



# European Journal of Science and Theology

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## ASPECTS CONCERNING THE RESTORATION OF THE HISTORICAL MONUMENT “ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH” (1594) IN ARONEANU, IAȘI, ROMANIA

The finishes of the historical ecclesiastical monument in the village of Aroneanu are unique for the era and the area in which it was built, being inspired by the richly decorated churches in Muntenia. Thus, on the outside we find the median bay that surrounds the church and divides it into two registers; The register at the top consists of two rows of decorations: one contains green and yellow ceramic elements in the form of a disk and a 6-pointed star shape, and the other of ceramic elements having a spindle pattern [6].

In the upper register, the drawings have a rhythmicity taken over by the lower register, the green ceramic elements specific for this place of worship being predominant.

Also, both the general framework and the roof of the spire, in particular, are configured according to the masonry structure over which it rises. In the wet plaster,

drawings were executed by folk craftsmen, imitating scribbled models in a clumsy way, however, this is pre-



Figure 4. Facade degradation

cisely what gives these decorative elements a special charm (Figures 4-5). Inside, the floor of the porch is made of mosaic, and the rest is finished with wooden floors, being raised by one step at the pews from the north and south and by two steps at the altar. The original fresco of the edifice was completely lost following a fire, and until the moment of restoration, no further intervention was made, the church being devoid of interior murals or applied deco-

rations. The roof of the nave is in the form of a wooden frame that follows the shape of the



Figure 5. Socle degradation

nave, the crest above the altar being lower. The tower has a bell-type roof specific to the Byzantine style from Muntenia. Both the wooden structure of the frame and the sheet metal casing required major interventions, as they were in an advanced stage of degradation caused by water infiltrations.

[...more at](#)

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**Contact, subscription:**

- [eurjsci@teol@yahoo.com](mailto:eurjsci@teol@yahoo.com)

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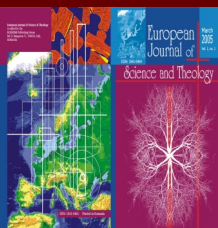
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- [ejst@tuiasi.ro](mailto:ejst@tuiasi.ro)

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EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF SCIENCE AND THEOLOGY

# Newsletter 20.6

## NARCISSISTIC CALL FOR METAPHYSICS

**Abstract:** Contemporary culture is often described as narcissistic, with extreme forms of solipsism becoming increasingly prevalent in mainstream thinking and perception of the world and the self. Narcissism represents a human existence trapped in profound subjectivism, where the individual's existential aspirations exceed the possibilities offered by the world they create and rely on. Efforts to use all available resources to achieve personal goals can lead to frustration and create a toxic atmosphere in interpersonal relationships. This paper explores the existential paradox of man and offers a possible explanation by extrapolating the anticipation of the transcendence of his existence from a theological perspective. The theological perspective presented here is an integral part of metaphysical reasoning and has the potential to offer a solution to the challenges posed by narcissism and the naturalistic conception of the world.

## THE FORMATION OF MORAL VALUES: A CONVERSATION BETWEEN BUDDHISM AND NEUROSCIENCE FROM A VIETNAMESE PERSPECTIVE

**Abstract:** With a particular emphasis on the Vietnamese viewpoint, this research investigates the junction of Buddhism and neuroscience in the framework of moral value development. Inspired by Buddhist teachings as well as modern neuroscientific studies, we investigate the complimentary insights these fields provide on the nature of the self, awareness, and moral action. The emphasis of Buddhism on compassion, mindfulness, and interconnectedness has profoundly affected Vietnamese moral standards, therefore influencing both personal behaviour and social conventions. Conversely, neuroscience questions conventional ideas of selfhood and free will and offers concrete data supporting the neurological bases of these moral values. We provide a comprehensive way to grasp moral value development by combining different points of view that respects both scientific investigation and spiritual wisdom. In the framework of Vietnam's changing cultural and ethical scene, this study prepares the basis for more investigation and pragmatic use of these discoveries.

## EXPLORING THE PHENOMENON OF RELIGIOUS CONVERSION AMONG KAZAKH YOUTH IN THE GLOBALIZED SOCIETY

**Abstract:** This study explores the dynamics of secularism, democracy, and the spread of foreign religious trends in post-Soviet Kazakhstan, focusing on the emerging religious pluralism among the youth. Traditional adherence to parental beliefs is increasingly giving way to individual religious choices, influenced by globalization. This phenomenon, known as 'religious conversion', is examined through qualitative research involving in-depth interviews with 40 Kazakh youths who have experienced religious conversion. Additionally, insights from 30 experts in religious studies enrich the analysis. The study aims to identify and understand the key factors driving religious conversion among Kazakh youth, set against the backdrop of global societal changes.

## ISLAMIC DISCOURSE OF THE REASON AND FAITH IN POST-NORMAL TIMES: IS IT A RETURN TO TRADITION?

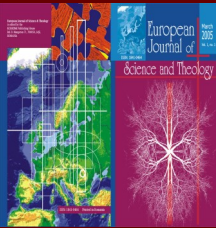
**Abstract:** The paper considers the rationalistic discourse developed as a methodology by Islamic intellectuals of the Middle Ages, which is still relevant today in research aimed at solving the problem of faith and knowledge, science, and religion. The authors believe that the problem of faith and knowledge has been solved as a problem of correlation, an organic complement of two forms of knowledge. Using the example of intellectual trends such as Falsafa, Fiqh, Kalam and Sufism, one can trace the development and spread of rationalism as a methodology of objective logic, in which there is a filiation of logical propositions and the ideas contained in them about the relationship between the concepts of the spiritual and rational spheres. Islamic rationalism was aimed at solving not only problems of a theoretical nature but also to solve problems from the practice of everyday life. In general, Islamic rationalism opened opportunities for a pluralistic interpretation of problems in the religious sphere, the preservation of intellectual reflection, and the promotion of dialogical hermeneutics. In post-normal times, there is an increasing need for critical thinking on global issues, such as the dialogue of religions, the tolerance of interfaith politics, and the formation of a tolerant consciousness in society.

## BLINDNESS AS A RELIGIOUS, MYTHOLOGICAL, AND MORAL ASPECT OF THE IMAGE OF KING DHRITARASHTRA IN ANCIENT INDIAN TEXTS

**Abstract:** This article considers the image of the blind King Dhritarashtra, a key character in the Mahabharata and other ancient Indian texts. Through a phenomenological methodology incorporating descriptive and hermeneutic approaches, the study examines how Dhritarashtra's blindness symbolizes wisdom, ignorance, and fate. The analysis highlights traditional Indian views on time, fate, and the duties of Kshatriya as embodied in Dhritarashtra's character, while also drawing parallels with other mythological figures. The research underscores the duality of Dhritarashtra's blindness as both a marker of profound insight and tragic ignorance, reflecting the broader moral and philosophical themes of the Mahabharata. This study contributes to the understanding of ancient Indian societal values and the enduring relevance of the Mahabharata in addressing ethical and existential questions.

## ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT. BACKGROUND, MODELS AND PERSPECTIVES

**Abstract:** Ecumenism can be seen as the natural desire of a spiritual community to unite. The desire for unification in a spiritual community is the power of love - agape, which is impossible without God and which directs those who are captured by it to fulfilment in the Kingdom of God. However, in history, like



any other process, ecumenism is a heterogeneous and very ambivalent phenomenon. At present, political possibilities based on the physical unification of churches seem to be practically exhausted. While ecumenism based on interfaith dialogue has prospects for development. Currently, various models of interfaith dialogue have been developed. As a rule, in each case of interfaith dialogue, several models of its conduct are used. However, the religious dialogue of a Christian with members of different faiths should be conducted from a position of humility, goodwill, solving practical problems within the framework of mutual cooperation and faith that God is leading us along the path of fulfilment. And this is the path of love and justice. This path may be different for each person. The purpose of the article was to present the existing forms and models of the ecumenical movement and the prospects for their development.

#### RESTORATIVE JUSTICE AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE TRADITIONAL RETRIBUTIVE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

**Abstract:** This paper describes the essence of restorative justice, its roots, definitions, underlying assumptions, principles, and practice. Moreover, it presents the fundamental components, features, and goals of programs. It also discusses the core elements, components, and differences between the retributive justice system and the restorative justice system, as well as the applications and methods of restorative justice processes in the criminal justice system. Restorative justice emerged in the 1970s and 1980s as an alternative to retributive justice, promoting respect, dialogue, and collaborative decision-making. Victims, offenders, social networks, justice agencies, and the community are all involved in addressing the consequences of criminal behaviour. Religious principles of reconciliation, restoration, and healing are central to many RJ programs, but promoters should avoid linking RJ too closely to faith, as it may cause discomfort for victims. Restorative justice builds relationships, resolves conflicts, and forms agreements tailored to cultural contexts and community needs. It challenges minimal involvement in sentencing to humanize victims and perpetrators. This study explores values promoting restorative justice, which aims to restore emotional and material losses through negotiation and problem-solving, incorporating forgiveness.

#### WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY ASSESSMENT. SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW BASED ON PRISMA MODEL

**Abstract:** Workplace spirituality (WS) is becoming a very important issue in the management of modern organizations. It has been recognized as one of the most important trends in organizational management in the 21st century, as a new paradigm of intelligence and management, and as a key to corporate excellence. To recognize whether the right conditions exist to foster WS, monitoring it to make changes and improvements that translate into better organizational performance is necessary. The following main research problem was formulated: Is it possible to measure WS, and if so, what tools are used in this regard? Due to the noted research gap regarding WS assessment models, this paper aims to identify and critically analyse tools for measuring WS. The PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) method was used to achieve this goal. Based on the research, 32 works describing different models of WS measurement were recognized and their structure and scale were critically analysed. On this basis, a new set of dimensions and their definitions were proposed. A model structure of relations between dimensions was also proposed. The contribution to science is to organize the knowledge of quantitative research on WS measurement. Moreover, to the author's knowledge, this is the first review article addressing this issue. It can also be considered an original contribution to science to propose a synthetic set of dimensions, the nature of which was established based on comparisons, repetitions, and similarities and differences between already existing models.

#### THE PAINTING OF THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON IN THE NEAMT GOSPEL OF 1821

**Abstract:** The first Gospel book illustrated with engravings in Romania, published in Neamt in 1821, depicts 23 of the 40 biblical parables with expressive and summarizing images. The only two engravings inserted in the text of the Neamt Gospel of 1821 summarize the first biblical section (Luke 15.11-20), referring to the monologue of the son in the vicinity of the herd of pigs, and the second section (Luke 15.21-31) focuses on the joy of the return to the father. The woodcuts show orthodox originality in sober simplicity. The text of the Gospels, rendered in Cyrillic characters, identifies the Romanian and Orthodox source of the Bible.

#### ASPECTS CONCERNING THE RESTORATION OF THE HISTORICAL MONUMENT "ST. NICHOLAS CHURCH" (1594) IN ARONEANU, IAȘI, ROMANIA

**Abstract:** Church "Sf. Nicolae", located in Aroneanu, a village near Iași - Romania, belonging to a former Orthodox monastery founded in 1594 by ruler Aron Vodă, was the subject of an extensive consolidation and restoration project, and in 2015 it was included on the List of Historical Monuments of Iași county, having the classification code IS-II-m-A-04098. The complex restoration process required a series of preliminary studies and tests to identify structural problems and degradations of the decorative elements. After establishing some safety parameters for the preservation of the historical ecclesiastical monument, the actual works began, starting with the consolidation of the structure and culminating with the restoration of the exterior decorative elements. All the interventions carried out on the historical monument led to a harmonious and unitary result, as close as possible to the original historical image the church had, during Aron Vodă's reign.

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# Newsletter 20.6

PROMOTING ORTHODOX IDENTITY THROUGH ART IN THE CONTEXT OF EUROPEAN MULTICULTURALISM – RESTORATION OF THE WOODEN CHURCH DEDICATED TO “SAINTS ARCHANGELS MICHAEL AND GABRIEL” BUZEȘTI VILLAGE, FĂRCAȘA COMMUNE, MARAMUREȘ COUNTY

*Abstract:* The present study covers the methodological process of conservation-restoration of a monument that is particularly valuable for our traditional wooden architecture and that has recently benefited from interventions aimed at saving it and restoring it to worship for future generations. The wooden church in the village of Buzești was built in 1799 by the creative fantasy of anonymous craftsmen, who reached exceptional performance levels through structural design, jointing and ornamentation. Its architecture bears the imprint of the Baroque style but the interior painting was done later, in the 19th century. Due to its age and especially its outstanding value, it was decided to include it on the list of category A historical monuments. Although over the years there have been several restoration interventions and sites with important repair works, in 2015 when the last important restoration of the monument took place, the church was in an advanced state of deterioration. The interior iconographic program was severely affected by internal and external factors that led to its almost total loss. Thus, in the pronaos, the original painting on the east wall could still be seen in gaps, in the nave the iconostasis still had small traces of painting and in the altar the faces of two hierarchs and a composition on the west wall were still barely visible. Only the vaults still had traces of the original painting, which had also been badly damaged by decay. Because the original painting was almost completely lost, it was proposed to create a new painting in the manner and technique specific to the period and to create an iconographic, chromatic and compositional balance between the new and the old. Thus, the new painting executed in the style of 19th century folk painting was done in the pronaos on the north, south and west walls and on the ceiling, and in the nave on the north, south and west walls as well as on the south and north vaults. What is special about this restored monument is the way this combination of restoration and new painting was achieved.

A PERSPECTIVE ON CHRISTIAN SACRAL ARCHITECTURE IN TIMES OF CRISIS

*Abstract:* The origins of Christian sacral architecture are formed by: 1. the models of sacral buildings shaped in ancient civilisation, when considering formality and aesthetics and 2. the rite in the communal Christian liturgy of thanksgiving, when considering ideology and functionality. The aim of this article is to demonstrate the timeliness of the principle. New and original concepts in the evolution of Christian sacral architecture - distinctive sequences in the process of its transfiguration – were stimulated by crisis conditions. In order to prove this condensed principle, the following methodological framework of argument was adopted: 1. critical analysis of literature on the subject; 2. evolutionary and comparative analyses with elements of a case study and in situ research; 3. heuristic analyses. The research results on the subject, presented in 4 parts of the article, summarize the following conclusions - they characterize the universal perspective of sacral Christian architecture.