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**RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF ETHNIC CONSOLIDATION AND DIFFERENTIATION**

Religions (confessions) played important role in the formation of ethnic variety of today's world. This paper gives many examples of the world-history from this point of view. In some cases the religions (confessions) promoted consolidation of tribes, in other cases they caused their differentiation. Consolidation took place when members of one or several cognate or non-cognate tribes/nations were the followers of one monotheistic religion (confession). Dissemination in one nation of several religions (confessions) caused its differentiation, because very often a religious self-consciousness transcended ethnic self-consciousness. Mono-confessional tribes by virtue of this were stable, and poly-confessional – unstable ones.