

## GLOBALIZERS TENDENCIES OF RELIGIOUS INTEGRALISM TO CIVILIZATIONS

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**Abstract:** *This year's paper for the Conference on "Religion and Globalization" has the theme: religion as a globalizer. The subject of the research is narrowed to the Problematic Question: How do integrist and integralist elements in major world religions stimulate globalization processes, and how is the globalization of national cultures into large civilizational wholes implemented through religious-integralist tendencies? The aim of the research is to point out the strong connection between religious integrism, cultural-political integralism and the globalization of national cultures into unique spiritual civilizations. The methods that will be used in the research are: observation method, cross-cultural method, comparative approach, content analysis... Practical contributions: in the area of interreligious tolerance, interfaith cooperation and intercultural dialogue. Scientific contribution: understanding the significance of the social background of religious integralism, researching the globalization of local and national cultures, deepening cognitive insights into the relationship: religion → culture → globalization. Social significance, primarily, in the advancement of scientific disciplines: sociology of religion, civilization studies and cultural studies.*

**Keywords:** *religious integrism/integralism, civilizations, culture, globalization, interreligious cooperation.*

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## **Introductory remarks: Religion as a globalizer**

On the topic: how does globalization affect religions, how does it change and transform them?, numerous studies and research have been published so far. All the numerous factors that have made individual local and folk religions well-known and close to people all over the planet have been investigated. Here, however, an opposite process will be investigated. Therefore, we have set the research a Problem Question: How does religion globalize reality? How do religions, which have their own distinctly integrist and integralist tendencies, unite local and national cultures into larger civilizational wholes? This tendency, at first glance, is not easy to notice. And even when it is noticed, it is not at all easy to assign meaning to it. Due to the complexity of the topic, it is even more difficult to notice certain logical or scientific regularities from which these tendencies grow.

The essence of religion is to spread. Every religion is a bearer of universal messages. In its most basic form, this universalism has integrating properties. At the level of ideas, the concreteness of historical contexts and approaches to faith, there are already significant differences between confessions, and especially between religions. The need to spread in space and time makes religion the oldest globalizer, long before technological or economic factors of globalization. All religions of the world have one common property: to overcome local borders by bearing witness to the truth, to reach every believer in the world and to ensure their extension in time (Станковић 2013). The major world religions have played a key role in uniting diverse populations in a common belief, creating networks and communities that transcend local borders (Babayo, Aminu Yahaya & Ating, 2018). Many authors therefore consider the great world religions to be the first globalizers on the planet (Herrington, 2013). They were early drivers of global interconnectedness and exchange, long before the economic and technological processes of globalization (Станковић 2015). Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam..., originated in a limited area and spread by preaching, the sword or persuasion. The spread of religions goes through: the authority of saints, the knowledge and skills of teachers and the activities of missionaries (Roudometof, 2014. p. 1017-1018).

In recent times, it also takes place through modern means of social communication: the press, radio, TV and digital networks. Faith is not only rooted in the souls and hearts of believers, but also becomes available to billions of interested people (Chatterjee, 2014 p.136). In recent times, the right to personal choice of religion has additionally affected the relations between local religious communities and the headquarters of different, often rival religions. From this we derive the Initial Hypothesis, which states: Not only does globalization affect religion (through technology, economics, communication, etc.), but religion also affects globalization, often as a powerful driving force or globalizer. Therefore, the following Problem questions arise: How does religion affect globalization? What religious globalizers do we recognize? What are their tendencies?..

### **Integrism and/or Integralism?**

The first question that arises is: Are Integrism and Integralism merely synonyms or are they somewhat different? There is no consensus on this issue. French terminology recognizes Integrism. On the other hand, English terminology recognizes Integralism, and Integrism is a completely foreign and unknown term which is automatically translated as Integralism. In French political thought, there is conceptual confusion, so Integralism (even Integrism) is equated with Fundamentalism, which is by no means the same. Here we now need to clarify these two concepts and to draw a certain distinction with related terms such as: Fundamentalism, Fixism, Traditionalism and Conservatism. All these conceptual distinctions will be of great importance for us in analyzing globalization tendencies and

the globalization capacities of religions. So let's start in order: a little about Integrism, and something more exhaustive about Integralism.

Integrism is, by all accounts, a more general term, more lexical and philosophical. Integrated is: united, associated, connected... Spatially, Integrating means: combining several parts into one whole. In the mathematical sense, Integrating means: Adding infinitely small quantities within established boundaries. In geometric terms, Integrism means the connection of parts with the tip of a conical shape. In the terminological sense, Integrated is a synonym for: standardized, centralized, unified, compact, adaptable, comprehensive... Here, the head and the constituent parts function symbiotically, the entire organism is functional, coordinated and reflects the unity of the whole and the parts. The question arises: what would Religious Integrism be then? In the most general sense, Religious Integrism denotes the unification of social life, political, economic and social systems with the basic postulates of the official religion, which is based on certain religious doctrines.<sup>3</sup> Religious doctrines provide answers to questions from social life, and the effort of faith to permeate all areas of social life sacralizes society. From this, the conclusion is drawn that not every religion is integrist. Most often, those religions and/or confessions are integrist that strive to act in social relations, those that have a pronounced social dimension, and a certain Social Teaching.

Unlike Integrism, which is a more theoretical and abstract concept, Integralism is a somewhat more concrete, sociological, and above all political science concept that is objectified in political science and has a historical foundation in political practice. At the most abstract level, Religious Integrism is equated with Religious Integralism. It is "the introduction of unity between religious and political goals". Thus, Integrism and Integralism share the same root or starting point, with the Integralism concretizing and fixing social and political relations for a religious background. And just as the Integral circuit is "a component containing a multitude of miniature connected parts"; so is a national society as a whole, including its political system, a reflection of religious instructions and recommendations that: base social relations, political, economic and social systems on the sources of religious doctrines. Here we are already in the space of Religious Integralism.

### **Integralism, fundamentalism, fixism, conservatism, traditionalism**

Terms such as fundamentalism, fixism, conservatism and traditionalism are often confused with Religious Integrism and Integralism. Here too we must make a distinction. Fundamentalism is a return to the sources of faith, a return to the faith as it was at the time of the founders, cleansing it of subsequent religious deposits, schools and teachings (Станковић, 2010. p. 110-114). Fundamentalism is a concern for the purity of faith, a return to its basic, fundamental foundations (Peels & Kindermann, 2022. p. 494-495). In contrast to fundamentalism, integrism is an effort to inspire the entire social life with faith, to give the political, economic and social system a religious meaning and to harmonize the system with official teachings and doctrines.<sup>4</sup> Sometimes, therefore, fundamentalism and integrism are complementary, but most often they are not correlative. Traditionalism seeks to preserve the deposits of the past. Unlike fundamentalism, which seeks to get rid of the deposits of the past in order to see the faith in its purity at the source of the faith in the time of the founders, traditionalism insists on the legacies of the centuries and in this it is similar to integrism and integralism. However, integrism and integralism seek to implement the fullness of faith into modernity and everyday life, while traditionalism is less concerned with faith and more with preserving the heritage. And while traditionalism strives for immutability (Heywood 2004), integrism and integralism, on the contrary,

<sup>3</sup> „the Catholic spirit, living in the institutions, in the laws, in the customs...” (Aparisi y Guijarro, 1873. p. 341)

<sup>4</sup> Integrism did not aim at blindly transferring past institutions, but rather at infusing their spirit into modern structures. (Schumacher, 1962. p. 344)

strive for changes that implement faith into reality in a dynamic age. This integralist implementation is experienced as an “adaptation that does not deviate from its essence”. On the other hand, the property of immutability brings traditionalism closer to conservatism, where conservatism is only a feature of one direction, the fight against any changes in a society. Finally, perhaps the closest to integrism is fixism. All social life: the political system and economic and social institutions, is permeated with faith among integrists. Integralism fixes faith in the reality of life, while fixism describes more a state of ideological fixation on a single paradigm or ideological teaching. Fixism is not a religious term, but refers to a belief or attitude that postulates that everything is immutable, that there is no possible change or evolution, and is a term that comes from science (scientific fixism)<sup>5</sup> and from art. In any case, fixism resists change in any area, be it social, political or cultural, while integralism keeps pace with the changes of the era in which it is found (Robert, Fontaine & Veron 2017).

All these terminological distinctions will help us in further research regarding the globalizing capacities of religions.

### **Religious Integralisms: Experiences and Historical Perspectives**

“The miracle of the multiplication of the loaves (...) that’s what the Church is (...) it’s what holds me up. How alien I feel, deep down, to the struggle between progressivism and fundamentalism!” (Mauriac, 1958. p. 907). This evangelical “miracle of the multiplication of the loaves” is nothing other than an active invocation of the Holy Spirit, whose power the faithful followers of the Church of the Apostle Peter in Rome saw in Catholic Integralism. In the middle of the 20th century, the Latin (Roman) Church found itself faced with two equally frightening tendencies: the first, in order to save and preserve its essence, to fall into a complicated and unreliable traditionalism, which is another name for Catholic fundamentalism; and the second, which, in seeking to change what must be changed, also changes what must not be changed, and thus to headlong alienate itself from its essence in progressivism. Interestingly, integrists do not reject the opening of the Church to the modern world. On the contrary, they see an active Church in the world as it is today (Stanković, 2022. p. 341). In that world, followers are actually the bearers of the Church’s messages, and society is perceived indistinguishably: integrated and integral – as a targeted concentration of Catholics among themselves. Catholics, who were called liberals, believed that it was necessary to boldly draw a line under the past. They advocate a linear approach to reality, the essence of which is progress, and are often also called progressivists. The Holy See, on the contrary, believed that it could not compromise on principles, because the truth was at stake: therefore, it took an unyielding position. Between preserving the tradition of Catholic fundamentalism on the one hand, and the progressivism of liberal ideology on the other, the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) opted for the third option. The integrist approach remained grounded in the teachings of the church, but integralism was rejected. Catholic integralists advocate, to this day, the sacralization of society through state institutions: that positive law be supported and bound to the Canon Law of the Catholic Church. This approach was rejected by the Second Vatican Council by a majority vote, and the reality of a secular order in which the state and the church are separated was accepted. According to the official concept, it is possible to build the kingdom of God on earth, but not through the legal order of state law, but through a moral order that comes from God-inspired people, who will transform the world around them through the lay apostolate (Congar, 1965. p. 329). The Council rejected the “Closed Church”, but also “the dictates of liberalism, progressivism and relativism” (pope Benedict XVI). In order for the church to remain alive, it must open itself to the world; in order to preserve its essence, it must reject the nihilistic dictates

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<sup>5</sup> Scientific fixism once claimed that biological species were permanent and did not evolve, an idea that was refuted by the theory of evolution.

of evolutionary progressivism (Rourke, 2010). It was concluded that the Church must stand in all its fullness in the world as it is, and offer gifts to believing Catholics, and give hope and comfort to all other Christian brothers. Instead of the passive "Peter's Church" that is the guardian of God's treasury, comes the active "Peter's Church" that invokes the Holy Spirit and brings Him down to earth. Such a strong presence of the Holy Spirit would not be possible without the Church's integrist approach, although religious-political integralism itself is rejected.

The history of Eastern Orthodoxy knows only one integralist attempt during the reign of Ivan IV the Terrible, when powerful monastic circles tried to influence the Russian Tsar to introduce "Dostroy" – a code of conduct in a typically Orthodox society (Станковић, 2023. p. 66). Everything remained a matter of attempts. Since Orthodoxy opted for the exclusive option of individual salvation, imitating the monastic ideal, the entire field of social life was left to secular authority, and it never encountered integrist tendencies.<sup>6</sup>

In Protestantism, integralism never gained the social and political status it deserved. The unifying force of all Protestant denominations, like a common denominator, would be the literal interpretation of biblical texts (biblism). Inspiration from the New and Old Testaments, free from subsequent interpretations by the Holy Fathers, in Protestant denominations is manifested through morality in a completely secular world. The most pronounced in this manifestation is Calvinism, which insists on the rigid biblical morality of the religious community. A kind of strong public opinion of the civil community of Calvinists tends to penetrate the structures of secular power. The Calvinist *Res publica* should reflect the opinion of the civil community. Hence the idea of representative democracy and proportional representation. A public matter is only a reflection of the opinion of the community of believers (Fergusson, 2004. p. 73). Some theorists of integrism see certain integrist tendencies in Protestantism precisely in these efforts.

In Islamic theology and sociology of religion, the integralist question is less complex. It is pure and clear as nowhere else. The differences in approaches between Sunnis and Shiites are obvious, the integralist manifestations in Sunnism and Shiism differ, but what they have in common is that Religious Integralism in Islam implies a comprehensive integration of Islamic principles into all aspects of social life: governance and law, economic and social doctrines... An equal sign has been placed between Integrism, Integralism and Islamism. Islamism resolutely rejects secularism and openly propagates the construction of a civilization based on a single vision of faith and life (Avon, 2024). There is no doubt that both Sunni and Shiite Islam have a vision of a living Islam that is realized daily in the life of every believer. The integrist dimensions here are very striking. Islam is far from a private religion, it is a comprehensive worldview that should inform and integrate every aspect of life with faith. And not only the political, legal, economic and social system, but also: science, art, culture and all other forms of Creativity. The Islamic integrist conception rejects the separation of Islam from state power, and seeks to subsume the legal order under Islamic (Sharia) law.

More than anywhere else, there is a clear distinction between integrism and integralism in Hinduism. The integrist tendency in Hinduism seeks to unite so many diverse religious approaches and

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<sup>6</sup> Almost nothing has been written about integrism in the Buddhist faith. Max Weber was of the opinion that social issues in Buddhism were completely neglected, and that the reason for this was exclusively a preoccupation with individual salvation. In that case, a certain unambiguity could be underlined between the Orthodox approach to Christianity and Buddhism, at least in terms of integrism and integralism. Attempts in Eastern-Orthodox societies to realize some kind of ideal of the Christian-Orthodox man: through culture, art or, for example, through the political activities of the "God-Prayer Movement", lead to the conclusion that there are intends to build some kind of Orthodox culture, which, due to its reliance on the basic postulate of individual salvation, remains in the domain of will and attempt. In Buddhism, these tendencies are openly anti-social, so we cannot speak of any "Buddhist integrism and integralism".

spiritual traditions into a single Hindu faith.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, Hindu integralists seek to unify the national space through Hinduism: through culture and political activities and to give it a Hindu meaning – Hindutva (Sharma, 2015). Here there is a tendency to unite fragmented spiritual traditions and practices into a single national-civilizational whole. If we can talk about globalization in Hinduism, then it is the “civilization of the Subcontinent”.

## Religious Integralism: Theological Justification and Political Action

During the 19th century, secularization pushed the Catholic faith into the private domain. The Catholic Church found itself in an unenviable position: it had a subordinate and passive role. Under the onslaught of liberalism and individualism: the number of believers fell, public morality collapsed, and Christian values were eroded. The need for renewal and revitalization of the church began more seriously under Pope Pius IX. He condemned liberalism, modernism, secularism, and rationalism in the „*Syllabus of Errors*“ (1864) and centralized spiritual power: spatially in Rome (*ultramontanism*) and dogmatically: in the dogma of Papal Infallibility (when the pope speaks *ex cathedra*). Since Pope Pius IX, Rome has been the center of all Catholics in the world. After him, Pope Leo XIII encouraged the laity to form associations, but also to be obedient to their bishops (Gracias, 1953. p. 554). He encouraged Catholics to take up the “cross of responsibility” in the temporal order under the guidance of the Church. Leo XIII saw the support for these activities in the teaching of Saint Thomas Aquinas, who speaks of a “Holy Society” guided by a divine order behind which the Church stands (Casado 2004). In the neo-Thomistic conception, the Temporal Order in society could be transformed into the Divine Order, through the involvement of the laity (Lee, 1963). Pope Pius X had a somewhat different approach. He believed that all institutions in society could and should be subordinated to the Church, “as the bearer of divine law and Christian virtues.” This would give grounds for the integralists to demand that secular laws be subordinated to church laws, and that the basis of the entire legal system be the Canon Law of the Catholic Church. However, this conception remained in the minority at the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965). The Church no longer had the strength to prevent secularism. Pope John XXIII spoke of the renewal of the Church through *Aggiornamento* or modernization (“updating”). In such a conception, the laity have a key role in renewing and perfecting the “Time Order” through Gospel-filled action in the areas of family life, culture, economics and politics. The advocacy of the integralist idea of imposing the Catholic faith on the legal order of secular society has been completely abandoned. Instead of Top-Down (from faith through the legal order), today integralism is implemented from the bottom up: by each individual Catholic layperson inspired by faith and socially engaged. (Lemos, 2014). Integralism is realized through group and individual lay apostolates: in the family, at work and in the local environment.

Islamic integralism openly advocates that all aspects of human life should be governed by God’s will as established in Sharia - the law developed by Islamic scholars on the basis of God-given foundations. Today, it is already quite obvious that Islamic integralism has a strong political dimension: entire parties and political movements have Islamism as a fundamental political value and ideology in their programs. Islamic integralism is an ideological, political and legal continuation of the integrist worldview of the Islamic religion. The main instrument for realizing the integrist doctrine is *fiqh* (*fiqh*, هـقـف), the so-called Islamic jurisprudence. *Fiqh* is a kind of logic for implementing rules that are built in the spirit of the Islamic faith, so that norms are based on the holy book of the Quran and the *Sunnah* (religious law that Muhammad commanded during his lifetime). Islamic jurisprudence has

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<sup>7</sup> Four major traditions are used in scholarly studies: Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Shaktism, and Smartism. They are sometimes called denominations of Hinduism and are distinguished by the primary deity at the center of each tradition.



promoted the application of religious sources (the Quran and Sunnah) and derived rules for life situations from them. Fiqh clarifies the process of applying Islamic norms in everyday life: including rituals, morality and social law. At the same time, Fiqh is an instrument and measure of Islamic integralism. Its elaboration has not only a legal, but also an economic, social and universal dimension in everyday life. Fiqh is applied to all Islamic believers in the world, it represents the global Islamic religious community or Ummah (umma, أمة). Ummah is another name for the Islamic global society – Islamic civilization (Graham, 2006).

### **The Globalizing leverage of Religions**

Since the end of the 19th century, the Catholic Church has seen the defense of its teachings and influence in society through ultramontanism, a movement that looked “beyond the Alps,” “to the center of the world” – Rome. Ultramontanism has today become synonymous with “increasingly strong one-sided ties with the papacy and the central institutions” of the Holy See in Rome (Musa & Šestak 2023. p. 56). In 1870, the First Vatican Council proclaimed the dogma of papal infallibility, in all situations when the Holy Father acts *ex cathedra*. In the meantime, the Papal State was replaced by the point-state of the Vatican, the spiritual-spatial gravitational point of 1.4 billion Catholics in the world. A century and a half of regeneration of the Catholic Church and the resuscitation of the “Catholic return to secularized society” lasted. Today, Rome is the undisputed seat of the Catholic version of Christianity. St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome, on the rock where the remains of the holy apostle Peter are stored, is the center of this world. The importance of local churches and episcopacies has diminished. The conclaves that accompany the election of a new bishop of Rome have acquired the significance of a global event. The *Urbi et orbi* address of the bishop of Rome is also a global event that is carefully followed and discussed in all parts of the world. A journalistic and scientific discipline has even been created that follows and analyzes events in the Vatican (Vaticanology). The institution of the lay apostolate has activated the faithful who are now engaged in teaching the Catechism, in announcing the faith through evangelization, and in being the spreaders of the faith (missionaries). Group apostolates of the laity have enabled the existence of numerous Catholic organizations in culture, science, higher education... (Robinson, 2017). In societies where Catholic Christianity is only a minority, this approach strongly protects the Catholic minority and allows it an alternative coexistence in accordance with the spirit of faith. All these trends will homogenize societies with a majority Catholic population and shift their focus from nation-states to the Vatican as the spiritual center of Catholic civilization (Turina, 2020).

The symbol of Islamic civilization is the “holy Kaaba”, a meteor or cube whose stability symbolizes the permanent and unchanging world of Islam. However, in contact with different cultures, Islam adopted foreign influences. Muhammad’s faith was greatly influenced by Judaism, the oldest monotheistic religion, but also by the Arian and Nestorian heresies, which were then widely spread in the neighboring Christian world. The Arab culture, in which Islam was conceived, was in contact with the Hellenic culture of the ancient Greeks, but also with the Egyptians and Chaldeans, and somewhat later with the Persians, Indians, and even the Chinese (Siba’i, 2002). The positive experiences of other cultures and sciences were successfully integrated into Islamic civilization. The Islamic faith was transmitted to the Islamic community in the first places of worship. The first schools were attached to mosques, so mosques became places of cultural dissemination. The first centers of Islamic science, universities, were established at mosques, so: faith, spirituality, soulfulness, art and science were firmly integrated from the beginning. Thus, mosques became centers for teaching Islamic sciences, literature and art. After the mid-ninth century, legal sciences flourished in these schools, and in parallel with them: astronomy, engineering and medicine (Dallal, 2010). These centers of higher education

have survived to this day, making Islamic universities among the oldest in the world. Among them, the following stand out for their reputation and tradition: Al-Zaytuna in Tunisia, Al-Azhar in Egypt and Al-Qarawiyyin in Fez, Morocco. Thus, Islam built its own indigenous and authentic civilization. In the space of national cultures, the role of Islam is so strong that the Islamic faith is not only the basis of the national identity of a nation or ethnic group, but also the very life of each individual. Islam is thought and spoken about; it is written about, it is loved. Islam is a way of life: a complete system of responses. The task of each individual Muslim, in such a system of meaning, is only to follow the signs by the wayside with composure and calmness, and to sink into one great Islamic collective consciousness: ideas, habits, cultures, customs and behaviors. (Rahman, 2024. p. 88). The degree of integralism in Islam is so strong and powerful that it permeates all of human life. What globalizes national groups with a majority Islamic population in today's conditions is the same faith. Common religious practice and Islamic customs, Islamic solidarity, a single religious center in Mecca, the obligation to go on the "hajj" and pilgrimage to the Kaaba represent a powerful integrative factor that powerfully breaks down borders and calls for Islamic solidarity.

## Conclusion

In this scientific paper, we started from the Initial Hypothesis that religion has significant globalizing capacities. Religious approaches, however, are not identical. Depending on how social a religion is, its power to influence globalizing trends also depends. As expected, the two religions with the most pronounced social activism contribute the most significantly to globalization (Milosavljević & Maksimović 2018. p. 39). Globalizing trends can be most strongly observed in the Catholic version of Christianity and Islam, especially in Sunni Islam (Middle East Program, 2002). These trends primarily relate to the centralization of religious activity, the existence of strong religious cults (in Rome and Mecca), and a strong propaganda network (news agencies, television stations, universities, activities through culture and art). All of these formats act supranationally. Belonging to a religion, at least, seems to be at least as important as belonging to a nation. Recently, in Islamic and Catholic societies, specific business ethics have been developing, pilgrimage tourism (especially in the centers in Rome and Mecca), numerous non-governmental civil society organizations with religious goals and programs have been formed, numerous international organizations based on religious solidarity, scientific, professional and popular magazines... In the era of identity, religious identity has acquired perhaps the most significant role. In religions such as Islam, and more recently Catholic Christianity, religious identity prevails over national identity, or is at least equal to it (Станковић 2013, 2015).

All this points to the importance that religion plays in the processes of world globalization. Authors such as Fukuyama believed that the End had come not only to history but also to civilizations, because the world had turned into one large, global village (Köchler, 2020). On the other hand, Samuel Huntington presents the thesis that the Global Village is heterogeneous, and that it consists of a series of spiritual-cultural entities or civilizations (Huntington, 1996). As things stand now, the globalization process has stopped somewhere halfway (Станковић, 2007). The world globe is dotted with various world civilizations, among which at least two of the multitude are more than clearly civilizational profiled. The first among them is Islamic civilization (with minor differences between Sunni and Shiite Islam), and the second is Catholic civilization (as the supporting force of the Christian world).

It is to be expected in the future that, with the processes of globalization, spiritual and cultural entities will further strengthen. Technological innovations of the digital age have intensified communication between people, so that humanity in the sphere of communications has become practically Unum - One. This has resulted in the strengthening of religious identity over local identities of



ethnicity and nation.<sup>8</sup> Transtemporal and metaspatial religious identities act as a powerful driver of globalization tendencies in the modern era.

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<sup>8</sup> In Islam, positive integralistic tendencies distance Islamism from extremism. (Milosavljević & Vuković 2015)

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