

## “RELIGION Á LA CARTE” AND FAMILY

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### Abstract:

To understand the spiritual behaviour of people is complicated because more similar terms describe this phenomenon, such as religiosity, spirituality, mysticism, paranormal and supernatural occurrence. The new phenomenon of contemporary religiosity is called spiritual nomadism or religious tourism or ‘religion á la carte’. The ‘religious market’ offers wide scale options: horoscope, palmist, amulets, seminars of magic, table-turning or fengshui. Our target is to explore the connection between the value of family of respondents and non-Christian nonaffiliated religiosity. This research demonstrates the characteristics and attitudes of the non-Christian nonaffiliated religiosity through horoscope, divination, magic, witchcraft, table-turning, superstition, east-philosophies and phenomenon of UFO. The analysis indicates the attitude of the respondents to the institution of marriage and to the next generation by children, by adults and by grandparents respondents. The consequences are based on the interview of 2020 respondents (representative by county, age, gender, education, number of habitants and nationality). In the research were used univariate, bivariate and multivariate analyses.

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**Key Words:** Religiosity, Family, Value

### Introduction

The phenomenon of contemporary religiosity is called spiritual nomadism or religious tourism or ‘religion á la carte’. The ‘religious market’ offers wide scale options: horoscope, palmist, amulets, seminars of magic, table-turning or fengshui. Many researches point out on the fact, that profitability of these modern religions is more preferential than scientific remedy.

Some studies show correlation between religiosity and marriage happiness<sup>143</sup>, religiosity and warmth in family relations<sup>144</sup>, religiosity and connection to family and lower risk of conflicts<sup>145</sup>. Christiano<sup>146</sup> measured contingency between religiosity and stronger centeredness to family. Agate, Zabriskie and Eggett<sup>147</sup> analyzed religiosity in context of leisure and functionality of family. They perceived that those families were more religious which members spent more time together through home-based activities. Religiosity of parents influences the behavior of their children positively. In religious families there is lower rate of depression and lower misuse of alcohol and drugs. Johnson<sup>148</sup> found the fact that the families of religious people are happier, more intimate and more accepting. Heaton, Jacobson and Fu<sup>149</sup> analyzed the contingency between religiosity and voluntary childlessness.

Nasel and Haynes<sup>150</sup> used “Spiritual and Religious Dimensions Scale” in their research to analyze Christian religiosity and spirituality of New Age. The conclusion were the following 5 factors: Christian religiosity, alternative spirituality, discomfort, extrinsic religiosity and paranormal belief. Lindeman and Aarnio<sup>151</sup> analyzed 3 dimensions of belief in the research about non-Christian non-affiliated religiosity: superstitions, magical beliefs and paranormal beliefs. By factor analyses 5 factors were found, presenting this part of belief: paranormal agents, human agents, signs, vital power

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<sup>143</sup> Booth et. al., 1995  
<sup>144</sup> Mahoney et al., 1999, 2001  
<sup>145</sup> Sherkat, Ellison, 1999  
<sup>146</sup> Christiano, 2000  
<sup>147</sup> Agate, Zabriskie, Eggett, 2007  
<sup>148</sup> Johnson, 1973  
<sup>149</sup> Heaton, Jacobson a Fu, 1992  
<sup>150</sup> Nasel, Hayes, 2005  
<sup>151</sup> Lindeman, Aarnio, 2006

and food. By other authors this dimensions mean the same (Tobacyk and Milford<sup>152</sup>, Keinan<sup>153</sup>, Brugger a Graves<sup>154</sup>).

Consensus among researchers – such as superstition, magical or paranormal belief - doesn't exists. Some<sup>155</sup> of the researchers analyzed the paranormal belief in paranormal person (witch, spirits) or in paranormal skills (telepathy). Researches<sup>156</sup> of superstitions are also focused on rituals, amulets, signs. Astrology, fengshui are sometimes analyzed like superstition, magical or paranormal beliefs. Some studies<sup>157</sup> found the correlation between emotional instability (neurotics), scruple and belief to superstitions. Padgett and Jorgenson<sup>158</sup> found contingency between negative life experiences (times of threat) and higher interest to astrology. Sharps et al. <sup>159</sup> found that paranormal belief is connected to depression and dissociation. Williams et al. <sup>160</sup> found correlation between paranormal belief and rate of neurotics.

The aim of this research is to explore the connection between the value of family and non-Christian non-affiliated religiosity.

### Methods

To understand the spiritual behavior of people is complicated because more similar terms describe this phenomenon, such as religiosity, spirituality, mysticism, paranormal and supernatural occurrence. This research demonstrates the characteristics and attitudes of the non-Christian religiosity through horoscope, divination, magic, witchcraft, table-turning, superstition, east-philosophies and phenomenon of UFO. We counted index of non-Christian non-affiliated religiosity (index NNR) based on 13 questions. Cronbach's alpha has value 0,829. The index scale is from 0 to 100 (0 – minimal belief, 100 – maximal belief).

### The value of family was measured trough certain items:

- Attitude to marriage
- Attitude to next generation (fertility, attitude to abortions, attitude to cohabitation and sexual behavior of children)
- Attitude to former generation (attitude to grandparents – possibility to intern them into nursing home).

We counted the index of value of family (index VF) based on 13 items. Cronbach's alpha has value 0,862. The index scale is from 0 to 100 (0 – minimal value of family, 100 – maximal value of family). We divided it into 3 parts (lowest quartile, 50% and highest quartile).

The population are habitants of Slovakia age between 18 – 60 years. Participants were chosen by representative choice after 6 quotas: gender, education, age, nationality, number of habitants in village/city, county. In this research 2020 respondents participated. Field research was realized in 2008.

### RESULTS

| Index VF  | index NNR | N    |
|-----------|-----------|------|
| highest   | 23,36     | 510  |
| middle    | 30,12     | 821  |
| lowest    | 32,55     | 609  |
| aggregate | 29,11     | 1940 |

<sup>152</sup> Tobacyk, Milford, 1983

<sup>153</sup> Keinan, 2002

<sup>154</sup> Brugger, Graves, 1997

<sup>155</sup> Rice, 2003

<sup>156</sup> Keinan, 2002

<sup>157</sup> Wiseman, Watt, 2004; Zebb, Moore, 2003

<sup>158</sup> Padgett, Jorgenson, 1982

<sup>159</sup> Sharps et al., 2006

<sup>160</sup> Williams et al., 2007

**Tab. 1 Comparison index VF and index NNR,  $F(2, 1937) = 56,033, p < 0,001$** 

| Gender | Index VF  | index NNR | N   |
|--------|-----------|-----------|-----|
| man    | highest   | 22,49     | 208 |
|        | middle    | 27,40     | 392 |
|        | lowest    | 30,20     | 376 |
|        | aggregate | 27,43     | 976 |
| woman  | highest   | 23,96     | 302 |
|        | middle    | 32,61     | 429 |
|        | lowest    | 36,34     | 233 |
|        | aggregate | 30,80     | 964 |

**Tab. 2 Comparison index VF and index NNR by gender, man:  $F(2, 973) = 18,403, p < 0,001$ , woman:  $F(2, 961) = 52,210, p < 0,001$** 

| Age     | Index VF  | index NMR | N   |
|---------|-----------|-----------|-----|
| 18 - 29 | highest   | 22,41     | 140 |
|         | middle    | 31,19     | 270 |
|         | lowest    | 33,73     | 273 |
|         | aggregate | 30,41     | 683 |
| 30 - 39 | highest   | 27,01     | 82  |
|         | middle    | 29,83     | 204 |
|         | lowest    | 33,47     | 147 |
|         | aggregate | 30,53     | 433 |
| 40 - 49 | highest   | 24,47     | 152 |
|         | middle    | 30,54     | 180 |
|         | lowest    | 32,03     | 114 |
|         | aggregate | 28,85     | 446 |
| 50 - 60 | highest   | 20,91     | 136 |
|         | middle    | 28,31     | 167 |
|         | lowest    | 27,23     | 75  |
|         | aggregate | 25,43     | 378 |

**Tab. 3 Comparison index VF and index NNR by age**

| Age     | df     | F     | signification |
|---------|--------|-------|---------------|
| 18 - 29 | 2, 680 | 26,95 | 0,000         |
| 30 - 39 | 2, 430 | 4,37  | 0,013         |
| 40 - 49 | 2, 443 | 12,07 | 0,000         |
| 50 - 60 | 2, 375 | 11,85 | 0,000         |

**Tab. 4 Rate of signification of tab. 3**

| „It's equal if partners live in marriage – important is that they are satisfied“ | index<br>NNR | N    |
|--|--------------|------|
| Strongly agree   | 31,55        | 669  |
| Agree  | 30,84        | 629  |
| Disagree   | 26,84        | 435  |
| Strongly disagree  | 22,57        | 258  |
| Aggregate  | 29,13        | 1991 |

**Tab. 5 Index NNR in comparison with item: „It's equal if partners live in marriage – important is that they are satisfied“,  $F(3, 1987) = 28,282, p < 0,001$** 

| „What's your attitude about sexual contacts of married person to other people?“ | index<br>NNR | N    |
|---|--------------|------|
| Nothing bad, I am not against it  | 30,53        | 72   |
| Sometimes no problem, if husband/wife is tolerant                               | 35,29        | 115  |
| Against it, it can create problems  | 30,01        | 307  |
| Against it, it's not fair to husband/wife                                       | 30,13        | 822  |
| Strongly against it based on moral attitude                                     | 26,35        | 684  |
| Aggregate   | 29,13        | 2000 |

**Tab. 6 Index NNR in comparison with attitude to infidelity,  $F(4, 1995) = 11,815, p < 0,001$** 

| “What's your attitude to abortions?”                                  | index<br>NNR | N    |
|---|--------------|------|
| I am strongly for injunction of abortions                             | 23,39        | 339  |
| I am for possibility only by health problems                          | 28,61        | 690  |
| I am for possibility by health problems, economical and social reason | 31,55        | 603  |
| I am for possibility without limitation                               | 31,20        | 378  |
| Aggregate   | 29,10        | 2010 |

**Tab. 7 Index NNR in comparison with attitude to abortions,  $F(3, 2006) = 24,287, p < 0,001$** 

| „If the family (parents and children) lives in small flat with grandmother, should the family intern grandmother to nursing home?“ | index<br>NNR | N    |
|--|--------------|------|
| Strongly agree   | 33,01        | 63   |
| Agree  | 30,55        | 176  |
| Agree/Disagree   | 30,39        | 457  |
| Disagree   | 28,80        | 628  |
| Strongly disagree  | 27,77        | 685  |
| Aggregate  | 29,10        | 2009 |

**Tab. 8 Index NNR in comparison with attitude to possible intern of grandmother in nursing home,  $F(4, 2004) = 3,595, p = 0,006$** 

## Discussion

The analyze indicates the attitude of the respondents to the institute of marriage, to the next generation – children and to the previous generation - grandparents. The consequences of the research

are based on the interview of 2020 respondents. In the research were used univariate, bivariate and multivariate analyses. In point of the fact two analyzed variables correlate strongly. The respondents, who declared high level of value of family, and who have low rates in each indicators of non-Christian religiosity, they don't believe to horoscope, divination, magic, superstition, witchcraft and phenomenon of UFO. These people evaluate the family which based on marriage, have positive and conservative attitudes to the new and previous generations.

The attitudes to values of family is opposite among respondents than by those, who have high rates of non-Christian religiosity. According to the results the conclusion points at the fact that in this new mystic-occult wave people try to find their own secular religiosity. They think that this can absolve them from responsibility to the family - which based on marriage like most important institute of stability of society - to the new generations (to children) and to the previous generations (to grandparents).

How can fake values coming from "religion á la carte" create solidarity, harmony and cooperation between generations? The only institute what can give stability for the society is the family based on marriage.

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