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## A B S T R A C T S

Carool Kersten

*Religion and Literature, Identity and Individual: Resetting the Muslim-Christian Encounter*

In the first two decades of the twenty-first century inter-faith encounters have become a casualty of a paradigm shift in the thinking about the global order from the political-ideological bi-polar worldview of the Cold War era to a multipolar world marred by the prospect of culture wars along civilisational fault lines shaped by religiously-informed identity politics. On the back of 9/11 and other atrocities perpetrated by violent extremists from Muslim backgrounds, in particular relations with Muslims and the Islamic world are coined in binary terms of us-versus-them. Drawing on earlier research on cosmopolitanism, cultural hybridity and liminality, this article examines counter narratives to such modes of dichotomous thinking. It also seeks to shift away from the abstractions of collective religious identity formations to an appreciation of individual interpretations of religion. For that purpose, the article interrogates the notions of cultural schizophrenia, double genealogy and west-eastern affinities developed by philosophers and creative writers, such as Daryush Shayegan, Abdelwahab Meddeb, and Navid Kermani.

*Keywords: cultural hybridity, Islam, literature, religion.*

Rasoul Rasoulipour  
*The Other as My Equal*

The tremendous human capacity to “love” one another is, in my opinion, the strongest evidence both for the existence of God and for the relationship that God intends for human beings to have with God and with each other. At the same time, the human capacity for envy, hate, aggression, and violating the dignity of “other” humans is similarly great evidence that something is horribly wrong – human beings fail to maintain the intended relationship with God and each other. God’s intention does not change, but we forgetful human beings lose sight of it from time to time. This problem is at the root of human alienation from God and others that leaves us isolated, oblivious, suspicious and fearful.

This paper intends to provide a framework that allows us to see the source of the problem, to explore some of the causes for human alienation from each other and creation, and to find ways to heal the gap between ourselves and the rest of God's creation. I believe that all struggles, oppressions and sufferings result from this alienation, and a substantial mission of all religions, at least the Abrahamic religions, is to heal this divide by seeing the other as one's equal.

*Keywords: the other, equality, human dignity, alienation, stranger.*

Nadja Furlan Štante

*Christian-Muslim Women in Religious Peacebuilding – Breaking Cycles of Violence*

In a broader context, the main focus of this paper is the question of women's religious peacebuilding, which is understood in its widest sense, in terms of women's active participation in building liberating theologies and societies. It is about the promotion of the full humanity of women. While elaborating this theme, the paper takes up Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite's assertion that the "violence against women is the largest and longest global war." Just peacemaking is very much an interfaith and interreligious work and should be placed as a crucial starting point of the urge for transformation of "violent" theologies and living everyday praxis. While women have been marginalised from peacebuilding generally, the emerging field of religious peacebuilding has been particularly challenging for women. The liberating theme of this paper is illumination of the ambivalence of invisibility and marginality of women in religious peacebuilding, good practices and future issues.

*Keywords: women, religious peace-building, interreligious dialogue, obstacles, good practices.*

Mohammad Saeedimehr

*Islamic Mysticism and Interreligious Dialogue*

My aim in this paper is to investigate Islamic Mysticism and find out how and to what extent mystical views can build good grounds for a productive and fruitful interreligious dialogue. First, I provide a brief clarification of what I mean by

the notions of 'interreligious dialogue' and 'Islamic mysticism.' Then, I explain three mystical principles as three bases for the promotion of interreligious dialogue. These are the metaphysico-theological principle of 'the unity of existence' (*wahdat al-wujūd*), the anthropological thesis of *fitra* (primordial nature), and the hermeneutic method for interpreting the Qur'an. Finally, I explore the implications of these principles for interreligious dialogue and discuss the role of mystical teachings in promoting interreligious dialogue in two different, though interrelated, areas: doxastic and moral.

*Keywords: Islamic mysticism, Interreligious dialogue, Sufism, Ibn 'Arabi.*

Andrew Ashdown

*An Exploration of the Christian-Muslim Landscape in Modern Syria and the Contribution of Eastern Christian Thought to Interreligious Dynamics*

This paper considers Christian-Muslim relations in modern Syria and the importance that eastern Christian thought can make to the interreligious context within the Middle East. It briefly describes the diverse historical and contemporary Christian and Muslim religious landscapes that have cohabited and interacted within the country and the cultural, religious, and political issues that have impacted the interreligious dynamic.

Based on fieldwork undertaken in government-held areas during the Syrian conflict, combined with critical historical and Christian theological reflection, the article contributes to understanding Syria's diverse religious landscape and the multi-layered expressions of Christian-Muslim relations, in a way that has not been previously attempted. Providing insights into interreligious praxis prior to the conflict and in its midst, the article contributes to an understanding of the effect of conflict on interreligious relationships.

The article considers the unique contribution of eastern Christianity to the Christian-Muslim dynamic and concludes that the significance of the theology and spirituality of the 'Antiochene' paradigm has been under-recognised in western discourse and that, having coexisted within the cultural environment of Islam, it is uniquely placed to play a major role in Christian-Muslim dialogue and the reframing of Islam's engagement with modern society.

This article contributes therefore to knowledge and understanding of the changing Christian-Muslim dynamic in Syria and the neighbouring region; a new understanding of the religious landscape; and a door to exploring how east-

ern Christian approaches to Christian-Muslim relations may be sustained and strengthened in the face of the considerable religious and political challenges faced by both communities today.

*Keywords: Middle East, Syria, Christian-Muslim relations, Eastern Christianity.*

Mesut Idriz

*Expounding the Concept of Religion in Islam as Understood by Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas*

The discussions concerning the religion in Islam have a long history in Muslim intellectual tradition, particularly in the Arabic language. However, with the rise and development of Islamic oriental studies in the Western world in the last two centuries and particularly after the second half of the 20th century onwards, a “return” to semantic studies began re-emerging. Realizing the necessity, Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas began to focus and develop the definitions that had been altered, and clarified misunderstood and misleading concepts in relation to the religion of Islam in both the Muslim world and the West. Beginning from the 1970s, al-Attas began explicating his thoughts for the English speaking milieu (later in other languages). Al-Attas’s profound knowledge in various disciplines, traditions, cultures, and languages allowed him to begin to contribute scholarly input as he contributed his beliefs as well as ideas in the academic environment. In this article, al-Attas’s comprehensive understanding will be discussed briefly, but in some detail, including his own specific intellectual contributions.

*Keywords: Religion in Islam, al-Attas, Dīn and Religion, the Qur’an, Dīn and Arabic.*

Amar Ahmed

*Consuming Eid Al-Adha: Constructing and Expressing the Muslim Identity*

There is a lacuna in ethnographic research with regards to Muslims’ identity construction and expression from an internal perspective. Eid Al-Adha is an Islamic holiday which is rich in symbolism, collective rituals, and spiritual and material abundance. The article will interpret the meanings and values that consumers of Eid Al-Adha construct as parts of their identity, mainly being the religious one.

It will discuss how the holiday expresses significant Muslim values like collectivism, submission to God, sacrifice, charity, patience, and sacredness. Moreover, it will explain possible differences in consumption reflecting particularism due to national and/or cultural identities. The paper furthers our understanding of what Muslims do and say during their consumption of the Day rather than referring to scriptures or scholars. It contributes to the body of knowledge of Muslim holidays, the meanings associated with them, and how celebrators utilize the symbolism within them to construct their identities.

*Keywords: Muslims, Identity, Eid Al-Adha, Consumer Culture Theory, Islamic Culture, Cultural Consumption, Identity Construction and Expression.*



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## P O V Z E T K I

Carool Kersten

*Religija in literatura, identiteta in posameznik: ponastavitev muslimansko-krščanskega soočenja*

V prvih dveh desetletjih 21. stoletja so medreligijska srečanja postala žrtev paradigmatkega premika v razmišljanju o globalnem redu s politično-ideološkega bipolarnega svetovnega nazora obdobja hladne vojne proti multipolarnemu svetu, zaznamovanemu z možnostjo kulturnih vojn na civilizacijskih prelomnicah, ki so jih zarisale z vero prepojene identitetne politike. Po terorističnih napadih 11. septembra in drugih grozodejstvih, ki so jih zagrešili nasilni ekstremisti iz muslimanskih okolij, se zlasti odnosi z muslimani in islamskim svetom oblikujejo v okviru binarnega razločevanja mi-oni. Na podlagi predhodnih raziskav o kozmopolitizmu, kulturni hibridnosti in liminalnosti avtor v prispevku preučuje narrative, nasprotne tovrstnemu dihotomnemu načinu razmišljanja. V prizadevanjih, da bi se odmaknil od abstrakcij oblik kolektivne verske identitete k zavedanju o individualnih interpretacijah religije, prevprašuje pojme kulturne shizofrenije, dvojne genealogije in afinitet do Vzhoda in Zahoda, ki so jih razvili filozofi in predstavniki ustvarjalnega pisanja, denimo Daryush Shayegan, Abdelwahab Meddeb in Navid Kermani.

*Ključne besede: kulturna hibridnost, islam, literatura, religija.*

Rasoul Rasoulipour

*Moj bližnji kot meni enak*

Izjemna človeška sposobnost »ljubiti« drug drugega je po mojem mnenju najmočnejši dokaz tako za obstoj Boga kot za odnos, za kakršnega je Bog želel, da bi ga človek imel do Njega in do svojega bližnjega. Obenem je človeška zmožnost za zavist, sovraštvo, nasilje in teptanje dostojanstva »drugih« ljudi podobno močan dokaz, da je nekaj hudo narobe – ljudje ne zmorejo vzdrževati želenega odnosa z Bogom ali z drugim. Božji namen se ne spreminja, samo raztresena človeška bitja včasih pozabimo nanj. Težava tiči v jedru človekove odtujitve od Boga in drug od drugega, zaradi nje smo osamljeni, pozabljivi, sumničavi in preplašeni.

V prispevku želim ponuditi okvir, ki nam bo pomagal uzreti vir težave, raziskati nekaj razlogov za človekovo odtujenost od bližnjega in od stvarstva ter poiskati načine za premostitev vrzeli med nami in ostalim božjim stvarstvom. Verjamem, da vsi spopadi, vse zatiranje in trpljenje izvirajo iz te odtujitve in da je bistveno poslanstvo vseh religij, ali vsaj abrahamskih religij, premostiti ta prepad tako, da drugega obravnavajo kot enakovrednega.

*Ključne besede: drugi, enakost, človeško dostojanstvo, odtujitev, tujec.*

Nadja Furlan Štante

*Kristjanke in muslimanke v religijski izgradnji miru - zaustavitev ciklov nasilja*

V širšem kontekstu je glavni poudarek prispevka vprašanje ženske (religijske) izgradnje miru, ki je razumljeno v najširšem pomenu, v smislu aktivnega sodelovanja žensk pri izgradnji osvobajajočih teologij in družb. Gre za promocijo polne človečnosti žensk. Prispevek temelji na predpostavki Susan Brooks Thistlethwaite, da je »nasilje nad ženskami največja in najdaljša svetovna vojna«. Pri izgradnji miru pomembno mesto zavzema medreligijski dialog. Le-ta bi moral postati ključno izhodišče za preobrazbo nasilnih teologij in vsakdanji praks. Medtem, ko so (bile) ženske pri izgradnji miru marginalizirane, je nastajajoče področje religijske izgradnje miru še posebej zahtevno in hkrati velik izziv in vir moči za ženske. Osvobajajoče vprašanje tega prispevka je osvetlitev ambivalentnosti nevidnosti in marginalnosti žensk pri religijski izgradnji miru, dobre prakse in (prihodnja) vprašanja.

*Ključne besede: ženske, religijska izgradnja miru, medreligijski dialog, ovire, dobre prakse.*

Mohammad Saeedimehr

*Islamski misticizem in medreligijski dialog*

Moj namen v pričujočem prispevku je raziskati islamski misticizem in ugotoviti, na kakšen način in v kolikšni meri lahko mistični nazor predstavlja dobro podlago za tvoren in ploden medreligijski dialog. Na začetku na kratko opredelim pojma »medreligijski dialog« in »islamski misticizem«. Nato pojasnim načela misticizma, ki tvorijo osnove za razvijanje medreligijskega dialoga. To so metafizično-teološko načelo o »enotnosti obstoja« (*wahdat al-wujud*), antropološka teza o



*fitri* (prvinski naravi) in hermenevtična metoda za tolmačenje Korana. Nazadnje preučim implikacije teh načel za medreligijski dialog in obravnavam vlogo mističnih načel pri spodbujanju medreligijskega dialoga na dveh različnih, a medsebojno povezanih področjih: doksastičnem in moralnem.

*Ključne besede: islamski mysticizem, medreligijski dialog, sufizem, Ibn 'Arabi.*

Andrew Ashdown

*Raziskava o krščansko-muslimanski krajini moderne Sirije in doprinosu vzhodno-krščanske misli k medreligijskim dinamikom*

Avtor v prispevku obravnava krščansko-muslimanske odnose v sodobni Siriji ter pomen, ki ga vzhodno-krščanska misel lahko ima za medreligijski kontekst Bližnjega vzhoda. Na kratko opiše raznolike zgodovinske in sodobne krščanske in muslimanske verske krajine, ki so soobstajale in vplivale druga na drugo v okviru države, ter kulturna, verska in politična vprašanja, ki so sooblikovala medreligijsko dinamiko.

Na podlagi terenskega dela na območjih, ki so bila med sirske vojno pod nadzorom vladnih sil, ter kritičnega zgodovinskega in krščanskega teološkega razmisleka avtor predstavi raznolike verske krajine Sirije in večplastne odseve krščansko-muslimanskih odnosov v njej na povsem nov način. Z vpogledi v medreligijsko prakso pred vojno in med njo pomaga razumeti posledice, ki jih je vojaški konflikt imel za medreligijske odnose.

Avtor v članku razmišlja o edinstvenem prispevku vzhodnega krščanstva h krščansko-muslimanski dinamiki in ugotavlja, da je pomen teologije in duhovnosti »antiohijske« paradigme v diskurzu Zahoda premalo priznan in da je ta vsled svojega soobstoja s kulturnim okoljem islama edinstveno primerna za to, da prevzame glavno vlogo v krščansko-muslimanskem dialogu in pri preoblikovanju pogleda na islamsko interakcijo s sodobno družbo.

Članek tako prispeva k poznavanju in razumevanju spreminjajoče se krščansko-muslimanske dinamike v Siriji in širši regiji, podaja novo razumevanje verske krajine in odpira vrata preučevanju možnosti za vzdrževanje in krepitev vzhodno-krščanskih pristopov h krščansko-muslimanskim odnosom ob precejšnjih verskih in političnih izzivih, s katerimi se skupnosti danes soočata.

*Ključne besede: Bližnji vzhod, Sirija, krščansko-muslimanski odnosi, vzhodno krščanstvo.*

Mesut Idriz

*Koncept religije v islamu, kakor ga je razumel Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas*

Razprave o religiji v islamu imajo v muslimanski intelektualni tradiciji dolgo zgodovino, zlasti na področju arabskega jezika. Z vzponom in razvojem islamistike in orientalistike v zahodnem svetu v zadnjih dvesto letih, še posebno pa od sredine 20. stoletja dalje, so se strokovnjaki spet začeli »vračati« k semantičnim študijam. Zavedajoč se nujnosti te potrebe, se je Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas začel posvečati podrobni razdelavi spremenjenih definicij ter pojasnjevanju zavajajočih ali napačno razumljenih konceptov, povezanih z islamsko religijo, tako v muslimanskem svetu kot na Zahodu. Zato je zgodnjih 70. letih prejšnjega stoletja svoje misli začel predstavljati angleško govorečemu okolju (pozneje pa tudi v drugih jezikih). Z razlago svojih prepričanj in idej v akademskem okolju, temelječih na poglobljenem znanju z različnih znanstvenih področij, poznavanju različnih tradicij, kultur in jezikov, je pomembno prispeval k učenosti. V pričujočem članku bom na kratko, a relativno podrobno predstavil al-Attasovo celovito vedenje in nekaj njegovih specifičnih intelektualnih prispevkov.

*Ključne besede: religija v islamu, al-Attas, dīn in religija, Koran; dīn in arabščina.*

Amar Ahmed

*Oblikovanje in izražanje muslimanske identitete: potrošnja kurban bajrama*

V etnografskem raziskovanju se na področju študij oblikovanja in izražanja muslimanske identitete z notranjega gledišča kaže vrzel. Kurban bajram je islamski praznik, poln simbolike, kolektivnih obredov ter duhovnega in materialnega obilja. V članku so razloženi pomeni in vrednote, ki jih praznovanci kurban bajrama kot potrošniki kulture oblikujejo kot del svoje, pretežno verske, identitete. Avtor preučuje, na kakšen način se skozi praznik izražajo pomembne muslimanske vrednote, kot so kolektivizem, pokorščina bogu, žrtvovanje, dobrotelost, potrpljenje in svetost, in ponudi razlago možnih razlik v potrošnji – partikularnosti, ki izvirajo iz nacionalnih in/ali kulturnih identitet. Članek pomaga bolje razumeti, kaj muslimani počnejo in govorijo med potrošnjo kurban bajrama, medtem ko se s svetimi spisi in učenjaki ne ukvarja. Avtor z njim prispeva k poglobljanju vedenja o muslimanskih praznikih in pomenih, ki so z njimi povezani, ter opisuje, kako praznovanci s pomočjo praznične simbolike izoblikujejo lastno identiteto.

*Ključne besede: muslimani, identiteta, kurban bajram, teorija potrošne kulture, islamska kultura, kulturna potrošnja, oblikovanje in izražanje identitete.*