


A Word from the Editor-in-Chief: The Coming of Age of *Politics and Religion Journal*

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With the release of the Autumn 2024 issue, *Politics and Religion Journal* has now completed eighteen years of uninterrupted publication. In doing so, the journal has “come of age” in Serbia, as well as in many other countries where the age of eighteen marks the legal beginning of adulthood.

Founded back in 2007, the Journal was the first of its kind in the world, and as such it opened new field of study of political and social sciences. The durability of the Journal for eighteen straight years testifies that its founders were right in arguing that that politics cannot be fully understood without taking religion into account. Throughout last eighteen years, the Journal has consistently received submissions from Political scientists, and researchers from related disciplines, who support and believe in its founding vision. This idea is perhaps best summarized by our German colleagues who founded the “Institute for Politology of Religion” in Duisburg and whose motto is: “One cannot understand politics without understanding religion” (see Innerhofer 2008). Unfortunately, it appears that this Institute has ceased to exist in the meantime as there have been no recent updates or online activity related to its work.

Not only was *Politics and Religion Journal* the first of its kind globally, but it also seems to be one of the most internationally diverse journals in social sciences. This is not merely an opinion, but a conclusion drawn from a very simple mathematical analysis. Just take the year of the Journal’s founding and count the number of issues published since 2007, and take into account the international diversity of the authors. Such approach is quantitative, not qualitative – as qualitative assessments—such as who is the “best” of the “worst”—are usually very subjective. However, whether a Journal is international or not is a matter of straightforward mathematics. That is why I usually say that I aim to be as mathematical as possible while doing work in social sciences. Thus, if one

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were to compare this journal with other renowned publications in the field—particularly American and British journals—and count the authors, their geographic origins, racial and religious backgrounds, and the topics they cover, they would find that *Politics and Religion Journal* has brought together a larger and more diverse range of researchers, reviewers, and topics than any other major journal worldwide. If an analysis proves that there is a more international journal than *Politics and Religion Journal*, I am ready to make a public apology in this regard. Additionally, it is also important to note that the journal emerged alongside a new political science subdiscipline of the same name—Politology of Religion. This discipline was first established globally at the Faculty of Political Science, University of Belgrade (Serbia), during the 1993/1994 academic year.

This issue is dedicated to the influence of radical Islamic movements in the former USSR, a topic of critical interest worldwide, especially in the wake of the war in Ukraine. For a long time, Western policy, academia, strategic centers, and intelligence agencies have viewed the “Islamic question” as Russia’s soft underbelly. The list of contributors from MGIMO—the Moscow State Institute of International Relations (2024)—and other institutions speaks to the issue’s quality. It is well-known that MGIMO serves as the theoretical base and primary source of personnel for Russia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Who is better to understand this problem than them? The very fact that this institution teaches fifty-four languages alone testifies to the high caliber of the school and its researchers.

I am confident that our readership will eagerly anticipate the conclusions of our authors, especially readers in the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and the West in general. At the same time, who would doubt that this issue will also draw the interest of the Islamic world, as well as India and China, which face similar challenges as Russia?

References

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