

The Impact of Religion on Values and Behavior*

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1. Introduction

The mutual interest in religions and values was the basis of a long co-operation with Kazufumi Manabe. This paper attempts to set up a broader perspective for future research by elaborating three limitations of the existing analyses. In the next section the argument will be brought forward that the relationship between religion, values and behavior requires a more complex macro-micro-design than it is usually applied in the empirical studies. In the third section it will be shown that the existing literature on the relationship between religion and work values remains unsatisfying because the measurement issues so far have not been clarified and most papers do not include work efficiency, productivity or, more general, the outcome of work in the analysis. Therefore, the core argument in the Protestant ethic so far has not been adequately tested. While the effect of religion and work ethics has often been discussed another relationship is largely unexplored. In section 4, the argument will be brought forward that the so-called postmodern values of self-determination, in particular gender equality and sexual tolerance can be seen as unintended outcomes of the Protestant reformation in Western Europe. In order to render empirical plausibility to the theoretical arguments, a few simple, macro-level analyses of the combined European and World Value Surveys¹⁾ will be added in Sections 3 and 4. These exploratory analyses only intend to show that it seems worthwhile to examine the theoretical arguments in the paper more closely.

2. Conceptual Framework

It has become very common in empirical research to distinguish at least between the macro- and the micro-level, and sometimes even between more than two levels. The micro-level typically consists of individuals. The higher levels are often conceptualized as aggregates or systems of individuals. In the analysis of religion it is fruitful, however, to introduce religion as a meaning system on a further level of analysis. It consists of symbols, teachings and doctrines which are often documented in holy textbooks, such as the Holy Scripture. They also become manifest in religious and mundane arts, in poetry etc. As archeology shows, meaning systems can persist even if they are forgotten for centuries. They are, therefore, independent from the actual society and conceptualized as a separate level of analysis.

If the meaning system of religion is understood in a broad sense it includes symbols, doctrines, beliefs, prescriptions, values and norms. Can religion in this sense affect values? It only could affect them if the values under consideration are not part of the meaning system or if the meaning systems as a whole can influence its own parts, in particular the values. It is not necessary to discuss these possibilities in detail

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1) The file has been downloaded from <http://www.jdsurvey.net/web/evs1.htm>: European Values Study Group and World Values Survey Association. EUROPEAN AND WORLD VALUES SURVEYS FOUR-WAVE INTEGRATED DATA FILE, 1981–2004, v.20060423, 2006. **Aggregate File Producers:** Análisis Sociológicos Económicos y Políticos (ASEP) and JD Systems (JDS), Madrid, Spain/Tilburg University, Tilburg, The Netherlands. **Data Files Suppliers:** Análisis Sociológicos Económicos y Políticos (ASEP) and JD Systems (JDS), Madrid, Spain/Tilburg University, Tilburg, The Netherlands/ Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung (ZA), Cologne, Germany.) **Aggregate File Distributors:** Análisis Sociológicos Económicos y Políticos (ASEP) and JD Systems (JDS), Madrid, Spain/Tilburg University, Tilburg, The Netherlands/Zentralarchiv für Empirische Sozialforschung (ZA) Cologne, Germany.

because the beliefs, norms and values of the individuals are logically independent from each other. An empirical question, for instance, is whether the belief in life after death is correlated with the value *respect for life*. Similarly, average beliefs and values at the macro-level which are mathematically derived from micro-level orientations are empirically related to each other.

As depicted in Figure 1, the meaning system religion has to be analytically distinguished from the presentation or visibility of religion in a given society. Religion can be presented in manifold ways. In traditional societies religious beliefs are often imposed by the political authorities. One has to believe what the king or the priest prescribes. Religious and political leaders will try to control the communication processes in such a way that people have to adopt the beliefs and norms. In free societies, by contrast, several religions typically compete on religious markets. Individuals can make their own choice on which religion to adopt. The higher the visibility of a meaning system, the higher the chances are of recognition by the citizens. While American sociologists of religion like Stark and Iannaccone (1994; Iannaccone 1991; 1993; Iannaccone et al. 1997) assume that free competition on the religious market will increase visibility and quality of religious products and as a consequence stimulate religious participation, theories of secularization often maintain that religion becomes increasingly invisible in modern societies.

In Figure 1 *presentation of religion* is a macro-level variable. However, religion can be presented at many levels, beginning with public religious rites like Christmas in the Western World or New Years Day in Asia and ending with the presentation in the family or other private environments. Not only priests, but also politicians, teachers, friends, and many others may influence our exposure to religion. According to socialization theories, the religious behavior of parents largely affects the religiosity of the children. These few hints already demonstrate that the presentation of religion in modern societies is a very complex multi-level process. In the simplified model in Figure 1, it is reduced to an impact of *presentation of religion* on the macro-level on *exposure to religion* on the micro-level. Further complexity has to be added if the path from exposure to religion to action is elaborated on the basis of the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen and Fishbein 1975; 1980): Individuals who are continuously exposed to religion will adopt certain beliefs and values which then structure attitudes and beliefs about behavior. The latter may affect the behavioral intention which, in turn, may finally — besides behavioral control - affect behavior. The explanatory sketch in Figure 1 represents the chain for a single action. Its complexity would be tremendously increased if several actors and/ or actions were taken into account.

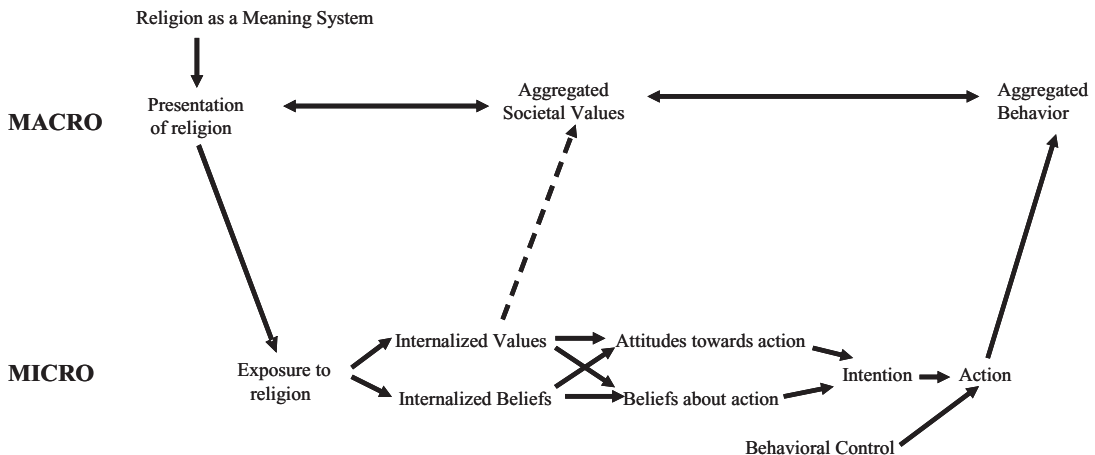


Figure 1: The Relationship between Religion, Values, and Action in a Simplified Micro-Macro-Model

In the light of Figure 1, Max Weber (1984) himself has only rudimentarily investigated the processes which ultimately led to the rise of Capitalism. He has predominantly focused on the meaning system and on the aggregate level and analyzed relationships between Ethics and religion. The new Calvinist work ethics which emerged in the 16th and 17th century were based on a specific Calvinistic understanding of God and salvation. The work morality did not logically follow from these beliefs but it could be more easily embedded in such a belief system. Max Weber has largely neglected the cross-level and individual-level relationships as Coleman (1970) has pointed out. Doubts may arise a) whether priests have accepted the teaching on predestination and whether they have drawn a connection between these beliefs and work morality (MacKinnon 1988a), b) whether these beliefs and norms have been internalized by the Calvinist laymen, c) whether Calvinist entrepreneurs in particular later on have acted in accordance with these norms, and d) whether their behavior later on became the basis of the spirit of Capitalism on the societal level. Max Weber, however, has already pointed to a consequence of the rationalization process which present comparative analyses on work values typically ignore. Once capitalism is institutionalized, a religiously based work ethos is no longer required. By establishing competition and other institutions, capitalism is able to keep the high standards of professional work²⁾ without religion. Competition, for instance, guarantees diligence! People who are not industrious are fired or go bankrupt in a capitalist system.

In order to test the core argument of Max Weber it is therefore not only necessary to model the process in a multi-level design but also to include measures of work efficiency and productivity in the analysis. Authors like Norris and Inglehart (2004), confine themselves to the left half of Figure 1 and arrive at the conclusion that the influence of Protestantism on work ethics has disappeared. In order to elaborate the limitation of this approach in greater detail we will carry out a similar aggregate-level analysis with different indicators. It includes only variables of the left part of Figure 1 and does not meet the requirements in Figure 1. More specifically, we classify societies according to their religious traditions and impute that these religions have been presented to the respective populations for several centuries. We try to find out whether these societies differ with regard to work values.

3. Religion and Work Ethics

3.1 Hypotheses and Assumptions

Max Weber's Protestant Ethics have stimulated a huge amount of empirical research on the relationship between religion and economic and occupational success on the micro- and the macro-level. The analysis of Glenn and Hyman (1967) exemplifies the state of the research in the US until the mid of the sixties. The debate continues, however. Recently macro-economics has also become interested in the Weber thesis (Cavalcanti et al., 2006 with further references). According to Max Weber it is not religion but a specific ethic embedded in the religion belief system which promotes the spirit of Capitalism and economic success. While economists typically focus on the relation between religion and indicators of economic development or work efficiency, sociologists often confine themselves to the relationship between religion and work ethics. Let us follow the latter approach and state as a first hypothesis:

H1: The population in Protestant and religiously mixed societies with a larger proportion of Protestants should on the average attribute a higher importance to competitive activism, hard work, and thrift than people in other societies.

Max Weber has explicitly stated that Confucianism lacks the relevant components of Protestant Ethics. In the light of the economic success of Asian countries after World War II, scholars like Berger or Harrison³⁾ have critically re-assessed the Weber thesis and replaced it by the Post-Confucian thesis

2) Whether you call the standards work morality or work motivation seems to be a matter of taste. Subsequently both expressions will be used synonymously.

3) See Kwon (2007) for a discussion.

according to which Confucianism has not only entailed many of the virtues of Capitalism, but also included specific Asian values which enabled countries like Japan and Korea to develop an Asian variant of Capitalism. If one shares this view⁴⁾ one should expect that achievement and work orientations are also high in countries with a Confucian tradition:

H 2: The population in Asian countries with a Confucian tradition should, on average, attribute a higher importance to competitive activism, hard work, and thrift than people in other societies.

In order to see whether the World Value Survey might give some support to these two hypotheses, we have carried out an exploratory analysis. The results, however, can only confirm or disconfirm the hypotheses if several necessary conditions are met. Specifically we assume that

- C 1: societal values persist since the eighties and that it is therefore not essential whether we take data from the eighties, the nineties or from this century,
- C 2: the relationship between religion and work morality is not concealed by other forces,
- C 3: work values are reliably measured in the World Value survey. The indicators are scale-equivalent so that means can be compared across countries.

3.2 Religious Zones

In order to investigate whether the data are roughly compatible with the hypotheses, we have assigned the countries of the World Value Surveys into the following groups:

- (1) Anglo-Saxon
- (2) Protestant
- (3) Asian Countries with a Confucian Tradition (Asian Mix)
- (4) Israel (if question has been asked)
- (5) Christian Mix
- (6) Singapore (Confucian-Islamic Mix)
- (7) Catholic
- (8) Orthodox
- (9) Islamic-Christian
- (10) Islamic
- (11) Hindu

A country has been considered as dominated by a single religion if the majority of people belong to a single religion. A country has been considered as religiously mixed if at least two religions reached more than 20 percent of the population. In those few instances where these two criteria led to unconvincing results, the historical tradition of the country has been taken into account. This was particularly true in former communist countries in Middle and Eastern Europe.

Classifications like this are always open to many objections. In particular Protestants as well as Orthodox are split up into many religious denominations, and it is arguable whether they should be fused into a single group. The Orthodox churches have often built up very specific relations with the political powers in the respective countries. One can also object that specific countries have been incorrectly classified. With respect to their religious tradition, Estonia and South Africa have been classified as Protestant countries but it might be more appropriate to treat them nowadays as religiously mixed. And does Northern Ireland really belong to the Anglo-Saxon pattern?

It may be considered even more problematic that countries are not weighted in accordance with their population sizes. However, we do not consider the national cultures but only the religious cultures as

4) Kwon (2007) attributes the economic success to the role of Asian states as cultural actors. Needless to say that states could also influence the work orientations of their citizens.

relevant for the moment. A Catholic, say, from Italy is exposed to the same work ethics as a Catholic, say in Northern Ireland. Furthermore, no distinction has been made between the different waves of the World Value Surveys. We have taken the assumption seriously that the work ethics changes only gradually within centuries.

3.3 Importance of Work

In Figure 2 it is investigated how much emphasis is placed on the importance of work in the different cultural zones. The item was included in a battery on the importance of different life domains. Work was one of these domains. Respondents could answer on a 4 point scale which runs from very important (=1) to not at all important (=4). In Figure 2 these scales are treated as scale invariant interval scales. Only if this untested assumption is met can the means in the different zones be compared. As can be seen, a fairly high importance is attributed to work in all religious zones because the average never exceeds 2.0. However, the highest importance is attributed to work in those countries where we did not expect it: In India and in countries where the Muslim religion is strong, the averages are close to one. The countries where we expected high work ethics and work motivation range in the middle (Confucian and Protestant countries) or at the right end of the scale (Anglo-Saxon countries).

Figure 2 also reports error bars. Regarding the fact that we do not have single stage random samples from the cultural zones they must not be interpreted as confidence intervals in a statistical sense. Rather they convey crude but nevertheless useful information about the number of cases and the homogeneity of the population. The confidence interval for Singapore is large, for instance, because the country has participated only in a single survey (small N) and the population is relatively heterogeneous with regard to work ethics. By contrast the confidence intervals are very small in the three religious zones where respondents place the highest importance on work.

One may object to the analysis that the four point scales do not really reach interval level. However, if we treat the responses as ordinal no other picture emerges. In Figure 3 the results are depicted in the form of stacked bars. *Very important* is represented by black, *rather important* by hatched, *not very important* by grey and *not at all* by white bars. As already mentioned, the large majority in all religious zones considers work either important or very important. However, in the three religious regions at the top of the Figure the category 1 is chosen by far most often: nearly 83 percent of the respondents in India and in the religious mixed Muslim-Christian zone and nearly 75 percent of the respondents in the Muslim zone consider work very important. So, the measurement level is not important. What really matters is the comparability of the answers.

Can we conclude with Norris and Inglehart (2004) that the principles of the Protestant Ethics have lost their importance in postmodern societies? Certainly not! Our item simply does not touch on the religious meaning of work which is essential to the Protestant Ethic. Items like "*Work is a duty to the society*" used by Norris and Inglehart are not better in that respect because the religious asceticism was driven by the need for salvation or by a calling, not by a perceived duty for the society.

Following Max Weber, we do not expect the Protestant ethic to persist: "For when asceticism was carried out of monastic cells into everyday life, and began to dominate worldly morality, it did its part in building the tremendous cosmos of the modern economic order. This order is now bound to the technical and economic conditions of machine production which today determine the lives of all individuals ... with irresistible force. ... In Baxter's view ... [the] care for external goods should only lie on the shoulders of the "saint like a light cloak, which can be thrown aside at any moment". But fate decreed that the cloak should become an iron cage. ... Today the spirit of religious asceticism ... has escaped from the cage. But victorious capitalism, since it rests on mechanical foundations, needs its support no longer (see Weber 1984: 188⁵).

Unfortunately, the items also do measure the norms and standards of work which emerged from that

5) The English translation has been copied from <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/weber/WeberCH 5.html>

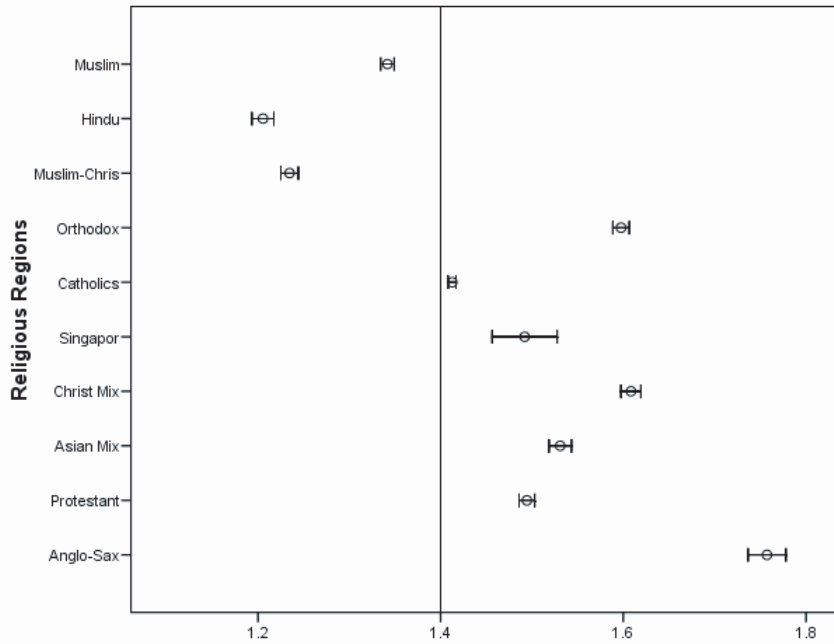


Figure 2: Average Importance of Work: Results from the Combined European and World Value Survey 1981-2005

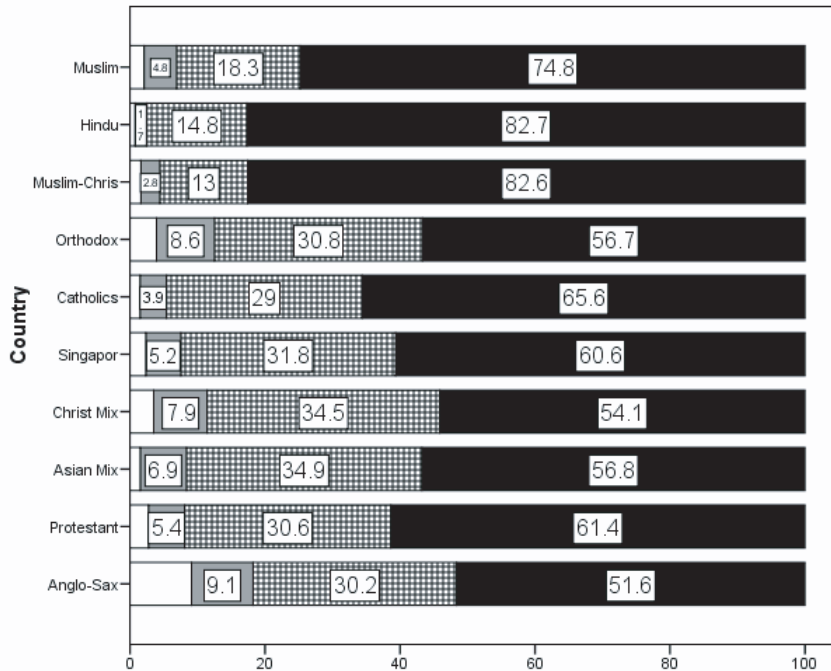


Figure 3: The Frequency Distribution of Importance of Hard Work: Results from the Combined Value Survey 1981-2005:

change. These modern standards are often based on law, and they are above all established with a system of incentives and sanctions. Accordingly, the items do not measure the standards which guide the life and work of modern individuals. In addition, culture-specific response sets⁶⁾ and religiously desirable response behavior may distort the answers. Above all, questions which directly or indirectly address the importance of work will almost certainly be affected by the actual situation in the labor market. As long as work is a major source of income, its desirability increases with scarcity. Thus people in poor societies with high unemployment rates will place a higher importance on work than people in societies with good job opportunities⁷⁾.

Thus, there are reasons for calling the measurement quality of the items into question. Responses could be inflated by social desirability and could be distorted by labor market conditions. If so, we can nicely explain a German finding which was a hot issue in Germany several decades ago. In 1979 Noelle-Neumann showed that the work orientations of West Germans had markedly declined over time. Later on, German work orientations also turned out relatively low in international comparisons (see Noelle-Neumann and Strümpel 1984). At the same time, Germany was economically very successful. Germany is still the world champion in exports. How can we explain this discrepancy? In the sixties and seventies German children were taught at school that work is not all in life. Quite a few pupils had to read the famous fable of the French poet La Fontaine about the ant and the cricket. While the ant works hard during summer and stocks up food for the winter, the cricket only plays music. In autumn the cricket has nothing to eat and asks the ant for help. Teachers compared Germans with the ants which only know work but cannot enjoy life. The lesson to be drawn was that German children should neither become ants nor crickets but find the happy medium. This may explain to some extent why Germans do not attribute a high importance to work in surveys. As far as long-term comparisons are concerned, the low unemployment rates in the sixties may have operated in the same direction.

One can interpret the results in a completely different way, however, by assuming that the item really measures work orientation. Those who say that work is important really attribute a high importance to work. Then we have to solve the puzzle that the economically most successful Anglo-Saxon, Protestant and East Asian societies have the lowest work motivation. A possible solution to the puzzle is that the work orientation has only a very slight effect on work behavior and achievement. In capitalism supervision, quality control and other institutional arrangement contribute much more to work efficiency than the work motivation of people.

3. 4 Hard Work as a Goal of Education

Other questions may therefore be better suited for measuring work morality. The question with children should be encouraged to learn at home *hard work*, is probably slightly less affected by the actual demand for labor force. The item was included in a longer battery on desirable child qualities.

Figure 4 reports the percentage of respondents in each religious zone who mention hard work as an important child property. This time the orthodox countries rank first. More than eighty percent of the respondents in this religious zone mention hard work as a desirable child property. India, the Islamic countries, and countries with a mix of Muslims and Christians display high percentages too. In countries which, according to our hypotheses, should rank high, however, only between twenty and forty percent of the respondents mention hard work. The Confucian Asian countries lay in between these countries and the leading countries. Thus, the pattern again is not consistent with our hypothesis.

Perhaps child qualities are also not optimally suited for measuring work ethics too. Respondents will place highest importance on those properties which in their view contribute most to the success of a child. If hard work is seen as essential to the economic success, it will probably be mentioned. To some extent

6) It is often argued, for instance, that Japanese tend to middle categories. If it were true, Japanese would also not attribute exceptionally high emphasis on work values.

7) An immediate consequence of this assumption is that unemployed people or people with a high risk of unemployment should display or assign a higher importance to work.

the priorities will also be determined by our capacities. If we cannot give our children a good education or train their cognitive competences, we will resort to those abilities which are at least to some extent under our control. It is probably easier for many people to teach hard work than creativity, for instance. Consequently child quality will not so much reflect the work ethics of the respondent but properties which in the perception of the respondent are relevant to a successful life and at least to some extent controllable.

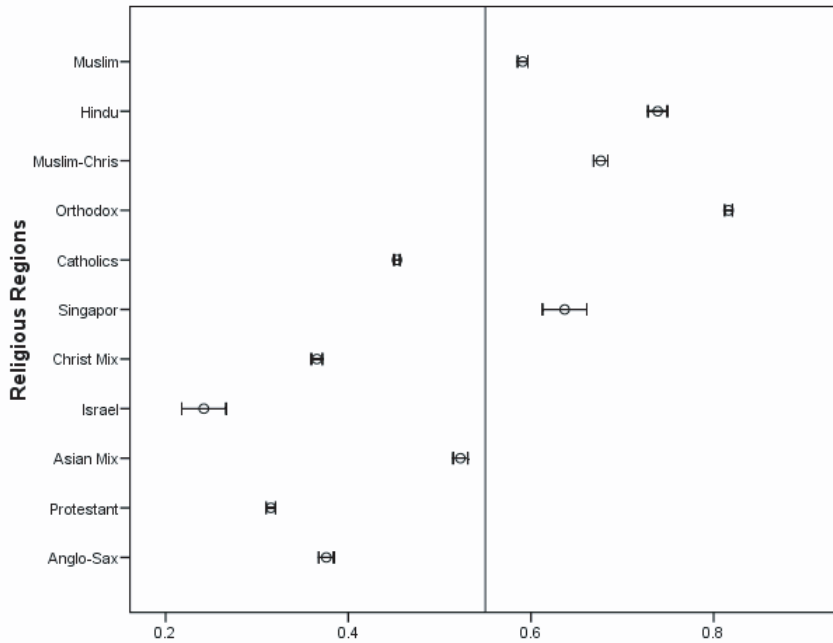


Figure 4: Hard Work as an Important Child Quality
Results from the Combined Value Survey 1981-2005:

3.5 Fair Payment and Bribery

If social desirability is a problem, it may be less severe with regard to ethical standards which are more remote from our daily experience. We therefore briefly examine beliefs about fair payment and the attitude toward bribery. Many people will never come into the situation of accepting or rejecting a bribe. Similarly, only few people have to decide on wages and are confronted with the question whether a wage is fair or not. To be sure, people may complain about wage differences between managers and the employees but they do not have any influence on these wages. Therefore, their responses may better reflect their underlying standards and be less affected by situational considerations.

It is one of the implications of achievement societies that rewards correspond to the achievements. The one who works more effectively should also be better paid. It can be plausibly argued that this aspect of achievement justice is part of the Protestant Ethic. The Value Surveys include a question in which two secretaries are compared. One is working harder and more effectively and earns a little bit more than the other. Respondents have to say whether they consider this arrangement as fair or not.

Figure 5 displays the proportion of respondents who consider the higher payment as fair. In all religious zones these are more than seventy percent. Achievement justice seems already to have established as a universal principle. It is not true, however, that Protestant societies hold a stricter standard than other countries. On the contrary, the Protestant zone ranks last. While about 85 percent of the Muslims and even a higher percentage in Orthodox countries and Singapore consider the differential wage

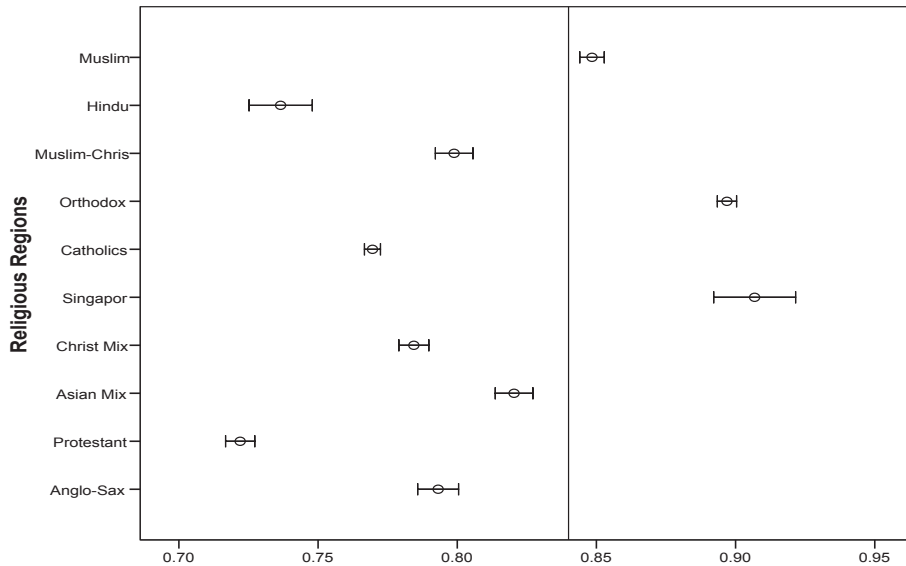


Figure 5: Should the one who works harder earn more?
Results from the Combined Value Surveys 1981 to 2005

as appropriate, only about 72 percent of the population in Protestant countries agrees. Egalitarian considerations seem to play a larger role in these countries than in other societies.

Let us finally turn to bribery. Figure 6 displays the averages on a ten point scale for measuring the attitude toward bribery. Point 1 on the scale means that bribery is never o.k., and point 10 means that it is always o.k. Respondents can choose these extremes or positions in between. As can be inferred from the Figure, the large majority of respondents in all countries choose the scale values 1 or 2. The further to the left a mean is located the more strongly the population condemns bribery. Accordingly, Muslim countries are most rigid, shortly followed by Israel, Anglo-Saxon and Asian countries. The Protestant countries this time hold a middle position. Orthodox and Catholic societies as well as various religiously mixed countries are slightly more lenient towards bribery.

Just as a high work orientation does not imply a high productivity and efficiency of work, a rigid position on the bribery scale does not imply low levels of corruption in the respective society. On the contrary, wide-spread bribery may generate a very negative view of the population on bribery and very rigid attitudes. Other mechanisms may contribute to rigid attitudes too. Religiously highly integrated people will also display a high degree of norm conformity. Religious teachings typically elaborate the rules but not the exceptions. Followers of a religion will presumably do the same. Finally, rigid rules are often an indication of closed-mindedness which in turn depends on education. We therefore can expect more rigid positions in countries where the level of education is low and people are still very religious.

As in the case of work orientations it is not the knowledge of moral norms, but institutions like courts and the press which effectively curb bribery. These institutions seem to be best developed in Protestant societies. If we take the corruption perceptions index 2005 of Transparency International as an indicator of bribery, the Protestant Scandinavian countries rank by far best. Six out of our nine Protestant countries have rank numbers below ten. Only three societies perform worse, Germany, Estonia and South Africa. We have already mentioned that Estonia and South Africa are rather religiously mixed than Protestant societies. But even if we include these countries the median rank for the Protestant countries is six. Half of the countries have a rank below and half a rank above six. If we, by contrast, take the Islamic countries, the medium rank is 97! Obviously the Protestant countries were much more efficient in establishing structures which actually reduce corruption than others. Norris and Inglehart (2004: 178) are certainly correct in

pointing out that the Protestant ethic is no longer visible if we look at the verbal norm compliance. It is visible, however, if we take indicators for the extent of corruption. This is completely in line with a generalized version of Max Weber's argument. Just like capitalism has enforced value conform behavior by establishing competition and other economic institutions, Western societies have established the rule of law and a judicial system which to a larger extent protect against bribery. It is certainly true that societies would be better off if people would deliberately keep to the norms of the Protestant ethic. However, our data clearly show that the religious basis alone cannot guarantee norm compliance.

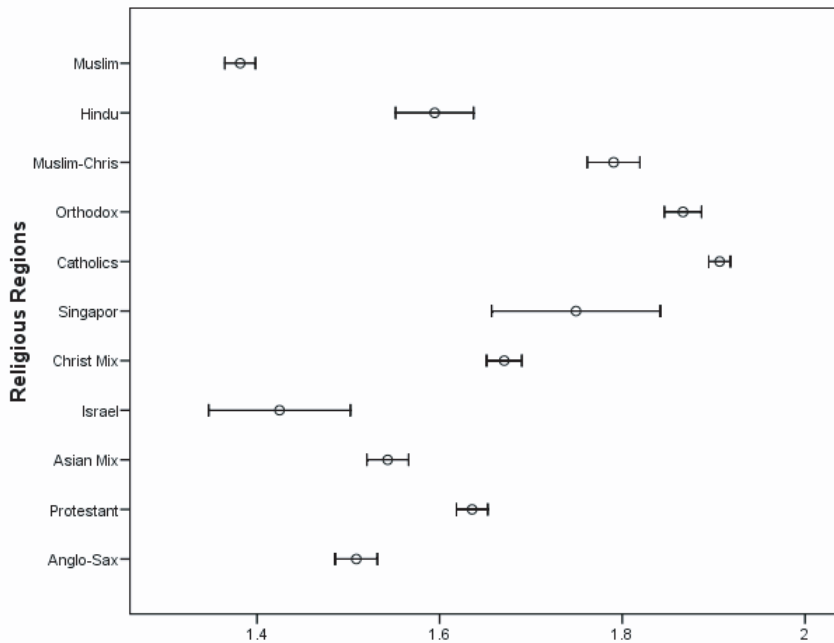


Figure 6: Attitude toward Bribery
Results from the Combined Value Surveys 1981 to 2005

4. Religion and so-called Postmodern Values

There might be another relation between religion and values which so far has not been systematically discussed. By emphasizing the equality of all human beings and their individual responsibility before God (see Jagodzinski and Dobbelaere, 1995 with further references), Protestantism has not only weakened the role of the church but contributed to the rise of a world view in which human dignity and the equality of life chances have become universal standards.

Let us first address the topic of gender equality. As the question has not been asked in Israel we only expect

H 3: Protestant and Anglo-Saxon societies to place a higher emphasis on gender equality.

The respective item in the Value Surveys reads as follows: “When jobs are scarce, men have more right to a job than women”. Respondents could agree or disagree or spontaneously answer neither nor. The item has been transformed in a three-point scale with agree=1, neither nor=2, and disagree=3. Figure 7 reports the mean value for each cultural zone. The higher the mean, the higher also the preference for gender equality.

This time the results are perfectly consistent with our expectations. The Anglo-Saxon and Protestant

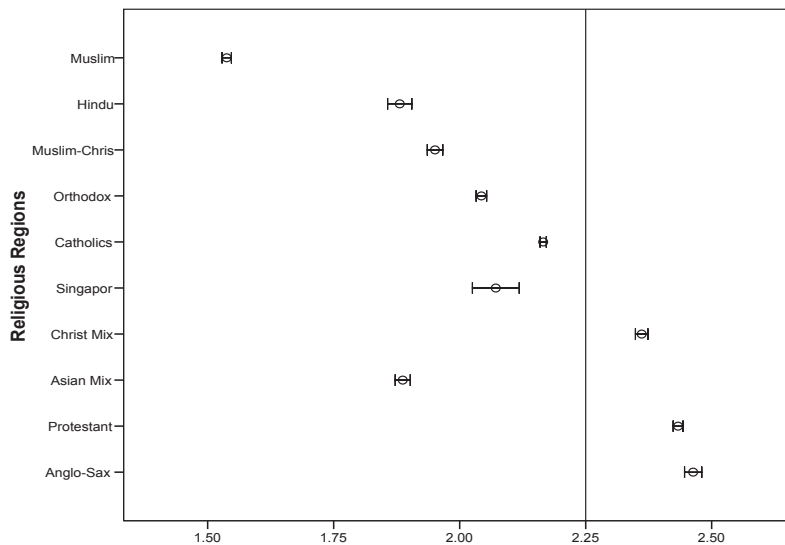


Figure 7: Job Opportunities for Men and Women
Results from the Combined Value Surveys 1981 to 2005

countries display the highest preference for gender equality closely followed by the countries with mixed Christian religions: Whether these differences will persist in a multivariate multi-level analysis needs further investigation.

Some aspects of sexual morality may also be affected by the process of individualization. This was certainly not foreseen by those who initiated the Protestant reformation, and therefore is an unintended consequence. Individualization, however, must not be equated to sexual permissiveness as is frequently done. Freedom of choice should only be granted where the respective behavior does not violate the rights of other persons. Space limitations prohibit a comprehensive elaboration of this point. The least difficult problem presumably is homosexuality. In a secular society, there is hardly any justification for prohibiting homosexuality as long as the rights of other human beings are not touched. This consequence seems to have been most strictly drawn in Northwestern Europe. Anglo-Saxon countries seem to be in between the Protestant and Catholic countries. Rather as a generation of previous observations than as a theoretically derived hypothesis we state:

- H 4: On the average members of Protestant West European societies and to a lesser extent countries of the Anglo-Saxon zone display a higher tolerance towards homosexuality than members of other cultures.

In contrast to the question on gender equality, the battery on moral attitudes has also been applied in the last wave in Israel. To our surprise, Israel turns out in Figure 8 as the most liberal country as far as homosexuality is concerned. The internal rationalization of the Jewish Ethics which has already been described by Max Weber (1975; 1984), Berger (1967) and others may insofar have resulted in a similar concept of self-determination as we observe it in Europe. Apart from that unexpected finding, the data again neatly corresponds to our hypothesis. The Protestant and the religiously mixed Christian countries display the highest levels of tolerance. Note that homosexuality is also used as an indicator of self-determination or self-expression values in the post-modernization theory (Inglehart 1997; Inglehart and Welzel 2005). While this theory considers the rise of self-determination primarily to be determined by the economic and technical development, the religious roots of the process are emphasized here. Jagodzinski and Dülmer (2005) have demonstrated in a multi-level analysis of the European Value Survey 1999 that religious influences on the attitude toward homosexuality are still visible besides economic influences. An

interaction effect between economic development and Protestantism becomes particularly significant. Further analysis on a world-wide level should be carried out in order to gain a better understanding of the influence of religion on these attitudes.

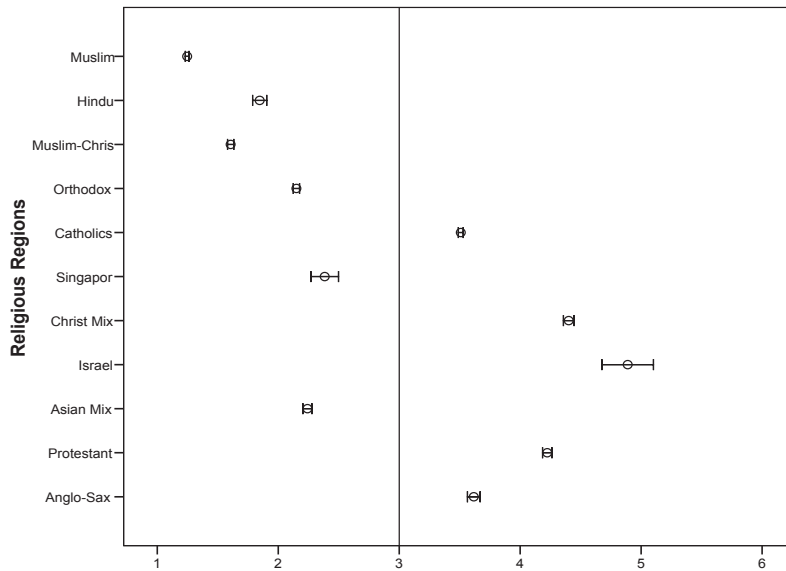


Figure 8: Homosexuality

5. Discussion and Conclusions

As far as work ethics are concerned, three conclusions can be drawn from the preceding analysis for further research. First of all, statements on the importance of work do not so much reflect an internalized moral norm as the demand for work. As long as we live from it, work becomes more important, the scarcer it is. Second, other norms of the achievement society have become universal in the sense that almost all people on the globe know the norms. They know what is fair or unfair with regard to payment, and they also know that it is hardly justifiable to accept a bribe. However, verbal norm compliance does not guarantee norm conform behavior.

In order to explain work productivity and efficiency, quite a few possibilities have to be more closely examined. Let us confine to three: (1) Maybe we do not find a relationship because we so far have not been able to measure work values reliably. (2) Maybe work values are reliably measured but they have no or little influence on work efficiency and productivity. Rather, in line with Weber's argument, this is nowadays much better guaranteed by competition and other institutional arrangements in capitalist societies. (3) Maybe the work values are important for the economic success of a society but only the work values of a relatively small group of people in higher occupations. In order to discern between these possibilities we have first to examine the reliability of the measurement instruments more carefully. Social desirability is not easily detected. Second we have to identify those institutions and groups which have or may have an effect on the outcome of work. We have further to develop criteria for good and bad performance. Finally, we have to unravel the fairly long causal chain which has lead from the religious ethics in different societies to the values and institutional arrangements of market economies. Only if these problems are solved can we hope to find answers on our questions.

With regard to bribery, the situation is slightly different. While most adults in our society work, hopefully only few are involved in bribery. This makes it rather unlikely to find a relationship between the average attitude in a mass survey and aggregated behavior, even if a relationship actually exists. The fact, however, that Protestant countries rank fairly low on the bribery perceptions index of transparency

international, weakly supports the assumption that the Protestant ethic may have promoted the generation of institutions which effectively reduce bribery. Again, we have to identify these institutions, to develop indicators for their performance, and to disentangle the chain from the religious ethic to the emergence of these institutions before we can get a deeper insight into the relationship.

With regard to gender equality and sexual tolerance, two questions deserve further investigations. First of all, are the two attitudes in combination with others reliable, metric equivalent indicators of a broader concept of self-determination as Inglehart suggests? From the perspective of parsimony a positive answer could only be welcomed. Independently of whether there exists a broader concept or not, the relationship between this or the more specific attitudes on the one hand and the change in the Protestant ethics deserves further historical analyses. Why and when has the idea of individual responsibility been applied to fields like gender or sexual behavior? Did this new understanding of self-determination first spread-out in secularized, religiously unaffiliated groups? And was the disenchantment of Protestantism a major cause of the rapid growth of these groups? As in the case of work values, the causal process deserves further investigation.

Literature

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1. Anglo-Saxon Countries⁸⁾		5. Jewish Country: Israel	(4)
UK	(1, 2, 3, 4)	6. Eastern Orthodox	(3)
USA	(1, 2, 3, 4)	51 Armenia	(3)
Northern Ireland	(1, 2, 4)	100 Bulgaria	(2, 3, 4)
2. Catholic Countries		112 Belarus	(2, 3, 4)
32 Argentina	(1, 2, 3, 4)	268 Georgia	(3)
40 Austria	(2, 4)	300 Greece	(4)
56 Belgium	(1, 2, 4)	498 Republic of Moldova	(3, 4)
76 Brazil	(2, 3)	642 Romania	(2, 3, 4)
152 Chile	(2, 3)	643 Russian Federation	(2, 3, 4)
170 Colombia	(3)	804 Ukraine	(3, 4)
191 Croatia	(3, 4)	911 Serbia	(3, 4)
203 Czech Republic	(2, 3, 4)	913 Serbian Republic of Bosnia	(3, 4)
214 Dominican Republic	(3)	7. Protestant Countries	
250 France	(1, 2, 4)	208 Denmark	(1, 2, 4)
348 Hungary	(1, 2, 3, 4)	233 Estonia	(2, 3, 4)
372 Ireland	(1, 2, 4)	246 Finland	(2, 3, 4)
380 Italy	(1, 2, 4)	352 Iceland	(1, 2, 4)
440 Lithuania	(2, 3, 4)	554 New Zealand	(3)
442 Luxembourg	(4)	578 Norway	(1, 2, 3)
470 Malta	(1, 2, 4)	710 South Africa	(2, 3, 4)
484 Mexico	(2, 3, 4)	752 Sweden	(1, 2, 3, 4)
604 Peru	(3, 4)	901 Germany East	(2, 3, 4)
608 Philippines	(3, 4)	8. Mixed Christian Traditions	
616 Poland	(2, 3, 4)	36 Australia	(1, 3)
620 Portugal	(2, 4)	124 Canada	(1, 2, 4)
630 Puerto Rico	(3, 4)	222 El Salvador	(3)
703 Slovakia	(2, 3, 4)	428 Latvia	(2, 3, 4)
705 Slovenia	(2, 3, 4)	528 Netherlands	(1, 2, 4)
724 Spain	(1, 2, 3, 4)	716 Zimbabwe (but indigenous)	(4)
858 Uruguay	(3)	756 Switzerland	(2, 3)
862 Venezuela	(3, 4)	900 Germany West	(1, 2, 3, 4)
3. Hindu Country: India	(2, 3, 4)	9. Christian-Islamic Countries	
4. Islamic Countries		8 Albania	(3, 4)
12 Algeria	(4)	566 Nigeria	(2, 3, 4)
31 Azerbaijan	(3)	800 Uganda	(4)
50 Bangladesh	(3, 4)	807 Macedonia, Republic of	(3, 4)
360 Indonesia	(4)	834 Tanzania, United Republic	(4)
364 Iran (Islamic Republic of)	(4)	912 Montenegro	(3, 4)
368 Iraq	(4)	914 Bosnia Federation	(3, 4)
400 Jordan	(4)	10. Mixed Asian religions	
417 Kyrgyzstan	(4)	(Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism)	
504 Morocco	(4)	156 China	(2, 3, 4)
586 Pakistan	(3, 4)	158 Taiwan Province of China	(3)
682 Saudi Arabia	(4)	392 Japan	(1, 2, 3, 4)
792 Turkey	(2, 3, 4)	410 Republic of Korea	(1, 2, 3, 4)
818 Egypt	(4)	704 Viet Nam	(4)

8) The category is narrowly defined: Canada, New Zealand and Australia have been assigned to the category Chris Mix, that is the group of countries with mixed Christian religions

The Impact of Religion on Values and Behavior

ABSTRACT

This paper tries to identify the loopholes in the research on religion and values and makes proposals for closing them. Section 2 extends the common study design in two directions: While research so far has either focused on the macro- or on the micro-level, future designs should be conceptualized as multi-level models because religion typically operates on at least two levels. Secondly, studies should not be confined to religion and values but also look at the resulting behavior and the further outcomes of behavior.

This is particularly true for studies on the relationship between religion and work ethics in the tradition of the Protestant Ethics. According to Max Weber the religiously based work ethics should be gradually replaced by work norms and standards which develop in modern, technological advanced capitalist societies and which Max Weber has described as the iron cage of capitalism. Regarding this, it is shown in Section 3 that the comparative analysis on religion and work values still has to solve two problems: First of all it has to be checked whether work values really reflect the standards which guide the conduct of modern individuals at work. Apart from this measurement problem it is still unclear to what extent work values nowadays have an impact on work behavior besides other incentives and sanctions. Whether religion ultimately had an indirect impact on work efficiency and productivity therefore cannot be clarified with the existing data. The paper presents some weak evidence, however, that Protestant and Anglo-Saxon countries are more effective in fighting bribery than other cultures. The verdict of bribery certainly is part of the Protestant Ethic.

Besides work and achievement values the paper briefly investigates the relation between religion and so-called postmodern values in Section 4. Equality as well as the modern right of self-determination can be seen as the final outcome of a Judeo-Christian Ethics which emphasizes the responsibility of the individual before God. Gender equality and as well as sexual tolerance then are unintended results of the profound ethical reforms which took place in Protestantism and Judaism during the last centuries. The data of the combined European and World Value Surveys presently do not allow a severe test of this and the other hypotheses in the paper but the presented empirical evidence is a sufficiently strong invitation to further, more comprehensive analyses.

Key Words: religion, work ethics, postmodern values