the state appeared national unification for which many think is impossible. Macedonian national unity that has been under question many times, come on the surface for this religious issue.

In order to understand this better it would be interesting to mention certain characteristics of cultural specifics of Balkan area. From historical point of view Balkan area, on which later on independent countries were created, even in present days is burdened with authoritative politic culture. It gives mark to all politics and religious events and relations (maybe because of the strong and long-lasting domination of impair, like Ottoman one). After communism crash people from this are started living in time and circumstances that were in collision with authoritarian political culture, from one side, and democratic political culture, on the other side. Result of this epoch collision would influence a lot on how religious and ethnic conflicts would be realized. Pointing at parallel existence of elements of authoritarian and democratic political culture is extremely important for the genesis of these conflicts. Territory of ex-Yugoslav republics in ethnic, religious and cultural sense is pretty heterogeneous. (Cebic Petar, 1998) In this pallet religious element should be appreciated since it is deeply in the root of the tradition and divides people into different groups. More precisely, traditions of all of the three ex-Yugoslav religions in which also orthodoxy belongs, also possess elements of authoritarian acting. All of that influence the whole society.

Now something about religious tolerance. Before we start explicating the relation between national interests and inter-religious tolerance in Republic of Macedonia we'll review religious tolerance in theory and practice in Christianity and Islam, as two leading religious organizations in Republic of Macedonia.

Such as great number of religious organizations, Macedonian Orthodox Church considers its religious truth as correct one, while others are incorrect, based on lies, which create distorted picture of the basic religious events in the past, present and future. Anyway dogmatic positions or Orthodoxy are clear. There is only one truth. Everything else is turning aside from the real path. On this point the following question appears "to what level each of Orthodox churches keeps on dogmatic truths that are basically accepted?" It depends a lot on the social constellation in which this church exists and functions. It is considered that, compared to other religious communities, Macedonian Orthodox Church is the most tolerant one. Macedonian Orthodox Church considers its teachings obligatory only for its members, but not for the rest of the members of the social community who belong to another religion. Without doubt, Macedonian Orthodox Church is one of the most tolerant religious organizations in the world of orthodoxy.

Conscious of its existing in multi-ethnic community, Macedonian Orthodox Church has always shown certain level of practical tolerance. But, the fact that Macedonian Orthodox Church is established as national church (church of the Macedonian nation) and it exists in that way in its national frames is doubtless. Somehow it limits its tolerance, but we can not say that Macedonian Orthodox Church doesn't show evident manifestations of practical religious tolerance. It practiced tolerance as much as it was needed, suited to the time and space in which it functioned.

Now we'll start explaining the observation and practical functioning of Islamic religious community in Republic of Macedonia, regarding issue of religious tolerance. Basically, its theoretical - dogmatic tolerance doesn't differ from the one of Orthodox Christianity. But, since Islam, generally, gives greater possibility for applying tolerance, still there are differences between them.

Out of theoretical-dogmatic postulates that were previously mentioned explain the practical functioning of Islamic religious community in Republic of Macedonia towards other religious communities and especially towards Macedonian Orthodox Church. Because of its close connection with Albanian politic parties (no matter whether they participate in the government or not) the identifying of moral Islamic principles (in the face of Islamic religious community) and politics ideology ( in the face of DUI, DPA, PDP etc) become more emphasized. Because of this direct connection with political elite, sometimes occur smaller or bigger oscillations on the part of tolerance towards Orthodox Christians. That's because, according to Islam all activities taken in order to make the influence Albanian politics parties stronger, are excused. That's the reason why the tolerance of Islamic religious community varies, depending on the social atmosphere in Macedonian society. Even Islam is theoretically pretty tolerant, in our country it is

closed and limited to itself, especially in less culturally and industrially developed areas, where it's specially conservative. Therefore most of the time Islamic religious community in Macedonia was on certain distance from Orthodox Christians.

In that direction we can talk something about the role of religion during the conflict in Republic of Macedonia in year 2001. Great damage for the future and democratization of Republic of Macedonia is the armed conflict that happened in Republic of Macedonia in year 2001. It's fact that political authorities are not ready and brave enough to analyze deeply the reasons, motives for the conflict. It has to be done by the science authorities. That's the attempt of these analyses. Here, I'll elaborate only one, but very significant dimension of this conflict, and it's the answer of the question: Whether, how much and how religious feelings of the citizens, belonging to Christian and Islam religion were violated. On the other hand, for the relation between the religions it is characteristic that they have never come mutually closer through modification and accommodating its dogma. So, instead of theoretical tolerance, only practical tolerance exists and it means concrete acting of the religious institutions and its perfection in certain social-political conditions.

On this point, Macedonian Orthodox Church, as institution with Orthodox believers has always shown practical tolerance, but of limited level, because remained firmly in its national frames. Differently from the Orthodoxy, where there's strong link between the church and nation, in Islam there is high level of connection between the faith and political power. This analyses searches for answer on the question whether this two, most important religious institutions in Republic of Macedonia (Macedonian Orthodox Church and Islam Religious Community) "didn't say aloud" (or even supported) manipulation with religious feelings or in the frames of religious tolerance actively participated in solving the conflict in year 2001.

In this direction, it's interesting to search for answer on the question: whether Macedonian Orthodox Church and Islamic religious community calm down or sharpen ethnic conflicts and problems. Since they are separated from the state, it is clear that they can not carry the main guilt for inter-ethnic problems in Republic of Macedonia. State and political parties in it are guilty for this. However, we can answer this question if we make detail analyses of the statements, declared by religious leaders in the last ten to fifteen years. Analyzes would show that their speeches differ from the religious teachings about peace and about conflicts. Anyway, these religious organizations can't be accused to be directly guilty for ethnic conflicts and problems, because they are not located on the main social road. They don't have influence on public life and public opinion as much as state and politics elite, which do it through the means for mass communication. If it depends on Macedonian Orthodox Church and Islamic religious community, there

wouldn't be ethnic conflicts in Republic of Macedonia. They are present because it's not up to them. But, they are not completely free of responsibility. If they are not responsible for what they said, they are responsible for not saying what they had to say. It gives impression that religious organizations in Republic of Macedonia do not have enough power to speak in their own religious language, but in certain social-political moment speak in collective language of its environment, where ethnocentrism becomes ideology of modern time.

### **Summary**

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Great numbers of sociological examinations, which refer to this subject, indicate an interesting data. Believe it or not, they show that religion and nation do not have logical connection. Additionally, here is the fact that religion is national and universal category. But, besides these strong facts, these social phenomena are in an unbreakable psychological connection and secret union! Only in such cases, certain identification of nation and religion that is difficult to understand appears. That's not the case in the rest of "peaceful" times. In this direction, it's interesting to search for answer on the question: Whether Macedonian Orthodox Church and Islamic Religious Community calm down or sharpen ethnic conflicts and problems.

**Key word:** Macedonian Orthodox Church; political tolerance; national church; national frames; religious tolerance; Islamic religious community in Macedonia; Islam believers; Orthodox Christians; reserved attitude; oscillation; practices religious tolerance; dosed tolerance; causing anger; believers; ethnic conflicts; responsibility; religious organization; religious language; social-political moment; collective language; ethnocentrism.

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