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RELIGION AND CAPITALISM IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY:

values, identities, and politics



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INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
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RELIGION AND CAPITALISM IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY: VALUES, IDENTITIES, AND POLITICS

(ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL
SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE)

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



Silver Lake, Veliko Gradište, 4–5 September 2026

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Institute for Serbian Culture
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MIGRANTS AS AN INDICATOR OF SOCIAL JUSTICE: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RELIGIOUS DISCOURSE AND STATE REGULATION IN POST-SOCIALIST SOCIETIES

Migration today is more than a demographic issue; it is central to discussions of fairness in society. In post-socialist countries, concepts of fairness are shaped by former socialist ideals of equality and by new systems influenced by capitalism, religion, and government regulation. Migrants are not merely people managed by governments – they reveal where and how fairness is defined. This paper examines how religious ideas and government regulation together shape the treatment of migrants in these societies. It considers how these forces create broader or narrower understandings of fairness. The research draws on interviews and analysis of key concepts, allowing for a nuanced understanding of both institutional practices and normative frameworks. In this context, particular attention is given to how political narratives, legal frameworks, and public discourse interact in shaping perceptions of migrants and their rights. Religious ideas are viewed as a call for broad fairness that can transcend borders, while government regulation determines how, or whether, these ideas are realized for migrants. This interaction is not static but evolves in response to shifting political priorities, economic pressures, and social attitudes. In post-socialist countries, this is particularly complex, as former ideals of equality encounter new market-oriented thinking, often producing tensions between formal commitments to fairness and practical limitations in policy implementation. Migrants are often the primary group through which questions of fairness are negotiated, as they occupy a position between inclusion and exclusion. Their status exposes the conditional nature of rights and highlights the boundaries of solidarity within national communities. Religious ideas can both challenge and reinforce unfair systems, depending on the context, institutional alignment, and political interpretation. In some cases, they provide a moral

framework for expanding inclusion and advocating for more equitable treatment, while in others, they may legitimize exclusionary practices by reinforcing cultural or identity-based distinctions. This makes religion a tool that can both contest and support inequality in contemporary society, revealing its dual role as both a source of normative critique and a mechanism of social stabilization. The paper's original contribution lies in conceptualizing migrants as a boundary-based analytical indicator of social justice, through which the dynamic interaction between universalist religious norms and particularist state regulatory frame.

Keywords: migrants, social justice, religious discourse, post-socialist societies, capitalism