

RELIGIOSITY AND CULTURAL PRACTICES IN SERBIA

Abstract: *The link between religiosity and cultural practices is a relatively rare topic in sociology. Serbia is a divided society in many ways, and by connecting and analyzing these two phenomena some symbolic divisions in our society can also be recognized. The text deals with the relationship between religiosity (levels and types) and cultural practices (activities of cultural participation in everyday life, popular and elite culture). The analysis aims to identify certain types of cultural consumers depending on the level and type of their religiosity. The present study is an exploratory one, with the primary objective of determining the extent to which the level and type of religiosity affect the type of cultural practices that the respondents exhibit. Our findings indicate that specific religiosity profiles correlate with the respondents' cultural habitus.*

Keywords: *religiosity, level of religiosity, cultural practices, symbolic struggles, Serbia*

RELIGIOZNOST I KULTURNA PRAKSA U SRBIJI

Sažetak: *Veza između religioznosti i kulturnih praksi je relativno retka tema u sociologiji. Srbija je višestruko podeljeno društvo, a povezivanjem i analizom ova dva fenomena mogu se prepoznati i neke simbolične podele u našem društvu. Tekst se bavi odnosom religioznosti (nivoi i tipovi) i kulturnih praksi (aktivnosti kulturnog učešća u svakodnevnom životu, popularne i elitne kulture). Analiza ima za cilj da identifikuje određene tipove kulturnih potrošača u zavisnosti od nivoa i vrste njihove religioznosti. Ova studija je istraživačka, sa primarnim ciljem da se utvrdi u kojoj meri nivo i vrsta religioznosti utiču na tip kulturnih praksi koje ispitanici ispoljavaju. Nalazi ukazuju da su specifični profili religioznosti u korelaciji sa kulturnim habitusom ispitanika.*

Cljučne reči: *religioznost, nivo religioznosti, kulturne prakse, simbolički napori, Srbija*

The aim of the text is to analyze religiosity and cultural practices in Serbia. The question we are trying to answer is whether religiosity determines the cultural habitus of the citizens of Serbia. Is religiosity one of the factors that affect our cultural choices, and does it therefore divide people into groups? Considering that Serbia is in many ways already a divided society, the question is whether religiosity is one of the factors that impact it, and if so, how this impact is manifested.

Religiosity has been and continues to be measured in various ways which can give different results. The studies whose data we are analyzing (INVENT

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2021² and EVS 2017³) relied on various indicators of self-declaration, belief, practices, knowledge, all of which were chosen to analyze the subject matter of this paper.

The interpretation of religiosity and the role of religion in the contemporary world is facing change, the same way that social change and changes related to religiosity are gaining momentum. After the two conflicting theses on secularization and revitalization it seems that Berger's unifying thesis on "multiple altars of modernity" is a fertile ground for the interpretation of contemporary religious pluralism, not only regarding religion, but also the forms of religiosity in the contemporary world. "Pluralism in the most comprehensive sense – the co-existence of different ethnic, moral, and religious communities, in one society – poses a vitally important political problem. Both fundamentalism and relativism make the problem intractable. Fundamentalism balkanizes a society, leading either to ongoing conflict or to totalitarian coercion." (Berger, 2014, 15) Religiosity in Serbia must be viewed in the social context, but we must also ask if there are any mechanisms specific to the "religious field" which resist the impact of the social environment and overcome it. In that sense religiosity in Serbia can be viewed in the context of global social trends (globalization, digitalization, migration, the rise in fundamentalism). Theoreticians do agree on one point: Europe is a space where secularization theory achieved its empirical verification to the greatest extent compared to the other parts of the world where religiosity has remained at a continually high level (Turner, 2012). The post-socialist parts of Europe (Merđanova, 2000) follow their own trends, while our space is additionally "complicated" by ethnic conflict and religion as identification markers. Sociological literature has documented the revitalization of religion in Serbia following the fall of socialism (Blagojević 2009, Gavrilović, 2013).⁴ What has certainly had an impact on these processes is the nationalist fervor in these regions, which pushed religion as one of the rare differentiating elements into the foreground (Perica, 2006). Monitoring trends indicates that religiosity in Serbia is still present at a high level, while some trends in religiosity are still gaining strength. However, some theoreticians doubt the research findings and the quality of the indicators: How much can empirical studies of religiosity actually help us in all this? For example, a global study carried out by Gallup International dating back from the

2 The analyses are based on a survey data within the Horizon 2020 project, European Inventory of Societal Values of Culture as a Basis for Inclusive Culture Policies in the Globalizing World. (No. 870691)

3 The European Values Study (EVS) is a large-scale, cross-national, repeated cross-sectional survey research programme on basic human values. It provides insights into the ideas, beliefs, preferences, attitudes, values and opinions of citizens all over Europe. (<https://europeanvaluesstudy.eu/>)

4 For a more detailed review of empirical studies and religiosity during socialism and later, see: Zorica Kuburić, Danijela Gavrilović, 2012. "Verovanje i pripadanje u savremenoj Srbiji", *Religija i tolerancija*, Vol. X, No. 18, 201–214.

end of 2011 (Petrović, 2012, 9) shows that the citizens of Serbia are exceptionally religious compared to citizens of other European countries. Ahead of them on the religiosity index we find only the citizens of Macedonia, Romania, Moldavia, and Poland. As many as 77% of Serbian citizens consider themselves “religious” if asked the question: ‘Irrespective of whether you attend religious service or not, would you call yourself a religious, non-religious person, or a staunch atheist?’ (*ibid*). But what does this question actually mean, how much sense does it even make when it comes to *religiosity*? After all, what kind of indicator of religiosity is this? (Vukomanović, 2012, 52).

There is a well-known syntagm about Orthodox Christians in Serbia as traditional believers, as well as about Orthodox religiosity in Serbia as “superficial and eclectic⁵ traditional religiosity” (Gavrilović, 2013). A contribution to the solution to this dilemma could be made by the role that religion plays in contemporary Serbian society, its impact on the beliefs and behavior of people (Gavrilović, 2013, Jovanović, 2022). Another impact is also participation in symbolic struggles, which can be transferred from the symbolic to real space, as it happens over and over again when it comes to questions related to the life of homosexuals in Serbia, the COVID-19 pandemic, but also abortion and other potential points of contention (Jovanović, 2016, Jovanović, 2022).

As Turner pointed out, the analysis of religion played the main role in the study of modernization, urbanization, and the industrial transformation of society (Turner, 2011, 21), so today the analysis of religiosity can point to the modernization, but also integration trends in contemporary society in general, and thus the Serbian one as well.

After diagnosing the revitalization of religion in Serbia and concluding that to a great extent it is a case of traditional, non-ecclesiastical religiosity⁶, sociologists somehow lost interest in the level and type of religiosity still developing in Serbia. In order to keep up with the trends in religiosity over the past five years in Serbia, we analyzed data from the 2017 EVS and 2021 INVENT studies.

Data analysis

The selected indicators of religiosity which originate from the two aforementioned studies have been analyzed with the aim of providing potential responses to the questions posed in this text (every table will contain specific information on which study the analyzed data originate from). We will first focus on the position

5 Data from the EVS from 2008 indicate that believers are not sufficiently informed about the basis of their religion, and thus combine Orthodox Christian elements with talismans, and a belief in reincarnation (Gavrilović, 2013, 43). In the text this phenomenon of not recognizing the incompatibility of Orthodox teachings and astrology could for example be documented by means of in-depth interviews with an Orthodox christian pilgrim (Čiparizović, 2012, 63-64).

6 Modern-day man, and even a contemporary Serb, is mostly religious and unchurched. (Krstić, 2012)

religion has among the other priorities in life, and then evaluate its position in relation to: family, work, leisure time, friends, and politics. When we compare the importance of religion to that of other aspects of life (family, friends, leisure time, politics, work) we note that the number of those who claim that religion is very important in their lives has increased from 17.5% to 30%. The model of religiosity in Serbia does not seem to be coming any closer to that of secularized Europe (Stolz, 2020) if we were to base our conclusions on this noted trend. Between two waves of the European Value Study, the evaluation of the importance of religion in the life of the citizens of Serbia indicates **a significant increase**. Still, family, work, friends, and even leisure time precede it in terms of importance.

Table 1. A comparison of EVS 2008-2017

2008 Very important %	2017 Very important %
Family 85.3	Family 90.9
Work 58.3	Work 60.1
Friends and acquaintances 41.1	Friends and acquaintances 54.2
Leisure time 31.0	Leisure time 49.8
Religion 17.5	Religion 30.4
Politics 6.0	Politics 9.4

We have already mentioned the link between denomination and religiosity in Serbia. Specifically, many of those who declare themselves members of the Orthodox Christian faith say that they are not religious. In and of itself this claim would be nonsensical were it not linked to questions of identity.⁷ Indicators of religiosity point that this gap is decreasing over time, but that it still exists. Table 2 presents data for the entire sample, that is, all the denominations found in Serbia, while in Table 3 we find data pertaining solely to Orthodox Christianity. We can note that approximately 80% of Orthodox Christians claim to be religious, which represents an improvement compared to previous research, while some claiming to be Orthodox Christian declare themselves as spiritual or as “having no religious or spiritual beliefs”. Many Orthodox Christians (14.5%) declare themselves to be non-religious and non-spiritual, which indicates the role that religion plays as an identity marker. Some 7.3% of Orthodox Christians declare themselves to be spiritual.

⁷ Religious affiliation has been a significant factor in the separation of nations, since belonging to a specific religion was one of the main agents of ethnic belonging via multiple ethnic identifiers. The impact of religion is reflected in the idea of a mythical homeland, a shared origin, and plays an important role in the content of the collective memory of an ethnic group (Gavrilović, 2008).

Table 2. Indicators of religiosity in the INVENT research 2021

Denomination %	Religiosity %
Orthodox Christian 89.4	Religious 75.1
Catholic 3.8	No, but I have spiritual beliefs 7.5
Muslim 1.5	I have no religious or spiritual beliefs 17.4
Does not affiliate with any religion 2.7	

Table 3. Orthodox Christians, religiosity INVENT research 2021

Religious 78.2%
No, but I have spiritual convictions 7.3%
I have not spiritual or religious convictions 14.5%

The further evaluation of the level and type of religiosity in Serbia included indicators of religious practice. The following two tables present data from 2008, 2017 and 2021, which refer to attending religious service and prayer. The data indicate that the practice of these activities **remains mainly at the same level**. Going to church on major holidays has always been the dominant religious practice in Serbia, as it is today, but prayer as an intrinsic religious practice has increased, as indicated in the research carried out in 2021.

Table 4. Indicators of religiosity, EVS 2008, 2017

Religious service	2008	2017	Pray	2008	2017
More than once a week	1.6	1.6	More than once a week	15.9	11.3
Once a week	5.8	6.6	Once a week	11.6	9.8
Once a month	13.8	14.7	Once a month	9.4	10.8
Only on specific holy days	34.0	33.5	Only on specific holy days	10.3	14.9
Once a year	7.5	8.1	Once a year	12.4	14.4
Less often	17.4	15.9	Less often	16.1	17.4
Practically never	18.8	19.5	Practically never	19.6	21.5

Table 5. Indicators of religiosity, INVENT research 2021

Religious services	2021	Pray	2021
(Almost) daily	0.7	(Almost) daily	15.5
At least once week	7.9	At least once week	16.8
At least once a month	17.6	At least once a month	12.5
A couple of times a year	41.6	A couple of times a year	21.5
(Almost) never	7.2	(Almost) never	9.0

There is a statistically significant association between types of self-declared religiosity and forms of religious practice (Pearson's Chi-Square 413.654, Sig. 000).

Of course, those who claim that they are religious mostly practice religion, but it is interesting that those who declare themselves as spiritual, or in the study from 2017 claim that there is “some life force” or “I don’t know what to think”, pray almost as much as religious individuals.

It is difficult to claim that our findings would undermine the thesis on traditional, maybe even eclectic, fashionable and globalized religiosity (a combination of Orthodox Christian religiosity with belief in reincarnation, the use of talismans, the practice of yoga and reiki). It would seem that these two types of religiosity, traditional and eclectic religiosity, dominate the religious space in Serbia. This conclusion is based on an analysis of the indicators of the space (a multi-correspondent analysis, SPAD 7.3) (Gavrilovic, 2013, 43). There is talk of this phenomenon within the SOC itself and it is considered a problem which needs to be solved.

Table 6. EVS 2017, belief in reincarnation

Do you believe in reincarnation	Yes %	No %
a religious person	37.1	62.9
not a religious person	12.9	87.1
a convinced atheist	15.3	84.7

When we look at the data which indicate the importance of God in the lives of believers, the data from 2008 and 2017 are almost the same. We could conclude that stabilized religiosity is still active. At the same time, when we analyze the trends, we can note that the data from EVS 2008 and EVS 2017, in terms of “strong” indicators of religiosity, show an increase in these indicators.

Table 7. EVS 2008 and 2017, do you believe in:

Do you believe in:	2008 %	2017 %
God	84.9	85.4
Hell	24.9	36.9
Life after death	28.7	41.0
Heaven	31.7	41.8
Reincarnation	19.2	31.6

Following up on existing analyses of religiosity, in an attempt to more closely determine the model of religiosity which exists in Serbia, further data (INVENT research, 2021) were analyzed through a multi-correspondent analysis using SPAD 7.3 with the aim of determining the grouping of forms of religious-practice in the “religious space” of Serbia. ⁸Figure 1.

⁸ The cluster analysis included the following items:
Could you please indicate your belonging to a religion or denomination?

INVENT research 2021, clusters of religiosity

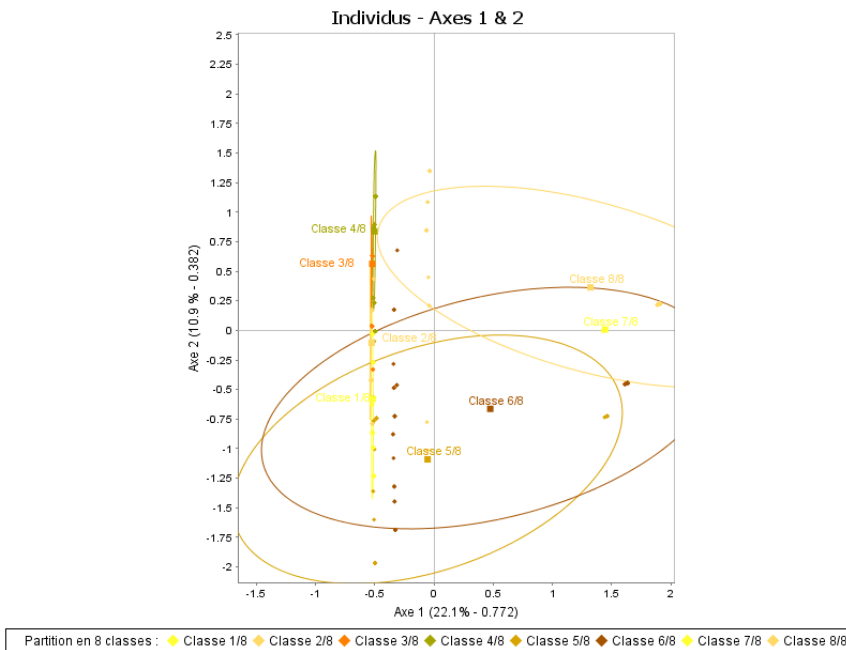


Table 8. Clusters of religiosity, INVENT research 2021⁹

Country	Cluster name	Percentage
Serbia	1. Serbian Orthodox Christian regular practitioners	27.41
	2. Serbian Orthodox Christian occasional practitioners	12.21
	3. Serbia Orthodox nearly without practices (four rites)	19.64
	4. Religiosity without practice	10.67
	5. Serbian Orthodox (prayer+ religious services-) Personal?	1.78
	6. Regular practitioners Roman Catholic	4.12
	7. Spiritual Orthodox and Orthodox who claim they are not religious	19.56
	8. Secularised	4.61

Independently of whether you belong to any religion or denomination, would you say you are religious?

Apart from special occasions such as weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services or meetings?

Apart from when you are at religious services, how often do you pray?

9 The SPAD analyses and the clusters of religiosity are the product of work which is currently being done, and which refers to a comparative analysis of religiosity and the cultural profiles in Europe, on which the author of the text is collaborating with Frederik Lebaron and Nemanja Krstić.

The clusters of believers that we can see in contemporary Serbia indicate the existence of regular believers, to which one-third of the respondents belong. These findings indicate the existence of “serious religiosity” in Serbia. In Croatia, for example, a decrease was noted in church religiosity, i.e., a presence of “distanced church religiosity” and an increase in personal religiosity (Nikodem, Zrinščak, 2019). Regular religiosity is based on regular church attendance and prayer. Despite the significant cluster of those who declare themselves spiritual and non-religious Orthodox Christians (19.56%), the remaining clusters bear evidence of a significant level of respondents with a religious habitus. If we were to rely on Bourdieu’s theory of a religious field and religious capital, we would be able to notice that the existence of religious capital impacts the perception, behavior, and strategies of people and thus all the spheres of society. A religious field depends on the needs of the people, but also the offer, and enables the possessors and controllers of religious capital (churches and religious communities) to manage and manipulate laymen.

Religiosity and cultural practices

The relationship between religion and culture can be interpreted in different ways. In this text we treat religiosity as part of the culture of the citizens of Serbia, a deciding factor in their way of life, lifestyle, beliefs, cultural consumption... (Cvetičanin, 2007, 12). Religious practices can also be viewed as part of the cultural consumption in Serbia. In the introduction to the volume *Religion and Modern Society* (2011), Turner asks the question of whether modern consumerism has an impact on the form and content of religion. Some theoreticians ascribe the constant presence of religiosity in America and the lack of any secularized trends to the extent that they are found in Europe precisely to the adaptation of religion in America to consumerist culture. On the other hand, religiosity itself impacts cultural practices and cultural consumption. This section of the text attempts to link insight into religiosity in Serbia today with the various aspects of the cultural practices of religious individuals in Serbia, as well as to note the dynamics of this relationship. In that sense, religious differences can be viewed as a part of broader cultural orientations which often divide the Serbian cultural space, and unavoidably make up a part of the symbolic struggles.

A statistically significant association was noted between levels of education and institutionalized cultural capital and religiosity in the study carried out in 2021 (Pearson’s Chi-Square 40.475, Sig. 004). Specifically, with the increase in the level of education, the number of those who declare themselves to be spiritual or have no spiritual or religious beliefs also rises. More precisely, this difference in percentages can be noted starting with the university level of education. The greatest number of religious individuals can be found among high school

students, which is logical considering most Serbian citizens have a high school education. In sociological literature this pattern was noted long ago and some studies have proven it, especially in the case of the US (pewresearch.org/religion/2017); however, data from 2017 do not confirm the association between the level of education and self-declared religiosity.

The following data outline the different elements of the cultural profiles of religious individuals in Serbia.

Cultural and political values do not depend on the type and level of religiosity of the respondents from Serbia, and the only statistically significant difference (Pearson's Chi-Square 29.410, Sig. 000) can be noted for opinions regarding homosexual marriage, specifically the opinion that "Homosexual marriages should be allowed throughout Europe", which is something that most people declaring "No, I don't have any religious or spiritual beliefs" agree upon (INVENT research). Despite the statistical significance, when analyzing the percentages we see that there is no high level of support for this opinion in all the studied categories.¹⁰ Analyses based on data from EVS 2017 indicate that religiosity statistically significantly determines our approval of homosexuality, that religious individuals to a greater extent do not approve of homosexuality, or the use of soft drugs, of abortion, divorce, euthanasia, casual sex, prostitution. In the same vein, religious individuals more often declare, to a statistically significant extent, that they do not want homosexuals and immigrants as their neighbors, while no statistically significant differences were noted for all the other options – the Roma, Muslims, Jews. When we look at the data which refer to the approval of tax fraud and other socio-pathological occurrences, we can see that there is no difference which correlates with the religiosity of the respondents, which has been indicated in previous studies. It would seem that such data are the consequence of the SOC publicly sharing its beliefs and its formed discourse regarding certain issues (abortion, homosexuality...), and the absolute lack of an opinion (hiding) when it comes to work ethic and attitudes towards the public welfare, corruption, and other important social issues in contemporary Serbian society. The social ethics of the SOC

10 Similar analyses are found in the work of S. Zrinščak, who cites Rodney Stark and his attempts to determine the link between religion and the establishment of moral norms in various social environments. He compares West and East Europe, putting special emphasis on Catholic countries, attempting to determine which impact is stronger – that of religion or the social and cultural context. Animosity towards homosexuality and abortion was found to a greater extent in Catholic countries and was ascribed to the influence of Catholicism. Zrinščak claims that the impact of religion on certain moral norms is clearly visible; however, it is very difficult to empirically verify such a claim and evaluate the strength of the impact. Some occurrences are morally unacceptable, even among those who are not religious, since they emerged under the influence of a religion which was dominant, and then became the cultural standard (Zrinščak, 2004). Similarly, Inglehart states that in Denmark, Sweden, and other protestant countries a protestant morality can be found, despite the low level of religiosity (Inglehart, Norris, 2007) (Gavrilovic, 2013).

are mainly limited to the field of gender and individual morality (Gavrilovic, 2013, 102). When it comes to opinions used to measure openness towards groups of people who are different (ethnically, religiously), no statistically significant difference was noted in relation to the religiosity of the respondents.

Statistically significant differences can also be noted (Pearson's Chi-Square 35.009, Sig. 000) for the opinion "Taking everything into consideration, family life suffers when women work a full-time job". Conservativeness and religiosity go hand in hand, as is shown in most studies and in life itself (Gavrilović et al., 2022).

Trust research occurs quite frequently, but the INVENT study provided a slightly unusual offer of options: the Government of Serbia, the European Union, the media, social networks (for example Facebook), science and scientists, religious leaders. There is a statistically significant difference in trust in: the Government of Serbia, the media, science and scientists, and religious leaders. For the other remaining institutions, social networks and the EU, no statistically significant difference was noted in relation to the religiosity, spirituality, or non-religiosity of the respondents. Religious individuals show statistically significant greater trust in the government and religious leaders.

One segment of this text will be dedicated to cultural consumption and the tastes of the respondents, and the correlation between religiosity and these elements. Statistically significant differences can be noted when we analyzed listening to traditional rural folk music, neofolk music, turbo folk music, traditional urban folk music, classical music, opera, jazz, blues, rock music, pop music, techno, pun, hip-hop, as well as hard rock and heavy metal.

Table 9. Religiosity and musical taste

	Religious		Spiritual		I don't have any	
	I love	It bothers me	I love	It bothers me	I love	It bothers me
Traditional rural folk mus.	34.5	2.6	17.2	6.1	18.9	6.1
Neofolk	21.9	5.0	10.1	17.2	15.0	17.8
Turbo folk	11.0	11.8	8.1	28.3	7.5	21.1
Traditional urban folk mus.	26.3	2.4	10.2	4.1	18.3	2.8
Popular music	22.4	3.5	18.0	4.0	26.4	2.4
Classical music	4.1	12.8	6.1	7.1	3.8	8.5
Opera/opera	1.7	22.5	4.1	20.4	2.4	16.5
Jazz music	2.2	15.4	3.1	7.1	3.3	9.0
Blues	2.3	13.1	5.1	6.1	3.8	6.6
Rock music	11.6	9.3	21.2	12.1	20.8	10.4
Pop music	12.4	5.1	19.2	4.0	25.5	4.2

Techno	1.9	27.6	5.1	28.6	5.6	23.1
Punk	0.6	28.3	2.0	29.6	0	27.5
Hip-hop	1.8	22.5	9.1	19.2	4.7	22.6
Hard rock; heavy metal	1.6	29.9	5.1	29.3	2.8	31.3

The tastes in music of those who define themselves as religious, spiritual or non-religious differ. The following table provides a list of the musical preferences of these groups:

Yes, I do have religious beliefs	Traditional rural folk music, neofolk and turbo folk, traditional urban folk music, pop music
No, but I have spiritual beliefs	Opera, jazz, rock, techno, punk, hip-hop
I neither have religious nor spiritual beliefs	Pop music, classical music, jazz, blues, punk, hip-hop, hard rock and heavy metal

Religious individuals spend a considerably greater amount of time watching RTS (Pearson's Chi-Square 98.500, Sig. 000), commercial television stations (Pearson's Chi-Square 46.482, Sig. 000), read online editions of newspapers somewhat less (Pearson's Chi-Square 22.091, Sig. 005), follow social media less (Pearson's Chi-Square 42.528, Sig. 000), and generally use the internet less (Pearson's Chi-Square, 26.971, Sig. 001). At the same time, they rarely state their political views or sign online petitions (Pearson's Chi-Square 19.209, Sig. 014). Religious individuals watch Netflix and similar streaming services less (Pearson's Chi-Square 19.278, Sig. 013) or play video games (Pearson's Chi-Square 28.393, Sig. 000). Significant differences were noted for listening to music in English (Pearson's Chi-Square 51.005, Sig. 000), watching local television productions (Pearson's Chi-Square 65.473, Sig. 000), as well as tv series and movies from other parts of the world.

Differences in subscribing to "conspiracy theories" are another element which we analyzed to recognize the cultural profile of the respondents from Serbia. It is often the attitude of the SOC towards some of these claims that is problematized in public life.

When we analyze the distribution of agreement with the opinion "The COVID-19 epidemic was created on purpose in order for the WHO and pharmaceutical companies to earn as much money as possible" we can note a statistically significant association between the declarations (I have religious, I have spiritual, or I have neither religious nor spiritual beliefs) and agreement with this opinion (Pearson's Chi-Square 35.659, Sig. 008). Insight into the percentages indicates that this is an opinion mostly accepted by those who declare themselves as spiritual.

The opinion “God created man in his own image and likeness, and the theory that we are descended from monkey-like ancestors is a lie” also showed a statistically significant association with self-declared religiosity (Pearson’s Chi-Square 132.219, Sig. 000). This opinion is one accepted mostly by religious individuals.

The opinion “NASA’s Moon and Mars landings were hoaxes – it was all filmed in a desert somewhere in America” is mostly not accepted by individuals who declare themselves “non-believers”. The differences are statistically significant (Pearson’s Chi-Square 45.520, Sig. 000).

If we were to consider the currently still active opinion of “Not only are vaccines not useful, it is highly likely they are harmful to human health”, no statistically significant association between this opinion and the type of religious self-declaration was noted. This is especially interesting since there is an entire ongoing debate which problematizes both the opinions of religious individuals and the opinions of the SOC regarding vaccination (Jovanović, 2022). No statistically significant differences were noted for the opinion “5G technology is used to monitor and control people”.

Conclusion

The analyses that were carried out confirm the existing trends in religiosity. Religiosity is high in the European context. The question is whether religiosity has any impact on the lives of people and how it is manifested. In this text, we analyzed only one association, i.e., its impact on cultural beliefs and practices. Certain differences were noted. For example, the higher the level of religious practices, the greater the lack of openness toward foreign and digital programming, and the greater the focus on local content. There are also differences in many of the segments of cultural preferences in relation to music, TV, and digital programming. Differences were also noted in beliefs. These cultural differences can provide the basis for actual social manifestations which occur during pride parades, certain cultural events, and various aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Symbolic borders, borders established through cultural codes, are distinctions separating social groups that also enhance within-group cohesion. When it comes to such situations, we are witnesses to the fact that religion does have an impact on Serbian society, and that the numbers we interpreted have an actual social impact.

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