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The role of interfaith dialogue in the process of protection and implementation of Human Rights

The main thesis of this essay is that the inter-religious dialogue gives us some unique mechanisms for protecting and implementing human rights. This alternative way of implementation of the basic provisions of the international human rights law includes several practices. Among them there are organizing demonstrations, informational campaigns, lobby campaigns for the ratification of certain legal means, monitoring, educational programs, declarations etc. These activities define the inter-religious dialogue movement as a civil society phenomenon that acts both at the level of international and local NGOs on the one hand, and at the level of the high religious authorities on the other. In this regard, in order to illustrate the inter-religious potential for accomplishing the protection and the implementation of the international standards, the analysis encompasses the relations between different religious systems as well as between the religious bodies and the state itself.

Introduction

The contemporary process of globalisation and the accelerating process of international communications make the investigation of interfaith dialogue a critically important issue. Religions in other ages lived in separate territories. Their divisions resulted from their occurrence in different spaces. However, this lack of communication has changed radically in recent decades. Today religious offers cannot be made from a monopolistic standpoint and this fact explains the importance of the dialogue between them. Thus, the new social and economic conditions in the world mandate a change of the old scheme of interactions (or their absence) between religions.

In this regard, the main argument of the following essay is that interfaith dialogue[1] offers several unique

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mechanisms of protecting and implementing human rights. This alternative for implementing the basic provisions of international human rights law includes several practices: organizing demonstrations, informational campaigns, lobbying for the ratification of certain legal instrument, monitoring, educational programs, declarations, etc. These kinds of activities define the interfaith dialogue movement as a phenomenon of the civil society that acts on the level of international and local NGOs.

We follow this line of reasoning to identify the unusual nature of interfaith dialogue and thus explore the topic by starting with the definitions of three key concepts in our essay. Therefore the first chapter analyzes three terms: "interfaith dialogue," "protection" and "implementation."

The second chapter elaborates on the two main levels on which interfaith dialogue accomplishes the protection and implementation of international standards. The one is on the level of religious rights while the other encompasses human rights as a whole.

The third and final chapter presents the role of interfaith dialogue as redefining the official attitude of certain religious systems towards human rights issues. In this regard, at least two main obstacles are addressed confronting the enforcement of international standards of human rights. Namely, they are the "problem with reservations" regarding women, and the freedom to choose or change one's personal beliefs.

In order to achieve more objectivity we have used both legal instruments and the literature of interfaith dialogue. Additionally, we have employed three types of approaches – analytical, polemical, and interpretative.

Finally, in accordance with the topic of the essay we highlight the protection and implementation of human rights. However, in order to create a clearer picture of the so-called "culture of human rights", some aspects of their promotion, fulfillment, and enforcement are mentioned as well.

Definition of the key concepts used in the essay

A credible exploration of the role of the interfaith dialogue in the protection and implementation of human rights requires a clear definition of the three core concepts used in the exploration. These three key terms are "interfaith dialogue", "protection" and "implementation."

Since there is no agreed upon definition of "interfaith dialogue," in what follows the concept will be used as an umbrella term covering various kinds of activities. These different types of inter-religious interaction (discussions, joint appeals, shared projects, etc.) take place at different levels, ranging from governmental to grassroots. Broadly defined, there are six forms of dialogue people engage in: parliamentary dialogue, institutional dialogue, theological dialogue, community dialogue, spiritual dialogue, and inner dialogue.[2] Although the last two types of communication channels underlie all other discussions, they do not bear significantly on the pur-

pose of the present essay. When it comes to the contribution of interfaith communication to the improvement of human rights status as a whole it is both the parliamentary dialogue and the community dialogue that should be particularly explored. Consequently, in the chapter on this issue the term "interfaith dialogue" expresses the above mentioned two types of religious interaction even when not overtly indicated.

The first type of dialogue - the parliamentary dialogue - refers to the large assemblies created for interfaith discussion such as those organized by the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP) and World Council of Churches (WCC).[3] These worldwide organizations do not focus on particular agendas, but rather tend to explore broader concerns, such as the possibility for better cooperation between religions, or global issues such as peace, poverty, the environment and human rights. Covering such complicated and fragile problems, the parliament dialogue is important since it takes place at the level of International NGOs. Thus it serves as a regulator of state decisions and government policies. We further investigate how and to what extent the discussion between high-ranking religious leaders can influence and shape the governmental policy towards human rights protection.

The second type dialogue – the community dialogue – concerns the less structured interaction between people of different religions. It also includes cooperative social projects organized by religious groups in response to local problems and practical matters. Its involvement in the course of civic or humanitarian projects is on a more unofficial level then is true of the first type of dialogue. However, this kind of informal interaction between representatives of various beliefs assumes its own place and "responsibility" for the human rights situation. It encompasses numerous local and regional initiatives for the promotion of both conflict prevention and conflict resolution. In this sense, the peace-keeping and peace-building role of the "Clergy for peace" in the Middle East or the "Council of grace" in South India could be mentioned.[4] Moreover, these unofficial streams within society often function as indicators of people's awareness of human rights.

In addition, the valuable role that both institutional dialogue and theological dialogue have specifically in the process of implementation of religious freedom could be pointed out. The one is important for including the organized efforts of particular religious institutions that aim at initiating and facilitating various other dialogues. The other refers to the process of representatives of different religious communities discussing theological and philosophical issues in a structured format. These two types are also explored further on.

The second term to be elaborated is "protection." As stated in "Understanding Human rights," protecting certain human rights means that the state must "prevent violence and other human rights violations among people on its territory."[5] With regard to interfaith dialogue, protection refers to the important role to be played by inter-religious communications in conflict prevention, conflict management, conflict transformation and post-conflict peace-building. For instance, on

the one hand, this can be connected with the specific role of varied religions providing food security, health services, etc., which corresponds directly to economic, social, and cultural rights as ascertained by ICESCR. On the other hand, it encompasses the protection of civil and political rights. For example, in wartime Bosnia and Herzegovina when freedom of movement was limited, some local religious leaders were useful in acting as escorts to refugees returning as minorities in their communities. Apart from this, the interfaith dialogue dimension of the protection of human rights entails attempts both to articulate respect and to promote religious tolerance within society.

Finally, the third concept explored is "implementation." Essentially this means that the state has a duty to protect, fulfill, and implement human rights. On the one hand, civil and political rights "implementation" means that the state and its authorities have to respect the rights accepted. Therefore, these so-called "negative" rights require less energetic state action. On the other hand, to implement economic, social, and cultural rights means that the government should initiate certain positive actions.[6]

Apart from the process of implementation as a whole, the implementation of religious freedom in particular is elaborated in the second chapter of this essay – "The role of the interfaith dialogue in the protection and implementation of religious rights."

The role of the inter-religious dialogue in the protection and implementation of human rights

Inter-religious communication offers an alternative way of implementing human rights. The role of cross-religious cooperation in promoting and preventing human rights could be investigated from several different perspectives. The input is visible in the pivotal role played by religion in the moralization of society. Thus it influences in a positive way the perception of mankind towards the delicate human rights issue. There are various examples that could be pointed out. For instance, the moral support for the non-violence movement given by the church on the 17th of April 2003 could be mentioned. This date was promulgated as a day for prayer and fasting for peace throughout the world in order to raise social consciousness and indicate the violations of basic human rights caused by war crimes.

Nevertheless, the role of interfaith dialogue in promoting human rights within society is all the more essential. There are at least two main levels on which its contribution is noticeable. On the one hand, it can be achieved through mutual understanding and tolerance between various religious systems, involving more effective protection and implementation of the freedom of thought, conscience and religion. From this point of view interfaith dialogue particularly assists the implementation of religious rights. On the other hand, its influence can be observed within a larger framework. Certain political and civil rights, as well as economic, social,

and cultural rights, are successfully encouraged and advocated by the NGOs dealing with interfaith dialogue.

There are several arguments that prove the fact that inter-religious co-operation is of specific importance concerning the promotion and protection of human rights. One of them is illustrated by the Bucharest Meeting in 2000 of the Stability Pact for South-Eastern Europe. It was aimed at addressing the needs for democratization and respect of human rights, human dignity and reconciliation.[7] The official report states that the contribution to the objectives of the Stability Pact of inter-religious dialogue is bound with the exploration and preparation of the grounds for co-operation between the confessions and religions in the region. Such an interpretation of the connection between interfaith dialogue, on the one hand, and the protection of human rights, on the other, is based on the understanding of religious rights as guaranteed by international law.

The role of inter-religious dialogue in the protection and implementation of religious rights

The three basic legal instruments encompassing the issue of religious freedoms are Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 18 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and Article 9 of the European Convention on Human Rights. The other legal document dealing especially with religious freedoms is The United Nation Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief. As stated in the ICCPR, under the term "religious freedoms" one should understand everyone's "right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. This right shall include freedom to have or to adopt a religion or belief of his choice, and freedom, either individually or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in worship, observance, practice and teaching."[8]

However, the role of the relation between different religious factions in the process of implementation of religious freedoms and the principle of non-discrimination in particular provides the possibility for overcoming a problematic situation within the international standards. The obstacle is caused by the lack of a legally binding treaty protecting the realization of religious rights. In this regard, The UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief should be mentioned again. Although it has some legal effect, especially under customary international law, it is still only a declaration bearing no officially authorized obligatory status.

The fact that there is no internationally enforceable instrument that would safeguard the free exercise of personal beliefs makes the inter-relations between various systems of beliefs especially important. As it does not promote a singular religious perspective but rather is based on the respect of one's free choice of faith, it assists the state's obligation to implement religious freedoms. Inter-religious dialogue offers a mutual self-controlling mechanism within the religious organism itself

through placing all religious systems on equal ground. Additionally, it could also serve as a monitoring body. Along with the Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance and other regional instruments dealing with the implementation of the freedom of religion on local level, interfaith dialogue provides a unique possibility to observe and regulate the implementation from within. Therefore, the more powerful the multi-lateral religious dialogue movement, the more reliable the safeguard for identifying the incidents and the avoidance of violence of religious rights.

A good example of the above-mentioned interdependence is the formal discussion "*Nurturing a Culture of Dialogue: A Journey from Violence to Cooperation"* held under the patronage of Boris Trajkovski, the President of Macedonia. By clarifying points of differences, the multi-lateral dialogue carried out by a group of religious leaders in the midst of the recent 2001 crisis in Macedonia facilitated the building up of trust and openness between religious groups. One outcome of the constructive discussion was that the two deans of the Orthodox and Islamic theological seminaries made a commitment to cooperation between the two schools. Additionally, a plan to rebuild mosques and churches that had been destroyed or vandalized during the conflict was accepted. In conclusion, they made a significant commitment to creating a Council on inter-religious cooperation appointed by religious leaders to replace the one previously directed by political parties. The concluding provision presents a significant step ahead towards religious independence from the ruling elites and turns religion away from being a factor in interethnic conflicts.

However, the role of the interfaith dialogue movement is not only that of mediator between various religions. As summarized in "Understanding human rights," international and local NGOs dealing with the interfaith dialogue issue, together with secular organizations, have "an equally clear role in pointing out violations by states and others, in defending the persecuted and promoting tolerance through information campaigns, awareness raising, educational programs and teaching."[9]

Moreover, one of the key principles of interfaith dialogue as stated by Abbot Thomas Keating in "Guidelines for Inter-religious Understanding"[10] is that a difference among belief systems should be presented as facts that distinguish them rather than as points of superiority.[11] This main postulate resolves the long-standing problem concerning the relationship between the state and religion. More precisely, the phenomenon of the "state-church" or "official belief" is often a source of violation of religious freedom. Although the international standards do not require the separation of church or religion from the state, such relationship repeatedly results in discrimination against those who do not belong to the recognized faith. Further on, abuses of the freedom of belief could affect breaches of the other rights as well. Among them are the rights to employment, accommodation, access to social services, etc.

In this regard Florian Bieber in his report on "Minority rights and the freedom of religion in Balkan

countries" enumerates several kinds of such violations of religious rights that reflect on economic, social, and cultural rights.[12] As a rule, they refer to the efforts of governments to establish the predominant religion as a formal or informal state-church, thus violating the rights of other faith communities. As a consequence of this discriminatory policy the dominant religion usually receives a privileged status in the state structure, while the smaller communities are viewed with suspicion by the authorities.

Related to the topic of this paper, the above mentioned problem has reference to the violation respectively of the right to cultural and religious identity. Moreover, the intervention of the "authoritarian" religious community in the political sphere manipulates government decisions.[13] This reflects not only on cultural rights but also on the right to proper education and sometimes even on the right to work. For instance, in the educational system some minorities are exposed to stereotyping. When in schoolbooks Islam is characterised as a "religion of warriors" it affects the quality of education and hence its positive influence on the rising generation is questionable.

Furthermore, he points out that a lack of dialogue and constructive relations exists even among these injured religious groups. The outcome of this "hierarchy" is that many religious units are confronted with registration problems as religious communities. For example, in some cases new religious groups must be registered at the ministry of the interior instead of the ministry of religious affairs. This lack of legal personality for the new religious entities further complicates the ownership of property, and contracts (i.e. employment) are made impossible. Therefore it seems that the existence of dialogue and more constructive relations among religious communities is important from a religious standpoint as well as for the realization of the key provisions of the international treaties.

The role of interfaith dialogue in protecting and implementing human rights as a whole

Although the role of the inter-religious dialogue in the protection of human rights as a whole is not as obvious and direct as the role of the state, it does have its own unique and specific position. The interfaith dialogue movement's means are different from the traditionally used mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights – reports, recommendations, individual complaints, etc. As a factor within the civil society it acts through demonstrations, information campaigns, educational programs, appeals, calls, notes, urges, and encouragement. Thus the promotion of human rights can be accomplished through several strategies.

One of these strategies is cooperation between various religious systems. Their members urge political leaders to uphold the principles of democracy, good governance, and human rights. In this respect, interfaith dialogue succeeds in promoting and protecting human rights using the symbolic value of religion. Furthermore,

through guiding policy-making it can partake in the structure and make its presence felt in the content and implementation of human rights instruments and mechanisms. Additionally, campaigns can be organized to lobby the ratification of certain international instruments.

Therefore, at the level of religious leadership the international interfaith NGOs, as part of the non-governmental network, contribute to the visible development of civil society. As such they can influence both the formal governmental policy and public opinion. In this regard an evident example is the legal experts working group with multi-religious representatives, established in May 1999 within the Inter-Religious Council (hereafter IRC) in BiH. Since the representatives of all the major faith communities in BiH were dissatisfied with the legislation concerning religious freedom currently in force in BiH, the above-presented experts working group has been assigned to draft a new law on the freedom of religion and the legal status of the religious communities in BiH. As an outcome of its activity on October 10, 2002, the agreed on text for a Law on Freedom of Religion and the Legal Position of Religious Communities and Churches in BiH was presented by the prominent lawyers from the four traditional religious communities and churches (the Islamic Community of BiH, the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church and the Jewish Community).[14] Thus the draft law presented stands a good chance of being adopted and implemented in the parliamentary procedure.

The role of interfaith dialogue in the protection of human rights as a whole is visible in wartime as well. In such cases as divided cities or conflict prevention and post-conflict peace building, the leaders of different religious communities having broad concerns about people beyond their own groups "can use their authority to lead the way to inter-ethnic co-operation ... and on a practical level they can play an extremely important role in civil society building."[15] Apart from the non-governmental initiatives that will be explored further on in this chapter, we could hardly ignore the role of religious leadership. In this respect, the role of joint efforts towards reconciliation undertaken by the religious leaders in BiH is even more important considering that the tradition of grassroots activism and strong civic engagement is usually lacking in the Balkan area. As Branka Peuraca points out, faith authorities can foster reconciliation not only through formal joint statements but also through personal example. For instance, she points out that such a simple act as an Orthodox priest and a Franciscan monk sharing coffee publicly in a café in Tuzla received attention as a demonstration of overcoming rifts between faith traditions and influenced some of the local people.[16]

In addition to the above-mentioned, Marc Gopin proposes a valuable analysis of the role of the cross-belief discussion as a specific form of inter-religious dialogue. According to him, both "official" dialogue at the level of religious leadership and interpersonal communication between believers from dissimilar systems of belief are a powerful means of reconciliation. As he puts

it, "to the degree that one can get enemies to use their words one will move closer to peace and away from confrontation."[17] The idea is that during the interfaith encounter, by articulating deep envy, the shame of the collective humiliation of one's group, the desire to take revenge or to see the enemy suffer, one will move the intense emotions of hatred into a different mode of interaction.[18]

Furthermore, it is the grassroots interfaith dialogue initiative that has the important mission of preparing the grounds for reconciliation. Without this essential basis, international assistance could be insufficient. To prove this statement Peuraca indicates several cases where the early initiatives toward promoting interfaith reconciliation undertaken by international actors were misconceived and counterproductive. From among them we can mention the efforts to rebuild mosques in the predominantly Serbian cities of Banja Luka and Trebinje that led to an unfortunate death. Thus grassroots inter-religious initiatives can assist the work of international organizations so that their efforts are not perceived as an outside pressure to reconciliation.

The role of the inter-religious dialogue as redefining the official attitude of certain religions towards the issue of human rights

So far we have elaborated the functions of multilateral religious dialogue as a self-regulatory mechanism preventing both religious discrimination and the violations of religious freedoms. Moreover, interfaith dialogue was presented as independent from the state's influence as a monitoring body. Apart from this, inter-religious dialogue has a crucial role as a redefining mechanism which transforms the official attitude of certain religions towards the issue of human rights.

This aspect of communication between religions is of particular significance for the present essay, since many breaches of human rights still stem from religious intolerance, ignorance, or one-sidedness. In this respect, the interfaith debate, based on the principle of mutual understanding among world religions, offers a great possibility to overcome certain negative approaches to human rights through discussion. As mentioned before, it is the theologian dialogue that can be perceived as an opportunity for redefinition. Furthermore, the 8th principle of the "Guidelines for Inter-religious Understanding" could be used as a reliable foundation for the efforts of re-thinking. This postulate states that: "In the light of the globalization of life and culture now in process, the personal and social ethical principles proposed by the world religions in the past need to be re-thought and re-expressed."[19] However, this attempt is grounded not only in the theoretical apparatus of interfaith dialogue but also in its practical activities. For instance, the relationship of religion to the family, to education, to the state, to women's rights, etc., has been one of the topics of discussion encouraged by the WCC between Christians and Muslims in recent years.

Thus, interfaith dialogue offers a possibility for entering the dialogue with Muslims on the restrictions on

fundamental human rights that are imposed in many countries with Islamic majorities. However, it is important not to single out freedom of religion or belief, because other fundamental rights may also be threatened. One of the fundamental postulates of interfaith co-operation is not to criticized and neglect but to inspire new common perspectives on a given issue through mutual understanding and interaction. Using this basic principle for resolving the difficulty with the teachings of Islam it is essential not to characterize Islam as repressive. Thus, it would be possible to enter into a dialogue with Muslims about the application of international law in pluralist societies with Islamic majorities.

Religious NGOs can also help encourage both other believers and governments to enforce human rights standards with respect to the gender issue. Several basic rights recognized by the international standards are violated even to this day. For instance, Sheriah[20] limits the rights of women to a fair trial since they do not have the right to access the court on an equal footing with men. In this regard, the Global Network of Religious Women's Organizations should be mentioned. Its goal is to develop internal guidelines for the purpose of mainstreaming gender concerns in all religions. The Network aims to bring together women of different faith traditions in order to promote understanding, the observance of human rights, and the political status of women among followers of different religions. One of the general problems of the human rights treaties – the "problem of reservations" - could be addressed through such activities. As a consequence, better conditions for the implementation of the basic human rights of women in Islamic countries could be provided.

Along with women in Muslim states, another target group is the adherents of other religions. Thus apostasy – the freedom to choose or change one's faith, could be safeguard in future through common discussions. This step would be in accordance with international law, which states that every person has the right to choose and convert his or her beliefs freely and without any restrictions or oppressions. In the UDHR it is stated that "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief."[21] At the same time, the current situation is that Islam questions the act of converting to another religion (apostasy). For instance, a person who exercises his/her freedom of apostasy in some countries where society is based on the Shariah laws is still severely punished.

Therefore, interfaith dialogue has the important task of defining a common canon of values acceptable to all. Facilitating the most problematic spheres of life within which human rights seem to be frequently disregarded, the inter-religious exchange of ideas assists the implementation of the international standards. However, the latter is frequently connected with redefining the perception of human rights of some religions, which perceptions are inherited from the past.

Conclusion

It is a fact that religious leaders have recently been too easily manipulated by nationalist politicians. Moreover, religious motives were used not only in the Bosnian violent conflict but even during the recent events that took place in New York and Washington on September 11th 2001. Thus different religious traditions were misused for secular goals. They were involved in an inhumane violation of basic human rights. For instance, in ex-Yugoslavia the power of established reverence for religious authorities existing for centuries was used first by the former communist regime and later by the political leaders during and even after the war. The role of religion, a powerful instrument used both in a positive and negative way, raises the question of how co-operation between different religious communities can protect and implement human rights.

In the light of the above-mentioned, the present essay had the objective to explore the role of interfaith dialogue in the process of protection and implementation of human rights. To this end, an attempt was made to elaborate their interdependence and the various alternative "mechanisms" for the protection and implementation that inter-religious communication offers to the traditional legal procedure.

In the course of elaboration, several ways of protection and implementation of human rights were demonstrated. They were thematically developed in the respective chapters.

In order to make the exploration clearer in the first chapter the three key concepts – "inter-religious dialogue," "protection," and "implementation" were defined. Since the concept of the interfaith dialogue can have different interpretations, we have insisted on specific definitions of these key terms. In the second chapter, the role of interfaith dialogue in the protection and implementation of human rights was presented from two perspectives. The one illustrated its impact especially for religious rights, while the other focused on human rights as a whole – their civil, political, economic, social, and cultural dimensions. Finally, in the last chapter the role of the interfaith dialogue as redefining the official attitude of certain religions towards human rights issue was explored.

Future research on this topic could lead to an examination of the role of interfaith dialogue in the process of reconciliation. Such an exploration is of interest since it covers a violation and, consequently, the possible protection of many rights. These rights include the right to life and personal security, the right to property, to free movement, and economic, social and cultural rights. This offers a unique perspective towards the role of interfaith dialogue in protecting and implementing human rights in the post-war context.

Notes:

1 In the following, inter-religious dialogue and interfaith dialogue are used as synonyms. This use of these terms is in accordance with widely accepted practice.

2 Eck, D. *What do we mean by 'Dialogue'?,* in: Current Dialogue, vol. 11, 1986, pp. 14-15.

3 Other similar international NGOs dealing with the Interfaith dialogue issue are The World Parliament of Religions, The Global Ethic Foundation, The World Fellowship of Inter-Religious Councils (WFIRC), etc.

4 See *World Council of Churches inter-religious relations & dialogue,* http://wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/interreligious/index-e.html

5 Benedek, Wolfgang and Nikolova, Minna. 2003, p. 24.

6 Ibid., p. 24.

7 Rondos, Alexandre. *Bucharest Meeting. Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe Working Table I,* http://domino.kappa.ro/mae/home.nsf/Toate/pactstabil/$File/agenda26_en.htm

8 The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/b3ccpr.htm.

9 Benedek, Wolfgang and Nikolova, Minna. 2003, p. 165.

10 Keating, Thomas. *Speaking of Silence: Christian and Buddhists on the Contemplative Way*. Edited by Susan Walker. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1987, pp. 56-57.

11 Abbot Thomas Keating and his organization, the Snowmass Conference, made up of fifteen religions, each represented by one person. The Snowmass Conference has been meeting for nearly ten years, and the fifteen spiritual leaders have arrived at a consensus on the principles of inter-religious dialogue.

12 Bieber, Florian. "Minority rights and the freedom of Religion in Balkan Countries", 1999, pp. 7-14, http://www.immi.se/irf/invandraren/inva991/minority.htm.

13 In this respect, one could mention the role that the Serbian Orthodox Church played in promoting nationalist tensions in Serbia.

14 For further details see: "Law of freedom of religion and the legal position of religious communities and churches in Bosnia and Herzegovina", in: "Building civil societies in Southeast Europe," http://www.wcrpp.org/RforP/SOUTHEASTEUROPE_MAIN.html.

15 Bieber, Florian and Daskalovski, Zidas. *Religion in Kosovo – blessing or curse?* in: Understanding the war in Kosovo, London: Frank Cass, 2003, p. 275.

16 Peuraca, Branka. "Can Faith-based NGO Advance Interfaith Reconciliation?: The case of Bosnia and Herzegovina," in: United States Institute of Peace, N. 103, 2003.

17 Gopin, Marc. "The use of the word and its limits: a critical evaluation of religious dialogue as peacemaking," in: Smock, David, ed., Interfaith Dialogue, Washington: USIP, 2002, pp. 155.

18 Ibid., p. 152.

19 Keating, Thomas. 1987, p. 57.

20 Sheriah is the Islamic codification of law.

21 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, http://www.udhr.org/UDHR/default.htm.