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Religion and Related Morality Across Cultures

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Religious beliefs, practices, norms, and communities are integral parts of culture and seem to shape most aspects of it. Inversely, culture, at the local, national, and transnational levels, seems to shape religious doctrines, rituals, norms, and groups. By "shaping," one can envision two major pathways. On the one hand, religion and culture—more precisely, other than religious cultural elements like values, self-concept, emotions, language, and ethnic identity—may parallel and *mirror* each other, possibly due to long-term bidirectional causal influences. Thus, religious universals may parallel cultural universals and cross-religious differences reflect cross-cultural differences in, for instance, self-concepts, emotions, or values. On the other hand, religion and culture may *transcend* each other. Religion complements, compensates, or changes culture, and culture complements, compensates, or changes religion. At some point, religions may become subcultures or countercultures, and cultures may become quasi-religious alternatives.

A cross-cultural psychologist is particularly interested in the following basic, preliminary question: Do religious differences indeed *explain* cultural differences? Is religion a *sui generis* category worthy of being studied on its own, or do religious influences on cultural differences simply reflect the role of socioeconomic factors and value differences among individuals and societies?

The answer to this question is affirmative. Saucier et al. (2015), analyzing data from 33 countries on almost 50 psychological variables, found that the largest differences between countries did not involve constructs most frequently emphasized in cross-cultural psychology such as values, social axioms, or cultural tightness but instead primarily involved religion and secondarily involved regularity norm behaviors, family roles and

living arrangements, and ethno-nationalism. The authors concluded that "if a cross-cultural psychologist wishes to focus on variables that generate strong differences between populations, one good strategy is to focus on beliefs connected to religion (or the metaphysical), and especially on practices and behaviors that reflect the everyday impact of religion on persons" (p. 63). Similarly, when it comes to cross-cultural differences, specifically for self-construal, Vignoles et al. (2016) found that cultural groups emphasize different ways of being both independent and interdependent, depending on (1) individualism-collectivism and (2) national socioeconomic development, but also on (3) religious heritage—that is, the cultural group's Protestant, Catholic, Christian Orthodox, Muslim, or Buddhist tradition.

In sum, understanding religion is essential, both theoretically and empirically, to understand cultures, and vice versa. A major area of the religion × culture interaction is individuals' perception, within their society, of who they are and what they ought to do.

A Focus on Cross-Cultural Research on Religion and Related Morality

Cross-cultural research on religion has a long and decent past, but has exploded in the past 15 years. It simply becomes impossible, even by focusing only on the past 10–15 years of research, to present a thorough review of the empirical literature within a single chapter, taking into consideration all the cognitive, emotional, moral, and relational-social dimensions of the religion × culture interaction as well as the various outcomes of this interaction across all life domains, from development through health, to social behavior. For a broad global picture on the cross-cultural psychological research on religion in general, the reader may consult earlier introductions (Cohen, 2009; Saroglou & Cohen, 2011) and reviews (Saroglou, 2003; Saroglou & Cohen, 2013; see also Norenzayan, 2016; Wilson, Hartberg, Lanman, & Whitehouse, 2017, for an evolutionary perspective; and Belzen, 2010, Belzen & Lewis, 2010, for qualitative approaches).

For the purposes of this chapter, I focus on one major area of cross-cultural research on religion: the relationship of religion and religiousness with morality across cultures, and I review primarily research from the past 15 years. This choice was made for several reasons. First, as suggested earlier, religions' impact on beliefs- and norms-based behavior seems primordial for understanding cultural differences (Saucier et al., 2015). Similarly, knowing how culture influences religious morality might be of primary importance for acquiring a more general understanding of religious differences: the dimensions of religion other than morality (i.e., beliefs, rituals, and group belonging) also have strong moral connotations (Saroglou, 2014). Moreover, in the increased empirical work on religion and culture in the past 15 years, morality is one of the two thematic areas in which researchers have shown the greatest interest; the other is well-being. Furthermore, by focusing on morality, this chapter aims to be unique with respect to previous reviews on

religion and culture.[1] Finally, the harmonious coexistence of different cultural groups in today's globalized world often seems to be undermined by heated moral divides that interfere with various domains such as politics, legislation, or education. It is thus important to dedicate a chapter to the cross-cultural psychological dimensions of the ways religion relates to and influences morality (see also Chapter 10 by Joan G. Miller, Matthew Wice, and Namrata Goyal on culture and morality).

"Causal" Status of the Religion × Morality × Culture Links

Before describing the chapter's structure and major themes, it is useful to clarify the basic question of the causal—or not—character of the links between religion and morality, and of the role of culture. First, strictly speaking, it is *not* religion that *creates* or, more precisely, *founds*, morality. People's, even children's, morality exists partly independently from religion, and children, not only adults, can question religion in the name of moral values (Turiel & Neff, 2000). However, religion *shapes* morality across cultures in several ways: it (1) imposes additional values and norms to universal, across cultures, moral principles; (2) elaborates anthropological micro-theories (e.g., a fetus is a human person) that aim to orient universal values toward more narrow domains (e.g., attitudes regarding abortion; Turiel & Neff, 2000); (3) sustains morality through a powerful integrated set of beliefs, rituals, and group authorities; and (4) emphasizes specific hierarchies between values, which may or may not parallel those of the dominant culture (Saroglou, 2014).

Second, culture, that is, cultural aspects other than religion *shapes* religion's relationships with morality. Cultural psychological characteristics and differences on key domains such as self-construal, cognition, emotion, values, and interpersonal and intergroup relations influence (explain or moderate) how religiosity is expressed and how it impacts morality. Similarly, specific characteristics of cultural groups and societies, such as socioeconomic status and development, ethnic and religious diversity, degree of secularization, system of governance, language, and juridical and philosophical traditions, may also shape (explain or moderate) religion's moral outcomes.

Chapter Structure

In this chapter, I review cross-cultural research from the past 15 years on the way religiosity and religion relate to various aspects of morality—all major domains that people, universally or not, may characterize as relevant for moral judgment. This will include both the interpersonal and non-interpersonal (self- or society-related domains

1. For themes other than morality, the reader may consult specific reviews on cross-cultural psychology of religion as applied to specific major psychological domains such as mental health (Loewenthal, 2007), personality (Saroglou, 2017), development (Holden & Vittrup, 2010; Trommsdorff & Chen, 2012), and emotions (Tsai, Koopman-Holm, Miyazaki, & Ochs, 2013). It is also important, for cross-cultural psychology, to mention acculturation (Saroglou & Cohen, 2013). There also exist reviews of research on the psychology of non-Christian religionists, such as Buddhists (Kristeller & Rapgay, 2013), Hindus (Tarakeshwar, 2013), Jews (Cohen, Gorvine, & Gorvine, 2013), and Muslims (Abu-Raiya, 2013); see also, for an edited volume, Kim-Prieto (2014).

of morality). More precisely, I examine both *universals* (features that hold across religions and cultures) and cultural *specifics* (aspects that differ as a function of religions, cultures, and cultural/societal factors) regarding the way religiosity and religion relate to (1) homosexuality, (2) (herero)sexuality, (3) fertility, marriage, family, and parenting, (4) work (job preferences and work ethic) and economy, (5) prosociality, at both the interpersonal and the societal spheres, and (6) citizenship (support for democracy, civic engagement, pro-environmental attitudes, and honesty) (see Chapter 1 by Walter J. Lonner, Kenneth D. Keith, and David Matsumoto for a historical perspective of the study of universals and culture specifics).

Within each of these sections, the literature review will emphasize evidence from international data, allowing us to disentangle the effects at the individual level from effects at the collective level. More precisely, as far as the religion × culture interaction is concerned, one must distinguish between (1) *individual religiosity*, mostly making distinction between believers and nonbelievers—or between different ways of being religious—both within and across cultures; (2) individuals' *religious denomination* (affiliation to specific religious traditions or groups, both within and across cultures); (3) *societies' religious "heritage"* (countries or world regions of Protestant, Catholic, Orthodox, Muslim, Hindu or Buddhist tradition or past); and (4) other *countries' religious characteristics*, mainly the mean level of religiousness versus secularization and degree of religious diversity, which may parallel or complement the role of other country-level characteristics (e.g., socioeconomic development).

In addition, some key comparative studies, and in particular experimental studies that provide methodologically sound information on the "causal" role of religion and/or culture, will also be examined. Moreover, in all chapter sections, a summary will succinctly synthesize the many individual findings of the studies reviewed within each section. Finally, the chapter will close by offering an integrative synthesis and discussion of the deeper explanatory mechanisms of the religious morality × culture interaction.

Homosexuality

Moral condemnation of homosexuality across religions has been pervasive. Does this translate today into religious intolerance of homosexuality and homosexual persons, and, if yes, is it to the same degree across cultures and religions? Is religious homophobia a simple translation of cultural conservatism, or does religion have a unique and causal role? Do cultural changes in values and related attitudes toward homosexuality influence respective religious attitudes? This section will deal with these questions.

Individual Religiosity Across Cultures

Numerous studies in recent years have focused on religion and attitudes toward homosexuality by analyzing large international datasets, most often from various waves of the

World Values Study (WVS), the European Values Study (EVS), and the European Social Survey (ESS) (see Table 22.1 for a list of these studies). Each of these analyses has typically included many dozens of countries and many thousands of participants.

Consistently across all of these studies, individual religiosity is found to predict low tolerance of homosexuality and to do so across countries and across world regions, including Western, secular Europe. This is the case with various measures of religiosity, that is, self-identifying as religious, considering religion to be important in one's life, religious attendance, and belief in God, thus, not only with religious fundamentalism or religious orthodoxy, orientations known to typically reflect high authoritarianism and conservatism.

Moreover, religiosity predicts all forms of intolerance of homosexuality; that is, certainly in legal terms (opposing gay rights, marriage, and adoption), but also in moral terms (considering homosexuality to be wrong and unjustifiable), and even in social terms (low acceptance of homosexuals as neighbors or as free to live their lives). In some analyses, the link between religiosity and low social tolerance of homosexuals is weaker if not nonexistent (Hoffarth, Hodson, & Molnar, 2018, Study 2). Similarly, in Western Europe, whereas religious attendance and belief in the superiority of one's own religion predict both moral and social intolerance of homosexuals, the belief in God (a devotional aspect of religiousness) predicts only a moral but not a social intolerance of homosexuals (Doebler, 2015).

Importantly, the role of individual religiosity with regard to homophobia seems unique. The effect remains even after controlling for sociodemographic variables, including religious denomination, but also relevant individual characteristics such as income (Jäckle & Wenzelburger, 2015; Malka, 2014), conservatism in values and political orientation (Donaldson, Handren, & Lac, 2017; Hoffarth et al., 2018), endorsement of traditional gender roles (Adamczyck & Cheng, 2015; Janssen & Scheepers, 2018), and intelligence (Souza & Cribari-Neto, 2015).

Cross-Religious Differences and Country-Level Influences

Are all religions equally "homophobic"? Several of the studies mentioned in Table 22.1 offer comparisons between religions in terms of (1) mean level comparisons between religionists of different denominations; (2) comparisons, between denominations, of the association between individual religiosity and homonegative attitudes; and (3) comparisons between countries/world regions of different religious heritages, in particular after controlling for other relevant between-country socioeconomic differences (see, in particular, for the world: Adamczyk & Cheng, 2015; Hoffarth et al., 2018; Jäckle & Wenzelburger, 2015; Malka, 2014; and, for Europe: Doebler, 2015; Hooghe & Meeusen, 2013).

Beyond the key difference between religious believers and nonbelievers, the latter being typically more accepting of homosexuals, these studies generally show a rather consistent rank order on antigay attitudes between religions (see also Figure 22.1). Muslims,

TABLE 22.1 International and Experimental Studies on Religion and Attitudes Toward Homosexuality

Studies	Data-Base	Country/ies	Religious Measure	Homophobia Measure	Control Variables	Country-Level Moderators
			INTERNATIONAL STUDIES			
Adamczyk & Cheng (2015)	WVS	47 countries	Importance of religion; religious denomination	Homosexuality never justified	Traditional gender role	Confucian, Buddhist, or Asian country
Adamczyk & Pitt (2009)	WVS	33 countries	Importance of religion; religious denomination	Never justified	Birth cohort	Survival vs. self-expression values (mean)
Clobert et al. (2014, Study 1)	ISSP	Japan South Korea Taiwan	Religiosity: Buddhists, Taoists, vs. Christians	Homosexual relations are wrong		
Doebler (2015)	EVS	43 countries	Religious attendance, belief in God, religious denomination	Never justified No neighbors	Country's corruption, inequality	Western vs. Eastern Europe Mean religiosity
Donaldson et al. (2017)	ESS	28 countries	Being religious	Gay, lesbians free to live their lives	Values, political orientation	Liberal vs. conservative countries
Hoffarth et al. (2018, Study 2)	WVS ESS other	97 countries	Religious attendance; religious denomination	Moral, societal acceptance	Fundamentalist political orientation	Mean gay rights recognition
Hooghe & Meeusen (2013)	ESS	29 countries	Being religious; religious attendance; religious denomination	Gay, lesbians free to live their lives		
Jäckle & Wenzelburger (2015)	WVS	79 countries	God's importance Intrinsic/ extrinsic; religious; religious denomination	Never justified No neighbors	Income	(Ex)Communist countries
Janssen & Scheepers (2018)	WVS	55 countries	Religiosity; Religious denomination, attendance, particularism	Never justified	Income Authoritarianism Traditional gender role	
Malka (2014)	WVS	57 countries	Religiosity; religious denomination	Never justified	Wealth	Religious heritage

(*continued*)

TABLE 22.1 Continued

Studies	Data-Base	Country/ies	Religious Measure	Homophobia Measure	Control Variables	Country-Level Moderators
Souza & Cribari-Neto (2015)	WVS	52 countries		Never justified	Intelligence, Income	Religious diversity Muslim vs. non-Muslim countries % of nonbelievers
van den Akker et al. (2013)	ESS	20 countries	Being religious; religious attendance; religious denomination	Gays, lesbians free to live their lives		Mean religiosity
EXPERIMENTAL STUDIES						
Batson et al. (1999)		US	Intrinsic religiosity	Help a gay for pro-gay vs. neutral goal		
Blogowska et al. (2013)		Belgium	Religiosity	Antigay aggression		
Clobert et al. (2015, Study 1)		Belgium, France	Buddhist primes, on Buddhists	Sociomoral, political gay acceptance		
Jackson and Esses (1997, Study 1)		Canada	Fundamentalism	Helping a gay vs. non-gay unemployed	Attribution of responsi-bility	
Labouff et al. (2012)		Netherlands	Church context priming	Thermometer attitude toward gays, lesbians		
Ramsay et al. (2014)		Singapore	Buddhist, Christian primes	Thermometer attitude toward gays, lesbians		
Rowatt et al. (2006)		US	Fundamentalism; religious orthodoxy	Implicit and explicit attitude toward gays	RWA Social desirability	
Yilmaz et al. (2016)		Turkey	Muslim primes	Thermometer attitude toward gays, lesbians	RWA	

WVS, World Values Study; ISSP, International Social Survey Programme; EVS, European Values Study; ESS, European Social Survey; RWA, Right-wing Authoritarianism.

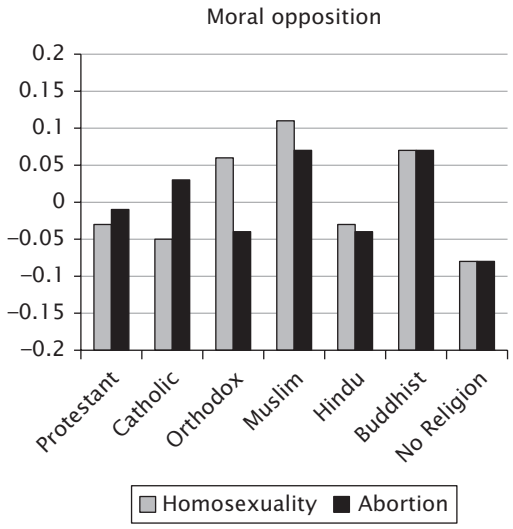

FIGURE 22.1 Differences across religious affiliations on moral opposition (from 1 = *never justifiable*; to 10 = *always justifiable*) to homosexuality and abortion, corrected for national and household wealth. Data are from the World Values Survey wave 5 (2005–2008; 57 nations). Opinions were first coded to range from 0 to 1, with higher scores signifying opposition and then regressed on the natural log of the respondent's nation's gross domestic product (GDP) per capita at purchasing power parity and the respondent's household income decile within his or her nation. The figure displays the residual scores from this analysis, representing the degree to which a religious group's negative opinion is higher versus lower than predicted based on national and household wealth. Figure adapted with permission from Malka (2014, figure 11.2, p. 239). Taylor and Francis, 2014.

possibly due to both religious and cultural characteristics of the respective countries, are located at the high end of the homophobia continuum.[2] Orthodox Christians follow, located between Muslims and the other Western Christians. Given the similarly Christian theology of the Orthodox, this relatively high rank may be justified by historical reasons: a communist, sexually conservative past for the East European Orthodox and the long co-existence with Muslims for the Mediterranean Orthodox Christians. Similarly, Muslims and, to some extent, Orthodox Christians, rather than Catholics and Protestants, tend to show not only moral but also social intolerance of homosexuals (Doebler, 2015). Catholics and Protestants are most often in the middle of this ranking, with Catholics and/or conservative Protestants sometimes exhibiting less tolerance of homosexuals than mainstream (European) Protestants—otherwise, Catholics are generally less homophobic than Protestants. In most studies (but see Malka, 2014, for an exception), Hindus come next (but see Janssen & Scheepers, 2018), and, at the low end of this "ranking," one can find Buddhists who often are close to nonbelievers on this issue. (Jews are not highly

2. The strong homophobia within Islam, the strongest compared to all other religions, may explain why Western Europeans, though they generally do not discriminate a Muslim target compared to a Christian one when helping for a morally neutral cause, were found to discriminate the Muslim target by helping him or her less compared to the Christian when both targets planned to participate in an anti-gay rights rally (van der Noll, Saroglou, Latour, & Dolezal, 2018).

numerous within and across countries; thus, their ranking position on religious morality is not highly consistent across studies.)

Buddhists' attitudes toward homosexuality are not consistent across studies and may greatly depend on or interfere with the cultural context. Across the world, Buddhists may show stronger homophobic attitudes than nonbelievers (Hoffarth et al., 2018, Study 2) and even stronger homophobic attitudes than Christians if we control for national and household wealth (Malka, 2014). But in European countries, where most Buddhists are converts, they are tolerant of homosexuals (as are Jews), and their tolerance is equal to that of nonbelievers (Hoffarth et al., 2018, Study 2). Moreover, religiosity of Buddhists in East Asian countries (Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan) has been found to predict weaker or null antigay attitudes compared to Catholics and Protestants living in the same countries (Clobert, Saroglou, Hwang, & Soong, 2014; but see Xie & Peng, 2018, for a study in China where Christian beliefs too do not predict homophobia). Finally, in an attempt to disentangle religious effects from other cultural effects at the country level, Adamczyk and Cheng (2015) found that Confucian societies are less tolerant of homosexuality than are European and American societies, and this cannot be reduced to a regional Asian effect. However, a higher proportion of Buddhists contributes to more tolerance.

Finally, other country-level religious characteristics shape societies' (in)tolerance of homosexuality, and several country-level features moderate the relationship of individual religiosity with homonegativity. Societies that are more secular and more religiously diverse show, at the country level, a higher mean tolerance of homosexuality, both in legal/moral and social terms (Souza & Cribari-Neto, 2015; van den Akker, van der Ploeg, & Scheepers, 2013). This effect persists beyond the role of other indicators of societal development such as low perceived corruption and income inequality (Doebler, 2015).

However surprisingly at first glance, the more liberal a society is, endorsing values of self-expression rather than survival values and demonstrating tolerance by recognizing gay rights, the stronger the association between individual religiosity and the intolerance of homosexuality becomes. Inversely, the religiosity–homophobia link is weaker in size in conservative and religious societies, where homophobia is high (Adamczyck & Pitt, 2009; Donaldson et al., 2017; Hoffarth et al., 2018, Study 2). A similar contrast is observed between Western and Eastern postcommunist Europe, with the former showing statistically stronger links between antigay attitudes and individual religiosity (Doebler, 2015).

How can these findings be interpreted? In liberal, self-expressive values-oriented societies, variation in moral positions increases. This variation reflects nonbelievers' more tolerant positions rather than the religious becoming more conservative: the religious simply "persist." Variation in religiosity also increases. Consequently, religious ideology offers resources to fuel moral opposition to liberal morality in a context where traditional, cultural homophobia is increasingly reduced. Finally, as suggested by Hoffarth et al. (2018, Studies 4 and 5; see also Batson, Floyd, Meyer, & Winner, 1999; Blogowska, Saroglou, & Lambert, 2013, Study 2), the endorsement of religious rhetoric on the sinner–sin distinction ("love the sinner, hate the sin") typically applied to homosexual

persons may contribute to legitimize and maintain religious antigay prejudice within liberal societies.

Experimental Evidence Across Cultures

The preceding evidence on religiosity and the low tolerance of homosexuality across the world is correlational, with attitudes toward homosexual people being measured through self-reports. Thus, one could counterargue that this self-report–based evidence is only a translation of moral de-consideration and does not result in real prejudice. However, experimental studies (see Table 22.1) confirm the existence of antigay prejudice also in terms of implicit attitudes and behavioral discrimination and hostility among highly religious participants, at least in Western cultural contexts of the Christian tradition (e.g., Batson et al., 1999, United States; Blogowska et al., 2013, Study 2, Belgium; Jackson & Esses, 1997, Canada; Rowatt, Tsang, Kelly, Lamartina, & Mccullers, 2006, United States).

Additional experimental studies confirm some "causal role" of religion in implicitly activating prejudice against sexual minorities. This has been attested in various cultural contexts: when passengers were approached by the experimenter in front of a (Christian) church vs. a neutral place (LaBouff, Rowatt, Johnson, & Finkle, 2012, the Netherlands), when students were primed with Muslim words (Yilmaz, Karadöller, & Sofuoglu, 2016, Turkey), and when Christian and Buddhist Chinese students were primed with, respectively, Christian and Buddhist concepts (Ramsay, Pang, Shen, & Rowatt, 2014, Singapore). However, in another study, Buddhist concepts subtly presented to Belgian and French Buddhists (who were mostly converts) activated more positive attitudes toward gay people in comparison to neutral primes (Clobert, Saroglou, & Hwang, 2015, Study 1).

Summary

The religious condemnation of homosexuality as immoral translates, consistently across religions and countries, into associations between personal religiosity—both belief and practice and not only fundamentalism—and low tolerance of homosexuality and people with alternative sexual orientations. This is certainly the case in moral/legal terms, but often also in terms of mere social tolerance. Even implicit exposure to religious ideas—certainly Christian and Muslim and possibly Buddhist ideas—automatically activates antigay prejudice. Very likely because of the specific religious teachings, the religiosity's effect on the low tolerance of gays and lesbians is unique and additional to the effects that sociopolitical conservatism and low socioeconomic status have on such low tolerance. For both religious and other cultural reasons, Muslim individuals and countries are the most intolerant of homosexuals, Eastern Orthodox Christianity lies between Islam and Western Christianity, and Buddhism seems to be located at the low end of the religious antigay prejudice continuum.

At the country level, higher secularism and religious diversity predict a higher mean tolerance of homosexuals. However, in terms of the individual × country-level interaction, whereas in traditional societies and those with a recent communist past (East

Europe) both homonegativity and religiosity are highly normative and their relationship is statistically weaker, the role of religiosity in predicting homonegativity becomes stronger in liberal Western societies. In these societies, self-expressive values allow for higher individual variability in moral attitudes and more conservative reactions against modernity and the religious rhetoric of the sinner–sin distinction serves to legitimize sexual discrimination. However, in these liberal societies, Catholics and mainstream Protestants tend to explicitly express intolerance of homosexuals more clearly in moral/legal terms, for instance through opposition to gay marriage and adoption, and less so in social/personal terms. The preceding findings suggest some internal changes within Western Christianity as it "acculturates" into modernity. Nevertheless, even in such liberal contexts of Christian tradition, religious homonegativity still translates into antigay prejudice and behavior.

(Hetero)sexuality

Why does individual religiosity so pervasively across religions and cultures imply the condemnation of homosexuality and a low tolerance of people of minority sexual orientation? Why is this also the case in liberal societies, which are aware of scientific evidence showing that sexual orientation is determined, at least in part, by genetic and biological dispositions? One possibility is that the intolerance of homosexuality exemplifies, to the highest degree, both a religious mistrust of sexuality in general and the religious emphasis on fertility and family. As will be shown in this and the next sections, religion implies a preference for sexuality that is hygienic, restrictive, and oriented toward survival and fertility. Similarly, religion implies a preference for family-related values and practices that restrict sexuality and intra-sex competition and the related risk for violence and that maximize investment in offspring (see Freud, 1927/1961; Kirkpatrick, 2005; Weeden, Cohen, & Kenrick, 2008; Weeden & Kurzban, 2013). These objectives are facilitated by religion's emphasis on relevant moral emotions (e.g., guilt, disgust), values/norms (e.g., sublimation, low consideration of hedonism, disapproval of divorce and abortion), beliefs (e.g., women–men differentiation and inequality), and practices (e.g., low premarital and extramarital sex, preference for religious and ethnic homogamy, investment in children). Note that the conflicting links between religion and sexuality are bidirectional, with sexuality also diminishing, experimentally and longitudinally, religious and spiritual aspirations (Rigo, Uzarevic, & Saroglou, 2016; Vasilenko & Lefkowitz, 2014).

In this section, I examine recent empirical evidence allowing us to answer a series of questions. Is the historical religious mistrust toward (hetero)sexuality still present in attitudes and behaviors, even in liberal and secular societies? Is restrictive sexuality as a function of individual religiosity present across religions and cultures? Are there cross-religious and cross-cultural differences in religious restrictive sexuality? Do the

underlying explanatory emotions, values, and beliefs play a role cross-culturally, or are they present only in some religious and cultural contexts?

Individual Religiosity Across Cultures

There is strong cross-cultural evidence that religiosity relates to restrictive sociosexuality, as well as to relevant values (low consideration of hedonism), moral emotions (guilt and disgust), and beliefs (gender inequality).

Schmitt and Fuller (2015) analyzed data from 56 nations (gathered in 10 world regions) from the International Sexuality Description Project. The study included a measure of *sociosexual orientation* tapping *restrictive versus liberal* sexual attitudes, desires, and behaviors, as well as a measure of *short-term mating* interests (desired number of partners, time to consent to sex with someone who is desirable, and short-term mate seeking). Across all but one (East Asia) of the world regions, self-identification as religious was negatively related to liberal sociosexuality as well as to short-term mating interests. This was the case for both men and, slightly more strongly, for women, for various age groups, and in world regions of both Christian (Americas, Europe) and non-Christian dominant heritage (Middle East, Africa, Oceania, and South/Southeast Asia).

Sexual desire and satisfaction is a major motivation to have sex. *Hedonism*, defined by Schwartz as pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself, can be considered a core motivating value for sexual interest. Religiosity is typically found to imply a low consideration of hedonism, and the evidence is strong (religion's association with hedonism is second in strength only to its association with the value of tradition) and consistent across studies, cultures, religions, genders, and age groups (Roccas & Elster, 2014, a review of 28 studies; Saroglou, Delpierre, & Dernelle, 2004, a meta-analysis of 15 studies; Schwartz, 2012, an analysis of ESS data from 33 countries).

Moreover, endorsing the moral foundation of *disgust–purity* sustains attitudes and behaviors typical of restrictive sexuality (Koleva, Graham, Iyer, Ditto, & Haidt, 2012). Religious people across cultures have been found to highly endorse this moral foundation (Azadmanjier & Khalili, 2017, Iran; Bulbulia, Osborn, & Sibley, 2013, New Zeeland; Deak & Saroglou, 2016, Belgium; Koleva et al., 2012, United States; Nilsson, Erlandsson, & Västfjäll, 2016, Sweden; Yalçındağ et al., 2017, Turkey). In addition, *sexual guilt* undermines sexual desire and behavior. Specifically, sexual guilt has been found to be related to religiosity and to partly mediate the relationship between religiosity and restricted sexual desire, attitudes, and behaviors. This was the case with different cultural groups within the same country: Euro Canadian and East Asian female students in Canada (Woo, Morshedian, Brotto, & Gorzalka, 2012) and Christian and Muslim men and women in Belgium (Rigo & Saroglou, in press).

A subtle explanatory factor of the link between religiosity and restricted sociosexuality could be *gender inequality* and, relatedly, strong gender differentiation, the latter known to sustain sexism (Glick & Fiske, 2001). Most of the cultural and religious restrictions in norms related to sexuality, marriage, and family target women more

strongly than men. Using international data from multiple sources, Schnabel (2016) found that, even when accounting for a country's human development and gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, gender equality is lower in more religious countries—differences between Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism were smaller than the differences between the religious and the nonreligious. Moreover, priming religious ideas increases subtle sexism even in Western countries of Catholic and Protestant tradition (Haggard, Kaelen, Saroglou, Klein, & Rowatt, 2018: see also Chapter 9 by Deborah L. Best and Angelica R. Puzio on culture and gender).

Country-Level Influences and Cross-Religious Differences

As it will be developed below, there is suggestive evidence that country-level variables may moderate the religiosity–restrictive sociosexuality association. More importantly, religions differ in the degree and the extent to which they imply restrictive sociosexuality, resulting in a kind of rank order similar to that found for religious homonegativity. Finally, experimental and other research shows meaningful behavioral differences between religionists of different religions when confronted with sexual "temptation."

In line with evidence reviewed in the previous section showing that the link between religiosity and homonegativity becomes statistically stronger in liberal and secular countries, Jung (2015; WVS data, 47 countries) found that low approval of *premarital sex* is related to religious attendance and religious importance but that the association is stronger in countries with higher GDP per capita (Jung, 2015). These countries are most often the more liberal ones. This moderating finding again reflects the greater variability in individual differences in morality in societies animated by self-expressive values and, as Jung (2015) suggests, the functional differentiation of religious believers confronted with secularization.

The preceding study, plus a study on reported behavior of premarital and extramarital sex (Adamczyk & Hayes, 2012; 31 countries, data from the 2012 Demographic and Health Survey) and the previously mentioned study by Schnabel (2016) on gender equality, together provide evidence favoring the idea that Islam, compared to other religions, implies the most conservative attitudes toward premarital and extramarital sexuality, as well as the lowest endorsement of gender equality (Hindus are equally low in premarital and extramarital sex). Importantly, earlier age of marriage, restrictions on women's mobility, and a country's human development do not explain the highest scores of Muslims on these attitudes and behaviors. Across the world, Christians, then Jews, and finally Buddhists come after Muslims in the rank order of religions regarding their opposition to premarital sex (Adamczyk & Hayes, 2012). This evidence confirms Norris and Inglehart's (2004) point that the divide between Islam and the West essentially concerns gender-, sexuality-, and family-related norms.

There may be one exception to this pattern. Islam is considered to favor *intramarital sexuality*, at least to a greater degree than do other religions, possibly, even if not only, due to the very high value that Islam places on fertility. Interestingly, comparing participants

of Christian and Muslim traditions living in Belgium, Rigo and Saroglou (in press) found meaningful similarities. In both groups, religiosity was associated with strong sex guilt and disgust–purity and low disinhibition and sexual fantasy across genders and marital statuses, and this in turn predicted a low frequency of heterosexual behavior among *single* people. However, religiosity was related to low sexual desire and a low frequency of intramarital sexuality only among Christians but not among *married* Muslims.

Finally, there seem to be interesting cross-religious differences in the management of sexual "temptations." First, Protestants moralize transgressive thoughts, including sexual ones, more than do Jews. Using hypothetical scenarios, Cohen (2003, Study 3; Cohen & Rozin, 2001, Studies 2 and 4) found that US Jews and Protestants consider having a sexual affair as immoral, but Protestants, more than Jews, report even the mere thought of having a possible sexual affair as immoral. This was not limited to sexuality since Protestants also highly moralized thoughts in other hypothetical scenarios involving cheating on an exam, disrespect of parents, and cruelty to animals. This is because Protestants more strongly perceive thoughts to be controllable (Cohen, 2003, Study 2; Cohen & Rozin, 2001, Studies 1 and 3).

Second, Kim, Zeppenfeld, and Cohen (2013) argued that if Protestants perceive bad thoughts as immoral more than people of other religions do, they may be particularly prone to adopt the defense mechanism of sublimation. *Sublimation* is a process by which people take forbidden or suppressed emotions and desires and channel them by displacing them in a nonconscious way toward productive, often creative, ends. Kim et al. (2013; see also Cohen, Kim, & Hudson, 2014; see also Figure 22.2) indeed found that, compared to US Jews and Catholics, Protestants are more prone to choosing creative careers and accomplishing creative achievements if they had, earlier in their lives, experienced major problems related to anxieties about sexual depravity or taboo sexual behaviors. Similarly, when primed with damnation-related words or when induced to feel unacceptable sexual desires, Protestants produce more creative artwork in the lab.

Summary

Very likely in line with several evolutionary goals, across cultures and religions, men and women who are religious tend to endorse a restrictive sociosexuality: nonpermissive sexual desires and attitudes; low consideration of the value of hedonism; and avoidance of short-term mating, multiple partners, premarital and extramarital sex, and delay of the time to get married. Only for East Asians and/or Buddhists do these trends seem to apply in a very weak way. In addition, initial cross-cultural evidence suggests that religiosity largely implies high sexual guilt, disgust, and inhibition, as well as gender differentiation resulting in gender inequality. All of the preceding issues undermine sexuality in general and permissive sexuality in particular. As for homonegativity, the association between religiosity and restrictive sexuality is stronger in rich and liberal countries, probably due to the population's greater variation in moral positions in these countries.

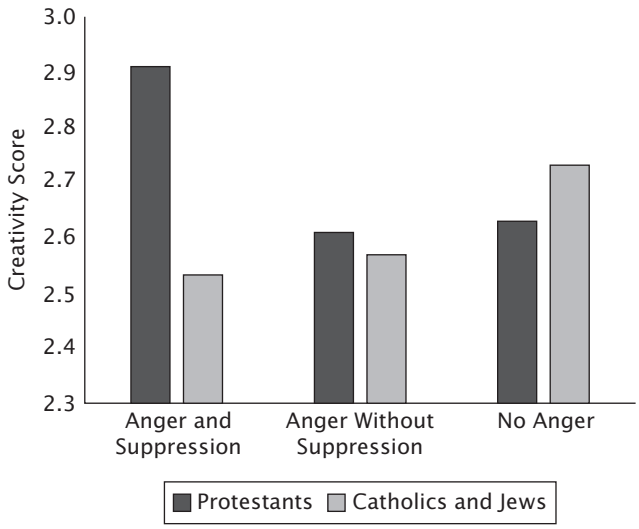

FIGURE 22.2 Sublimation among Protestants, compared to Catholics and Jews: mean combined creativity scores on sculpture-making, collage-making, and cartoon-captioning tasks as a function of participants' religious group and condition (whether participants had to recall an anger-provoking incident and then suppress it, recall an anger-provoking incident but suppress a neutral thought, or not recall an anger-provoking incident and suppress a neutral thought). Reprinted with permission from Cohen, 2014.

Even after controlling for socioeconomic variables, Muslims, and to some extent Hindus, compared to Christians, Jews, and Buddhists, show stronger acceptance of gender inequality and inhibition of extramarital sexuality, but their religiosity may not affect their intramarital sexuality. US Protestants, compared to Jews and/or Catholics, seem particularly affected by sexual thoughts, and not only acts, by considering such thoughts to be controllable and thus immoral and by adopting as a defense mechanism sublimation through creativity (see also Chapter 3 by Peter B. Smith for discussion of the cultural dimension known as Masculinity).

Fertility, Marriage, and Parenting

The religious preference for a long-term mating strategy also implies the promotion of fertility and does so intramaritally to favor long-term parental investment in the offspring. Intramarital sexuality, oriented to procreation and marriage stability, diminishes the risk of disease, increases the quality of offspring, and solidifies long-term parenting. Religiosity thus should promote fertility, marital over single and childless statuses, marital stability, and parental investment of resources in children. Consequently, religiosity should imply the disapproval of divorce and abortion.

Beyond evolutionary explanations, a positive association between religiosity and fertility can be understood from several other perspectives. Given the critical role of family socialization for later religiosity in adulthood, a large number of children translates

into many future religionists. This is important for the maintenance and growth of the religious group in which a great number of followers may compensate the unverifiability of beliefs, especially in the context of "market competition" between various religious groups. Moreover, investing in children's education is a means to canalize sexual desire, hedonism, and self-interest and to focus attention on other-oriented goals more in line with the religious ideal. In addition, transmitting religious values and ideals to the younger generation contributes to religion's ambition for the moral transformation of individuals and societies. Finally, high gender differentiation, valued in traditional religious teachings, may contribute to fertility since religious mothers are expected to dedicate much of their time and resources to childrearing.

Are the links between religiosity, on one hand, and, on the other hand, fertility and parental investment in children (including the disapproval of divorce and abortion) present across cultures and religions? Are there cross-religious differences and country-level moderators of these links? Is there some tension between fertility (actual number of children) and parental investment in children (more children implying less resources for each child) across various religious and cultural contexts? Will religions' current fertility rates influence future cultural changes? In this section, I review research that provides some answers to these questions.

Religious Similarities Across Cultures

Analyses of international data confirm a positive association between religiosity and a high ideal number of children for both men and women and for both Catholics and Protestants (Adsera, 2006, 13 developed countries), as well as a high actual number of children for women across all Christian denominations (Frejka & Westoff, 2008, 15 European countries and the United States). Age, marital status, residence, education, and income do not substantially change the positive association of religiousness with fertility. Similarly, in South East Asia, Buddhists, Catholics, Protestants, and Muslims, but not Hindus, show higher fertility rates compared to the unaffiliated. This effect was present among couples of high or moderate, but not low, education status (de la Croix & Delavadalle, 2018; six countries). Finally, according to a Pew Research Center (2017) study on 70 world countries, the religiously unaffiliated (i.e., mostly the nonreligious) have a lower fertility rate (1.6 at the world level) compared to all religionists except Buddhists (the other religions ranged from 1.8 to 2.9 at the world level) and this holds true in all world regions (except Latin America).

Moreover, religionists of all major traditions (Catholics, Protestants, Christian Orthodox, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists) find abortion rather unjustifiable compared to those with no religious affiliation (i.e., mostly the nonreligious), and these differences remain even when controlling for national and household wealth (Malka, 2014, WVS, 57 countries; see also Figure 22.1). Interestingly, religious homogamy, known to be favored by religious individuals when deciding to get married (Sherkat, 2004), has been found to predict greater reproduction across most of the studied countries. This effect

was additional to the effect of individual religiousness and was stronger among more educated people (Fieder & Huber, 2016; 32 countries, various international data sources).

Finally, religiosity also predicts high investment in children across several religions. In the above-mentioned study on six South East Asian countries, de la Croix and Delavadalle (2018) found that, in addition to being *pro-birth* (i.e., placing more importance on the sole number of children), Buddhists, Catholics, and Muslims, compared to the unaffiliated, are also *pro-child*: parents place more importance on the number *and* quality (health and education) of children as opposed to their own consumption and savings. Catholicism showed the strongest pro-child attitudes and Islam the strongest pro-birth attitudes.

Note, however, that it is unclear whether religious parents' investment in children translates into positive outcomes for these children. In a unique multicountry longitudinal study of this question, Bornstein et al. (2017) examined religious parents' educational qualities and their short-term outcomes on children. Parent religiousness had mixed effects 1–2 years later: through higher parental efficacy, religiousness predicted children's social competence and school performance as well as fewer internalizing and externalizing problems. However, through higher parental control, religiousness predicted more child internalizing and externalizing problems. This pattern of results was rather similar for the four religions studied (Catholicism, Protestantism, Islam, and Buddhism) in the nine cultural contexts (China, Cambodia, Italy, Jordan, Kenya, Philippines, Sweden, Thailand, and the United States).

Country-Level Influences and Cross-Religious Differences

Among developed countries, the more secular and diverse a society, the lower the mean ideal number of children. However, as for homonegativity and restrictive sociosexuality (see the two previous sections), the association between religious practice and a high ideal number of children becomes stronger in secular and diverse societies (Adsera, 2006). Among developing countries, there are non-negligible differences between religions on fertility. As argued by Heaton (2011), these differences may reflect differences in beliefs and practices related to contraception, in attachment to the respective religious teachings, in socioeconomic development, and in the malleability to be influenced by social change.

Cross-Religious and Cultural Differences in Fertility

Analyzing data from 30 countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, Heaton (2011) indeed found that Muslim fertility is higher than Christian fertility in most countries, a difference that was greater at higher levels of development and educational achievement. Islam's emphasis on traditional family and gender roles may insulate Muslims from social changes associated with development. Catholics also had slightly higher fertility scores compared to Protestants. Level of education, type of residence, marriage timing, contraceptive use, and divorce rates only partially explained the Muslim–Christian difference and did not at all explain the Catholic–Protestant difference. These findings support the

possibility that the observed fertility differences can be explained by specific religious worldviews.

Buddhism seems to imply today particularly low fertility rates compared to the other religions. It has been argued that there are no clear and specific scriptural injunctions or formal codes of conduct on contraception in Buddhism, just as there are no moral prescriptions for procreation and sexuality is not associated with sin as in the monotheistic religions (Skirbekk et al., 2015). Indeed, in an analysis of data from six countries in the Asia-Pacific region, Buddhist affiliation or devotion did not predict high fertility when controlling for socioeconomic characteristics including education, residence, age, and marital status (but see, for opposite conclusions, de la Croix & Delavallade, 2018). Findings from the Pew Research Center (2017) study seem to confirm this idea since, worldwide as well as in Asia, fertility rates for Buddhists are low and similar to those of the nonaffiliated (see Figure 22.3).

Note also that there seems to be an interaction between religious denomination and world region/cultural context in predicting fertility rates. As indicated in the Pew Research Center (2017) study's detailed fertility rates by religion and by major world region (see Figure 22.3), the same religion (e.g., Judaism) may be associated with lower fertility rates in North America (1.8) than in Israel (2.7), which involves a demographically threatening Middle East context. Similarly, Christians and Muslims in Europe have lower

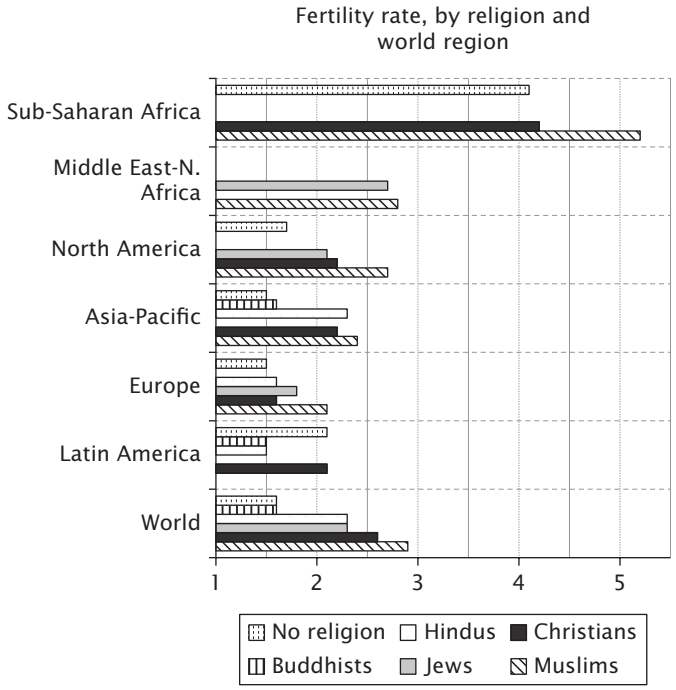

FIGURE 22.3 Fertility rate, by religion and major world region (2015–2020). Adapted with permission from Pew Research Center (2017, figure on p. 15). Folk religions and other religions are not included. Pew Research Center, 2017.

fertility rates (1.6 and 2.2) than they do in Africa (respectively, >4 and >5) obviously due to different societal norms.

Religious differences in fertility rates, also in comparison to the fertility rates of nonbelievers, may influence cultural changes in the near future. According to the Pew Research Center (2017) study, in 2015, the religiously unaffiliated constituted 16% of the world population; Christians were the majority (31.2%), and Islam was the second religion (24.1%), with Hinduism coming next (15.1%). Taking into account several estimators, mainly natural growth through births minus deaths, religious switching, and age and fertility by religious group, the study concludes that, with an estimated increase of the world population from 7.3 to 9.3 billion people, a very likely religious map of the world 50 years later (i.e., in 2060) will imply (1) a rather stable proportion of Christians (31.8%) and Hindus (14.5%), (2) a significant increase in the Muslim population (31.1%), and (3) a non-negligible decrease of the nonreligious/unaffiliated (12.5%). In sum, the world may become more religious and more morally conservative.[3]

Cross-Religious Differences on Abortion, Divorce, and Age of Marriage

Finally, other research has shown interesting cross-religious differences in variables of interest other than fertility such as abortion, divorce, and age of the first marriage. Regarding abortion, the hierarchy between religions becomes clearer after national wealth and household wealth are controlled for (Malka, 2014, WVS, 57 countries; see also Norris & Inglehart, 2004). Muslims show the strongest opposition, Buddhists follow, and then Christians and Hindus. Among Christians, it is the Catholics that show the strongest opposition to abortion, with the Orthodox showing the least opposition—but remember that the latter are the most opposing of homosexuality.

Within the United States, cross-religious differences have been documented for the rate of divorce as well as for the age of first marriage. Catholics have lower rates of divorce than Protestants (Teachman, 2002). The consequences of divorce are stronger for Catholics than Protestants in terms of both negative impact on well-being (Clark & Lelkes, 2005) and the "risk" for Catholics of exiting religion—Protestants shift religious denomination/group (Lawton & Bures, 2001). In addition, Catholics—possibly, I think out of prudence to avoid divorce—and Jews tend to marry for the first time at a later age than the do nonreligious. Mormons and Protestants, on the other hand, are more likely to marry earlier than the religiously unaffiliated (Lehrer, 2004)—possibly, I think, because premarital sexuality is strongly proscribed.

3. The percentage of unaffiliated will increase in the United States and only very slightly in Europe, but will decrease importantly in Asia and the Pacific; the percentage of Christians will continue to decrease in Europe and slightly in the Americas but will increase importantly in sub-Saharan Africa. The percentage of Muslims will remain stable in the West, decrease in Asia and the Pacific, and increase importantly in sub-Saharan Africa.

Summary

The religious preference for long-term reproductive strategies also implies positive associations between religiosity across countries and religions and a higher ideal and real fertility (with the possible exception of Buddhists), the preference for marriage and parenthood rather than single and childless statuses, the tendency not to postpone the age of marriage, religious homogamy, valuing intramarital fidelity, the disapproval of abortion and divorce, and a high parental investment in children. These effects seem specific to religiosity and are not reduced to socioeconomic differences and general conservatism.

Beyond this general trend, secularization and a country's socioeconomic development appear to decrease mean fertility rates but to increase the difference between believers and nonbelievers on fertility—this accentuates the possibility for the world to become more religious and conservative within the next 50 years. Moreover, beyond socioeconomic differences at the individual and collective levels, specific religious traditions continue to exert an independent influence on the strength of the endorsement of attitudes and behaviors related to marriage and parenting. Muslims place the strongest emphasis on fertility and anti-abortion attitudes, in particular in developing countries. Thus, Islam may become the largest religion in the world in the next 50 years. Catholics follow, with stronger disapproval of abortion and divorce compared to other Christians in general, and they are also more affected by (parental) divorce compared to Protestants, at least in the United States. Orthodox Christians are more tolerant of abortion and divorce compared to Western Christians. Buddhists and Hindus are less consistent in rank order, for instance, when one compares fertility (low position) and anti-abortion (higher position). Finally, there seems to be high variability between religions regarding the age of first marriage, possibly due to religious groups placing differential emphasis on the avoidance of divorce versus the disapproval of premarital relationships.

Work- and Economy-Related Morality

In this section, I examine how religion (individual religiosity, religious affiliation, and a country's religious heritage) affects people's values, attitudes, and behavior related to work and economy across cultures. Research in this area has been rather heterogenous in terms of themes, concepts, questions, methods, and sometimes findings. Part of the difficulty comes from the fact that, to my understanding, this research sometimes combines and mixes questions that can be organized under three distinct axes (see also Figure 22.4): valuing work, valuing wealth and free market versus nonmaterialism, and valuing social and income equality. As the reader will see, there is some universality in the way religion influences work-related attitudes and values. However, cultural factors and different religious heritages considerably shape religion's role with regard to economy- and money-related issues.

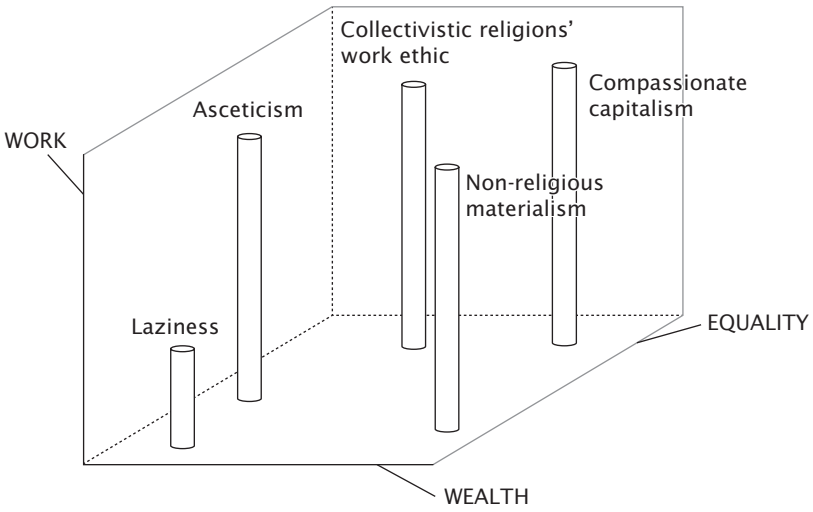

FIGURE 22.4 A proposed three-dimensional model allowing for the understanding of the interaction between religious valuing of (1) work, (2) wealth (and free market) versus non-materialism, and (3) income and social equality. Ascetic work ethic implies valuing work alone, but not wealth. Collectivistic religions' work ethic implies valuing work and equality. Capitalist work ethic implies valuing work and wealth. Modern "Protestant" work ethic implies compassionate capitalism (i.e., valuing work, wealth, and equality). From Vassilis Saroglou, 2018

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Specific themes that will be examined in this section are job preferences; organizational citizenship behavior; the ascetic "Protestant" work ethic, including some negative aspects of it; and economic attitudes toward wealth and free market and concerns for income and social equality. Methodologically, the studies reviewed here include surveys and analyses of large international data, as well as experiments.

To help the reader integrate the findings from the various studies, I suggest that the associations between religiosity and work- and economy-related moral issues can be seen as further outcomes of the basic personality characteristics of religion. Across cultures and religions, religiosity reflects, modestly but consistently, high agreeableness and conscientiousness—this also includes honesty and low impulsivity. Religiosity also reflects, to some extent, a preference for intuitive and holistic rather than analytic thinking. Cultural factors moderate the strength of these associations (Saroglou, 2015, 2017, for reviews).

Therefore, one should expect religiosity to be associated with work-related attitudes that denote (1) self-control, methodicalness, goal-orientation, and a willingness to accomplish what was planned, as well as (2) quality in interpersonal relationships and concerns for others' needs. Similarly, religiosity would not encourage an individualistic accumulation of wealth and materialism that fully neglects others' needs. However, it is less clear what happens when conscientiousness-related motives conflict with agreeableness-related motives. Would religiosity predict valuing wealth and a free market? These may increase resources for one's own family and society but may also not decrease—if not

increase—income and social inequality. This kind of conflict may explain why, overall, religiosity is unrelated if not slightly negatively related to the values of achievement and power (Roccas & Elster, 2014; Saroglou et al., 2004; Schwartz, 2012). These values, as operationalized in Schwartz's model, mix competence and personal, professional, and social success, on the one hand, with materialism, dominance over people, and a deconsideration of their needs, on the other hand.

Job Preferences and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Initial evidence suggests that, across various cultures, religiosity implies a preference for care-oriented fields of study and jobs, as well as responsible investment at the workplace. First, in an unpublished analysis (findings reported in Saroglou, 2012) of ESS Round 3 (2006–2007) data from 23 countries ($N = 43{,}000$), mean religiosity was highest and mean scores were above the midpoint of the scale among people who had chosen fields of study, and thus respective kinds of jobs, related to the care of others. These were "teaching, education," "personal care services," and "medical, health services, nursing etc." These fields indeed attract people who placed high value on (Schwartz's) benevolence. Inversely, the fields of study where mean religiosity was the lowest and below the midpoint of the scale were "technical and engineering" and "sciences, mathematics, computing etc." These domains are independent from prosocial concerns and involve high analytical thinking.

For the purposes of this chapter, I reanalyzed the same data distinctly by religious denomination. The discrepancy between the care-oriented study fields and jobs that attract people with, on average, higher religiosity, and study fields and jobs related to engineering and science, which attract people with, on average, low religiosity, was clearly confirmed for European Catholics, Protestants, and Christian Orthodox. Jews and Muslims were underrepresented for some study fields, making it impossible to draw comparative conclusions.

Second, some studies have used the construct of *organizational citizenship behavior*, defined as employee behavior supporting the social and psychological fabric of the organization. This construct comprises two other-oriented facets: (1) *interpersonal facilitation* (helping co-workers when needed) and (2) *organizational support* (supporting the organization even if it is undergoing hardships) and one self-directed facet (3) *job dedication* (dedication to perform work-related tasks above and beyond the call of duty). Overall, in these studies—where the positive associations, even when nonsignificant, are consistent—religiosity was positively associated with the global organizational citizenship behavior and all of its aspects. This was the case among Turkish factory employees in Turkey (Ersoy, Born, Derous, & van der Molen, 2011), Turkish employees in the Netherlands (Ersoy, Derous, Born, & van der Molen, 2015), US employees of various religions and ethnicities (Kutcher, Bragger, Rodriguez-Srednicki, & Masco, 2010), and Canadian students, mostly Caucasian/white Europeans, who consider the organizational citizenship behavior as intra-role rather than extra-role behavior (Kwantes, Karam, Kuo, & Towson, 2008). Even if based on self-reports, these findings may correspond to reality

if we consider the above-mentioned prosocial character of the study fields and jobs preferences which constitute real-life choices.

Valuing Work and Wealth: The "Protestant" Work Ethic

In social scientific research, the "Protestant work ethic" primarily denotes the intrinsic value given to hard work as an end in itself. Within a religious context, work becomes both a moral and a religious duty (see Furhnam, 2010, also for a discussion of alternative work ethics). On the basis of Weber's classic theory of Protestant work ethic as having contributed to capitalism, this construct has often been extended to include valuing the accumulation of gains and wealth and to economic preferences for free market versus economic regulation by the state. In these subsections, we will be careful to make clear distinctions between the work-as-intrinsic-value dimension and the pro-capitalist dimension of the so-called Protestant work ethic even if, in the original context of Weber's work, there may have been a genuine relationship between the Protestant *ascetic* work ethic and the spirit of capitalism.

Classic Surveys

Several surveys on single or few samples have used established self-reported multidimensional measures of the "Protestant work ethic." Overall, the major underlying factors that have been identified are (1) valuing and admiring *hard work* as being beneficial for a good life, (2) believing in *success* as a consequence of work, (3) suspicion toward and *mistrust of leisure*, and (4) *asceticism* that is, self-denial, self-discipline, and austerity, as opposed to self-indulgence and the pursuit of pleasure and immediate gratification (McHoskey, 1994; see also Furnham, 1990; Miller, Woehr, & Hudspeth, 2002).

Earlier reviews of such studies have concluded that there is no, or at least no longer, a remarkable Protestant–Catholic difference in work ethic. Individual religiosity is positively associated with the Protestant work ethic among Protestants but also among people from other religions (see, e.g., Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997; Hood, Hill, & Spilka, 2009). More recent studies corroborate the idea that other religions and spiritualities like Islam, Confucianism, and Eastern spirituality in general also imply strong endorsement of the Protestant work ethic (e.g., Zhang, Liu, & Liu, 2012; Zulfikar, 2012). There has also been an effort to conceptualize culturally distinct constructs like "Islamic," "Confucian," and "Buddhist" "work ethic(s)," but it seems premature to conclude today that these constructs are substantially, conceptually and empirically, different from the classic "Protestant work ethic."

Finally, in an early study on mostly Protestant and Catholic students in the United States, McHoskey (1994) found that religiosity, although positively related to the global score of the Protestant work ethic scale, was significantly related to the asceticism and anti-leisure components but not to the hard work and success factors. This distinction seems meaningful, but later studies failed to examine religiosity's distinct links with each of the scale's factors.

International Data Analyses

Three studies have analyzed large international datasets from various waves of the WVS (Dülmer, 2011; Hayward & Kemmelmeier, 2011; Norris & Inglehart, 2004). Not all studies have used exactly the same (number of) items. The WVS includes about 15 relevant items that Norris and Inglehart (2004) organized under three dimensions of work values: (1) *work as moral duty* (to society, against laziness, against wealth without effort), (2) *intrinsic benefits* from work for one's own personal and professional achievement, and (3) *material benefits* from work (i.e., comfortable conditions: job security, good pay, generous holidays, and no work pressure). Dülmer (2011) focused on only one dimension, that of valuing hard work (four items). Hayward and Kemmelmeier (2011) focused on one item measuring valuing work as a key factor, in the long run, of "better life" versus not valuing work since a better life is "an issue of luck and connections."

Two of these studies (Dülmer, 2011; Norris & Inglehart, 2004) showed that, to some extent surprisingly with respect to Weber's theory, the countries of Protestant tradition when compared to countries of Catholic, Muslim, and Hindu tradition are weaker on Protestant work ethic. The effect persists even after controlling for differences in human and political development between countries and for participants' sociodemographics, education, income, and religiosity. According to Norris and Inglehart (2004), these findings do not contradict Weber's theory. Protestant countries, having today attained economic prosperity partly thanks to the Protestant work ethic and related spirit of capitalism, no longer have reason to value hard work as strongly as people in poorer countries. They may even have embraced postmaterialist values such as prioritizing quality of life over hard work to achieve economic growth. However, Dülmer (2011) also found an effect of individual religiosity beyond the effect of a country's religious heritage. Across the world, people who consider religion to be important in their lives tend to more strongly endorse the value of hard work, and this effect exists beyond the role of sociodemographics, education, and income.

Furthermore, Hayward and Kemmelmeier (2011) provided more nuanced information by investigating not only the effects at the individual and collective levels, but also the interactions between the two. This implied distinct information on the role of (1) religiosity in general; (2) religiosity, by religious group/affiliation, and possible differences in the size of the associations; (3) religious affiliation; (4) country-level mean religiosity; and (5) a country's religious tradition. Again, beyond the role of age, gender, education, and income, at the individual level, people across the world with higher personal religiosity tend to value work more strongly. Moreover, this association holds true across most religious affiliations (i.e., Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox, as well as Muslims and Hindus), with effect sizes that are similar for Protestants and religionists of the other religions. Furthermore, the more religious a country is, the more strongly its citizens value work for a better life. However, in difference from Norris and Inglehart (2004) and Dülmer (2011), Protestants in general independently from their personal religiosity and country are more likely than Catholics to think that work is important for a better life

and that success is not due to chance or connections. Also, people in countries with a Protestant tradition do not differ from people in countries with other religious traditions; if anything, they more strongly endorse work as a moral value compared to people in Catholic and Orthodox countries.

Experimental Evidence

The preceding surveys and international studies show, overall, that there exists a general religious and not "Protestant" effect at the individual level, with personal religiosity leading, across cultures and religions, to a strong endorsement of work as a value. However, there is a "cultural Protestantism" effect in terms of a stronger mean endorsement of this value among Protestant individuals and people living in Protestant countries. Again, all of this evidence is based on self-reports, thus begging the question of whether there is any confirming experimental and behavioral evidence.

Interestingly, experimental activation of the Protestant work ethic induced by asking participants to complete a scale of items assessing Protestant work values or by unscrambling sentences related to hard work leads participants to make negative attributions about members of low-status groups (Biernat, Vescio, & Theno, 1996; McCoy & Major, 2007; Quinn & Crocker, 1999). This research indicates that the Protestant work values are implicitly associated with the belief in meritocracy (Uhlmann & Sanchez-Burks, 2014).

Furthermore, Uhlmann, Poehlman, Tannenbaum, and Bargh (2011, Experiment 2) primed American, Canadian, German, Argentinian, and Italian participants through a scrambled sentences puzzle containing either words referring to divine salvation (e.g., *almighty, redeem*) or nonreligious words of the same positive valence. Only US American participants, after the salvation prime, worked harder on a subsequent task (see also Figure 22.5). Another experiment revealed an implicit work–morality association as a function of the American ideal (Uhlmann et al., 2011, Experiment 3). Asian Americans were primed with work-related words after either their American or Asian identity was made salient. As a consequence, these participants expressed more conservative attitudes toward sexuality when the work priming was connected with the American but not the Asian identity. Nonreligious and non-Protestant Americans were also affected by the experimental manipulations. These implicit associations of work with both religion (salvation) and morality (restrictive sociosexuality) seem to reflect a cultural American Protestantism.

Those who are more familiar with US Protestantism should be more sensitive to such implicit influences. Sanchez-Burks (2002) argued that the Protestant Calvinist work ethic should imply a Protestant relational ideology: hard work needs relational distance and emotional insensitivity. He indeed found that American Presbyterians and Methodists were less attentive than non-Protestants to affect in spoken words when primed with a work context, but the groups were not different when primed with a nonwork context (Study 1). Moreover, American Protestants were less likely than non-Protestant Americans to automatically engage in nonconscious behavioral mimicry

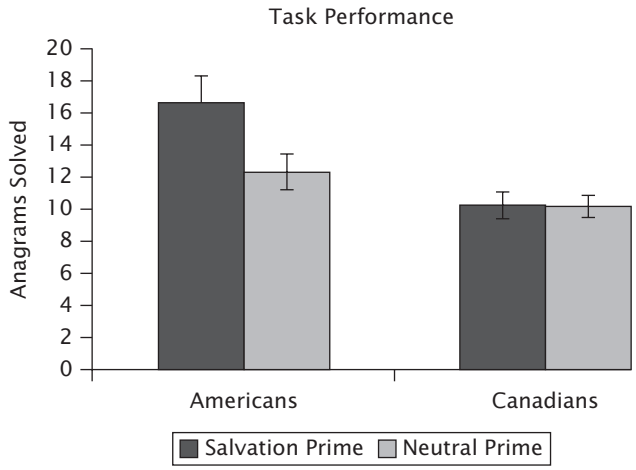

FIGURE 22.5 American and Canadian participants' task performance (anagrams solved) after being primed with words related to salvation versus neutral words. Numbers indicate the total number of anagrams solved. Error bars represent standard errors. Reprinted with permission from Uhlmann et al. (2011, figure 2, p. 316). Elsevier Inc., 2010.

(of a confederate's foot shaking) when in a work context but did not differ from non-Protestants when involved in a social context (Study 2). This indicates a reduced focus on relational cues specifically in the work context.

As Uhlmann and Sanchez-Burks (2014) concluded, these studies suggest that Calvinist Protestantism has profoundly shaped the American culture of work even at the implicit level and even among the non-Protestant and the nonreligious. This cultural Protestantism deeply involves faith in individual merit, moralization of work, and a professional ethos that, in an ascetic way, filters out distracting relationships and affects.

The Dark Side of the "Protestant" Work Ethic

The "Protestant" work ethic may also have a dark side. In a meta-analysis of more than 50 studies, Rosenthal, Levy, and Moyer (2011) found that a Protestant work ethic predicts negative attitudes and prejudice toward members of various minorities and socioeconomically and physically disadvantaged groups and low support of policies or programs that are aimed at helping members of those groups. The effects were clear in Western countries but rather nonexistent in non-Western countries. According to the authors, this does not mean that this work ethic is less present or less influential in non-Western countries. The results, rather, indicate that Western cultural values of strong individualism and personal responsibility also imply strong "blame the victim" perceptions and, in turn, prejudice.[4]

4. Note that this possibly weak endorsement of meritocracy and weak tendency to blame the victim in Eastern cultures may partly explain why religious prejudice toward ethnic, religious, and moral out-groups seems to be much weaker if not reversed (becoming tolerance) in Eastern Asian and Buddhist contexts compared to Western monotheistic ones (Clobert et al., 2014, 2015; Clobert, Saroglou, & Hwang, 2017).

Moreover, the dimension of asceticism in the Protestant work ethic may not be very welcome. Mudrack and Mason (2010) found that employees scoring high on the Asceticism subscale of the Protestant Work Ethic scale tended to be authoritarians, had less advanced moral reasoning, and regarded ethically questionable activities benefiting organizations—but not individuals—as relatively acceptable. The contrary was the case for those scoring high in the Hard Work dimension of the same scale. Thus, asceticism may reflect the need to constantly use external and quantifiable rather than internal criteria for one's self-evaluation of morality, thus facilitating deference to external authorities.

Pro-Capitalism Attitudes

Four studies also analyzed WVS data providing information on religion and people's economic preferences relative to capitalism, free marker, and concerns for income equality (Guiso, Sapienza, & Zingales, 2003; Hayward & Kemmelmeier, 2011; Malka, 2014; Norris & Inglehart, 2004). As far as *religious affiliation* is concerned, it seems that, across the world, Protestants and to a lesser extent Catholics, independently from their religiosity, value more private ownership in business and industry compared with religionists of other religions. This indicates an adaptation of cultural Christianity, and Protestantism in particular, with the major component of a capitalist society that is, free market. Moreover, and somewhat surprisingly, when controlling for national and household wealth, Buddhists, compared to other religious groups, seem to be more comfortable with the idea that individual economic incentives are more important than income equality. Protestants are slightly more likely than Catholics to defend individual wealth over equality. Hindus, on the contrary, are the least approving of income inequality. Also, controlling for socioeconomic variables corrects the first impression that Muslims are highly tolerant of income inequality. Moreover, at least according to Hayward and Kemmelmeier (2011), Protestants also seem to endorse individual over state responsibility and competition more strongly than several other religious groups; the contrast is strongest with Muslims and Christian Orthodox (and occasionally Buddhists), who, living in more collectivistic countries, seem to be less approving of these aspects of capitalism.

When it comes to the role of a *country's religious tradition*, there are some occasional differences between historically Protestant countries and countries of other traditions that suggest slightly more pro-capitalist attitudes in Protestant countries. These differences are, however limited, to the (1) support of individual responsibility, in comparison to Muslim countries; (2) private ownership, in comparison to countries with a Confucian tradition; and (3) competition, in comparison to countries of Catholic and Buddhist history. Importantly, in Protestant countries, people seem less likely to endorse the idea that people can only get rich at the expenses of others. These findings, taken together, denote a cultural Protestantism of "compassionate capitalism."

Finally, *personal religiosity* overall, across the world, is unrelated to several economic policy–related values and attitudes, possibly due to divergences between religions. This contrasts with the positive association between religiosity and work ethic that is broadly

present across cultures and religions. However, across all religions, individual religiosity predicts the concern for wealth to exist for all people and not getting rich at the expense of others.

Summary

Religiosity implies interpersonal quality in the workplace, as well as specific preferences on three distinct axes: valuing work, wealth and free market, and societal equality (see Figure 22.4). Indeed, individual religiosity predicts organizational citizenship behavior, which includes other-oriented values of helping colleagues and supporting the organization, as well as study fields and professional life choices that denote care for others (i.e., education- and health-oriented fields). The preceding results reflect the typical religiosity–agreeableness association. Furthermore, people who are (highly) religious tend to moralize work by valuing it as a moral duty—work as an end in itself—and as a means to have a better life.

This, however, does not seem to be specifically "Protestant"; it holds true for religionists of all major religions across the world and reflects a broader personality characteristic of religiosity that is, conscientiousness. However, especially when relevant socioeconomic variables are controlled for at the individual and collective levels, cultural Protestantism, be it for believers or nonbelievers, seems to have an amplifying effect on people's work values and work-related behavior. Contemporary US Americans, be they Protestant or not, show attitudes and behaviors that are particularly typical of the so-called Protestant work ethic compared to other Protestant cultural contexts and to non-US Americans. Nevertheless, the "Protestant" work ethic is not unambiguously beneficial in its outcomes: it also predicts prejudice, as well as excessive asceticism, which goes beyond hard work and implies austerity, denial of pleasure and delay of gratification, and reflects authoritarian tendencies and less developed moral judgments.

Regarding economic policy preferences, cultural Protestantism compared to other religious traditions denotes "compassionate capitalism." This means, on the one hand, higher value of individual over state responsibilities, free market, and competition, but, on the other hand, some concern for income equality and certainly support for wealth growth to prevent others' poverty and to avoid wealth at the expense of others. Cultural Islam, and in some cases Christian Orthodoxy and/or Hinduism, instead imply attachments to more collectivistic and less competitive perceptions of the normative economy, whereas religious Muslims, Christian Orthodox, and Hindus, like Western Christians, tend to place a high value on hard work. Such cross-religious and cross-cultural differences, as well as the difference in moral quality between certain aspects of capitalistic attitudes (favoring individual responsibility vs. allowing inequality and poverty), probably explain why, overall, personal religiosity is unrelated to pro-capitalism attitudes as a whole.

Prosociality

There is a significant consensus among classic theorists of early psychology that concern for others, certainly for our proximal ones and those in need, is a core value of all major religious faiths and spiritual traditions (Saroglou, 2006; Saroglou, Pichon, Trompette, Verschueren, & Dernelle, 2005). Theorists may differ regarding the mechanisms they advance to explain religious prosociality, but they concur that prosocial values are central in religion and spirituality—except for in some cults that sacralize psychopathology-based violence.

Research on religion and prosociality has expanded in the past 15 years (for reviews: Preston, Salomon, & Ritter, 2014; Saroglou, 2013; Tsang, Rowatt, & Shariff, 2015). It has also led to strong debates in social sciences. A naïve idea is to argue that religious prosociality *does not exist* or *is not real* because of its limitations found in research. In fact, it is psychologically naïve to expect religious prosociality to be universal (attested in all situations, in all occurrences and contexts, always replicable, present as a function of all forms of religiosity), heroic (only altruistically motivated, indifferent to the costs, automatically expressed, embracing of all humans and beings), unique in terms of causality (not explicable by relevant psychological mechanisms)—and "pure"; that is, with religion not at all being accompanied by antisocial tendencies.

On the contrary, it seems intellectually and psychologically pertinent to assume, and has been shown by research, that religious prosociality *exists*; that is, *on average*, religious people compared to the low or nonreligious *tend to* think, feel, and act more often in a way that benefits others and not (only) think in terms of self-interests. Moreover, religious concepts and primes, *on average, tend to* activate prosocial thoughts, inclinations, and behaviors more often than neutral—non-prosocial, nonreligious—primes do. Beyond this, research shows an impressive spectrum of moderators of religious personality mainly in terms of a target's status, forms of religiosity, motivations, cost estimation, and several contextual features such as the presence of a request, absence of conflicting norms, and religious stimulation (Saroglou, 2012, 2013). Nonbelievers' prosociality, even if present to a lesser extent, may be more altruistically and intrinsically motivated and seems to be more universalistic (Saroglou, 2013).

In this subsection, I focus on cross-cultural psychological questions. Are the prosocial outcomes of religiosity, and of some of its forms more so than others, present across cultures and religions? The same can be asked for religious primes. Moreover, are there cross-religious differences at the individual and collective levels with regard to the extent, nature, and underlying mechanisms of religious prosociality? Finally, how do cultural characteristics at the country level moderate the relationship between religiosity and prosociality, and how do they predict mean prosocial tendencies at the country level?

Religious Prosociality Across Cultures

Individual religiosity predicts prosocial outcomes across cultural and religious contexts. Religious primes of all major religions activate prosociality and may do it transculturally that is, in various cultural contexts and even among participants of different religions than the ones of the primes. Finally, moderators of religious prosociality (target status, type of religiosity and religious concepts, immersion into a religious mindset), initially found in single studies, seem to apply cross-culturally.

Religiosity and Religious Priming Across Cultures

Considerable evidence has been accumulated through decades of research across various religious and cultural contexts showing that individual religiosity, through its several forms, has an overall positive association with prosocial dispositions such as prosocial personality traits (agreeableness), cognitive tendencies (perspective taking), emotions (empathy, compassion), values (benevolence, prosocial virtues), motivations (e.g., need for affiliation), and reported behaviors (e.g. helping, volunteering, donating). This clearly, though not exclusively, applies to prosociality toward in-group members and proximal targets and to people in need more generally, but most often not toward targets perceived to threaten religious moral values. Though the effect may be amplified by religious people's impression management concerns, the association between religiosity and prosociality is genuine and can be confirmed by peer ratings, longitudinal evidence, life choices, and real behavioral intentions or behaviors (see, for reviews, Preston et al., 2014; Saroglou, 2013; Tsang et al., 2015). Lab studies show, for instance, that religious people tend to accept a confederate's request for help (Blogowska et al., 2013, Study 1), express lower aggression in responding after frustration (Saroglou et al., 2005, Study 1), get physically closer to others and cooperate with co-religionists in a virtual ball tossing game (Van Cappellen, Fredrickson, Saroglou, & Corneille, 2017, Studies 1–3), spontaneously share hypothetical gains with others (Clobert et al., 2017), and share bonuses, in lab games, with co-religionists but also with atheists (Everett, Haque, & Rand, 2016).

Moreover, dozens of experiments carried out in the past 10–12 years have shown that religious primes (worlds, images, texts, symbols, places/temples) activate prosocial thoughts, inclinations, and a variety of behaviors: trust, cooperation, generosity, gratitude, forgiveness, willingness to volunteer and make organ donation, helping, support of income redistribution. They also activate neighboring moral attitudes and behaviors: honesty, moral firmness, moral objectivism instead of subjectivism, resistance to temptations, public self-awareness, self-control, fear of sin, and punishment for unfair behavior, as well as decreased retaliation, hostility, and violent militancy.

This has been found with Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Jewish, and Muslim primes and across several countries and cultures in the world: Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Canada, Chile, Israel, Palestine, and the Middle East, Mauritius, Morocco, the Netherlands, Philippines, Taiwan, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States—including with

Asian Americans.[5] This does not mean that religious priming necessarily has unique prosocial effects, but instead effects that are comparable to those of relevant explanatory primed constructs, such as reward, punishment, law/authority, or positive valence. Also, the effects are often stronger for religious rather than nonreligious participants, but, interestingly, they may also hold trans-culturally/religiously: Buddhist primes enhance prosociality among Western Christians (Clobert & Saroglou, 2013, Clobert et al., 2015), as do Hindu primes among Catholic Mauritian Creoles (Xygalatas et al., 2016; but see Rand et al., 2014).

Moderators of Religious Prosociality Across Cultures

Across single studies, *devotional* forms of religion, like belief in a personal and, in particular, a loving God; frequency of prayer; and spirituality, are associated with—or activate if primed—prosociality, sometimes even extended prosociality, and attenuation of in-/out-group barriers. On the contrary, *coalitional* forms of spirituality, like public religious practice, religious identity, and literal and orthodox forms of religiosity, are associated with—or activate if primed—strong in-/out-group barriers, occasional prosociality but strictly limited to the in-group, and authoritarian and prejudicial attitudes (Preston et al., 2014; Saroglou, 2013).

In line with the preceding trends, Rade, Holland, Gregory, and Desmarais (2017), through a review of 33 articles, found that people possessing positive images of God and with strong beliefs in compassion were less likely to support capital punishment. (Keeping in mind that the latter implies violence, risk of torture, and irreversibility of the effects in case of a court error.) People with negative images of God were more likely to support capital punishment—the same was the case with US Protestants. Similarly, in a multilevel analysis of WVS data (59 countries), Wright (2016) found that, across countries, the importance of God and religion and the frequency of prayer were negatively related to the justification of violence against other people, but religious attendance showed the opposite association. Furthermore, analyzing data from 10 countries, Hansen and Ryder (2016) found null or negative relationships between intrinsic (devotional) religiosity and some form of intergroup hostility, but null or positive relationships between such hostility and rigid coalitional religiosity implying superiority of one's own religious group. Similar results have come from the analyses of EVS data from 37 countries on religious and racial prejudice, which is positively predicted by religious particularism but negatively by religious belief and spirituality (Ekici & Yucel, 2015).

Two additional moderators of the religiosity–prosociality links are the *target's status* and the salience of a *religious mindset* (e.g., a religious day vs. a work day). Both have

5. See studies reviewed in Galen (2012); Saroglou (2013); and Shariff, Willard, Andersen, and Norenzayan (2016). See, in addition: Batara (2016); Be'ery and Ben-Nun Bloom (2015); Clobert and Saroglou (2013); Clobert et al. (2015); Duhaime (2015); Johnson, Memon, Alladin, Cohen, and Okun (2015); Lin, Tong, Lee, Low, and Gomes (2016); Nieuwboer, van Schie, Karremans, and Wigboldus (2015); Xygalatas et al. (2016); and Yilmaz and Bahçekapili (2015, 2016).

received some cross-cultural validation. For instance, in two studies, one in Belgium (Saroglou et al., 2005, Study 2) and one in Poland (Blogowska & Saroglou, 2011, Study 1), it was found through several hypothetical scenarios that individual religiosity predicts one's willingness to help a proximal target (family member, friend, or acquaintance) when in need but not an unknown target in need in exactly the same hypothetical situations. Moreover, Sunday, but not weekdays, makes US religious individuals prone to respond positively to an appeal to continue bidding for secular charitable causes (Malhotra, 2010); and on a religious holiday, but not a weekday, Portuguese women accepted to write and post positive messages that were helpful for others (two studies; Pazhoohi, Pinho, & Arantes, 2017: see also for a "Saturday effect" on Jews' honesty: Bar-El & Tobol, 2017). Similarly, exposure of US religious fundamentalists to a prosocial biblical text after mortality was made salient made them more compassionate (Rothschild, Abdollahib, & Pyszczynski, 2009), and Belgians scoring high on fundamentalism also became more compassionate after reading a prosocial biblical passage (Blogowska & Saroglou, 2013).

Cross-Religious Differences

There is initial evidence regarding cross-religious differences in the nature—mainly strength, focus, extent, and underlying motives—of religious prosociality. As detailed next, this seems to concern, for instance US Mormons versus other Christians, Protestantism versus Catholicism and other monotheistic religions, and East versus West.

Johnson, Cohen, and Okun (2013) noted that, in Mormonism, there is a particularly strong emphasis on in-group values and the importance of caring for family, fellow Mormons, and the community. They compared almost 1,000 US young adults, all religious believers, who were Mormons, Catholics, or non-Catholic Christians. Mormons reported more frequent volunteering, certainly religious, but also family and secular volunteering; and the intrinsic religiosity of Mormons—but not their church attendance—was related to more frequent religious and family volunteering in comparison with the two other religious groups.

Van Elk, Rutjens, and van Harreveld (2017) compared about 400 Dutch Catholics and Protestants, all religious believers, matched for level of education and socioeconomic status, on their self-reported frequency of altruistic acts and donations to charities over the past year. In line with previous extensive sociological research attesting to Protestants' strong investment in charity and volunteering, the authors found Protestants to report higher prosociality. This difference was partly mediated by the Protestants' stronger religious beliefs in general and their belief in predestination in particular and not by differences in motivation to self-enhance.

Forgiveness seems to be a stronger and broader in scope value for Christians and Protestants in particular. Though forgiveness is highly valued in all major religions, US Protestants were found to consider the ideal of forgiveness as being total, covering all acts. US Jews, on the other hand, believe that some offenses are unforgivable—at least by humans (Cohen, Malka, Rozin, & Cherfas, 2006). Moreover, whereas Lebanese Christians

value forgiveness as being unconditional, Muslims in the same country consider that, for the victim to forgive, the perpetrator must first acknowledge the offense and demonstrate repentance (Mullet & Azar, 2009).

Finally, through a series of nine studies among Westerners of Christian tradition and East Asians of Buddhist, Taoist, or folk religious traditions, Clobert and colleagues (Clobert & Saroglou, 2013; Clobert et al., 2014, 2015, 2017) provided consistent evidence of a West–East divide on prosociality and tolerance (see also Figure 22.6). Priming

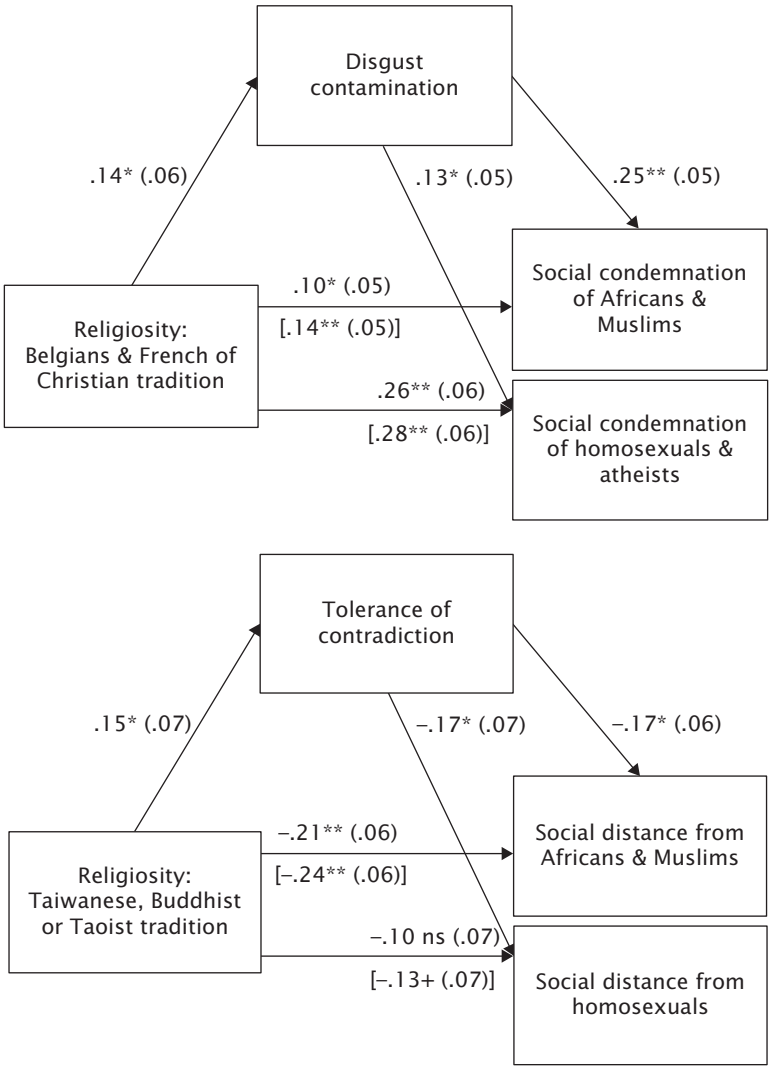

FIGURE 22.6 The effect of religiosity on ethnic, religious, and moral prejudice versus tolerance, through, respectively, disgust versus tolerance of contradiction, among Westerners of Christian tradition (*top*) versus Taiwanese of Buddhist or Taoist tradition (*bottom*). Numbers on paths represent nonstandardized regression coefficients, standard errors are in parentheses, the direct effects of IV on DV (c paths) are in brackets. Adapted from Clobert et al. (2017, figures 1 and 3, pp. 222 and 226). Copyright by the authors, 2015.

+ $p < .10$. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Western and East Asian groups with Buddhist concepts, compared to Christian, neutral, and occasionally Muslim primes, increased compassion, prosocial behavioral intentions of generosity, tolerance of contradiction, and in turn tolerance of ethnic and religious out-groups. Similarly, the religiosity of East Asians was more predictive of interethnic and interreligious tolerance compared to the religiosity of Westerners or Christian East Asians, which could even show the opposite attitudes, that is, prejudice. Again, this was partly due to differences in the tolerance of contradiction. Nevertheless, in some of the studies, the effects were typical of only those with a higher disposition for open-mindedness (high universalists and low authoritarians), and antigay and anti-atheist prejudices seemed more resistant to Buddhism's effects on tolerance.

Country-Level Influences

Country-level variables, such as a country's mean level of religiosity/secularism or socioeconomic development, moderate the religiosity–prosociality association, but also predict mean differences on prosociality at the country level.

Stavrova and Siegers (2014, Study 2; WVS, 46 countries) found that individual religiosity, a composite of religious attendance and one's self-definition as religious, overall predicted higher membership in charity organizations. Being Protestant versus Orthodox or living in countries with a communist past predicted respectively high versus low investment in charity. These effects hold when controlling for a country's GDP per capita and individuals' sociodemographics, education, and income. Moreover, in less religious and more secular countries where the social enforcement of religion is low, the link between individual religiosity and charity was stronger. Religious prosociality was thus stronger in countries in which people have free choice to be or not to be religious. This suggests that, in these contexts, religiosity may become more intrinsic in its nature and effects. This importantly parallels similar findings mentioned earlier in this chapter, where individual religiosity more strongly predicted homonegativity and restrictive sociosexuality in secular countries compared to religious ones.

However, different outcomes are found when the focus is shifted from the individual × country interactions to country-level associations: in more religious countries, the mean level of prosociality tends to be lower. This was found in an analysis on three country-level indicators (individuals' reports of helping strangers, donating money to charity, and volunteering time; Smith, 2015, 135 nations). Nevertheless, this effect may be due to other than religious differences between countries. Prosocial behaviors are more often present in rich countries, which are also characterized by high social trust, low corruption, and low in-group favoritism. In these countries, sociocultural religiosity is low (Paul, 2009; Smith, 2015). Going even further, Guo, Liu, and Tian (2018) found that, when controlling for GDP per capita, in more religious countries people on average tend to help more a stranger.

An alternative explanation is that, at the country-level, religious culture may play a negative role by dividing people between "us" and "them." Three international studies

published in the 2010s investigated the relationship between religion (individual religiosity, a country's percentage of religious believers, and a country's religious tradition) and a country's mean level of social trust (Berggren & Bjørnskov, 2011; Dingemans & Van Ingen, 2015; Olson & Li, 2015; 43 US states and 47 to 109 countries). Overall, individual religiosity was unrelated to a country's mean level of social trust, and religious traditions differed little, with Protestantism being an exception by favoring social trust. However, consistently across the three studies, the size of a country's religious population was negatively related to the country's level of social trust, an effect that was amplified when the country presented high religious heterogeneity or fragmentation. In other words, in countries including many believers, in particular when divided into many religious groups, social trust tends to be lower.

Nevertheless, it may be interesting to report here that religious ideologies, identities, and divides do not seem to be the strongest sources of intergroup conflict and violence. A team of political scientists (Bormann, Cederman, & Vogt, 2017) analyzed a dataset of ethnic cleavages that recorded multiple linguistic and religious segments for ethnic groups from 1946 to 2009. They assessed ethnic differences between the politically dominant group and potential challengers in each country. It turned out that intrastate conflict was more likely to be within linguistic dyads than within religious ones. There is also evidence that individual religiosity may prevent extremity of violence in intergroup conflicts, be those conflicts religious in nature or not. In studies among Christians and Muslims in Indonesia, in regions with or without conflict, Kanas and Martinovic (2017) found that, in the nonconflict region, religious identification was unrelated to violence and was related to lower support for protest among high national identifiers. In the conflict region, it was related to increased support for protest, particularly among high national identifiers, but not increased violence.

Summary

Across cultures and religions, personal religiosity is typically associated with prosocial dispositions, which often but not necessarily result in prosocial behavioral intentions and real behavior of different types, ranging from low hostility, to costly help and volunteering, through cooperation and generosity. Moreover, across cultures, religious concepts, even when implicitly presented, enhance prosocial dispositions, sometimes even among people of other religions than the primes themselves. Finally, also across cultures, the prosocial outcomes of religion are clearer (1) as a function of devotional rather than coalitions forms of religion, (2) when the target is a proximal/in-group member or at least is not perceived to threaten religious values, and (3) when a religious mindset has been made salient. On the contrary, conservative and/or authoritarian religiosity often predicts prejudice against and discrimination of ethnic, religious (including atheists), and moral out-groups. Nevertheless, religiosity seems to attenuate extremity and violence in authoritarians' and nationalists' sociopolitical behavior, and within country linguistic conflicts are more salient than inter-religious divides.

There is initial evidence for some cross-religious differences on the nature of prosociality, with Protestants investing more on volunteering and charity donations and endorsing more extended and unconditional forgiveness than other religionists. Nevertheless, US Protestants highly endorse capital punishment. Buddhism and Eastern Asian religious contexts imply tolerance rather than prejudice against ethnic and religious, though not necessarily moral, out-groups. This seems to be due to higher compassion and lower intolerance of contradiction. A communist past negatively affects the religiosity–charity association in respective, mostly Orthodox, countries.

The religiosity–prosociality relationship becomes clearer in secular countries, where there is more variability in individual differences on both religiosity and morality, and where religiosity can be expected to be more personal and thus intrinsic; this is not due to socioeconomic differences. Finally, country-level associations are not isomorphic to the above-mentioned trends. Mean indicators of prosociality (charity, volunteering, social trust) are lower in more religious countries. The same is true for countries with high religious diversity or fragmentation. It is not yet clear whether this is an artifact of other socioeconomic differences, richer countries being both less religious and more investing in charity and favoring social trust, or a real consequence of religion's role at the societal level as somehow dividing "us" from "them."

Citizenship

Citizenship implies prosocial concerns for the common good (care, justice, equality for all citizens) and righteousness and honesty in one's own relations to society. In this section, I examine the role religion plays cross-culturally with regard to four key facets of citizenship: (1) support of democracy, (2) civic engagement, (3) pro-environmental attitudes, and (4) honesty in one's own relationships with society by avoiding cheating and corruption.

As evoked in previous sections, religiousness is typically characterized by personality tendencies for agreeableness, conscientiousness, and honesty. Therefore, it seems reasonable to expect religiosity, consistently across cultures, to predict low levels and the condemnation of cheating and corruption. However, it is less clear what to expect for the other aspects of citizenship (support for democracy, civic engagement, and pro-environmental attitudes). For these three constructs, underlying motives related to conscientiousness (the maintenance of societal order) may, to some extent, conflict with agreeableness-related prosocial concerns.

Given religion's ideal for a better world, religiosity should predict civic and political engagement in favor of the common good, as well as support for democracy as the best possible political system to sustain equality and avoid the abuse of power. However, civic and political engagement, as well as strong support for democracy, often implies protest against established traditions, authorities, and sources of (abusive) power.

These may conflict with religion's typical correlates of conservatism and authoritarian conventionalism.

Similarly, because of (1) the belief in the world being the creation of a supreme being and thus gratitude to the "Creator," (2) prosocial concerns for future generations, and (3) respect for the natural world, which is currently threatened by the effects of materialism, religion should favor the endorsement of environmental values. However, pro-environmental ideas are rather recent and demand a significant paradigm shift in our everyday behaviors, as well as a solid understanding of the related scientific knowledge. Thus, in some religious contexts characterized by general conservatism and literal thinking, religiosity may be related to indifference to and suspicion of pro-environmental ideology and values—not to mention the conservative religious suspicion of science in general. Finally, there may be some interesting West–East differences: Christianity has been criticized for having favored strong anthropocentrism, domination, and thus a negligence of nature. On the contrary, Eastern religions are perceived as considering nature to be more sacred than do Westerns religions.

Support for Democracy

Different dimensions of religion (i.e., the belief and the social dimensions) have conflicting effects in respectively downplaying and favoring the support of democracy. Important differences exist between cultures, in particular between Western Christian and Muslim contexts.

In an early analysis of WVS data (Norris & Inglehart, 2004), after controlling for each country's human development and individual education and income levels, individual religiosity was found to predict across countries low support for democracy as an efficient system and as an ideal form of government to be preferred to strong authoritarian leadership. European countries of Protestant tradition showed the strongest support for democracy. Compared to Western countries, support for democracy was slightly lower in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, and much lower in ex-communist countries of Christian Orthodox tradition and countries of Hindu tradition. Countries of Muslim tradition did not differ from Western countries, leading the authors to conclude, perhaps prematurely (see later discussion), that the major conflict between the West and Islam is not on democratic values, but rather on sexuality and family-related values.

In latter analyses of further WVS waves of data, Ben-Nun Bloom and Arikan (2012, 2013b, 47 and 54 countries, respectively) focused only on countries where people have experienced democracy. They also distinguished between religious belief and social religious behavior (religious attendance and investment in a religious organization). Across countries, personal religious belief was negatively related to support for democracy (like in Norris & Inglehart, 2004), an effect mediated by a high endorsement of traditional and survival values. However, social religious behavior showed the opposite pattern (i.e., a positive association with support for democracy), partly due to increased political interest and trust in institutions. The two effects and the first mediation—and, with

some differences between religions, also the second mediation—hold across religious traditions. Catholics' religious belief had the weakest negative effect and their social religious behavior the strongest positive effect on the support of democracy; the opposite was the case for Muslims. Furthermore, the negative effect of religious belief on support for democracy was also found when controlling for authoritarianism and political orientation to the right (Ben-Nun Bloom & Arikan, 2013b). This suggests a unique role of religious ideology, one beyond political conservatism, in nourishing ambivalence against democracy. This, in my opinion, reflects a theological discourse that praises the hierarchical system of governance of the religious institution as being a better system than secular democracy even if all faithful are equal in front of God.

Additional experimental evidence suggests some "causal" directions in these associations (Ben-Nun Bloom & Arikan, 2013a). Turkish and Israeli students, of respectively Muslim and Jewish tradition, either first answered the religious beliefs items (belief prime) and then the support of democracy items, or first answered the religious social behavior (behavior prime) questions and then the pro-democracy ones. These two primes respectively decreased and increased support of democracy in comparison to a control condition where students directly answered the democracy-related items without any religious priming.

Civic Engagement

In line to some extent with the preceding findings, the existing international studies suggest no overall effect of devotional religion on civic engagement, but do suggest some positive associations of the social dimension of religiousness with specific aspects of civic engagement, in particular within the context of immigration and/or among Muslims. Note that "civic engagement" here does not include political orientation or voting preferences, but refers instead to the active involvement of expressing positions within the public sphere and taking action to support these positions. Within the WVS, civic engagement includes acts such as having signed a petition, joined a boycott, or attended a lawful demonstration.

Three international studies have provided initial cross-cultural evidence on the religion–civic engagement association (Just, Sandovici, & Listhaug, 2014, ESS, 18 European countries; Norris & Inglehart, 2004, WVS, many world countries; Sarkissian, 2012, WVS, 9 Muslim countries). Consistently across the three studies, religious attendance or self-identification as religious was unrelated to civic engagement, and being Christian or Muslim in Europe was actually negatively related to civic engagement. However, belonging to a religious association was positively related to the three indicators of civic engagement (petitions, boycott, demonstrations). Moreover, personal religiosity of second-generation Muslim, but not Christian, immigrants in Europe who were also more dissatisfied with their current countries also predicted such civic engagement (Just et al., 2014).

In sum, it seems that the devotional, mystical-like dimension of religion does not encourage believers to mix with the affairs of the world except in very specific cultural contexts, such as those of perceived marginalization. However, the social, affiliative dimension of religion does do so. Whether this is because of broad moral concerns for all citizens or to advance legitimate interests of one's own community has yet to be clarified.

Pro-Environmental Attitudes

Earlier research on religion and pro-environmental attitudes and behaviors denoting sustainability, mostly based on single studies and occasional comparisons of different religious groups within one country, has provided mixed results (see numerous studies, mostly but not exclusively in the United States, cited in: Gifford & Nilsson, 2014; Minton, Kahle, Jiuan, & Tambyah, 2016; Mostafa, 2016; Muñoz-García, 2014). Personal religiosity has been found to be characterized by either positive or negative attitudes toward environmental values and behavior or to be unrelated to them entirely. This holds for various Christian groups and other Western monotheistic traditions. Within-country differences between religions or denominations on these attitudes and behaviors seem to be attributable to the respective theological discourses emphasizing either *dominion* that is, the Earth has been given to humans by God to be exploited for development and growth or, on the contrary, *stewardship* that is, humans are expected to take care of the Earth as a gift from the Creator.

Within the same religious group, different forms of religiosity (literal vs. symbolic religious thinking, or traditional religiosity vs. religion-as-quest) seem to result in contrasting negative versus positive attitudes, respectively, toward the environment and humans' obligations to the world (e.g., Muñoz-García, 2014; a study in Spain). The same is the case for people holding an authoritarian versus benevolent image of God (Johnson et al., 2017; a study in the United States). Similarly, apocalyptic tendencies (believing that the end of the world may be imminent) favor low interest in environmental issues within conservative or fundamentalist religious groups (Hand & Van Lier, 1984). Finally, some research suggests that Buddhists tend to show stronger concern for the environment and more sustainable behavior than Westerners of Christian tradition or nonbelievers (e.g., Minton, Kahle, & Kim, 2015; a study in South Korea and the United States).

However, there is evidence that religious leaders and institutions have increasingly endorsed pro-environmental discourse and values in recent years. This endorsement may have contributed to gradual changes of (conservative) religious individuals and communities in favor of care and responsibility regarding the environment and sustainable behaviors (Danielsen, 2013). Such modern developments have been relatively quick and easy to implement within religious organizations very likely because, unlike other liberal issues such as abortion, euthanasia, or gay marriage and adoption, they do not threaten other, conflicting religious moral norms.

Thus, perhaps not surprisingly, in a new study in Singapore including about 1,500 participants (Buddhists, Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Taoists, and nonreligious),

religiosity was found to have a slight positive association with both valuing sustainable behaviors and adopting pro-environmental views (Minton et al., 2016). In addition, Eastern religious followers did not score higher in these attitudes than the other religious groups. Rather, it was Christians who were found to hold stronger pro-environmental views than Buddhists and Hindus. Finally, in a recent, possibly the first, large international study on this topic, Mostafa (2016) found, across 40 countries, that personal religiosity (importance of God and religious practice) predicts a higher concern for global warming. This holds beyond the role of other individual-level variables such as postmaterialistic values, political orientation, and internal locus of control, as well as country-level variables, mainly GDP per capita and carbon dioxide emission. These trends are confirmed by a more recent analysis of WVS data (34 countries) showing that religious individuals of all major religions, and more strongly Buddhists, are more concerned about the environment than non-religious individuals, especially those with low life satisfaction (Felix, Hinsch, Rauschnabel, & Schlegelmilch, 2018).

Honesty

Honesty is highly valued across religions. As a personality dimension, it can be seen as a blend of aspects related to agreeableness and prosociality (trust, straightforwardness, equality in rights) with aspects related to conscientiousness and self-control (integrity, loyalty, equality in obligations). From a citizenship morality perspective, it implies opposition to and avoidance of lying, cheating, fraud, and corruption.

A series of multicountry and international studies examined how the interaction between religion and culture influences various aspects of citizens' honesty. These included (1) unethical consumer behavior (active/illegal or passive/questionable consumption or benefit of products or money—e.g., accepting too much change received by a store cashier (Vitell et al., 2016, five countries of various religious traditions); (2) the acceptance of lying as justifiable (Stavrova & Siegers, 2014, Study 3, 46 European countries); (3) the reported frequency of having, over the past 5 years, exaggerated or falsified insurance claims, having bought something that might have been stolen, or having committed a traffic offence (Stavrova & Siegers, 2014, Study 4, 26 European countries); (4) the acceptance of fraudulent behaviors (claiming undue government benefits, cheating on taxes, and accepting a bribe (Corcoran, Pettinicchio, & Robbins, 2012, 51 countries); and (5) the level of perceived corruption within a given society (Mensah, 2014, 62 countries).

Consistently across these studies, individual religiousness or aspects of it (mentioned hereafter in parentheses) was found to predict, across cultures, a higher disapproval of unethical consumer behavior (spirituality), the nonacceptance of lying as justifiable and low reported fraudulent behavior (self-identification as religious and religious attendance), and a nonacceptance of fraudulent behaviors (importance of God in life, but not religious attendance or belonging to a religious organization).

In addition, these studies revealed the roles played by country-level variables in moderating these effects as well as interesting cross-religious differences in the magnitude

of the effects. Spirituality's impact on the disapproval of unethical consumption seems to be stronger when power distance or uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede's cultural dimensions) is low (Vitell et al., 2016), suggesting that spirituality, when combined with the perception of equality or with feeling secure about the future, leads to more solid morality. Moreover, religiosity's effect in predicting the disapproval of lying as never justifiable and reporting low numbers of uncivil acts becomes clearer or stronger when moving from religious to secular countries (Stavrova & Siegers, 2014, Studies 3 and 4). This effect, similar to what has been found for charity, suggests that within cultural contexts where social reinforcement of religion is low, religiosity becomes more intrinsic in its nature and outcomes.

Across the studies, though the cross-religious differences are not always consistent, it appears that Protestant countries imply high moral standards, showing the highest mean disapproval of fraudulent behaviors compared to Muslim and non-Protestant Christian (Catholic and Orthodox) countries (Norris & Inglehart, 2004) and the lowest level of perceived corruption compared to countries of Muslim, Catholic, and Orthodox tradition or those of "other religion or no religion" (Mensah, 2014). The place of Buddhist tradition in this "ranking" is inconsistent across studies.

Why, within Christianity, does this discrepancy exist between Protestant countries and Catholic and Orthodox countries? According to Carl, Gupta, and Javidan (2004), Catholicism—and, in my opinion, also the Orthodox world—in its adherence to a clear hierarchical structure and with its strong emphasis on family and related loyalty may have shaped people's proclivity to more easily accept the status quo and thus accept conditions for corruption in society. Interestingly, in recent experimental studies, Protestants were found to be less dependent on social control when they showed low cheating behavior, whereas Catholics were more responsive to social control when avoiding cheating, a finding indicating a more morally autonomous and intrinsic endorsement of honesty among Protestants (Quiamzade, Sommet, Laborde, L'Huillier, & Guiso, 2017; see also Chapter 4 by Evert Van de Vliert and Dejun Tony Kong for related discussion of culture, climate, and corruption.)

Note finally that the above-mentioned international studies are based on self-reported measures. Thus, one may be skeptical of whether religiosity really translates into less dishonest behavior. Nevertheless, even if religious moral hypocrisy may exist, attitudes and values in favor of integrity have been found to be, to some extent, predictors of real behavior (Van Iddekinge, Roth, Raymark, & Odle-Dusseau, 2012), and the same is the case for religiosity when results are significant (e.g., Bloodgood, Turnley, & Mudrack, 2008). Moreover, studies using religious priming indicate that religious ideas are capable of even implicitly activating behavioral honesty (see reviews in Galen, 2012; Shariff et al., 2016).

Summary

Based on the personality characteristics of religiosity that denote *both* prosocial concerns for the common good and concerns for social and personal stability (agreeableness and conscientiousness), one should expect complex or ambivalent relationships of religiosity with the modern inclinations for civic engagement, support for democracy, and pro-environmental values but clear negative relationships with dishonesty, fraud, and corruption.

Indeed, across cultures, individual religiosity, in particular through its devotional dimension that includes some kind of retreat from world affairs, is rather negatively related or unrelated to support for democracy and civic engagement, the latter as expressed through protesting ideas and acts aimed to advance social change. However, the social, affiliative dimension of religiosity turns out to imply, across cultures, support for democracy and civic engagement, in particular among Muslims in contexts of perceived discrimination. The personal religiosity–low support for democracy association persists beyond the underlying role of political and social conservatism and socioeconomic characteristics at the collective and individual levels. This could be explained by religion's emphasis on hierarchical forms of governance. Thus, perhaps not surprisingly, support for democracy is highest in countries of Protestant tradition and weakest in countries with collectivistic religious traditions.

As far as pro-environmental attitudes are concerned, earlier single-study investigations carried out when pro-environmental moral concerns were just beginning to emerge in society provided mixed evidence regarding the role of individual religiosity. High versus low endorsement of pro-environmental values depended on the underlying theological discourses denoting, respectively, dominion versus stewardship and the conservative and literal versus liberal forms of religion—with apocalyptic beliefs promoting indifference to the Earth's future. More recent studies have indicated an overall positive relationship, across cultures, between religiosity and pro-environmental concerns and attitudes, and this across all major religious traditions. This is probably due to an increased endorsement of ecological values by religious institutions. Though modern, these values are prosocial, with respect to the future generations and do not conflict with other religious moral norms.

Finally, consistently across several international studies, individual religiosity or spirituality implies the disapproval of and/or lower reported frequency of dishonest and fraudulent behavior: lying for one's own interest, active and passive unethical consumption of goods, and various behaviors denoting tax fraud, cheating, and corruption. The effects are stronger in secular countries than religious ones—again denoting more intrinsic forms of religiosity in the former—and in societies where the cultural values of personal security (low uncertainty avoidance) and perceived equality (low power distance) are high. Countries of Protestant tradition show the highest disapproval of dishonesty and the lowest perceived corruption. This is possibly because intrinsic Protestant

faith emphasizes autonomy and a strong coherence between thoughts and acts, whereas other religious traditions (e.g., Catholic, Christian Orthodox, and Muslim) emphasize hierarchy, family values, and in-group loyalty, values that could possibly work to protect the status quo and thus facilitate tolerance of unfair civic behavior.

Discussion

As examined in details in this chapter, cross-cultural research on religion over the past 15 years, through studies of large international datasets, focused comparative studies on different cultural groups, and (quasi-)experimental work has nuanced, complemented, extended, sometimes challenged, and thus significantly advanced our previous scientific knowledge on the moral outcomes of religion, which had been primarily derived from Western cultural contexts of Christian tradition.

In this last section, first, a synthesis will be made of the various major findings, allowing us to answer the question of how religion shapes morality similarly or differently across cultural contexts. This synthesis will be divided into two subsections. The first will deal with life domains for which the links between religion and morality show strong cultural universality and some meaningful cultural/religious variability (in sexuality, family, work, prosociality, and duties to the community). The second subsection will deal with the remaining domains (economic preferences, sociopolitical engagement, and environmental attitudes) for which the religion–morality links show high cultural/religious variability.

The third and fourth subsections will deal with two broader, more abstract questions that are important for understanding the role religion plays in moral cultures and divides. What preferences, across cultures, does religion sustain with regard to the two big areas of morality—the interpersonal, prosocial, and consequentialist area and the hygienic, righteous, and deontological one? Finally, are there evolutionary forces that could explain religion's strong connection with morality across cultures, as well as cultural-religious diversity and diversity in religious morality?

Sexuality, Family, Work, Prosociality, and Duties to the Community: Strong Universals and Interesting Cultural Variation

As shown in this chapter, being (highly) religious, as opposed to being nonreligious or being low in religiosity, implies remarkable similarities across cultures and religions in moral preferences regarding a large spectrum of domains of human activity: sexuality, family, work, interpersonal relationships, and duties to society. However, cross-cultural variability also exists in terms of religious differences and cultural influences on the strength of the effects and possibly on relevant cultural changes (see, for a brief synopsis, Table 22.2).

TABLE 22.2 Religiosity and Morality Across Cultures and Religions: Synopsis of the Main Findings

	Religiosity Across Cultures	Moderators: Rel. Effect Stronger	Country-Level Influences	Cross-Religious Differences
SEXUALITY AND FAMILY				
Homosexuality	Negative attitudes; antigay prejudice	Moral/legal > social opposition	SSED countries, religious diversity, West > East Europe: more mean tolerance but stronger links with religiosity	Islam/Muslims vs. Buddhism: highest vs. lowest intolerance Among Christians, Catholics-Orthodox: least-most intolerant
(Hetero)sexuality	More restrictive: low premarital and extramarital sex; long-, not short-term dating	Women > men		Muslims, Hindus vs. East Asians/Buddhists: highest vs. lowest Protestants > Jews: moralize sexual thoughts Protestants > Catholics, Jews: use sublimation
Hedonism (value)	Low consideration		SSED countries: less negative links with religiosity	
Gender equality	Low endorsement			Islam/Muslims: the lowest
Fertility	High fertility Opposition to abortion and single-childless status	World regions Parents' religious homogamy and high education	SSED countries: lower mean fertility	Muslims vs. Buddhists: highest vs. lowest Among Christians, Catholics: strongest anti-abortion attitudes
Marriage, family	No delay of time to get married Opposition to divorce			Muslims: religious not restrictive of marital sex Among Christians, Catholics vs. Orthodox: most vs. least opposition
Parental investment to children	High (resources, long-term)	High education		Catholics: highest (in East Asia)
WORK AND ECONOMY				
Work as value	High endorsement		Higher endorsement in religious countries	Cultural Protestantism: stronger effect In the West, not East: work as value implies prejudice
Free market				High endorsement in Western Christianity Low endorsement in collectivistic religions
No wealth at the expense of others	High endorsement			

(*continued*)

TABLE 22.2 Continued

	Religiosity Across Cultures	Moderators: Rel. Effect Stronger	Country-Level Influences	Cross-Religious Differences
PROSOCIALITY AND CITIZENSHIP				
Prosociality	High prosocial dispositions and charity membership Religious priming effects	Devotional > coalitional forms of religion	In SSED countries: higher mean trust and prosociality, but stronger links with religiosity	Protestants: unconditional extended forgiveness; highest volunteering Buddhism/East Asia: ethnic and religious tolerance
Dishonesty, fraud, and corruption	High disapproval and reported low behavior	Countries with low uncertainty avoidance and power distance	In SSED countries: stronger links with religiosity	Protestantism: strongest honesty, weakest corruption
Support for democracy	Low, for religious belief; high, for social religious behavior			Highest vs. lowest in West. Christianity vs. collectivistic religions
Civic engagement	Unrelated, for religious belief; high, for social religious behavior			Higher for Muslims, when discrimination
Pro-environmental attitudes	High in recent studies	Underlying religious discourses, forms Early vs. more recent studies		
COMPETING MORALITIES				
Hygienic/righteous vs. prosocial	More emphasis on sexual/reproductive		Stronger preference in non-Western societies	
Deontology vs. consequentialism	Preference for deontology		Struggling with the two in SSED countries	

Note. SSED countries, more secular and/or of more socioeconomically developed countries.
When a religion's name is given (through a substantive; e.g., Catholicism), this refers to effects of the country's religious tradition/heritage; otherwise, religion affiliation as an adjective (e.g., Catholics) refers to individuals' religious affiliation.

Individual Religiosity Across Cultures: Purity, Care, Labor, and Loyalty

Indeed, personal religiosity across countries and religions implies a propensity for:

- the disapproval of same-sex relations, marriage, and adoption, in particular in moral/legal, but also social terms;
- socio-restrictive heterosexuality—low premarital and extramarital sex, no delay of time to marriage, few sexual partners and a related emphasis on sexual guilt and purity, and low endorsement of hedonism and gender equality;
- fertility in terms of a high ideal and actual number of children (except among Buddhists) and the disapproval of abortion;
- an investment in marriage and children: religious homogamy, devaluing divorce, spending preferentially on children's growth instead of on oneself;
- the consideration of hard work as an intrinsic moral value, thus viewing leisure with suspicion;
- prosociality in interpersonal relationships, at least with proximal people and in-group members and as also shown through charitable giving and volunteering; and
- the avoidance of dishonesty, fraud, and corruption.

These moral inclinations, taken together, denote a morality that emphasizes self-restriction, righteousness, and investment in work and parenting instead of self-indulgence and search for pleasure, as well as interpersonal trust and prosociality instead of the advancement of only self-interests. Not surprisingly, thus, this morality seems to reflect broader characteristics of religiosity in terms of *personality traits* (conscientiousness and agreeableness, and not necessarily high or low openness; Saroglou, 2015, 2017), *value hierarchies* (values of conservation and limited, not extended to universalism, self-transcendence; Roccas & Elster, 2014; Schwartz, 2012), and *moral foundations* of care and fairness, but also and importantly purity and, to some extent, loyalty (Graham & Haidt, 2010). These moral trends, as functions of personal religiosity, seem to generalize across life domains as well as across countries and religions. Importantly, all of these moral preferences denote unique outcomes of religiosity since they hold true beyond the role of sociopolitical attitudes and socioeconomic variables at the individual and collective levels. They also seem typical of religiosity across its various forms.

Cross-Religious Differences: Religious Traditions and Atheism as Subcultures

However, there are also slight differences, mostly in the strength rather than the presence of the effects, between *religions* that is, between individuals of different religious *affiliations* or between countries of different *religious heritage* (see the synopsis in Table 22.2). These differences seem to exist beyond the impact of socioeconomic factors

and can thus be attributed to specific religious teachings or cultural specifics of the religious civilizational zones.

Islam shows the highest sociorestrictive sexuality (intolerance of homosexuality, low premarital and extramarital sexuality) and the highest fertility and attachment to traditional family values—but with intramarital sexuality being more highly valued—as well as the lowest endorsement of gender equality. *Catholicism* is most often similar to Protestantism, though more tolerant of homosexuality. It is, however, more intolerant of abortion and divorce, but also less intolerant of fraud and corruption, probably because of Catholics' emphasis on hierarchy and family and group loyalty. *Protestantism*, to a higher degree than other religions, is characterized by a strong need for thought–act coherence, a high tendency to sublimate inhibited sexual and immoral thoughts through creativity, a strong ascetic work ethic, and extended (forgiveness) and active (volunteering) prosociality. *Orthodox Christians*, mostly in countries of communist past, are more traditional than Western Christians with regards to sexuality- and family-related values—though historically more tolerant of divorce. *Judaism* is often numerically underrepresented across studied countries, but the existing evidence suggests a flavor of more pragmatic morality: lower moralization of thoughts; no universal forgiveness; and lower conservatism, compared to the two other monotheisms, on sexuality- and family-related issues, including lower fertility—though less so in Israel. Finally, *East Asian religions*, more clearly *Buddhism* than *Hinduism*, are characterized by less pronounced sexual and family-related conservatism and sexual prejudice and even show ethnic and religious tolerance, very likely due to greater compassion and tolerance of contradiction compared to Western monotheisms.

A very tentative integrative interpretation of the preceding cross-religious differences is that religions, beyond their important commonalities in morality, seem to differ, for religious doctrinal and historical cultural reasons, on the emphasis they put on some *privileged concerns*: Islam on growth and purity, Protestantism on individual faith coherence, Catholicism on family and societal stability, Orthodoxy in distinctiveness preservation, Judaism on pragmatism, and Buddhism on compassion. Nevertheless, beyond these cross-religious differences, it remains that the greatest cultural divide regarding morality exists between religious believers and nonbelievers. This favors the idea of religion/faith and irreligion/atheism as two, partly competing subcultures.

Religious and Cultural Changes: Country-Level Influences

Country-level features, such as the degree of secularism (vs. high mean religiosity) or a country's socioeconomic development, show *country-level associations* that is, links with other country-level tendencies in moral attitudes and behavior. They also show *country-level moderations* that is, interactions between individual religiosity and country-level variables in predicting, between cultural contexts, differences in the presence versus absence, size, and direction of effects on individual morality.

Country-Level Associations: Isomorphism and Asymmetry with the Individual-Level Associations

As reviewed in this chapter, the more religious a society is, the more their sexuality- and family-related morality is "hygienic" and "righteous." Inversely, the more secular a society becomes, which typically parallels higher socioeconomic development, the less restricted sexuality- and family-related morality is, and the more it is marked by autonomy, equality, and flexibility. This implies an *isomorphism* between country-level associations and individual-level associations: at both levels, higher (individual or mean country level) religiosity predicts more restrictive sociosexuality and traditional family values, respectively individually or at the mean country level.

However, not isomorphism, but *asymmetry* in the associations between the individual and the collective levels occurs when we focus on the other part of morality—the interpersonal one relating to prosociality and honesty. Here, the more religious a society is, the lower its mean levels of prosociality and honesty are, and, inversely, in more secular countries, mean prosociality is higher and mean corruption is lower. The direction of these societal associations is in contrast to the opposite-direction individual-level associations with religiosity, where, as seen in this chapter, personal religiosity implies higher prosocial and honest attitudes and behaviors. The associations at the country level may indicate some causal role of societal religiosity, with religious societies, for instance, encouraging divides between groups and hierarchical structures leading to inequality and corruption. Alternatively, these associations may be artifacts of socioeconomic differences, with rich and developed countries implying social justice and income equality and thus less societal religiosity since, in these contexts, religion is less necessary to compensate for a dysfunctional society's detrimental effects on individuals' lives.

Country-Level Moderations: Religiosity Becomes More Intrinsic and Societies Slightly More Polarized

Beyond the country-level associations, a country's characteristics *moderate* the individual associations between religiosity and morality. Interestingly, when moving from religious to secular countries, the consequences for individual religiosity seem to be the same for the two types of moral domains (the interpersonal and the hygienic). In fact, in societies with higher social and economic development, stronger democracy, a greater presence of nonbelievers, a lower societal strength of religion, and/or more religious diversity, the associations of individual religiosity with homonegativity, restrictive sociosexuality, prosociality, and honesty become clearer or stronger. These moderating effects can be characterized as denoting a *strengthening of the religious–secular moral differentiation*.

How should such effects be understood? One plausible interpretation is that, in secular and rich cultural contexts, religiosity becomes more intrinsically motivated based on personal choice rather than social pressure and thus more authentic in its moral outcomes. Another interpretation, not incompatible with the previous one, is that, in

modern secular contexts, there is higher variability in people's moral attitudes and religiosity. Thus, statistically, the associations between religiosity and moral preferences simply become greater in size.

This does not mean that religiosity becomes more morally rigid in secular cultural contexts. As seen in this chapter, religionists' conservative morality attenuates in secular societies. However, this suggests some soft, not strong, polarization between believers and nonbelievers, given that the latter adopt very liberal modern moral positions. In an analysis of data from more than 200 world subregions, Wilkins-Laflamme (2016) focused on family values through an aggregate of attitudes on premarital relations, homosexuality, abortion, and distinct gender roles. A greater moral and religious divide between the religious and the secular was found in areas with a higher presence of the religiously unaffiliated, which are typically mostly nonbelievers. These greater differences were mainly due to more liberal attitudes and the lower religiosity of the unaffiliated rather than to more conservative attitudes or a higher religiosity of the religiously committed.

Economy, Sociopolitical Engagement, and Environmental Concerns: Weak Universals and Strong Cultural Variation

Contrary to the case for the domains of sexuality and family, as well as work ethic, prosociality, and honesty, where individual religiosity is accompanied by clear and consistent moral outcomes across religions and cultures, the role of individual religiosity seems weaker and much more culturally dependent for moral orientations relative to economy-related attitudes, sociopolitical engagement, and environmental concerns (see also Table 22.2). Overall, with regard to these domains, religiosity may be entangled in a conflict between concern for the common good (income equality, social justice, and preservation of the environment) and respect for established ways, norms, and authorities, all of which are threatened by civic action for social change, new pro-environmental lifestyles, or the modern, free market–based, economy.

Thus, not surprisingly, the ways religiosity relates to moral attitudes regarding these domains depends on (1) the religious tradition being embedded in individualistic (e.g., Western Christianity) versus collectivistic (e.g., Islam, Hinduism, Christian Orthodoxy) cultural contexts; (2) the form of religiosity (conservative and literal vs. symbolic) and the dimensions of religion (devotional vs. social) involved; and (3) the societal and religious emphasis on what is, at any given moment, socially and morally prescribed or proscribed.

Indeed, religion's role with regard to pro-capitalist attitudes is complex. Beyond religiosity's general tendency across cultures not to imply support for "inhuman capitalism" (excessive materialism that increases poverty), Western Christians, and in particular Protestants, tend to place higher value on individual over state responsibility, free market, and competition. The opposite is the case for non-Western religions that are embedded in more collectivistic cultures. Moreover, *religious belief*, possibly resulting from an attachment to hierarchies and respect for authority, leads, across cultures, to weak support for democracy—with Western Christians being the religionists who most

strongly support democracy. Similarly, possibly related to religious global conservatism and a desire to "retreat" from world affairs, religious belief does not favor (protesting ways of expressing) sociopolitical engagement. However, being a *member of a religious organization* predicts both support for democracy and sociopolitical engagement, the latter especially among Muslims born of immigrants and living in a context of perceived discrimination.

Finally, environmental attitudes, which denote prosocial concerns for future generations and the world, depend greatly on the kind of religious ideology emphasizing dominion versus stewardship in the human–earth relationship. More recently, however, environmental values have become increasingly endorsed by religious authorities, and since they do not conflict with other religious moral norms, personal religiosity has started to reflect high pro-environmental concerns across cultures.

Religion and the Conflict of Prosocial Versus Hygienic and Righteous Moralities

As shown in this chapter, religions, across cultures, like societies in general, have been concerned with two big areas of morality. One regulates quality in interpersonal relationships, valuing care, justice, and the avoidance of harm. The other regulates individuals' duties to the self, the community, and the sacred order of the world; it values internal and external purity, integrity in respecting broad abstract principles—independently of whether their consequences may be prosocial or not—loyalty toward the group, and respect for authority.

In other words, religion seems preoccupied, across cultures, by both *prosocial/cooperative* and *hygienic/righteous* moralities, or by both *consequentialism* and *deontology*, or, finally, by both *universal* care and fairness-based morality and *non-universal* loyalty-, authority-, and purity-based morality. Whereas humans agree regarding the prosocial, care-based morality, it is typically on the other part of morality that there exists a moral divide between conservatives and liberals, as well as between collectivistic and individualistic cultural contexts.

I examine here a further question that is critical to understanding religion's role in the sometimes-heated cultural moral divides: Is religion concerned *equally* with the two areas of morality? What are religion's *preferences* when the two moralities are in conflict?

First, empirical evidence suggests that personal religiosity is more clearly, strongly, or consistently related to attitudes and practices aimed at regulating sexuality, reproduction, marriage, and family than to other, prosocial aspects of morality. For instance, among US students, moral views about sexual behaviors (casual sex, homosexuality, abortion, divorce, cheating sex) are more strongly linked to religious attendance than are other moral issues such as lying, cheating, not helping, not forgiving, and disobeying parents (Weeden et al., 2008, Study 1). Similarly, Weeden and Kurzban (2013), having analyzed data from 90 countries (270,000 participants), found that cooperative morality (disapproval of various acts mostly denoting lying, cheating, violence, and harm) did not

really predict religiosity, and certainly not consistently across 10 major world regions, when controlling for sexual/reproductive morality. In contrast, more restrictive reproductive morality predicted religiosity in all world regions (see also Figure 22.7, where it also appears that this moral preference is stronger in traditional, non-Western societies).

In a similar vein, is religion's insistence on sexuality- and family-related morality explained by other-oriented empathetic concerns or by collectivistic principles? For instance, when religious people oppose issues like abortion, gay marriage/adoption, and euthanasia, do they do so because they care, as they claim, for the weak and defenseless fetuses, children, or elderly people? Interestingly, in two studies in Belgium, it was found that the moral opposition of religious people and conservatives versus the nonreligious and liberals on these three moral issues was not related to indicators of prosociality (care and fairness, empathy, generosity), but mainly reflected the conflict between endorsing or opposing the collectivistic morality of purity and loyalty (Deak & Saroglou, 2015, 2017).

Second, there are several life situations where prosocial concerns for others' well-being clearly compete with other principles more typical of righteousness, such as honesty, integrity, purity, and loyalty. This is a critical conflict between *consequentialism*, defined here as the avoidance of harm, and *deontology*, defined here as the respect of other than no harm principles, independently of and even despite their consequences

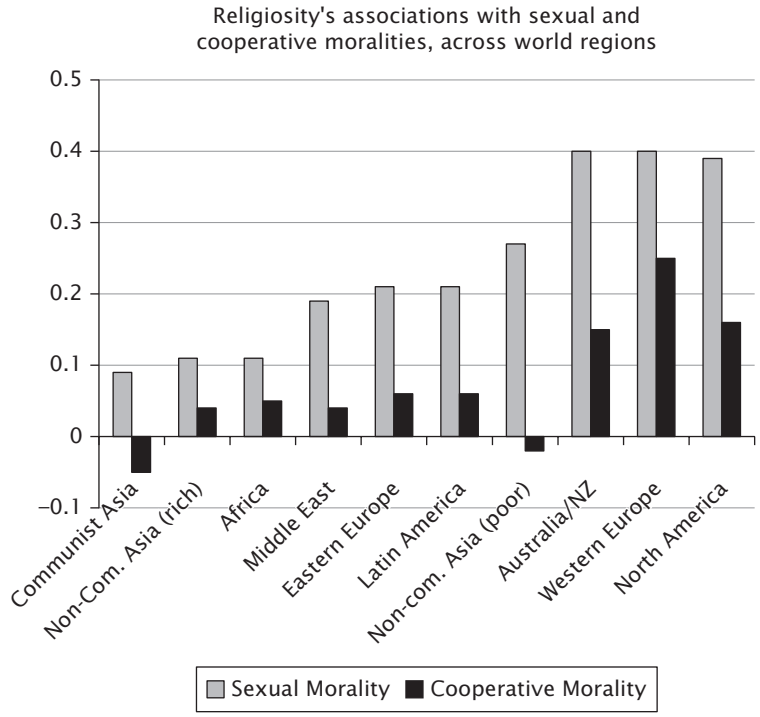

FIGURE 22.7 Association of religiosity with two types of morality, sexual and cooperative, by major world region (90 countries, 270,000 participants). Figure adapted with permission from Weeden and Kurzban (2013, table 5, p. 444). Elsevier Inc., 2013.

(indeed, a more realistic and critical dilemma than that of "should I kill one person to save the lives of many?").

Using a series of moral dilemmas where these two aspects of morality were in conflict (e.g., lying or putting a friend's life at risk; being loyal in respecting engagements taken or harming others), researchers found that, at least in a secularized Western European country (Belgium), religiosity struggles between these two aspects of morality. Valuing care as a function of religiosity counters religiosity's effect in favoring deontology, but only when the latter has very detrimental consequences for loved ones; otherwise, deontology is preferred (Deak & Saroglou, 2016). Moreover, religious primes fuel authoritarians' tendency to make such antisocial deontological choices (Van Pacherbeke, Freyer, & Saroglou, 2011). In more traditionally religious countries, other researchers found that religious people overall tend to prefer deontology/rule-based morality over utilitarian, consequentialist, or humanitarian moral concerns, judgments, and decisions. Religiosity thus predicted deontological over utilitarian judgments in a large set of moral scenarios (Banerjee, Huebner, & Hauser, 2010; large US web survey), moral objectivism over moral subjectivism (and the same was the case following a religious priming; Yilmaz & Bahçekapili, 2015, Studies 1 and 2; Turkey), and respect for rules (not cheating, not lying) over harm avoidance and care for others (Piazza & Landy, 2013, Study 2; United States).

In sum, rather than simply reflecting an "extended" morality (see Graham & Haidt, 2010), religion implies, across cultures, more emphasis on hygienic and righteous morality rather than on prosocial and cooperative morality. Religion is struggling with the two moralities in secular contexts, and it shows a preference for, in traditional cultures, deontological morality even when this morality conflicts with care and harm avoidance.

Distal Cultural Explanations of Prosocial and Hygienic Religious Morality

Back in the 1980s, it was argued that, from a sociobiological and evolutionary perspective, religion, as a cultural device that provides beliefs, rituals, and symbolic language emphasizing both family and prosociality values, allows for a shift from an altruism that is limited to natural, genetically based, and geographically limited kinship to a cultural altruism that is extended to a larger cultural kinship (see Batson, 1983). Much later, it was argued that this religious extension, from a natural to a culturally broader kinship, has been beneficial for the creation of broad human coalitions promoting reciprocity, cooperation, and the realization of demanding goals (Kirkpatrick, 2005). In addition, Batson, Schoenrade, and Ventis (1993), based on experimental work, concluded that a major motive of religious prosociality is the need for a positive self-image and positive evaluation by others, rather than clearly altruistic motives. Sociologists of religion have additionally argued and found that, in societies with a personal moral God, religiosity clearly relates to morality, whereas, in societies without a personal moral God, religiosity is rather unrelated to moral behavior (Stark, 2001). Finally, economists of religion have argued that

participation in a religious group's activities is costly (in time and resources) but serves as a strong signal of commitment, which is particularly expected within strict religious groups in order to reduce free riding (Iannacone, 1994).

These ideas have been revisited and further developed in recent years by scholars studying the cultural evolution of religion. A central idea is that the cultural evolution from religions without personal and moral gods to religions providing personal and moral "big" gods that are omniscient and ready to punish and reward people for their (im) moral behavior has facilitated the shift from small communities to larger "big" societies (Norenzayan et al., 2016). In these societies, morality can be fostered in the context of anonymity, a context that would otherwise facilitate immorality. This served to solidify trust and cooperation within large societies and privileged the expansion of major religions offering these types of big gods over alternative religious beliefs and practices. In addition, participation in religious rituals is a costly signaling behavior, thus a reliable indication that religious practitioners can be trusted; this, in turn, enhances cooperation (Sosis & Bressler, 2003). Nevertheless, though fascinating from an interdisciplinary evolutionary perspective, this approach does not easily transpose to explain contemporary cultural religious diversity. Questions also persist regarding the need for empirical validation of some parts of the theory (see commentaries in Norenzayn et al., 2016).

Another approach also takes into account the role of religion in contributing to in-group formation through preferential association with similar others but focuses on religious sociality as having a hygienic and disease- and parasite stress–protective function. Religion offers protective isolation from out-group individuals who may harbor novel infectious diseases and/or perform atypical behaviors possibly containing risks of contagion. Furthermore, it strengthens bonds, networks, and social support within the in-group, reducing the morbidity and mortality caused by infectious diseases that penetrate the in-group (Fincher & Thornhill, 2012; Thornhill & Fincher, 2014). These authors argue that, compared to other theories on the role of religion in dysfunctional societies, their theory could provide explanations for different benefit-cost ratios of interacting with in-groups versus out-groups under different degrees of parasite stress—in other words, explanations of cultural variability in religion and its consequences.

Indeed, Fincher and Thornhill (2012; Thornhill & Fincher, 2014) found, through the analyses of one dataset from 65 countries and another from the US states, that religiosity is higher in places where the prevalence of infectious diseases is high. (As shown in this chapter, in these societies, conservative, hygienic, and righteous morality is also high.) In another analysis of data from 216 countries, they also found that countries with higher disease richness and higher contemporary parasite severity are also countries with high religious diversity (many religions are present). This association holds even after controlling for population size, the Gini index, democracy, and GDP per capita. This approach can offer a comparative explanation of the prevalence, growth, and decline of religiosity across societies and possibly of the differential associations between religiosity and sexuality- and family-related morality across cultures.

Conclusion

Religiosity shapes people's moral preferences and behaviors in remarkably *similar* ways across cultures, including religious cultures. In doing so, religion is confronted with both universal moral imperatives and specific religious doctrines and norms, with the two, in some cases, being potentially conflicting. Beyond a global cultural divide in morality between believers of all religions and nonbelievers across almost all domains of human activity, from early sexual pleasure to the decision on when to die and how to be mourned, *different* religious cultures exist. They mirror, follow, precede, shape, create, counter, or compensate for other aspects of culture and cultural differences on morality. Cultural developments also shape religious morality, and this morality *changes* accordingly, even if it pretends to remain the same.

These processes are less concerned with defining what is good or bad and more with defining what should be preferred as a higher good, or what should be avoided as a worse evil, and for which reasons. In other words, religions create subcultures of hierarchies of values. In some cases, insistence on a too narrow or too broad good ends up in serious evil. Finally, the existence of multiple cultural sources, including religious and secular ones, defining or commenting on what is moral or morally preferable is misleadingly named moral *relativism*; instead, it is a guarantee of more *autonomous* and *mature* morality.

Acknowledgments

This review and the writing of this chapter was facilitated by a sabbatical year offered to the author by his home university. Part of the literature review was conducted when the author was, during the sabbatical year, on scientific stay at New York University, a stay financially supported by the Belgian National Fund for Scientific Research.

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