

ABSTRACTS

Frigerio, Alejandro. *Establishing Bridges: Articulation of Meanings and Social Settling in Religious Movements in the South Cone.*

It is usually assumed that when a certain group of religions originated in other contexts is adopted, this necessarily implies they must suffer important modifications in order to have a minimum success in other cultures than those where they had their origins. By analysing the expansion of Afrobrasilian religions in Argentina, this article argues that these positions underestimate the use of mechanisms of presentation, rather than adaptation, of new ideas. This makes the individual and social reception of new religions easier, without having to produce important changes in doctrine and in practice. This would be achieved by building bridges between the beliefs and/or value systems present in the society and the systems of beliefs of the new religions. The frame alignment notion, developed by American sociologist David Snow, is particularly appropriate for understanding this process.

Carozzi, María Julia. *Autonomy as Religion: The New Age.*

Based on the concept of movement frame developed in the study of religious and social movements, the article analyses the New Age alternative circuit as the therapeutic-religious wing of a sociocultural macromovement for the affirmation of autonomy, which was originated in the Sixties. The analysis focuses on the development of the New Age movement frame in the United States, as well as on the transformative key of the discourse and situations organized by movement activists, and alternative circuit of professionals in Buenos Aires.

Ferrándiz Martín, Francisco. *The Cult of Maria Lionza in Venezuela. Times, Spaces, Bodies.*

This article offers a general view of the possession cult of Maria Lionza through the analysis of three of its most relevant aspects: its historic profile, its speciality and the forms of corporately that are continually rising in its bosom. Product of the oil modernity and lacking a clear hierarchy and orthodoxy, the cult has a great flexibility and an extraordinary dialogue capacity

—almost immediate— with different aspects of the national reality. In fact, this work defends that, under the “archaic” interpretative facade that covers the cult of Maria Lionza, this religious phenomenon is yet another of the most autonomous, freshest and ultimately most intense niches of the cultural debate, rearticulation and production in contemporary society in Venezuela.

Vallverdú, Jaume. *Conversion, Commitment and Identity Construction in the Hare Krishna Movement.*

The processes of conversion into the Hare Krishna movement in Spain follow a gradual, causal and revivalist model. This model can be inferred from the autobiographical narratives of its current members. These narratives, though, are in fact ideological reconstructions determined by the organizational, symbolic and doctrinal patterns of the group, which are internalized by its members as a guarantee of their sense of belonging and compromise. The mechanisms of motivation and institutional engagement have a crucial role within this evolutive model of conversion. The model of conversion under scrutiny follows five main sequences, divided in turn into smaller steps. The main sequences are: alienation, search, crisis, discovery, and conversion and compromise. This itinerary draws a complete sequence of religious conversion which culminates in the achievement of a satisfactory system of meanings responding to a number of individual needs, mostly socio-emotional and existential.

Lagarriga Attias, Isabel. *Religious Experience: Old and New Forms of Female Struggles.*

Despite the importance of women’s role within society as reproducer of religious values, their relegated role in this field throughout history is accentuated in societies such as ours. In order to deal with this, forms of female responses have arisen. At some times when religious repression has been strong, they lean towards heterodoxy or else towards somewhat exalted mystical experiences which have allowed women to carry out an outstanding role. In this study we present how these situations have arisen in Mexico, becoming the basis of feminine religious behaviours in our society.

Ortiz Echániz, Silvia. *Gender Relations in the Marian Trinity Spiritualist Ritual.*

Gender studies favour the observation and anthropological analysis of a differentiated religious participation. This study intends to underline the relevant female participation in rituals of the Marian Trinity Spiritualism, a popular religion which is very extended in marginal urban environments.

Women's participation in religious hierarchies and spiritualist cult practices allows them to satisfy their spiritual, psychological and social needs, providing them with an important symbolical power which gives them prestige and social recognition. It particular, it underlines the ease with which women learn or dominate trance in order to assume ritual transferences, which symbolically make them take on masculine generic qualities which are socially considered superior, thus promoting a compensatory therapy.

Vázquez Palacios, Felipe. *Differentiated Promotion of Religious groups in central Veracruz.*

This article analyses the problem of promotion of religious groups at a local level. In order to do this, the author refers to three points: 1) The discussion on religious minorities in Latin America 2) The general conditions in which the religious message circulates 3) A case study at Banderilla, Veracruz.

Padilla Arroyo, Antonio, *Secularization, Education and Scholastic Rituals in the 19th Century.*

The aim of this article is to describe some aspects of the secularization process in the 19th century in Mexico. The paper is an overview at redefinition of the private and public spaces. This paper analyses the role played by education and scholastic institution in the formation of customs, ideas, behaviours and social practices, and specially the importance of the scholastic rituals amongst them.

Higuera Bonfil, Antonio, *Elements of a Theocratic Identity: Jehová's Witnesses*

This study is the result of a research project covering the Mexico-Belize border which looks for the nodal elements of the theocratic identity of Jehová's Witnesses. The conception and form of behaviour are documented in three main areas: religion, society and

family. The image obtained is the scenario where many of the social relations within the religious group are reproduced.

Ríos Molina, Andrés, *The Scarlet Colour Savage Beast: the Satanization of the State by Jehova's Witnesses.*

From the beginning of the century, the conflict between military forces and revolutionary groups in Colombia concentrated in the North Western region known as *Uraba*. In the nineties, paramilitary groups enter in the conflict scenes. In the midst of the armed conflict, the religion that gained more force was Jehova's Witnesses. There was even a point where a town was created and all its settlers belonged to this religion. Through a rigid and detailed discourse, each of the actors is interpreted in a symbolic system: the State, guerrilla groups, unions, the United States, the UN. Consequently, the members of the religion adopt a life style that allows them to keep their distance from the conflict.

Garma, Carlos, *The Legal Situation of Religious Minorities in Mexico*

¿What is the legal situation of religious minorities after the 1992 constitutional modifications and the new regulation that rules the legal status of religious groups in Mexico? It is not enough to analyse the legal text of the law, but to consider how it is applied through the interaction between the state and minority churches. Different cases will be analysed that demonstrate problems in the application of the new legal dispositions for different religious groups such as Jehova's Witnesses, the Light of the World and Indigenous Religions.

Nivón B., Eduardo and Xóchitl Ramírez S. *Policy or Law? The Nation's Cultural Patrimony Law initiative.*

The commotion caused by the recent presentation of the Nation's Cultural Patrimony General Law initiative has prompted many opinions. In this essay we hold the criteria that before reforming the legal framework concerning patrimony, it is more urgent to revise the policies to be followed in this field, which must be based on the experience accumulated over the years and the awareness that patrimony policy is yet another aspect of the process of democratization of our society. Society will only be in the condition to defend its patrimony by bringing together the most varied social agents, by guaranteeing the way in which the State conducts public matters.