

## **Religious globalisation: Experiences and perspectives**

Author : Carlos Alberto Baena López

Co-author : Enrique Montes Pérez

## **ABSTRACT**

The hypothesis for this paper is that religious globalisation increases through the phenomenon of individual migration. However, it is consolidated through the reinforcement of national organisations set up by people that move throughout the world maintaining their own regional, linguistic and cultural identities.

This hypothesis questions the theories that highlight religious globalisation, based exclusively on individual spiritual expression, to suggest that personal religious migration is the basis for preserving and increasing a collective phenomenon and massive religious globalisation.

Furthermore, personal identity is the basis for exchanging spiritual and, more specifically, religious matters, initially between individuals with regional and linguistic affinities, and progressively between these people and the native population of their host countries.

To illustrate the process of religious globalisation, two historic milestones will be analysed: first, the colonial religious globalisation witnessed in the 15th and 16th Centuries in North America, and, secondly, the growth of Christian Pentecostalism in Colombia throughout the 20th Century as a result of wider religious globalisation.

Further to the above, in the second section, a contemporary case of religious globalisation based on new religious movements will be analysed.

Finally, this paper will conclude with a section on the perspectives of the phenomena of religious globalisation.

The objective of this paper is to contribute to the analysis of the mechanisms and means of religious globalisation, with a focus on the examination of crucial aspects of the past and present, with the final aim of predicting the future perspectives of this phenomenon.

# **RELIGIOUS GLOBALISATION: EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES**

## **I. RELIGION AND COLONIES IN THE 15th-16th CENTURIES**

Globalisation is a worldwide phenomenon that has been studied over past centuries by different schools of thought. However, the history of this phenomenon allows for a greater understanding of its current reach.

Religious globalisation has two fundamental milestones in history. The first of these is the diffusion of Catholicism and Protestantism in the colonial era due to missions sent to the New World, from Europe to the Americas.

To understand this point with more clarity, it is necessary to recognise the conscience of the Christian religious identity that led to the Muslim invasion which developed in Europe following the Battle of Tours<sup>1</sup>; a battle between the forces led by the Frank, Charles Martel, and the Islamic army, at the orders of Abdul Rahman Al Ghafiqi of al-Andalus.

Different scholars agree that Medieval Christianity emerged in this way, reinforced by the reconquest of the Spanish territory from Islam, carried out on the Iberian Peninsula for centuries. Thus, the defenders of the Christian faith were born under this model of religious expansion, a mechanism through which the colonies were evangelised throughout the centuries that followed.

The defence and diffusion of the Catholic faith contributed to the creation of institutions such as the Holy Inquisition, evangelisation missions and other complex socio-political processes that aimed for this predominant European religion to reach other regions, crossing borders and cultures.

In 1493, a year before the arrival of Columbus to the colonies, fourteen caravels left Cadiz. To this departure place, the Benedictine friar Bernardo Buil travelled as a delegate of his Holiness along with other ecclesiastics. The presence of this friar is notable as it denotes the clear intention to expand Catholicism beyond the known kingdoms.

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<sup>1</sup> Townson, D. (1973) *Muslim Spain* (Cambridge Introduction to World History). Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, England.

As such, the Kings of Spain obtained the right of patronage of the Church in America through the Bull *universalis ecclesiae*<sup>2</sup>, which cites:

“We, in order that in it the false and pernicious rites disappear and the true religion is implanted (...) grant to the aforementioned King Ferdinand, who is also Governor of the Kingdoms of Castile and León, and to our dearest daughter in Christ, Joanna, Queen of the same kingdoms and daughter of King Ferdinand himself, that no church, monastery or pious place, both in the places and islands already acquired, and in those that will be acquired, can be erected or founded without the consent of the aforementioned King Ferdinand and Queen Joanna and their successors in the kingdoms of León and Castile”.

The first sentence of the quote makes reference to the purpose of the Spanish crown to ensure the disappearance of the religion of the native population and to establish their faith in new lands. The kingdoms of Castile and León had the right to carry this out as delegated by the Holy See. These kingdoms handed over the right given by the Holy See to different religious orders.

In 1513, following the discovery of the Pacific Ocean by Núñez de Balboa, the first diocese was established on the mainland, from which expeditions to Central America and South America departed.<sup>3</sup> The native populations were introduced to the Catholic religion through these missions and many of them were considered among the faithful or believers, adopting their customs and festivals as their own. This cultural impact is the foundation of colonisation by which the native population learned the language and the lifestyles of the European missionaries.

On the other hand, in 1607, a group of English colonists arrived in North America due to the need to increase trade and because of a navigation error. The first colonists died from hunger and illness, however, some survived and prospered. They developed tobacco plantations and in 1614 made their first shipments to England<sup>4</sup>.

North America became a refuge from the persecution and social disadvantages that were experienced in the ‘mother country’ and a place where new religious ideas such as

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2Redondo, G. (1993) *Historia de la Iglesia en España 1931-1939*. Rialp. Madrid, España.

3 Royo, A. (2011). *Historia de las historias de la Iglesia. Vita Brevis*. Estados Unidos

4 U.S. Department of State (2009). *Resumen histórico de los Estados Unidos de América*. Accessed 25th May 2018 at: <http://usinfo.state.gov/espanol/eua/hist.htm>

Calvinism and Protestantism could develop. Some of the founding colonists, such as Roger Williams, promoted religious freedom and tolerance<sup>5</sup>. The ideas of freedom, seeking God through the methodical reading of the Bible, the discourse between Bible scholars and many others formed a cultural and religious accumulation that had an impact on the lives of some of the indigenous residents of New England.

The colonisation carried out by the English was very different from the colonisation led by the Spanish, due to social and cultural factors that made up the European culture of the 15th and 16th Centuries. Nonetheless, in both cases a global social, economic and religious interconnection was developed between the colony and the ‘mother country’.

Colonial trade relations were established based on the trading and exploitation of raw materials. This implied a transoceanic social exchange, a new coexistence that included the conscience of *the others* with their customs and traditions, some of which were assimilated by the native population of the colony.

The desire to expand and the spread of the doctrinal elements of the predominant European regions during the 15th Century are essential for religious colonial globalisation, starting a dynamic process of opening produced by societies and constituting to a milestone in the history of current religious globalisation.

## II. CHRISTIAN PENTECOSTALISM IN THE 20th CENTURY

In later centuries, the cultural revolution that marked the Renaissance led to a social and religious transformation at the hand of theologian and friar, Martin Luther. This Augustine Catholic was concerned about the translation of the Scriptures, opposing the authority of Rome in order to submit himself solely to the Bible. This caused a rupture in Western Christianity and, with that, the birth of new pluri-religious communities<sup>6</sup>.

This same position was adopted by Calvin in France<sup>7</sup> and by other European thinkers, whose interest in the *reformation* of Catholicism gave rise to what was called the *Protestant Reformation*. The spread of the search for God, from a personal perspective

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<sup>5</sup> Smart, N. (2000) *The World's Religions*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

<sup>6</sup> Escobar, M. (2017) *La historia de la reforma en quinientos años*. Commerce Ltd

<sup>7</sup> Cervantes-Ortiz, L (2009). *Juan Calvino: su vida y obra a quinientos años de su nacimiento*. Editorial Clie. Colombia

and based on the Biblical foundations characteristic of reformationist thinking, extended throughout Europe and especially in British America.

Religious scholars of the Bible such as John Wesley and George Whitefield travelled from England, something which caused the reformationist thinking of the Europeans to become spread through the American colonies. Between 1735 and 1743, the phenomenon of “The First Great Awakening” occurred, which involved the Presbyterians, Baptists and Anglicans. Through this, the English Methodist Movement had a great influence on the beliefs of the residents of New England, now the United States<sup>8</sup>.

The spread of Methodism in the colony led to the rise in new religious leaders such as Jonathan Edwards, who some theologians point to as the precursor of American Pentecostalism. Influenced by John Locke, Jonathan preached in Northampton from which the religious revival spread<sup>9</sup>.

“The Second Great Awakening” took place between 1790 and 1840. During this time the basis for the modern Protestant churches was established, whose principal purpose was to promote reading of the Bible. Due to the printing press and the improvements gained through it, this religious model spread throughout the United States. In this context new congregations were founded between those worth mention are the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Church of Jesus Christ of All Latter Day Saints (the Mormons), and the Seventh-day Adventist Church, among others<sup>10</sup>. All of these denominations were characterised by their search for direct experiences with the Holy Spirit, manifestations of God through supernatural phenomena such as prophecy, healing and glossolalia (i.e. speaking of tongues).

Later, a preacher of the Holiness movement, Charles Parham<sup>11</sup>, associated glossolalia with the baptism with the Holy Spirit, as evidence of having the baptism with the Holy Spirit. As such Pentecostalism was born. Although related to Fundamentalism (religious belief based on literal interpretation of the Bible, which grew in North America coinciding

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8 Portillo, L. (2013). *La Historia de la Fe Cristiana, de la Biblia y de La Iglesia*. Nazareth Books. Los Angeles, California.

9 Marsden, G. (2003) *Jonathan Edwards: a life*. British Library. Virginia.

10 Portillo, L. (2013). *La Historia de la Fe Cristiana, de la Biblia y de La Iglesia*. Nazareth Books. Los Angeles, California.

11 Parham, S. (1930). *The life of Charles F. Parham, founder of the Apostolic Faith movement*. Garland Pub.

with the First World War)<sup>12</sup> and Evangelism, from this moment onwards it was understood that supernatural experiences following the conversion of each believer is an essential part of individual spiritual attainment.

The spread of the ideas of Englishmen John Wesley and George Whitefield evolved due to the interaction with other cultures such as the native population of British America. This allowed an understanding from other perspectives of the current Pentecostal movement and of the diverse denominations with similar foundations that had spread throughout the world.

It is certain that the travels of these two missionaries directly influenced the replication of European reformationist thinking in the American colonies. Reflecting this, many missionaries from Europe and British America travelled to Canada, Europe, Asia, Africa and Oceania, making the “phenomenon of the baptism with the Holy Spirit” known as evidence of the conversion of each believer<sup>13</sup>.

This was the case of T.B. Barratt, a Norwegian Methodist preacher who established the Pentecostal movement in his home country, as well as in Sweden and England. Later, his follower, Lewi Pethrus, spread the movement in Sweden. Pentecostalism also arrived in Italy due to the relatives of American migrants of Italian origin<sup>14</sup>.

Other cases of the expansion of the Pentecostal movement include Ivan Voronaev, a Russian immigrant in the United States who established the first Pentecostal church in Manhattan and later in Russia, Poland and Bulgaria; and Willis C. Hoover, a Methodist missionary who took the movement to Chile<sup>15</sup>.

Swedish-American migrants Daniel Berg and Gunnar Vingren began their preaching in Brazil, a country in which there was a break with the other Baptist churches in existence, which gave way to the first Pentecostal congregation in the country, the Assembly of God. The growth of the Pentecostal movement in Brazil made this the mainstream of Protestantism in the country<sup>16</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup>Definition of ‘Fundamentalism’. Real Academia Española. Updated 2017. Tercentenary Edition. Asociación de Academias de la lengua española.

<sup>13</sup>Synan, V. Pentecostalismo. Advance copy. Translation by María Victoria Castillo. CREER.

<sup>14</sup>Idem.

<sup>15</sup>Idem.

<sup>16</sup>Idem.

Similarly, other Pentecostal missionaries travelled from the United States to Asia and Africa. The churches founded in the Pentecostal movement, which shared their foundation with Charles Parham, were established by visiting preachers or missionaries revisiting their country.

This wide growth caused divisions, provoking different sub-movements. Notably among these are the Assemblies of God, which currently have more than 67 million members across the world, making it one of the largest Pentecostal fellowships<sup>17</sup>.

Among the aforementioned sub-movements, the Charismatic movement began in 1950 and since that year there has been permanent growth in many churches such as the Episcopal, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches<sup>18</sup>.

The continuous growth of the Charismatic movement led to a wide diversity of religious denominations, books and other publications<sup>19</sup>. The movement shares the same precepts as Pentecostalism but differs in its historical origin and the manner of its rituals and sub-themes. Glossolalia and the baptism with the Holy Spirit do not exist in traditional Pentecostalism, whereas in the Neo-Pentecostal and Charismatic movements it does exist. Likewise, personal confession in front of a congregation, the denial of diseases with biological origins and other sub-themes are not shared across all churches in the movement<sup>20</sup>.

In Latin America, there are currently approximately 19,000 Neo-Pentecostal or Charismatic churches, which see more than 100 million believers congregating. The sermons, which are much livelier, are distinct from traditional sermons, with audience participation through songs.

The branching out of the central axis of Pentecostalism has caused the movement to spread worldwide, but it has done so without clear leadership, inter-congregational dialogue or dialogue between different denominations. In some cases, even the headquarters of modern Pentecostal communities act independently of one another.

### **III. INTERNATIONALISATION OF NEW RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS**

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17 Word Assemblies of God Fellowship. Accessed 30th May 2018 at: <http://worldagfellowship.org/>

18 Williams, J.R. *Movimiento Carismatico*. Advanced copy. CREER.

19 Idem.

20 Saranyana, I. (dir). (2002). *Teologia de America Latina*. Vervuert. Madrid

Currently, there are several churches with international congregations such as: the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, which has more than 66,000 churches and places of worship across 140 countries<sup>21</sup>; the Evangelical International Church of the Soldiers of the Cross of Christ which has 25 main locations internationally, situated on different continents<sup>22</sup>; and the Church of God Ministry of Jesus Christ International, which has a permanent presence in 48 countries across Asia, America, Africa, Europe and Australasia<sup>23</sup>.

In order to understand the relationship between human migration and religious globalisation, we will look at the case of the Church of God Ministry of Jesus Christ International, which began in Colombia in 1972 with Neo-Pentecostalist influences. Its wide growth in the country led to international expansion; first in Panama, Peru and the United States<sup>24</sup>. In a like manner to the colonial era, the believers of this congregation have migrated to other regions such as Europe, South America, Asia and Australia. In integrating within the host country they share their beliefs with native citizens, who in turn have migrated to other regions and in so doing have also become social agents of change, even establishing congregations in the areas in which they now reside.

As such, human migration and the need for self-affirmation generated by globalisation promotes the spread of religious thinking, such as modern Pentecostalism. Likewise, the spiritual development which is encouraged in Pentecostalist denominations is, predominantly, the individual.

Believers that migrate to other nations bring their religious beliefs and ideals with them. Their identity is strongly linked to their understanding of where they come from and/or where they are going. They are exposed to a new culture and new social dynamics which uproots their daily customs and activities, but not their identity and the core of their being.

On this, Rafael Palomino states that: “because of marked social migration, an element of being rooted in the community is sought through the membership of a Church, not

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<sup>21</sup> Out Story. The History and Future of the Foursquare Church. Accessed 1st June 2018 at: [https://foursquare-org.s3.amazonaws.com/assets/Print\\_Foursquare\\_Our\\_History\\_Spanish.pdf](https://foursquare-org.s3.amazonaws.com/assets/Print_Foursquare_Our_History_Spanish.pdf).

<sup>22</sup> Directorio Internacional. Iglesia Evangélica Internacional Soldados de la Cruz de Cristo. Accessed 1st June 2018 at: <https://www.soldadosdelacruz.org/directorio-int>

<sup>23</sup> Direcciones. Iglesia de Dios Ministerial de Jesucristo Internacional. Accessed 1st June 2018 at: <https://idmji.org/direcciones/>

<sup>24</sup> Direcciones. Iglesia de Dios Ministerial de Jesucristo Internacional. Accessed 1st June 2018 at: <https://idmji.org/direcciones/>

necessarily motivated by reasons of doctrine, but rather personal interest: the preaching of the pastor, care for the music in Sunday services, relate to others from the same background, among others”<sup>25</sup>.

Thus, geographic location does not form part of the reasons for which a person is attached or detached from their religious identity. The elective principle, feeling that one can freely decide one’s preferences, has greater value in the current globalised society, where there is a myriad of consumer offers. This presumes that the elective principle is stronger in identity building than the sense of belonging<sup>26</sup>.

#### IV. GLOBALISATION AND RELIGION

The term globalisation, across different languages, refers to the globe, the universe and worldwide totality. Distances are shortened by simultaneous access to information immediately. Therefore, emphasises that this worldwide interconnection has traversed through different stages since the 4th Century until the present day, through conquests, conflicts of war and international economic systems, among others<sup>27</sup>.

In accordance with the aforementioned factors, globalisation is a worldwide phenomenon which has been studied in recent years through different schools of thought. Based on this analysis, different anti-globalisation perspectives have developed, understood from the perspective of anti-capitalism, anti-neoliberalism, etc.

As Fernando Savater points out, globalisation is an inevitable worldwide effect that is a tool to universalise the most remarkable human values<sup>28</sup>. The challenge that Savater poses is that globalisation does not refer solely to banking transactions, international trade and economic factors, but also to political, social and cultural factors.

As such, globalisation is understood as the worldwide transmission of cultural fragments, local in origin, which, easily exported to other regions, provide a sense of closeness to

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25 Palomino, R. *Identidad, Cultura y Cultos*. Anuario de la Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, vol. 17 (2013), Forthcoming. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2332614>

26 Castells, M. *Globalización, Identidad y Estado en América Latina*. Accessed 4th June 2018 at: [http://www.flacsoandes.edu.ec/sites/default/files/agora/files/1266426228.globalizacion\\_castells.pdf](http://www.flacsoandes.edu.ec/sites/default/files/agora/files/1266426228.globalizacion_castells.pdf)

27 Cuervo, L. (2006) *Globalización y territorio*. Serie Gestión Pública. United Nations Publications.

28 Núñez, P. y Espinosa, J (Coords.) (2009) “Filosofía y política en el Siglo XXI. Europa y el nuevo orden cosmopolitano”. Ediciones AKAL. Madrid, España.

distant locations. Therefore, it is not an ideology but rather a structured set of interconnected economic, cultural and social factors on an international scale. These social processes in which individuals and institutions are immersed lead to connections beyond territories. This establishes a new model of developing cultural identities.

Cultural identity is the sum of the identities of individuals that recognise themselves as members of a community. The individuals adopt beliefs and attitudes in accordance with the social and cultural context. The culture is a complex that includes knowledge, art, morals, rights, customs and whichever other habits or capacities are acquired by any other members of the society<sup>29</sup>.

Historically and currently, religion forms part of the culture and identity building both individually and as a collective. As such different settings arise in which religions, as part of global culture, interrelate.

In line with the above, what happens when a culture takes in two or more religions? In this globalised context, is it possible that *one* culture corresponds to *one* religion, and *one* religion to *one* culture? This issue is addressed by Rafael Palomino in “Identity, culture and worship”<sup>30</sup>, which affirms that a wide range of possible scenarios exist, including culture shock, the creation of sub-cultures within the same cultural identity, multiculturalism and integration, among others. These scenarios are not unique and exclusive, but they coexist in different models of the current globalised society.

In the same article the author affirms that globalisation accentuates the need for authenticity and originality from each individual, which is called “expressive individualism”. Directly related to this theme is consumerism, not only of material products but also of ideas and beliefs, reinforcing religious practice with the predominance of life stories or personal accounts of how each person lives their religion. As an example of this, the accounts of Western Christian converts to Islam or testimonies of individuals who have been converted to the Charismatic or Neo-Pentecostalist are highlighted. On the other hand, globalisation leads to an effect of individual expatriation that underlines the need for factors such as religion to reinforce individual identity.

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<sup>29</sup>Tylor, E.B. (2015). Primitive Culture researches into the development of mythology, philosophy, religion, art, and custom. Vol. 1, Third Edition, Revised. Scholar's Choice Edition

<sup>30</sup>Palomino, R. Identidad, Cultura Y Cultos. Anuario de la Facultad de Derecho de la Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, vol. 17 (2013), Forthcoming. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2332614>

Thus, the development of current globalisation leads to a reinvention of the religious act, beyond territory, culture, common social factors within a collective and other factors that once formed part of community building.

## **V. THE MECHANISMS AND MEANS OF RELIGIOUS GLOBALISATION**

Manuel Castells states that “the new global system that is formed through networks of exchange and communications flows, (...) is extremely inclusive and exclusive, (...) flexible and dynamic, but subject to powerful swings and a competitive dynamic”<sup>31</sup>. The intrinsic characteristics of these international movements allows for greater adaptability to different social contexts, creating plurinational networks with a fluid exchange of ideas. This happens with large denominations such as those mentioned above.

Globalisation drives the approach of religions and a wide variety of religious faiths, which provides an extensive offer to consumers in the local community in which the denominations which have been historically settled in the region and those which have been imported from other countries coexist.

Along the same lines, human migration and its growth in recent decades had led to cultures submerging themselves in this ethnic and cultural intermixing which also affects religious movements as we have seen. An example of this of Spain in 2017, at which point 4% of the population of Spanish citizens and immigrants in Spain were Muslims and 43% of Muslims in Spain are now Spanish (some being naturalised citizens or second-generation immigrants)<sup>32</sup>.

Another notable example is the United Bible Societies, a worldwide association founded in 1946 and which is currently having an international impact by “building the world’s largest Digital Bible Library, training thousands of church leaders to respond compassionately to HIV/AIDS through the ‘Good Samaritan’ programme and teaching hundreds of thousands of people to read in their ‘Bible-based literacy classes’”. This

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31 Castells, M. Globalización, Identidad y Estado en America Latina. Accessed 4th June 2018 at: [http://www.flacoandes.edu.ec/sites/default/files/agora/files/1266426228.globalizacion\\_castells.pdf](http://www.flacoandes.edu.ec/sites/default/files/agora/files/1266426228.globalizacion_castells.pdf)

32Unión de comunidades islámicas de España. UCIDE2018. (2018). Estudio demográfico de la población musulmana. Accessed 5th June 2018 at: <http://observatorio.hispanomuslim.es/estademograf.pdf>

organisation distributes “an average of 32 million full Bibles each year”, reaching “potentially 5% of the world’s population each year”. According to the organisation, in 2012 it distributed “over 405 million Scripture items”<sup>33</sup>.

The professor Diana Eck, Director of The Pluralism Project at Harvard University, states that:

“The interconnection and proximity of very ancient cultures and religions is the most characteristic phenomenon of the end of the 20th Century. This is the new geo-religious reality. The map of the world in which we live can no longer be divided by the distinct identities of Christian, Muslim or Hindu; each part of the world is imbued with all of the smells and textures”<sup>34</sup>.

Books, cassettes, CDs, videos, seminars, online training, bulletins, and television programmes allow for the spread of religious ideas in different countries. However, it is through human migration that religious ideas in host countries have a higher rate of spread and social significance.

With this in mind, the mechanisms of religious globalisation to take account of are, among others: the length of migration, the process of integration (which influences in great measure the language and likenesses between the culture of the country of origin and the host country), conformity to big or small groups, and the concentration of these in more or less nearby geographical points.

Coexistence between various cultures and, thus, between various religions is continuous and inevitable. This, together with the wide generation of spirituality in the 20th Century, implies a mutual knowledge of the beliefs of others and a questioning of the doctrinal foundations of one’s own religions, which in some cases is disparate or even contradictory<sup>35</sup>.

## I. THEORY OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

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<sup>33</sup> Nuestra historia. Sociedades Biblicas Unidas. Accessed 5th June 2018 at:

<https://www.unitedbiblesocieties.org/es/nuestra-historia/>

<sup>34</sup>Pat Fisher, M.(2003). Religiones en el Siglo XXI. Ediciones Akal. Londres.

<sup>35</sup> Vigil, J.M. Teología del pluralismo religioso: curso sistemático de teología popular.

When we are walking through a city we can easily find mosques, cathedrals and synagogues, and even within one family there are different beliefs all united<sup>36</sup>. This does not only show diversity in Society but also illustrates the fact that people these days are more aware of the other's beliefs and ways of life. This is an example of how the current theology of pluralism is contrary to the classical negative assessment of pluralism of the colonial period. During the invasions and conquests of new territories of previous centuries it was perceived what Vigil denominates as 'the syndrome of the chosen'<sup>37</sup>.

This syndrome consists of imposing the religious beliefs of one individual to the rest of the community. This is a type of religious regime based on the idea that there is only one single way of experiencing religion and therefore only one single confession and one single truth, which must be assumed by every individual for two main reasons: to please God and to benefit the world.

In the current context of multiculturalism, tolerance, democracy, respect of human rights and fundamental liberties this type of approach of exclusiveness or predilection of a supreme being towards a single collective is impossible.

In this regard, Juan José Tamayo confirms that there are three currents which influenced the theology and the conceptualization of religious facts: the theology of liberation, the feminist theology and the theology of religious pluralism. The first of them, linked to ecumenism, tries to bring in line the different dimensions of the religious concept of other communities such as indigenous people and peasants.<sup>38</sup>

The theology of feminism, on the other hand, constructed from different academic disciplines, is a wide set of ideas that pretends to 'create a deeper understanding of

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36 Vigil, J.M. Theology of religious pluralism: systematic course in popular theology //Teología del pluralismo religioso: curso sistemático de teología popular

37 Idem

38 Tamayo Acosta, J.J. (2011). Another theology is possible: religious pluralism, interculturality and feminism. Herder // Tamayo Acosta, J.J. (2011). Otra teología es posible: Pluralismo religioso, interculturalidad y feminismo. Herder

women's situations and begins with the experience of women's oppression and argues that the subordination of women goes from private circumstances to political conditions<sup>39</sup>.

Contrary to the above, the theology of religious pluralism replants central theological themes from three essential points: multiculturalism, religious diversity and inter-religious dialogue.<sup>40</sup>

It is considered that the current notion of religious pluralism grants higher priority to human dignity and assumes a tendency to harmonize and respect the other religious experiences. This is especially relevant in the context of globalization, where different channels of interactions are created between religious institutions and, particularly, between individuals of different religions.

Hence, there is a contemporary trend that underlines the pacific character of religions, as expressed by Tamayo when saying: 'Religious denominations count on important pacifying traditions and on personalities engaged in the non-violent battle for peace and human rights, from attitudes of compassion for the ones who suffer to signs of solidarity towards those excluded from the system'<sup>41</sup>.

Thanks to religious pluralism, different meeting scenarios are created, where symmetrical relationships prevail, and not hierarchized ones, where dialogue, knowledge of the other and respect for diversity are encouraged as a way to explain human existence. This creates ultimately spaces for conflict resolution and peace building.

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<sup>39</sup>Vuola, E. (1996). *Feminist theology: theology of liberation. Praxis as a method of Latin American theology of liberation and feminist theology*. Scientian Academy Fennica. Finland.// Vuola, E. (1996). *Teología feminista: teología de la liberación. La praxis como método de la teología latinoamericana de la liberación y de la teología feminista*. Academia Scientiarum Fennica. Finlandia.

<sup>40</sup>Idem //Vuola, E. (1996). *Teología feminista: teología de la liberación. La praxis como método de la teología latinoamericana de la liberación y de la teología feminista*. Academia Scientiarum Fennica. Finlandia.

<sup>41</sup>Idem

## II. PERSPECTIVES OF THE PHENOMENA OF RELIGIOUS GLOBALIZATION

In this sense, human migration can also be understood as religious migration, which has brought new contexts of interactions across individuals from different backgrounds and joint construction of open and flexible concepts.

The presence of migrants who have brought new ideas and beliefs has paved the way to a diverse, complex, and constantly changing religious aggregate. Migrants coming from different countries and from different social status and backgrounds might share traditions, beliefs and rituals with the host countries where they are living<sup>42</sup>.

Given that the “volume of international immigrants all over the world has increased significantly in the last decade”<sup>43</sup> (currently estimated that 258 million people live in a country different from the one they were born<sup>44</sup>), this kind of multicultural scenarios is a permanent reality in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and may still be in the coming years or even centuries.

This trend of massive human migration worldwide requires a calling to redefine “the other”, i.e. the one that arrives. This later should redefine “the others”, the ones that live in the host country, where integration should occur. In other words, it is necessary to rethink concepts such as:

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42Allievi, S. (2004). Immigration and change processes: Europe and the Mediterranean in the global context. Icaria Spain.// Allievi, S. (2004). Inmigración y procesos de cambio: Europa y el Mediterráneo en el contexto global. Icaria. España.

43International Organization for Migration. (2018). World Migration Report 2018. InfoSheet N°2 Migration and Migrants: A Global Overview.

44United Nations. Department of economic and social affairs. The International Migration Report 2017. Diciembre 2017. Extraído el 11 de Junio de 2018 de: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/publications/international-migration-report-2017.html>

- **Human dignity and Globalization:** “the principle of human dignity is inscribed in the nature of man. Thus, it is not granted but recognized”<sup>45</sup>. This acknowledgement of human rights and fundamental freedoms is essential in the scenario of Globalization. This acknowledgement is convenient for those migrants who belong to different religious groups and must interact with the citizens of the host country. Without this acknowledgement, the risk of exclusivism or different types of discrimination would increase significantly.

Violence that derives from the lack of recognition of this knowledge might foster religious extremism and terrorist acts carried out in the name of religion. This kind of violent acts has become a message of religious intolerance and has had serious consequences in several of the countries that have received significant numbers of migrants. For this reason, the global governance of migration based on human dignity and focused on human rights represents a challenge for the International System and the actors that comprise it.

In this regard, in the New York Declaration for refugees and migrants, adopted in September 2016, the general Assembly decided to draw up a global pact to promote safe, orderly and regular migration.<sup>46</sup> The latest draft of the global pact published in May 2018 states that: "we commit ourselves to condemn and counteract expressions, acts and manifestations of racism, discrimination, violence, xenophobia and related intolerance against all migrants, including those based on race, ethnicity, nationality, sex, religion or belief, in accordance with international human rights law. There is also a stated commitment to promoting an open and evidence-based public discourse on migration and migrants in partnership with all sectors of society, with the hope that it generates a more realistic, humane and constructive perception in this regard"<sup>47</sup>.

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45Guerra, M. R. (2002). Ethics, globalization and dignity of the person. UAEMEX.// Guerra, M. R. (2002). Ética, globalización y dignidad de la persona. UAEMEX.

46Refugees and migrants United Nations. Pact on migration. Retrieved on June 11, 2018 from: <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/es/pacto-sobre-migraci%C3%B3n>// Refugiados y migrantes. Naciones Unidas. Pacto sobre migración. Extraído el 11 de Junio de 2018 de: <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/es/pacto-sobre-migraci%C3%B3n>

47GLOBAL COMPACT FOR SAFE, ORDERLY AND REGULAR MIGRATION. DRAFT. 28 May 2018. Took the 11th of June 2018 from: [https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180528\\_draft\\_rev\\_2\\_final\\_1.pdf](https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/sites/default/files/180528_draft_rev_2_final_1.pdf)

As a consequence, migration and its cycles are an integral aspect of the changing structure of world politics, thus becomes necessary to address religious pluralism as a source of social enrichment, as mentioned in the New York Declaration.

- **Pedagogy of inter-religious dialogue:** Inter-religious dialogue is a practice that reflects the change of relationships between religions and it is founded on the basis of respect and no confrontation, based on the premise that no religion can achieve the total hegemony and that religious freedom is a fundamental right that must be respected by all<sup>48</sup>.

In Spain, for example, there is a set of religious entities dedicated to the inter-religious dialogue and “the most important milestone was the development of the Parliament of the World's Religions in Barcelona in 2004”<sup>49</sup>.

Religion diversity should not be seen as a source of conflict but rather as an opportunity to live together based on respect and tolerance. In order to promote this respect for religious diversity there is a need to find effective tools that diminish the negative stereotypes and stigmatization of people based on their religious beliefs, which have no other justification than the lack of communication and dialogue.

In conclusion, it is essential to build, through a true neutral education based on universal values, a society that accepts and cherishes multiculturalism.

- **Construction of global peace:** rejection, and often hatred, towards the new and different, leads to hostile and discriminatory behaviors and related forms of intolerance towards communities or minorities with marked cultural, social and religious differences.

The promotion of respect for the identity of the other and the guarantee of the full exercise of their rights within a framework of mutual respect and an expanded moral norm are key to the construction of peace in the scenario of globalization.

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48 Inter-religious Dialog Observatory of Religious Pluralism in Spain. Ministry of Justice. Government of Spain. Took on the 6th of June 2018 from: [http://www.observatorioreligion.es/diccionario-confesiones-religiosas/glosario/dialogo\\_interreligioso.html](http://www.observatorioreligion.es/diccionario-confesiones-religiosas/glosario/dialogo_interreligioso.html)// Dialogo Inter-religioso. Observatorio del Pluralismo Religioso en España. Ministerio de Justicia. Gobierno de España. Extraído el 6 de Junio de 2018 de: [http://www.observatorioreligion.es/diccionario-confesiones-religiosas/glosario/dialogo\\_interreligioso.html](http://www.observatorioreligion.es/diccionario-confesiones-religiosas/glosario/dialogo_interreligioso.html)

49 Idem

In this sense, the General Secretary of the United Nations mentioned in the Congress of Religious Leaders, held in Astana, the following:

“In time of turbulence, religious leaders can give cohesion to communities to stay together and find a common basis for peace and problem solving (...) these religious leaders have a responsibility to foster reconciliation, understanding and respect among his followers, besides being forced to denounce the crimes that are committed in the name of their religion”<sup>50</sup>: Ban stresses the importance of religious leaders for peace and prosperity.

It is essential that a holistic vision of religious communities be disseminated as sources of conciliation and not of conflict, that is, the recognition of religious communities as agents of peace.

- **Religious equity**: A challenge parallel to the challenge of religious freedom is the equal treatment of all confessions, without discrimination. Religious equity is not, in itself, the object of study of ecclesiastical law, but rather an approach.<sup>51</sup>

In this sense, Francisco José Bravo mentions that: “religious freedom is closely related to the principle of equality. Thus, if the principle of legal equality is not given, the fundamental right of religious freedom would be seriously damaged”<sup>52</sup>

Religious equity is therefore the act of applying the principle of equity to religion fact. It consists of being the equal holders of rights at an institutional and private level, without this implying a flawed practice of egalitarianism. In this way, in a secular State, where the principle of equity is applied and religious equity is respected, the fundamental rights of all religious actors and their institutions are recognized, guaranteed and promoted.

In the current globalized world, it is understood that the states are not religious (neither atheists, nor Catholics, nor Buddhists ...) but governmental macro-organisms at the

50 Ban stresses the importance of religious leaders for peace and prosperity. Taken November 5 from: <http://www.un.org/spanish/News/story.asp?NewsID=32556#.Vjss-IRfzIM> // Ban destaca importancia de líderes religiosos para la paz y prosperidad. Extraído el 5 de Noviembre de: <http://www.un.org/spanish/News/story.asp?NewsID=32556#.Vjss-IRfzIM>

51 González, J.M. (1997). Spanish ecclesiastical law. Oviedo University// González, J.M. (1997). Derecho eclesiástico español. Universidad de Oviedo.

52 Ruano, L. and Guzmán, C. (2016). Reform of nullity proceedings and other legislative developments of Canon Law and Ecclesiastical Law. Spanish Association of Canonists. Edition Dykinson, SL. Madrid. // Ruano, L. y Guzmán, C. (2016). Reforma de los procesos de nulidad y otras novedades legislativas de Derecho Canónico y Eclesiástico del Estado. Asociación Española de Canonistas. Edición Dykinson, SL. Madrid.

**Explanatory note:** from the perspective of the paper, the principle of equality is understood through its legal dimension, as that which all religions must enjoy as legal subjects, it means, equal treatment under the law. One of the pillars of law and democracy. It is different from the principle of social equality, which is a political system of movables community, and which we do not share.

service of the citizens that they host. This implies that the State does not favor certain religious confessions, does not promote adherence to any particular religious community, nor does it harass or coerce any of them, as there is no "official" religion.

This does not exclude the promotion of ethical and moral actions, foundations of coexistence and democratic societies, but it limits the actions of the State that violate the principle of equity. This complex vision of the coexistence of different religions in a territory and the governability of this pluralism are challenges faced by the globalized society, and that should include aspects of human dignity, interreligious dialogue, religious confessions as agents of peace and the application of the principle of equity to religion.

In conclusion, human migration supposes a religious migration that has been present since the colonial era and that at the present time imprints a pronounced pluralistic profile on societies. Migration has grown over recent years and it is predicted it will continue to grow in the future. Thus, the states and their institutions will have to rethink the social elements necessary for the proper coexistence of the people they host, taking into account their religious convictions. Likewise, the religious pluralism of globalization as an enriching cultural expression is part of the reality of current societies; a religious globalization, in increase, that opens the door to a new way of living in modern societies