

Peter Nynäs · Ariela Keysar · Janne Kontala ·
Ben-Willie Kwaku Golo · Mika T. Lassander ·
Marat Shterin · Sofia Sjö · Paul Stenner *Editors*

The Diversity Of Worldviews Among Young Adults

Contemporary (Non)Religiosity And
Spirituality Through The Lens Of An
International Mixed Method Study

OPEN ACCESS

 Springer

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ISBN 978-3-030-94690-6 ISBN 978-3-030-94691-3 (eBook)

<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94691-3>

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The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

*To Professor David M. Wulf for his
groundbreaking contribution to the
psychology of religion and his dedicated
support for our work.*

Foreword

Most academics conform to the traditional, safe, individual-excellence model of academe, concentrating primarily on their individual careers, and safely building on whatever research project they just finished and published in the usual journals that publish them. Others, and unfortunately far fewer, prefer to risk their time, and even their reputations, to venture into new areas with new people on innovative projects, the success of which will not depend on any one scholar's individual brilliance, but on the extent to which each participant can apply their intellect and imagination to messy, half-articulated problems in collaboration with others.

During the course of my career, I have met both sorts of scholars and tried to belong to the latter group. Over dinner some years ago at an international conference I had organised with colleagues seeking to bridge gaps between young UK and international scholars, I recall looking around the room and seeing young men and women who had met each other for the first time earlier that same morning engaged in deep conversations, often accompanied with laughter, sharing stories and ideas that would, I knew, shape their thinking and possibly careers for years to follow. A colleague sitting nearby, sensing my satisfaction, leaned closer and in a few words gave me one of the biggest compliments of my academic life: 'You know what you do? You build community'.

Build community? Is that really what we are supposed to do as academics? It does not seem to fit with the hard, competitive, aggressive world of long-awaited-for permanent positions, escalations up the promotional scale, research paper and funding reviews, conference show-off presentations, and social media scramble for followers. And yet, consider the truly transformative, scientific revelations and you will not see a lonely figure contemplating the future but people working with others, supported by a team, taking a community-collaborative approach. Even Paul was not alone on the road to Damascus.

Perhaps the idea of community is so important to me because I witnessed it closely during my own professional life. When I switched my career in my 40s from being an editor in academic publishing to becoming an academic in academe, returning to university to acquire new knowledge and new degrees, I saw quickly that the strangers I was meeting for the first time were willing to help, whether by

having a cup of tea to reassure me or sharing books, papers and, most precious of all, introductions to members of their own networks. I knew that there was a community willing to support both new and established academics. I applied what I knew about academic publishing and funding to two books, covering each aspect, and found myself able to give back to that community through workshops and consultations with emerging scholars. It was exciting to feel a growing sense of belonging, even as it became apparent that there was a contrast, even a clash, between the two types of academics described above.

It was easy to sort out who was who. For example, national and international academic organisations, such as the American Anthropology Association, the Association for the Sociology of Religion, the Sociology of Religion group in the British Sociological Association, the Australian Association for the Study of Religion, the European Association for the Study of Religion, to name a few, are led by people who volunteer their unpaid labour and masses of emotional, intellectual work to help their discipline and community grow. In contrast, there are others whose CVs mostly consist of their own journal papers and books: those individually oriented people rarely have time in their busy schedules to pay attention to others or to engage in high-risk, complex, necessarily collaborative research.

Some of my new friends and colleagues were, I observed, more interesting and daring than others, and so it was that I found myself in Finland, early in my new career, giving a paper on ‘post-secular futures’ at a conference organised by some of the most interesting and engaging people I had ever met, in academe and otherwise. Several of them feature in this edited volume, either as organisers, researchers or, like me, members of the Scientific Advisory Board. Perhaps it is because of my Canadian roots re-established in the UK, but there is something about northern European countries that has always felt like home, and I don’t think it’s just the trees and open spaces, or even the gentle hospitality of the people. With a long history of Protestantism and social welfare, the pattern of regular, undramatic, low-key religiosity is familiar. Indeed, discussions of a ‘northern’ religious landscape have infused many of my collaborations with scholars involved in this project.

These are scholars who often try to break the dominance of the elite, white-male-dominated individualistic nature of academe. It is a world to which many people aspire, and others resist. It is not a world admired by the people who have come together to write this book, and least of all by the project’s director, Professor Peter Nynäs, who began and led, with co-director Dr Ruth Illman, the Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG) project as an Åbo Akademi University Centre of Excellence programme in 2015. Professor Nynäs secured funding and other support both from the Åbo Akademi University Centre of Excellence (2015–2018) that is financially enabled by the Åbo Akademi University Foundation, and from the Academy of Finland in the form of research project funding (2015–2019). Those are not easy accomplishments considering the long-term and risky nature of the project.

It is hard work collaborating on a project of this size and scope, and it is one that could not have begun nor have been sustained were it not for a shared commitment to the group effort and outputs. Potentially chaotic and cumbersome, an

international group of some 40 researchers, assistants and advisors dedicated to working together for (considering the time frame of publications) up to 5 years is a rare entity. Further, the project would ask audacious questions and use a number of methods, some untried in this context, and its scale would range from small qualitative case studies to large quantitatively based international data. The work would be conducted in local languages in all countries, meaning that materials and outputs needed translations – itself an often risky business, but necessary if the project was to achieve one of its goals to ‘de-centre’ taken-for-granted categories and the near hegemony of Euro-American assumptions about religion, moving beyond the cultural and religious boundaries of Europe and the West.

The potential for failure was always high, both from internal and external sources: what if project team members disagreed with the way the research was developing? Although the project researchers all studied ‘university students’, they knew that ‘university students’ was not a coherent group of people. As they worked with prototypes as analytical categories, they also knew they were not fixed and understood in the same way across all regions, even if they did come with interesting and catchy names: (1) the Secular Humanist; (2) the Active Confident Believer; (3) the Noncommitted Traditionalist; (4) the Spiritually Attuned; and (5) the Disengaged Liberal.

What if cultural differences meant that the conceptual frameworks and languages being used were too different to be compatible? What if the ambitions and egos of the scholars clashed and grated so extensively that the group meetings became unbearable and any kind of consensus impossible? What if, more simply, the long distances and strains of international travel became too onerous over the years and members dropped out?

Those were a lot of ‘what-ifs’ that were surely on Peter Nynäs’ mind as he formulated the planning and led initial training sessions, and then workshops and seminars for, often, the entire international team in Turku, home to Åbo Akademi University. The YARG data were collected during the years 2015–2016 and managed by a core team at Åbo Akademi University led by Nynäs and senior researchers. And yet, as one involved from the first stages of the project’s conceptualisation, I can say for certain that none of those risky outcomes occurred, and I can also say that it was likely the skills, will and personalities of the project leadership and wider team that made it so. Those are the kinds of skills and experiences that build an alternative academic presence, a community-collaborative approach, unlike some of the more aggressive and competitive models favoured by institutions that seem, on the surface, so successful. More than even a model that is compatible and congenial, the community-collaborative model creates excellent research in ways that the individualistic model cannot.

From the beginning, the project was intellectually risky. It was decided to use an instrument, developed by American academic David Wulff, which was new to almost everyone and had an odd name: ‘Faith Q-Sort’. I had first come across David Wulff’s work in the early 2000s when I was trying to understand what belief meant to people who lived it, not just to the theologians who wrote about it. Wulff’s early work on belief was hugely important, as was his later suggestion that we might

understand more about people's beliefs and values by allowing them to sort through handfuls of cards with questions and statements on them. The ground-breaking and to some extent *verboden* research method was at the heart of Q-methodology: research participants are allowed to, even required to, get their hands on the materials: no purified laboratory here, nor a carefully constructed survey with only the words the pre-written programme could understand. This was a case of sitting around a table, or cross-legged on someone's floor, and letting them sift and sort, mutter and laugh, curse and question as they began to fill the sections on the mat, and, following that preliminary sort, to sit back and talk to the researcher about what it all meant. Readers will find lots of details about the specific techniques in the chapters that follow, but here I want to stress the somewhat messy, interpretive, hands-on nature of what is done with the Faith Q-Sort instrument, and the related survey and interviews.

Peter Nynäs and his team had the vision, the confidence and the sheer nerve to set out to do that in 12 different countries – Canada, China, Ghana, Finland, India, Israel, Peru, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Turkey and the USA (and, to a lesser extent with survey only, Japan) – with a total 4964 survey answers and 562 respondents taking part in the Faith Q-Sort and follow up interview. The challenge was always how to both collect local, country-based data, being cognizant of different cultures and habits, and compare it to other country data in a way that would make sense of each. And yet, quickly, it was obvious what the model was trying to do. As argued in my own UK-based research, it is nearly impossible to find research about religion that does not begin and continue with pre-existing categories and assumptions about what religion is, is not, and, to some extent, could be. In trying, as I did through doctoral research begun at Lancaster University in 2002, to 'research religion without asking religious questions', I came across many methods about sampling, weighting, rating and regressing, all of which depended on assumptions about what religion is, and the questions that need to be asked. And so, we have a plethora of papers and books which establish on a scale whether someone might be religious, or whether they have stopped attending religious services (a usual proxy for apparent commitment) but little about what actually matters to people – what they worry about, dream about, or even pray about.

We have papers and books about how often a certain ritual might be conducted and whether this is changing, but not enough about why scholars are fixated by 'ritual' and how they might define it. Will young people in Colorado, for example, consider that visiting their grandparents in a care home is a religious ritual, and if not, why not? Women who bake for church suppers or clean the pews consider that a religious activity, but many (notably male) academics do not. Why not? Do young people in Ghana, known to be amongst the most religious in the world, worry about what other people think about their religious beliefs? These are the sorts of issues that matter to people, and yet there are few rich, nuanced methods available to capture such complexity. Many are not capable of exploring seemingly contradictory phenomena such as, for example, wide-spread experiences where non-religious people feel in touch with a 'higher power'. The Faith Q-Sort statement, however, that someone "feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual being" allows for

the possibility that such an entity might be, perhaps, a deceased relative whose presence may not be symbolised by specific shrines but, perhaps, by the way someone, in Faith Q-Sort words, ‘furnishes one’s living space with objects for religious or spiritual use or inspiration’.

While many standard works about young people may bemoan the apparent disinclination of today’s youth to volunteer in charitable organisations as did their parents, they fail to consider other forms of pro-sociality that are not yet understood as the language and methods available for doing so are inadequate. More nuanced, preliminary and exploratory methods such as those employed on the YARG study are necessary.

The key to the project’s success was, of course, not to attempt those difficult, daring tasks of interpretation alone. The research team did not just speed off to their own parts of the world and then come back a few years later to announce what they had done. Their separate and joint activity was built up slowly, during group meetings in the UK, Finland and the USA, and smaller team meetings in separate countries. As someone who attended many of those meetings (and all of the larger ones), it was evident to me that there was a lot of discussion, agreement, disagreement, questions and resolutions to allow the research to be edged out, refined, repurposed at times and repositioned, not to make it all the same, or create a homogenous, uniform set of conclusions, but to be able to compare the key themes and the differences to offer complexity and contrast amongst the occasional conformity – all of which, ultimately, speaks to collaborative, community-framed intellectual courage.

Readers may agree or not with every one of this book’s methods and findings. They will, however, be intrigued and perhaps inspired to be part of the project’s current and future conversations. Here, thanks to YARG, we have a set of themes, processes and emerging theories that together construct a kind of international scaffold onto which future researchers can climb and conduct the challenging work to come as we all try to understand what the current generation of young adults is telling us, while also sometimes confusing us, about their religious and non-religious identities.

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October 2020

Editorial Foreword

This volume is a result of the research project Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective: A Cross-cultural, Comparative and Mixed-method Study of Religious Subjectivities and Values in their Context (YARG). The volume, among the research team referred to as “the main findings volume,” is a significant result of YARG. A few words need to be said about all that which made YARG and this volume possible.

YARG was selected a Centre of Excellence in Research Project 2015–2018 by Åbo Akademi University, a program that was made possible by the Åbo Akademi University Foundation. In addition, Åbo Akademi University has supported the project in many other ways that cannot all be listed here, but for which I am very thankful. I am also grateful for the research funding granted by the Academy of Finland 2015–2019 (nr 288730). The extensive international scale of the project was rendered possible only through the combination of funding from these two sources.

The project also gained important support from its scientific committee. The members provided essential input already at the planning stage of this research endeavor. Abby Day, Michele Dillon, Shalom Schwartz, Paul Stenner, Linda Woodhead, David Wulff, and Fenggang Yang are all internationally renowned researchers and have contributed extensively with their expertise. Their experience and connections helped us avoid many pitfalls and provided many important possibilities and opportunities. Thank you for being a part of this endeavor from the start!

Our co-investigators have also been of key importance to this project. Without them, this project would have remained a plan only. They facilitated the country-specific studies and thus made it possible to collect data in 13 different countries. Their expertise in local cultures and religions was already at the planning phase decisive to the design of the project and a cross-cultural implementation. Several of them are co-authors or editors of this volume or of other publications that stem from the YARG project. My warmest thanks go to:

Dr. Benjamin Beit-Hallahmi
Dr. Satoko Fujiwara

Dr. Ariela Keysar
Dr. Ben-Willie Kwaku Golo

Dr. Ruby Sain
Dr. Marat Shterin

Dr. Rafael Fernández Hart
Dr. Sivane Hirsch

Dr. Mia Lövheim
Dr. Nurit Novis

Dr. Slawomir Sztajer
Dr. Zhejun Yu

We cannot forget the thousands of anonymous young adults that have shared their time and voices with us and the readers. Their views were collected by the assistants that worked with us in each country. The assistants had demanding goals and strict deadlines they had to meet. They performed far beyond our expectations, and several of them are now developing academic careers of their own. Thank you and best of luck with your future work:

Seta Astourian
Francis Benyah
Sidney Castillo
Juan Chao
Karoliina Dahl

Habibe Erdiş
Tang Junchao
Sawsan Kheir
Avivit Mussel
Thea Piltzecker

Sohini Ray
Mallarika Sarkar
Mauricio Villacrez
Polina Vrublevskaia

My colleagues Dr. Kimmo Ketola and Prof. Mia Lövheim also helped in keeping this project on the right track. Together, with co-director Dr. Ruth Illman, they formed the steering group of the project. Prof. David Wulff designed the Faith Q-Sort (FQS) method that was at the center of the YARG project. His dedication to research in religion and his willingness to assist us in so many ways with implementing the FQS across the globe have been essential to the project years before it started. Thank you, David! All this started with your innovative research.

There is not space enough to elaborate what all people involved have meant to YARG, but on a personal note, I would like to emphasize the generosity that I have met through all these people. By accident, I quite recently came across my old school essays from when I was a young kid. One of them was about the classical question: “What would you like to do as an adult?” I was astonished to read that my dream back then was to “travel the world and visit all religious sites and temples.” YARG, and all the people involved, made this dream come true. YARG brought me to a sacrifice site in the Kalighat Kali temple in Kolkata (India), to join a gospel mass in Washington (USA), to participate in a shaman ritual in Puno (Peru), to join the Buddhist new year’s celebration in Shanghai (China), to enjoy working on my laptop in alternative progressive cafés in Istanbul, and to many other places. More importantly though, the willingness to share that has characterized all the people involved in YARG enriched and broadened my horizon, and invited me and my colleagues to understand the world differently.

I know that YARG has meant a lot also to my Åbo Akademi University colleagues – Måns Broo, Karoliina Dahl, Maria Klingenberg, Janne Kontala, Martin Lagerström, Mika Lassander, Clara Marlijn Meijer, Marcus Moberg, and Sofia Sjö. My gratitude is also expressed on their behalves, but of course just as much directed

to them, the skilled core team of YARG researchers. For good and bad, they know more than well what a project like YARG requires, how it can force people to step outside their comfort zones and also stretch beyond regular working hours. They know how friends and family are sometimes put on hold for work reasons. I know that too. YARG and the previous projects took a lot of me during the years when my children Olga, Signe, Elsie, and Zacharias, as well as my partner Hongjia, needed me. They have been important to me throughout the project. Gratitude is not a word dense enough to cover what the presence of family means.

Peter Nynäs

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Chapter 1

A Multinational Study on Young Adults and Contemporary (Non)religion: Theoretical and Methodological Approaches



Peter Nynäs , Ariela Keysar , and Sofia Sjö 

Abstract How can we comprehend contemporary forms of religion? What is an adequate methodological approach? Religion as an object of study has become increasingly evasive and there is an urgent need to address the limitations emerging from previous conceptual bias and limited empirical perspectives. This chapter presents the international research project Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG), its aims, questions, leading ideas and perspectives. In particular, we shed light on the mixed-method approach that was developed in order to meet the current challenges and demands. At the core of this is the Faith Q-Sort (FQS), a novel method for assessing religiosity developed by David Wulff (J Sci Study Relig 58:643–665, 2019). The chapter describes the strength of FQS for comparisons across cultures and its potential to expose new and emerging worldview subjectivities and defining elements in these. Finally, we shed light on how we applied the mixed method approach in studies of relevant themes.

Keywords Faith Q-Sort · Methodology · Theory · Religious change · Contemporary religiosity

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P. Nynäs et al. (eds.), *The Diversity Of Worldviews Among Young Adults*,

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94691-3_1

Next one, [statement] 28, uh, “Believes in some way, but does not view him or herself as religious” [FQS28]. Uh, well, it’s partly true about me; that is, I feel, uh, well, that something exists, but I’m not sure that Orthodox Christianity, for instance, is something I should identify myself with. I just kind of, um, I believe there’s something, but, uh, I’m not sure it can be covered by a single religion, uh, right. This is why I don’t consider myself to be religious. Interviewee from Russia (YRUPV043) commenting on a statement from FQS

1.1 Introduction

The citation above illustrates how the views which young people hold today on religion and spirituality, including non-religious worldviews, can be diverse and multifaceted. Voices like these raise questions such as, what does the religiosity of young adults look like today? How is it formed by specific cultural and national contexts? How can we successfully investigate questions like these from a multinational perspective? The citation originates from interview data collected in the Centre of Excellence in research (CoE) and research project Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG). It is a cross-cultural, comparative and mixed-method study of religious subjectivities and values in their context. More precisely, the preliminary research questions were:

- What are the characteristics of the religious subjectivities and values among young adults globally in terms of the configurations of religious, spiritual, and secular assumptions regarding beliefs, attitudes, practices, and experiences?
- What are the main discourses that constitute and shape the above subjectivities in terms of institutional, social, cultural and other related influences?
- What methodological and theoretical implications follow from our results with regard to how contemporary religion is conceived?

As these questions suggest, the YARG project has been ambitious, and it has also been successful in many ways. We set out to gather material from 13 countries – Canada, China, Finland, Ghana, India, Israel, Japan, Sweden, Peru, Poland, Russia, Turkey, USA – and we also succeeded with this, creating an active research network in the process. In Japan, however, we only implemented one part of our study, namely the survey. The ambition of this volume is not to provide definite answers to the questions posted above. First, the mere idea of providing definite answers to questions of this kind is disputable. On the one hand, the ‘global’ research horizon of YARG is broad and complex: it includes many culturally, linguistically, politically and historically different contexts that in themselves would require more thorough research efforts than what the YARG study was aiming for. On the other hand, we can also critically ask if our multinational approach is comprehensive enough with only 12 countries (or 13 with Japan). In some respect, YARG has a much too limited focus to fully justify the ambitious questions above. This concerns many different aspects, ranging from the cross-cultural design of the project and issues relating to sampling, to representativeness, to potential ways of analysing data, and to the dissemination of results.

There is also a second reason as to why this volume does not aim to provide definite answers to the questions presented above, and this is of a more pragmatic nature. This volume is part of a series of publications that all stem from YARG data. A special issue on religion and socialization was already published by the journal *Religion* (Klingenberg & Sjö, 2019) and a volume on religion and media, *Digital Media, Young Adults and Religion. An International Perspective* (Moberg & Sjö, 2020), by Routledge. Additional books and articles will be published over the coming years.

The aim of this volume could better be described as explorative (see Stebbins, 2001), i.e. to present some relevant snapshots into the research interest defined by the initial questions. The broad-ranging explorative approach fits well with our investigation into a landscape that is not yet clearly mapped and where we also have reasons not to trust current maps. It helps generate new ideas and perspectives. This is connected to two important aspects of the project. First, YARG is on the one hand a study of young people worldwide. This aspect is critically discussed in Chap. 2 of this volume. This focus means that our findings should be discussed in relation to other important contributions addressing how young people today negotiate and form religious identities, views and meanings (e.g. Gareau et al., 2019; Arweck & Shipley, 2019; McNamara & Abo-Zena, 2014). Still, in our case the choice of young adults was instrumental in regards of our interest in how religion is currently changing. Although we did not collect trend data to observe and document changes over time, we have comprehended young people as harbingers of religious and cultural change. Our findings can be seen as trajectories of how religion, spirituality and secularity are diversified and reconfigured.

Methodology is a second important theme. YARG involved an innovative methodological aspect, and particular attention is therefore given to the Faith Q-Sort (FQS). The Faith Q-Sort is based on Q-methodology and was originally developed by David Wulff (2019) for the assessment of religion. In cooperation with Wulff, FQS was further developed within the YARG study and implemented for cross-cultural use. One of the main epistemological strengths of FQS is that it allows us to study contemporary religiosity from a bottom-up perspective and with sensitivity for emerging subjectivities. This chapter will shed light on why this is crucial to the study of religions of today.

The chapters in this volume stem from analyses of data collected in YARG, and the issues they deal with reflect the research interests of YARG as they have developed during the project and via collaborations within the research network. The introductory notes provided in this chapter are central to the chapters as a whole, and provide background information not discussed in the individual chapters. In the following, we will shed further light on four main questions:

- What theoretical ideas were at the core of the project?
- What did the Q-methodology and the mixed method approach involve?
- How was the multinational research process organized?
- What ethical issues were raised and addressed?

1.2 Understanding Contemporary Religiosity?

Two observations have from the beginning been central to the YARG study. Scholars in the study of religions have become increasingly aware that religion in the first place has been changing rapidly over the last decades and, secondly, that our understanding of religion is based not only on a limited Western gaze, but also on a narrow empirical basis. Taken together, both observations raise serious questions about how we conceive of religion; what we take it to mean. Therefore, they also imply that our means for studying, assessing, and measuring religion are not up to date. Consequently, several scholars have called for a critical discussion of the conceptual toolkit traditionally employed in the study of religions (e.g. Bowman & Valk, 2012; Droogers & van Harskamp, 2014; Lassander, 2012, 2014; McGuire, 2008; Nynäs et al., 2015).

Lately, the prominent discussion about secularization in the West has also shifted towards being more concerned with the matter of contemporary religious change, rather than with a linear and simple disappearance of religious themes, ideas, and phenomena (see e.g. Nynäs et al., 2012; Woodhead, 2012). On-going processes of religious change have been conceptualized through a range of interrelated theoretical frameworks such as de-secularization (Berger, 1999), re-sacralization (Davie, 2010), re-enchantment (Partridge, 2005), post-secularity (Habermas, 2006; Nynäs et al., 2012), un-churching (Fuller, 2001), and de-Christianization (Brown & Lynch, 2012), to name just a few. Some researchers approach religious change against the background of a general ‘subjective or expressive turn’ (Heelas & Woodhead, 2005), while others speak of an “Easternization of the West” (Campbell, 2007) or the emergence of a ‘new style religion’ that is replacing ‘reformation style religion’ (Woodhead, 2012).

For this chapter, we extract a first important observation from this discussion: even though (Western) societies continue to become increasingly secularized, we need to be more attentive to how these processes of secularization are far from incompatible with certain forms of religion and spirituality (e.g. Berger, 1999; Day et al., 2013; Turner, 2010; Nynäs et al., 2015). Rigid juxtapositions between religion and secularity produce simplistic and distorted pictures of the complexities involved in the formation of values and religiosities today. Secularization does not erase religion but comprises a change in the conditions for ‘religious belief,’ and this has further consequences for the ways in which they can be expressed (Taylor, 2007; Warner et al., 2010). Current change is not taking place on a societal level only; it is also visible in the cultural and individual spheres. For instance, a growing body of research highlights the ways in which people increasingly mix ideas, practices, and identities in novel ways, following the changing organization of religion, secularization, and increasing religious diversity (e.g. van der Braak & Kalsky, 2017; Bruce & Voas, 2007; Woodhead, 2012; Gilhus & Sutcliffe, 2013; af Burén, 2015; Nynäs et al., 2015; Nynäs, 2017).

The process of religious change is fueled by global processes and sociocultural shifts in societies. In particular, the role of media (e.g. Granholm et al., 2015;

Moberg & Sjö, 2020), consumerism (e.g. Gauthier & Martikainen, 2013; Gauthier, 2020) and social movements (e.g. Nynäs & Lassander, 2015) are vital to these changes. Several accounts (e.g. Brown & Lynch, 2012) of contemporary religious change direct particular focus at the ways in which these developments have entailed cultural change, with subsequent profound implications for traditional understandings of religious authority and mechanisms of religious socialization. In the light of this, Ulrich Beck's (2010, p. 42) claim makes sense when he observes that instead of previous perceptions of a fusing of nation and religion "we see the formation of a new, religiously determined, global sociality in which increased significance is attached to transnational, religious imagined communities which complement, and enter into competition and conflict with the institutionalized forms of national societies and national institutions." Religion is both reconfigured and relocated.

From giving relevance to global sociocultural shifts follows a growing need to engage with religion outside the Western frame, both in geographical and conceptual terms. Fenggang Yang (2018) discusses what he calls the Global East, namely not only the East Asian societies and cultures but also diasporic communities of East Asians and the more general impact of East Asian culture and religion on the West, and claims that this "presents theoretical and methodological challenges for the social scientific study of religion" (Yang, 2018, p. 7). This takes us to the second main observation of the YARG study. There is a strong agreement that religion has often been one-sidedly conceptualized and assessed as a transhistorical universal essence, while religion as a concept has often in practice been provincial (e.g., Asad, 1993, 2003; Balagangadhara, 2005; Chakrabarty, 2000; Masuzawa, 2005; Winzeler, 2008). This is a complex issue. It implies that scholars have often been forced to presuppose a biased conceptual similarity between various religious traditions. This follows from how both general views of religion as well as restricted measurement or assessment tools tend to be predominantly Christian centered. Research on religion has further been predominantly conducted by Western scholars and on religion in the West. Also, research on young adults and religion has presented a Christian focus and bias, and has to a large extent emerged from the US (Shipley & Arweck, 2019).

Of direct further relevance for this aspect, is the debate on universality vs. particularism: the universality assumption clashes with the increasingly prevailing notion of cross-cultural incommensurability (e.g. Balagangadhara, 2014a, b). For example, as Balagangadhara (2014b, p. 41) states concerning the application of "Western" understandings of religion on the study of religion in India, scholars tend to assume "that religion is a cultural universal and that the difference between Indian and western culture (among other things) lies in the difference between their 'religions'". A critical view of assumptions of universality is essential to aspirations regarding cross-cultural studies on religion and spirituality. Nevertheless, we also need to stress the risks of becoming the victim of an opposite methodological and conceptual trap that is based on assumptions of, for instance, 'the totally different Western culture' or the 'totally different Asian or African culture' or similar notions attributed to national and cultural geographies. This is equally problematic and

challenging since it might become dependent on the process of essentializing differences and historicities in terms of incommensurable particularities.

The complex problem we address here does not mean blindness or bias in relation to non-Western cultures only. As Woodhead (2010) claims with regard to the concept of spirituality, it is often understood to be socially precarious when we think of institutions in terms of established churches and hierarchical structures. “Here again”, Woodhead (2010, p. 42) writes, “we see the distorting effect of identifying ‘real’ religion with historic western churches”. Bruce and Voas (2007) maintain that the processes of secularization and increasing religious plurality have altered contemporary religiosity in a fundamental way. For this reason, the typologies we use in order to describe – for example – religious organizations, such as church, sect, denomination and cult, have lost much of their earlier heuristic and explanatory value (Bruce & Voas, 2007), and the usefulness of taken-for-granted concepts in the study of religions such as public and private have been questioned (Woodhead, 2013).

De Roover claims that, “the contemporary study of religion has a unique opportunity to settle the debate on the cultural universality of religion” (de Roover, 2014, p. 2017). What does this mean? In this study, we have taken this to mean the need to establish a third option beyond dichotomous academic positions on universality versus particularism. This means, we argue, that we need to be cautious with regard to essentialist, limited, generic understandings of religion which are based on theistic, doctrinal, institutionally-based faith (Beckford, 2003; Day, 2010, 2011). As Lassander (2012) suggests, we must abandon dysfunctional categories and models and instead approach religion as a hybrid, or as Taira (2006) writes, account for the liquid character of religion with reference to Bauman’s (2000) distinction between a solid culture that existed in earlier times and the fluid or shifting character possessed by the present. Religion needs to be conceptualized as being part of human and social interpretations and negotiations. Concepts such as religion, spirituality and belief are created within various forms of academic enterprises; we need to be more attentive to the everyday, individual uses of the term ‘religion’, and be open to new understandings of that term.

In other words, with our study we attempt to be attentive to the social location of religion and “its role in bringing into being forms of identity that actors strategically create in order to adapt to and integrate themselves into various social situations” (Day, 2010, p. 10). In terms of method and on a pragmatic level, this theoretical outset by necessity equals a bottom-up approach to the category of religion that is characterized by a systematic empirical cross-cultural approach. This might have the potential to realize what Lambek (2014, p. 147) calls a “moving balance between distinct epistemological positions” and acknowledge that the ideal to obtain a neutral ‘view from nowhere’ is an illusion (Nagel, 1986) or, as Haraway (1988) aptly puts it, a ‘God trick’.

In this volume, we often choose to call our respondents’ outlooks worldviews. The precedent of worldview, *Weltanschauung*, was first connected to German idealism. The English version ‘worldview’ has been used and theorized in various ways: for interpersonally shared ideologies, for privately held outlooks, for explicitly

formulated philosophies and for implicit and intuitive structures (Holm, 1996; Naugle, 2002; Nilsson, 2013; Kontala, 2016). We prefer to use it as a parent term that can incorporate religious, spiritual, and non-religious outlooks and views on life. Furthermore, we also emphasize that even though worldviews are primarily expressed verbally these are not necessarily systematic or rational only. As cognitive representations they involve both emotional and conative dimensions (Holm, 1996). This approach helps us accommodate all kinds of emerging viewpoints that could reject, accommodate, approve, or doubt religion or spirituality including simultaneities and ambiguities. It also matches the design of the Faith Q-method we have used.

1.3 Q-methodology and the Faith Q-Sort

In light of the cross-cultural scope of the YARG study, we found that our ambitious criteria were best met by Prof. David Wulff's work on the Faith Q-Sort (FQS). FQS was designed by David Wulff (2019) in order to overcome some of the shortcomings of earlier approaches to surveys on religiosity and simultaneously to find a nuanced and less biased way to assess religious subjectivities. Q-methodology is rather unknown and usually not discussed in volumes on methodology, with some exceptions (e.g., Newman & Ramlo, 2010; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). It has been used in a variety of fields, ranging from studies of political opinions and marketing research to studies of educational settings and personality psychology, including studies that assess worldviews (Block, 1978, 2008; Brown, 1980; Gabor, 2013; Watts & Stenner, 2012; van Exel & de Graaf, 2005; McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Nilsson, 2013).

Q-methodology was developed in the 1930s by the British researcher William Stephenson (1993/1994) for assessing subjective viewpoints on a specific topic, or subjectivities. Our opinion is that this focus on subjectivity is important to the study of religions today, since it helps us to shift from limited views on religion, as e.g. belief, to a richer perspective. Subjectivity refers to the range of individual experiences that serve as a platform for agencies, identities, and social identifications, such as variations regarding preferences, emotions, values, desires, interests, practices, views, and beliefs. Subjectivities are also relational, and emerge as parts of interpretative communities at play in various contexts, and they are also fluid to some extent (Biehl et al., 2007). From the perspective we develop rooted in Q-methodology, worldviews therefore always involve an affective dimension in addition to ways of thinking, viewing, and doing things. This aspect of Q-methodology is central to the purpose of studying contemporary religion where lately the relevance of e.g. emotions and practices has been underlined (e.g. Bowman & Valk, 2012; McGuire, 2008; Riis & Woodhead, 2010).

Although McKeown (2001) developed a Q-set for Christian Orthodoxy, Q-methodology is relatively new in religious studies and FQS is currently the only tool for assessment of religiosity based on Q-methodology. The FQS was developed

to meet the challenge of how to assess individual religiosity and spirituality, and by using Q-methodology, Wulff (2019) designed an instrument that differs substantially from most other instruments in the field, such as the well-known Allport-Ross Religious Orientation Scale, ROS (Allport, 1950; Allport & Ross, 1967).

When a researcher conducts a study with Q-methodology, he or she confronts the respondents with statements that in a significant way reflect a broad array of viewpoints on a subject matter (e.g., the domains of personality or religion). The respondents are required to rank-order these statements and, unlike ratings in quantitative scales, how the statements are ranked is dependent of how other statements are perceived; the ranking of any particular statement constricts the placement of the other items (see Fig. 1.1 below). Providing respondents with a set of items that they have to sort into categories allows for individual expression of nuances and complexity, and consequently for a variety of expected and unexpected configurations to emerge, but the pool of statements (Q-set) also limits the study (Table 1.1).

The Q-set for a study should be broad enough to reflect potential subjectivities. It is typically derived from a range of sources that reflect views that both academic and non-academic actors might have on the topic being assessed (e.g. religiosity). Interviews, observations, and popular and academic literature on the topic are important sources for generating a specific Q-set, i.e., all sources that reflect relevant discourses and constitute the potential concourse (van Exel & de Graaf, 2005). There is of course not an endless option of significant positions that individuals take in relation to a certain subject, and the assumption behind Q-methodology is that only a limited number of distinct viewpoints exist on any topic (Brown, 1980). The

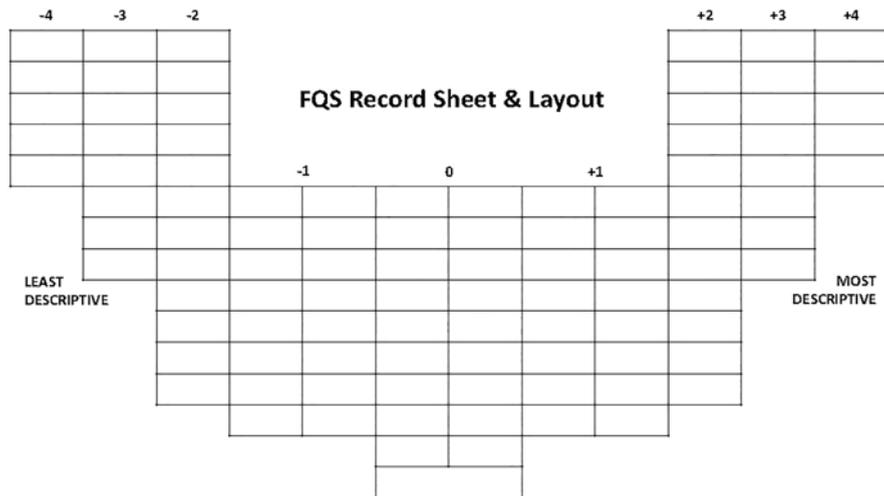


Fig. 1.1 FQS Record sheet and layout. The 101 statements of FQS are printed on cards and respondent ranks these statements by placing them in different categories on a layout. The placement should reflect the extent to which the respondent identifies with a certain statement in comparison with other statements in the Q-set of FQS

Table 1.1 Examples of statements from the Faith Q-set

12. Participates in religious activities chiefly on special occasions.
16. Being religious or spiritual is central to whom he or she is.
29. Is inclined to embrace elements from various religious and spiritual traditions.
46. Feels that one should remain loyal to the religion of one's nation.
70. Rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles.
86. Is committed to following a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment.

validity of any given Q-set rests on its items being representative of the entire domain (concourse) of the field or discourse being studied.

As a research instrument, the FQS is a qualitative procedure that involves and is assisted by quantitative analyses. This makes it an inherently mixed-methods tool (Newman & Ramlo, 2010). The individual sorts from a Q-study can be used to paint the picture of an individual. More commonly sorts made by a number of individuals can be combined and analyzed together resulting in what we call prototypes. Prototypes represent significant shared and unique patterns in our Q-data that have been extracted through an analysis of intercorrelations among Q-Sorts, which are then factor-analyzed. In our YARG study we have used the PQMethod based on the Principal Component Analysis for the statistical part. PQMethod is a widely-used software program maintained by Schmolck (2017) and is available online. We also used the online software Ken-Q Analysis (Banasick, 2019) that builds on PQMethod.

The Q analysis produces data for the final definition of the prototypes; a separate part of the process that requires reflection and judgment on the part of the researchers. The outcome of the statistical analysis includes tables with, for instance, factor loadings, item factor scores, and distinguishing statements for each of the factors (prototypes). The factors are distinguished by particular characteristics, but they may also share characteristics with some of the other prototypes. Because of this, the researchers have to determine both which items *define* a particular prototype, and which items *distinguish* one prototype from the other. To put it simply, behind every prototype we find individuals that more or less resemble the general description of a subjectivity that a prototype is. Sometimes a prototype is constituted by a very small number of participants, but it still remains relevant because it is distinct compared to other prototypes and represents a unique point of view (Watts & Stenner, 2012).

The final prototypes in a sample can be described with more or less nuance, but they are always an informed interpretation of the preliminary factor analyses. The so-called “commentary style interpretation” is a narrative based on statements ranked high and low in combination with distinguishing statements. The final reflective part done by the researcher often also includes the labeling of prototypes (e.g. Kontala, 2016; Watts & Stenner, 2012). The chapters in this volume present several different ways of using data from our YARG study for analyses, ranging from analyses of our main findings in terms of five global prototypes and how prototypes from all countries resemble these to discussions of the relevance of how single items and statements are played out. In some chapters we also use the prototypes as categories

that help us account for an individual level. In these cases, we may refer to a person of a prototype, i.e. an individual that correlates strongly with that specific prototype only and to a certain extent can be assumed to reflect the worldview pattern of that prototype.

These possibilities highlight the specific potential of Q-methodology as a tool for researching worldviews. Worldviews are expressed by people in their own unique ways, relative to their distinctive circumstances and one is not exactly similar to the another. Neither are they necessarily stable over time and place. Amidst all the uniqueness, the researcher can nevertheless find a shared pattern that allows a more abstract formulation. Q-methodology allows us to approach this empirically, where each Q-sort is the expression of a concrete individual, but each factor yields a more abstract prototype which helps to identify what is common to a worldview. In this project we find the methodological capacity to move between these levels important in order to generate a more valid representation of the phenomenon we call worldview. It is a quality different from both the virtues of representative surveys, and detailed hermeneutically informed qualitative methods. It corresponds with Wilhelm Dilthey's hermeneutics and his principle of forming generalizations by moving from parts to wholes and back again. What may look like a weakness from conventional perspectives, is actually a strength.

1.4 FQS and Cross-Cultural Research

FQS is ideally suited for cross-cultural research. FQS's rich item pool and flexibility in their placement puts subjectivity at the center of investigation. This promotes methodological attentiveness to the many different ways of living, experiencing, and expressing religiosity and their idiosyncratic configurations. The 101 statements that Wulff (2019) compiled reflect major religious traditions including observations from subfields in the study of religions. The set of statements is also broad in the sense that in addition to ways of thinking and viewing, it covers experiential and emotional dimensions, and also practices and ways of doing things.

This version of FQS was developed in a North American context, but it has still been successfully used also in several studies with both religious and non-religious groups (Terho, 2013; Pennanen, 2013; Lassander & Nynäs, 2016; Kontala, 2016). Still, any systematic multicultural study requires a thorough evaluation of instruments and methods before implementation. Therefore, teams of scholars from all involved countries contributed to evaluating Wulff's initial FQS. With regard to the religious and spiritual worldviews in their cultural contexts, they proposed revisions of current statements and suggested new ones, as well as pointing out statements that they found to be problematic for some reason.

This evaluation provided us with a significant and extensive input for a revision of the FQS that took place during a seminar where a multicultural and multidisciplinary team together reviewed the response. Throughout this process, we strived to be attentive to more local forms of religiosity, non-religiosity and secular positions.

This process resulted in the FQS-b (appendix 1), and only this version has been used in the YARG study. As a result of this process, we introduced for instance a new statement “Believes in some way, but does not view him- or herself as religious” (FQS28). This connotes a form of simultaneity and has been identified by the research team as central to Scandinavian religiosities (see also af Burén, 2015; van der Braak & Kalsky, 2017). Still, this statement proved to be salient for many participants in other areas as well, and came to contribute to defining religious subjectivities in China. Another new statement reflects to what extent “His or her sexuality is strongly guided by a religious or spiritual outlook” (FQS59), tapping into how many issues about morality are topical and form religiosities.

Despite all the efforts put into defining the specific items used in the FQS-set, this remains a challenging project. The particular expressions still need to be generalized for a variety of different contexts. The ambition to produce a version of the FQS that has multicultural validity requires modesty. A related problem is that the process of producing a valid Q-set tends to push the linguistic expressions to a level of sophistication that not necessarily echoes the ways in which young adults express worldviews. Using the word transcendence in the FQS-set is an example of this. It does not necessarily resonate with peoples’ everyday language. If the statements in the Q-set become too distanced from a real-life discourse, they may end up hard to comprehend, inviting participants to play a guessing game or make participants lose interest. To achieve true multi-cultural validity might involve item-by-item international, multilingual, and cross-cultural validation of all individuals (Wolf et al., 2020).

Validity and reliability of Q-methodology cannot be easily transferred from regular survey methodology. Like other research methods, Q-methodology has been the subject of critical discussions. One has e.g. addressed the need to further discuss how to perceive the role of language and discourses in contrast to both a more scientific approach and the focus on subjectivity (e.g. Billard, 1999; Druschke et al., 2019). It has also been claimed that the method has limited theoretic value due to the use of factor analysis, that the forced distribution distorts participants actual outlooks and preferences (Kampen & Tamás, 2014), and that the subjectivity and bias of the researcher is overlooked (Robbins & Krueger, 2000; Sneegas, 2020). In comparison with quantitative methods, Q-method has correctly been criticized for lacking the possibility for quantifying generalizations: it is not primarily concerned with which proportion of a larger population is associated with which prototype (see e.g. Thomas & Baas, 1992/1993).

We need to carefully scrutinize our use of Q-methodology, recognizing its limitations and qualities. In order to do so we also have to address the different nature of Q-methodology. As Stenner et al. claim “the Q sort as a data-collection form is designed to maximize the expression of qualitative variation and to record it in numerical form” (Stenner et al., 2008, p. 218) revealing that Q-methodology is best conceived not as quantitative or qualitative, but as an inherent blend of both (Ramlo, 2021). The emerging results from a Q-study will be more like concluding that white tigers exist, than claiming that all crows are black. A central strength of the FQS is therefore its potential to expose new and emerging subjectivities and defining elements in these. This allows comparisons across samples and the possibility of further investigating these samples in large-scale surveys.

1.5 A Mixed-Method Approach

The development and international implementation of FQS was at the core of the YARG study. The novelty in our research was first and foremost defined by the implementation of the FQS, but essential to our project were also aspects such as how the FQS was designed in itself, and furthermore combined with other methods. We used a mixed method-approach that meant a combination of quantitative and qualitative research instruments. This allowed us to address our research questions more fully, but with other methods we could also assess the quality of the FQS.

The YARG study started with a survey including six item blocks assessing the participants' current life situation, social life, sources for news and information, views and convictions, well-being and happiness and personal details (Appendix 3). The survey also included the Portrait Value Questionnaire (Schwartz, 1992, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). The survey had several functions. First, it provided essential demographic data that aided in our sampling for the FQS study. The FQS does not require a large number of respondents, but it is important to find enough respondents representing a variety of viewpoints. For this purpose, our initial survey ($N \approx 300$ /country) enabled a broad selection of participants for FQS ($n \approx 45$ /country) with regard to gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, language groups and class. These, in combination with other characteristics such as e.g., value priorities based on Schwartz's PVQ, and field of study of the participants, guaranteed diversity among the study's participants and their Faith Q-sorts. Since FQS is a new method, data from the survey has also helped us to explore the quality of FQS. How are individual prototypes reflected in measures of e.g. religiosity, demographics, moral attitudes, values and cultures?

Second, the survey also provided data for independent analyses. The part in the survey on media use has been at the core of analyses of religion and digitalization (Moberg & Sjö, 2020). Several chapters in this volume are also rooted in independent analyses of parts of the survey. A good example of this is Chap. 10 in this volume, on prosociality, civic engagement and volunteering.

Schwartz's PVQ on values has also been an important inclusion. From the perspective of sociology (e.g. Inglehart & Welzel, 2005; Maio, 2017), one can assume that individuals' values are not necessarily so much influenced by their (religious) worldviews as they are by e.g. the socio-economic context they grow up in (see also Lassander, 2014). The earlier idea that religious institutional affiliation translates into a particular value profile does not necessarily hold true, and there is ample ground for assuming that values play a more independent role in defining and directing how individuals self-identify in terms of religiosities.

Our mixed method approach also included interviews. The FQS sorting takes place face-to-face with the researcher giving the respondents the opportunity to ask questions and comment on the meaning of the statements. After the FQS sorting, a more extensive follow-up interview took place. During the interview, the respondents could explain in more detail why they had ranked certain statements as they had. The interviews were open and semi-structured. In contrast to the pre-formulated

statements of the survey and FQS, the participants were encouraged during the interviews to share personal stories, express their own thoughts freely and with their own words. In this way, they could initially explain the lifeviews and priorities which they had previously expressed through the FQS-sort. Further, the interviews generated complementary knowledge about the interviewees' thoughts on a limited set of themes and topics.

For our purposes in the YARG study and a wider comparability across all interviews, each individual interview followed a pre-defined general structure that was organized around three main themes of interest: (1) Interviewees' experience of the FQS and thoughts around it, as well as his/her own personal engagement with religion/spirituality or similar positions of a secular character. (2) Interviewees' personal history, self-understanding and current life situation. (3) Interviewees' thoughts about the broader social and cultural contexts and communities that they are embedded and involved in. We developed detailed instructions for interviewing (see Appendix 4).

In a similar vein as the survey, the interviews had multiple functions. They were valuable to later interpretations of results from the FQS and for our evaluation of its quality. The recording started already when the FQS sorting was initiated, and also minor questions about the FQS procedure and FQS statements were made accessible for later analyses. Further, the interviews provided additional independent data that could be used as such or as part of other mixed method designs and strands. The interviews have been used to a great extent in the studies coming out of the YARG study already, (Klingenberg & Sjö, 2019; Moberg & Sjö, 2020) and are related to in several chapters in this volume as well.

In short, the YARG mixed method approach has primarily meant a fixed sequential multiphase design where different parts have equal status (Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009). The main methods have been clearly defined in the YARG study already from the start of the research process, and the procedures with independent separate parts have been implemented accordingly. Yet, this fixed frame has allowed for emerging and dynamic elements and designs when it comes to single studies and analyses. As a whole, the YARG study has enabled a variety of research strands, namely the basic chain of research from posing a question and choosing data to analyzing and interpreting this (see Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

1.6 The Research Process

The complex research process was made possible by an international research network. The YARG study as a whole was managed by a core team at Åbo Akademi University led by a principle investigator and senior researchers. Local implementation in respective country was administered by co-investigators, and commonly research assistants and/or PhD students were employed for the collection and handling of data. The YARG study was also supported by a scientific advisory board. Planning and training sessions, as well as seminars were held on a regular basis at

Åbo Akademi University. The YARG data was collected during the years 2015–2016 in Canada, China, Finland, Ghana, India, Israel, Peru, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Turkey and the USA. These countries were chosen to represent a broad variety of national, cultural and linguistic contexts as well as a significant variety with regard to world religions, historical traditions, and contemporary religious developments and trends. The selection of countries covers all the main cultural value areas identified through the World Values Survey and “the Global Cultural Map” (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).

As a contrast to this broad approach, our sampling in each country means a notable limitation to the project, since the YARG study focused on university students (ages appr. 18–26 representing a variety in terms of gender and fields of study). Turning to university students was a deliberate choice motivated by our interest in contemporary religious change. In comparison to previous generations, young people born after 1990 are not characterized by having been gradually accustomed to consumer culture and digital media during their lifetime. Instead, these social phenomena have constituted an inherent and unquestioned part of their childhood and youth (cf. Possamai, 2009). Palfrey and Gasser (2008) refer to this generation as ‘the born digital’ and the ‘digital natives.’ They have been raised during social and cultural conditions that are particularly relevant to a study of religious change. Beyer (2019, p. 278) similarly concludes about the identities of the so-called ‘millennials’ that have grown up with expanding global horizons and contexts that they are “better regarded as dynamic and contextual projects, as fluid nodes in networks of relations”.

Our assumption was that university students generally have relatively extensive capital in this respect, also in comparison with other young adults. However, already from Chap. 2 we can learn that university students still do not comprise a coherent group of people. In all countries, we have selected a small number of universities where the survey data has been collected. Universities with a specifically limited focus or character have not been included. Rather, we have initially tried to reach diversity among the respondents. The fact that the YARG study is based on convenience sampling means of course that there is no way to tell if the sample is representative of a larger population, and data from the survey does not allow us to draw conclusions about any specific population or to make valid statistical inferences. Rather, in conformity with the YARG study as a whole, the approach is more exploratory.

The YARG study was conducted in local languages in all countries. All material intended for the use of our respondents, including the presentation of the study, the consent form, the survey and the FQS, was translated from English into target languages: Arabic, Bengali, Mandarin Chinese, Finnish, French, Hebrew, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, and Turkish. A regular back-translation method guarantees comparability across cultures, and it is the most widely used technique to detect item bias in surveys, i.e., when some items in a test might function differently for different groups in a study (Brislin, 1970, 1980; Geisinger, 1994; Harkness, 2003; Lin et al., 2005; Plake & Hoover, 1979). Yet we used a double and back-translation process, since this has been promoted in order to gain even higher reliability in the

translations (Hambleton, 1993, 1994; van de Vijver & Hambleton, 1996). A double and back-translation process enables the researcher to compare and select the “best” translation from two independent parallel translations (Harkness, 2003). Our experience was that this process also provides a higher degree of sensitivity to subtle ambiguities which proved to be essential when translating religious and spiritual vocabulary. This vocabulary can often be marked by biases emerging from the fact that religion in one culture or nation often is much more multifaceted than any translator may be aware of. The fact that we often received different proposals from our translators revealed that no translation is final, and in cases like ours, a multicultural academic team with a broad range of academic expertise in the field is needed to finally decide on its most adequate version.

Several ethical concerns were raised as part of the YARG study. For instance, religious and secular views are often considered to be sensitive information. The participants were well informed about the nature of the YARG study, that their participation was voluntary, and that they would remain anonymous. We especially emphasized that no teachers or parents would be able to request information about their participation in any form. The participants were informed that the data would be used for academic purposes only and by the YARG research team only, and that it would be securely archived after this. On the consent form that they signed and received a personal copy of, they were given contact information in the case they later would have questions or in the case that they would withdraw from the study at any point. These are standard regular procedures, but we also had to be extra careful. Even though it somewhat limited the factors we could include in our analyses, we could not for instance record in our final data set the fields of study or university belonging of our participants since this could put them at risk. This precaution was later in the project confirmed to be very important in some of the countries we included.

Overall, we have followed the national guidelines on the ethical principles of research in the humanities and social and behavioral sciences in Finland (2009) defined by the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity (TENK, 2009) as well as The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity Revised Edition (ALLEA, 2017). In October 2015, we received approval for the YARG project as a whole from the Åbo Akademi University research Ethics committee and in addition, all co-investigators have followed corresponding national procedures. These vary a lot between the countries. In some national contexts, personal worldviews are also politically sensitive. We have therefore largely refrained from further descriptions of the universities that are involved in the YARG study and where the data has been collected.

The YARG network is extensive and it involves a variety of linguistic and academic contexts. In line with ethical guidelines for international projects, we have tried to promote the careers of involved researchers at all levels. Throughout the process, we have also put efforts into being inclusive in our dissemination process in order to recognize the important contribution of all network members. This is also reflected in our document on principles for YARG authors. It defines some guidelines and rules for dissemination of results, and emphasizes the role of

co-authoring. Co-authoring can be a difficult process in international projects for many reasons. Yet, we find that it is worth the effort. At its best, it is a co-writing process where a fusion of horizons materializes in text and in new perspectives.

1.7 The Outline of the Volume

In general, the chapters in this volume that follow are divided into two sections. Especially chapter one, but also chapters two to four are essential to other chapters in this volume, since they together depict our approach, method and main results. Still, all chapters are expected to be read independently since they represent separate studies. We have therefore also needed to repeat certain parts of e.g. theories and methods, even though every chapter has its own focus.

The first section of chapters focuses primarily on what we can learn from the FQS data and explores the FQS-material from different viewpoints. First, however, and following this introductory chapter, we continue with a critical investigation of the young adults and university students that have been the participants in YARG. Like in every academic study, we need to be attentive to the limitations of the methods and approaches we use, and a reflection on our participants is therefore essential. What are the variations of worldviews in a cross-cultural perspective? How can these be further assessed, comprehended and conceptualized, and what are the implications of our results for different typologies of religions? We devote chapters to specific analyses of both respondents who initially seem to be positioned outside the main categories and types, and respondents who seem to hold secular and non-religious views. How are the ways of being (non-)religious distinct from each other? Both these groups are relevant and big. Aspects related to gender also provide lenses for general analyses based primarily on the FQS.

The second section of chapters includes more specific themes and cases, and parts where data from all parts of the mixed method approach also gets more attention. These chapters have a more thematic nature, and we bring up important aspects of being religious in relation to contextual aspects. This includes investigations of individualism and prosocial attitudes, and conservative and liberal values. We also look into how experiences of being discriminated against and being in a majority or minority position plays into worldviews and religiosities, as well as the relevance of the relationship between religion, public life and the state. In the concluding chapter, we bring the volume together, highlighting our main observations and looking forward towards where the YARG study and its varying findings may lead regarding comprehending religious, spiritual and secular subjectivities from a transnational perspective.

As pointed out in the beginning of this chapter, the YARG study is ambitious. This volume reflects an important but modest aspiration to de-center taken-for-granted categories and perspectives (see Bender et al., 2013). We move beyond European and American borders. We move beyond a focus on Christianity. We move beyond congregations and organizations. The cross-cultural mixed method

approach we have developed in the YARG project has enabled this. Nevertheless, neither the FQS nor the mixed method design it is part of can in a satisfactory way meet all the ambitions and research questions we initially addressed, but we still think that this volume can help us to identify some new relevant aspects of what it means to be religious, spiritual, or secular today, and how these identifications are entangled in other processes.

In many of the chapters in this volume, the FQS and the mixed method design open up new vistas for research on religion in a global perspective. The FQS differs from regular scales and questionnaires, and it is designed to be sensitive to both commonalities in religious beliefs and practices, while at the same time exposing the limitations of thinking in terms of universal patterns and categories. It accommodates the possibility to identify a range of emerging and even ambiguous or conflicting subjective realities in a complex multicultural context. FQS thus has the potential to produce relevant systematically and empirically rooted observations that can feed into future research on religion and spirituality in nuanced ways.

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Chapter 2

Young Adults as a Social Category: Findings from an International Study in Light of Developmental and Cohort Perspectives



Maria Klingenberg , Sofia Sjö , and Marcus Moberg 

Abstract The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the basic characteristics of the university students who have participated in the Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG) project, as mirrored in the survey data, and to discuss the findings in light of theoretical assumptions about young adults. The chapter provides an introduction to two prevalent research perspectives on youth: a developmental perspective, and a cohort perspective. Background statistics as well as the main findings on religion are then discussed in light of these perspectives. The respondents' age, civil state and relational commitments are analyzed from a developmental perspective, which assumes similarity on behalf of young adults as a consequence of their age. Furthermore, findings on values and media use are presented in order to explore whether the survey data provides support for the participants forming a generation, the main tenet of a cohort perspective, in terms of sharing values and media habits. The concluding section discusses the extent to which higher education sets university students apart from the youth population in generally, as reflected in the YARG data. The chapter therefore provides a first glimpse into who the participants are, and what the categorization of them as young adults entails.

Keywords Young adults · Developmental perspective · Cohort perspective · Value change · Media use · Self-assessed religiosity · Religious practice

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P. Nynäs et al. (eds.), *The Diversity Of Worldviews Among Young Adults*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94691-3_2

2.1 Introduction

In studies of young people, researchers frequently refer to characteristics believed to be common for this age group or cohort. For example, in the work by Jeffrey Jensen Arnett (2004), young adults or emerging adults are depicted as finding themselves in an in-between stage and going through transitions. Jean M. Twenge (2014), in turn, depicts young people of today as “more confident, assertive, entitled – and more miserable” compared with previous generations.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overview of the basic characteristics of the participants in the Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG) project as mirrored in the survey data, and to discuss the findings in light of theoretical assumptions about young adults. In YARG, a mixed-method approach including a survey, the Faith Q-Sort – a novel method used for the first time on a grand scale in the project – and semi-structured interviews was used to explore university students in thirteen different contexts (for more on the project see Chap. 1 in this volume). In any study relying on ideas about young adults, it is important to analyze the participants in relation to previous depictions of this social category. The transnational scope of YARG makes this particularly important, but the project also offers unique opportunities for this type of exploration. While it is true that the stages preceding adulthood entail increasing independence, contextual and cultural expectations influence at which age and how young people gain independence (Arnett & Galambos, 2003; Nelson et al., 2004). Furthermore, most of the labels that have been used to depict the contemporary cohort of young adults are based on studies in specific contexts. Are such labels equally valid for young adults in a transnational study?

This chapter begins with an overview of the main survey findings on religion (for more on the survey see Chap. 1 and Appendix 3). The findings and background data on the respondents are discussed in light of two prevalent research perspectives on youth. First, we provide an overview of emerging adulthood and the underlying developmental perspective. As this perspective assumes similarity on behalf of young adults as a consequence of their age, we explore how old the respondents are, their current civil state and relational commitments. Second, we present a cohort perspective on young adults, exploring the extent to which the survey data supports understanding our participants as a generation in terms of values and media use.

A critical question in relation to the YARG data is if it is valid to refer to the population studied as young adults, when the study is conducted in university contexts. The strategic selection of a certain segment of the youth population was a condition for the realization of the YARG study, but it also has implications for how the young people of the study should be understood in terms of privilege and class. In the concluding section, we explore the extent to which higher education sets university students apart from the youth population in general. In the conclusion, we draw together our findings regarding who our participants are, and what the categorization of them as young adults entails.

2.2 Indicators of Religion Amongst Young Adults: An Overview

In this section, we provide an introductory analysis of the survey findings on personal religiosity. Our first analysis concerns self-assessed religiosity, which was probed through the survey question: “Regardless of whether you consider yourself as belonging or close to a particular religious group, community, or tradition, how religious would you say you are?” The following question in the survey was: “How religious would you say the family you grew up in was?” On both questions, respondents were asked to do an estimation on a ten-degree scale, rated from “Not at all religious” (0) to “Very religious” (10). While we want to avoid an understanding of these findings as “static facts” regarding religious identities (cf. Day & Lee, 2014, p. 347), not least given the transnational scope of this survey, the findings nevertheless provide a first insight into the empirical data.

The mean of self-assessed religiosity across the entire sample (scale 0–10) is slightly below four (3.93), indicating a distanced degree of religiosity (Fig. 2.1). Six out of thirteen studied contexts or case studies are found within one scale step of the total mean, which indicates that the distanced relation to religion at a personal level holds true in many of the included contexts. However, the data also contains some exceptions. As indicated in Fig. 2.1, Sweden, Canada and Russia display means for self-assessed religiosity below three and are thereby characterized by high degrees

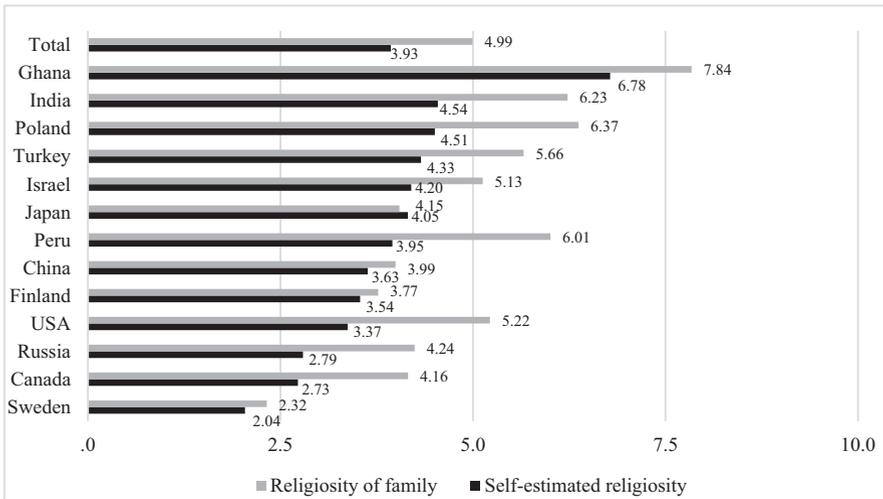


Fig. 2.1 Self-assessed religiosity vs. the family’s religiosity per case study, reported as means. Sorted by degree of self-assessed religiosity (n = 4964)

of non-religiosity.¹ In contrast, Ghana is characterized by having the highest degree of self-assessed religiosity with a mean close to seven.² The general picture nevertheless indicates that the participants more often than not assess themselves on the side of the scale that indicates non-religion. However, the standard deviations of the case studies generally exceed 2.5, which points to internal variation within each case study.

The second central finding is that the respondents assess their own religiosity as being lower than the religiosity of their childhood homes (with one exception: Japan). For childhood homes, the total mean of 4.99 is placed in the middle of the ten-degree-scale: for seven contexts, the means indicate religiosity rather than non-religiosity as a description of one's childhood home. While the discrepancy between self-rated religiosity and one's childhood home is small in Finland, Sweden and China, eight contexts are characterized by self-assessed religiosity being more than one scale step lower than the assessment of one's childhood home. The highest discrepancies are found in India, United States, Poland and Peru.

As for public and private religious practice, the respondents were asked to rate how often they "take part in religious services or ceremonies" and "engage in private religious or spiritual practices such as worship, prayer, or meditation". After conflating the eight response alternatives into four categories ("weekly", "monthly", "from time to time" and "never"³), 60% of the respondents are found to fall into the same category for both questions, suggesting high inter-item consistency. Since private religious practice was reported as occurring somewhat more frequently, we limit the presentation to these findings. Previous research also suggests that patterns of private religious practice and personal beliefs remain somewhat more stable during young adulthood compared with public religious practice (Uecker et al., 2007; Koenig, 2015).

Table 2.1 demonstrates that just as for self-assessed religiosity, there is variation in private religious practice in the respective case studies.⁴ While over half of the respondents from Ghana, Turkey and India report at least monthly practice – in Ghana, over half in fact report daily practice – over half of the participants in Sweden, Canada and Russia report never engaging in private religious practice.

The findings suggest a strong association between self-assessed religiosity and private religious practice. The mean for self-assessed religiosity on behalf of those

¹Non-religiosity here should not be indicated as suggesting that those who have done this self-assessment cannot express an interest in some religious or spiritual issues. For more on the different views expressed by this group of young adults, see Chap. 6 in this volume.

²Differences in means of self-assessed religiosity between case studies were tested with ANOVA, $F(12, 4951) = 69.60, p < .001$. The Israeli data is reported at a national level, meaning that the data is presented as a total of the three Israeli case studies.

³The category "Weekly" include response alternatives "Every day"; "More than once a week" and "Once a week". The category "From time to time" includes alternatives "Only on special days and celebrations" and "Less often". Due to low frequencies of "I don't know" (1.5%), this category was excluded from the analysis.

⁴Differences in descriptions of private religious practice by case study were analyzed by Pearson chi-square, $\chi^2(36) = 1186.46, p < .001$.

Table 2.1 Frequency of private religious practice, sorted by case study

Case study	<i>n</i>	Weekly %	Monthly	From time to time	Never	Total
Ghana	416	83	4	12	1	100
Turkey	342	53	7	28	12	100
India	296	44	6	36	14	100
Israel	735	38	7	25	30	100
Poland	292	33	9	33	25	100
United States	293	32	11	22	35	100
Peru	316	30	6	35	29	100
Finland	478	29	9	21	41	100
Canada	406	21	8	18	53	100
Sweden	325	14	6	21	59	100
Russia	331	12	5	33	50	100
Japan	322	10	7	51	32	100
China	319	8	5	38	49	100
Total	4871	32	7	28	33	100

who report engagement in private religious practice at least weekly is 6.23, while less frequent private religious practice is related to lower means for self-assessed religiosity. The mean of self-assessed religiosity amongst those who have responded that they “never” engage in private religious practice is 1.58.⁵

These findings underline the need to pay attention to contextual differences, but also suggest that our participants generally identify as less religious than the family in which they grew up. Can such findings be attributed to the target group of this study being university students, and further reflect on the experiences of leading student life? Such reasoning resonates with a life-cycle perspective on young adults. We turn to this perspective next.

2.3 Young Adulthood as Part of the Life-Cycle: Age and Experience

The underlining argument for perspectives that understand youth as a particular phase of the life-cycle is that due to their age, young people share characteristics that set them apart from other age groups. Being children no more, youth is understood as characterized by a number of transitions leading towards adulthood. For a young person, these transitions are intertwined with reflections on identity and

⁵For monthly private religious practice, the mean for self-assessed religiosity was 4.76, and for those engaging in private religious practice from time to time, the mean was 3.81. Differences between means of self-assessed religiosity and private religious practices were tested with ANOVA: $F(3, 4867) = 1151.194, p < .001$.

values. Religion and spirituality also constitute issues that young people engage with (Barry & Abo-Zena, 2014). Drawing on perspectives from developmental psychology, the tasks and issues related to young adulthood make it essential to study young people in their own right.

However, critique has been voiced towards “youth” and “young people” as conceptual categories as they are seen as too vague considering the broad age span they refer to. Furthermore, “youth” is understood as being attached to ideas of childhood that are not equally applicable to all ages within this age group. One development in light of such critique is the concept of emerging adulthood, referring to a specific period of life separate from both adolescence and adulthood. Arnett (2000) suggests that due to demographic shifts in the form of prolonged education and postponed family formation, emerging adulthood is “characterized by change and exploration of possible life directions” (2000, p. 469). Due to these demographic shifts, the transition to adulthood is “more complex, disjointed and confusing than in past decades” (Smith & Snell, 2009, p. 6).

The concept of emerging adulthood has also been critiqued, as it is not seen as being applicable to all young people. Bynner (2005) argues that the perspective fails to acknowledge how structural factors shape identities. Based on British longitudinal data, he argues that stratification of young people leads to factors such as prolonged education and postponed family formation being more prevalent amongst more privileged segments (cf. Hendry & Kloep, 2010). The discussion of the concept has also concerned its applicability beyond the North-American context, and the individual-centered focus underlining emerging adulthood has been questioned (Nelson et al., 2004). Though criticized, emerging adulthood is becoming increasingly accepted as a perspective on young people.

Arnett (2004) suggests that the religious and spiritual developmental process that starts in adolescence becomes even more pronounced during emerging adulthood, due to the increased focus on identity issues. Studies on religious and spiritual development in emergent adulthood have also explored emerging adulthood as connected to physiological, cognitive, and emotional changes (Barry & Abo-Zena, 2014). According to Smith and Snell (2009, p. 280), “The emerging adult years often entail repeated life disruptions, transitions, and distractions – which poses challenges for sustaining religious commitments, investments, and practices.” If we return to the findings reported in Table 2.1, the difference between self-rated religiosity and the religiosity of the family home could be understood as an indicator of a life phase marked by lack of stability.

In the YARG project the concept of emerging adults has not been used as a point of departure, but the developmental perspective can be applied to the young adults in our study. The participants could be described as being right in the midst of a unique life-cycle stage, characterized by occupation with identity issues. The focus on university students in the YARG study can be understood as further augmenting the prevalence of identity issues, due to the in-between character of student life. The transitional character of the life-cycle phase that our participants find themselves in could explain the differences we see between the level of self-identified religiosity and religiosity of the family home (Table 2.1): the poor fit between traditional

religious values and behaviors and student life would lead to a decline in religiosity. Previous research on religion and higher education has illustrated a decline in religious practice, but assumptions about higher education leading to decline in religious beliefs have been questioned (Mayrl & Ouer, 2009). Studies generally highlight a much weaker effect of higher education on religion than what has been previously theorized (Mayrl & Uecker, 2011; Hill, 2011). It has been suggested that the analysis of the influence of higher education on young people's beliefs, views and practices also need to consider factors such as the individual's religious affiliation, minority/majority status, ethnicity and pre-university experience (Bowman & Small, 2010; Hill, 2011; Park & Bowman, 2015). While the fact that the participants in YARG are all university students might explain some of the differences we see between the level of self-identified religiosity and religiosity of the family home, this factor certainly does not provide the whole answer.

Furthermore, research suggests that a developmental perspective cannot be applied to the category of young adults without hesitation. The transnational scope of the YARG project raises questions about the extent to which notions of emerging adults are culture-specific. While higher education can be understood as a moratorium, there may be contextual variation regarding, for example, the age and degree of independence amongst university students. We turn to our empirical data to explore these issues.

As age constitutes the focal point for the life-cycle perspective on young adults, the first analysis concerns the age of our participants. The age at which secondary education ends and enrollment into higher education begins varies depending on the national context. Furthermore, different systems of higher education allow for varying degrees of flexibility for students to shape the intensity and duration of their studies, which may also lead to age variations.

The students in the YARG study are primarily between 16 and 30 years old; respondents who reported being younger or older were omitted in this analysis. When this range is broken down into age brackets, it is clear that the majority of respondents (53%) are between 21 and 24 years old. This age bracket was therefore further divided into two categories. The age distribution according to case study (Table 2.2) illustrates that there is variation in homogeneity across the case studies, and that the greatest differences concern the extent to which university students belong to the youngest (16–20) and oldest (25–30) age brackets. While more than seven out of ten students in the Chinese case study belong to the youngest age groups, the same is true for less than one out of ten students in Ghana, India and Canada. Students above 25 are, in turn, uncommon in China, United States, Japan, Russia, Turkey and Poland, but make up more than one-fourth of the participants in Israel, Canada, Finland and Sweden. Some cases (Canada, Sweden, Finland and Israel) are characterized by a rather even distribution between the age brackets, while others are skewed towards the younger age groups. The mean age for the young adults in the YARG study is 22.

As the YARG study has been conducted through case studies, it is not self-evident that there is correspondence between the student population of a given country and the findings reported here. Nevertheless, Table 2.2 illustrates that

Table 2.2 Age distribution amongst respondents

Case study	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	16–20	21–22	23–24	25–30	Total	<i>n</i>
			%					
China	20.0	1.43	72	23	3	2	100	317
United States	20.7	1.53	51	38	9	2	100	295
Japan	21.0	2.08	49	37	8	6	100	315
Peru	21.2	2.44	45	27	17	11	100	316
Russia	21.4	2.05	38	30	25	7	100	342
Poland	21.8	2.04	38	26	27	9	100	296
Turkey	21.8	2.04	35	26	30	8	100	341
Ghana	22.9	1.41	3	36	50	11	100	399
India	22.9	1.77	9	34	39	18	100	290
Israel	23.0	2.92	24	24	22	30	100	747
Canada	23.2	2.34	9	36	31	24	100	383
Finland	23.8	2.85	11	27	24	38	100	442
Sweden	24.0	2.89	12	22	27	39	100	302
Total	22.27	2.56	29	29	24	18	100	4785

The differences in means between case studies were tested through ANOVA, and differences between the distribution of age categories in each case study were tested through a chi-square test. Both tests were found to be statistically significant, ANOVA: $F(12, 4772) = 104.48$, $p < .001$; Chi-square: $\chi^2(36) = 1392.14$, $p < .001$

images of “the university student” varies depending on context. Moreover, when university students are selected as representatives for the category of “emerging adults”, it is important to reflect on the correspondence between these categories. Since increased age is bound to result in accumulation of life experiences, differences between the experiences of young adulthood for a 20-year-old (mean age for China) and a 24-year-old (mean age for Sweden) can be expected.

Previous accounts of emerging adulthood point to transition being a main feature. Consequently, adulthood is characterized by an increasing degree of more permanent choices. The next analysis pinpoints the extent to which university students in our study have already made choices that signify relational commitment by exploring survey questions on civil state and caretaker responsibilities.

When our participants describe their civil state,⁶ the majority of the respondents (86%) described themselves as being “single”, 4% as “married” and 10% as “cohabitant or [in a] common-law marriage”.⁷ These findings demonstrate that most young adults have not (yet) formed binding commitments to a partner. We also explored the extent to which young people reported having children or responsibility for

⁶The question was worded “How would you describe your current civil state?”.

⁷The response alternatives “widow/widower”, “divorced” and “separated” were also included, but they were subsequently excluded in the analysis as each of these were selected by less than 20 respondents.

close relatives,⁸ and the findings confirm that it is rare for university students to have such responsibilities: only 4% of the respondents report that this is the case.

When patterns of civil state are analyzed according to case study, the findings suggest that there are also cultural norms at play. The social acceptance regarding cohabitation in Sweden and Finland makes such living arrangements much more common. Furthermore, caretaker responsibilities are not evenly distributed between cases:⁹ compared to how rare such experiences are in Russia, Turkey, United States and Japan (1–2%), experiences of carrying responsibilities for children is more common in Canada and India (9%, compared to the average of 4%).

Case study-specific factors influence to which extent respondents have experiences of long-term relational commitments. At the same time, it is likely that experiences of commitments are partly related to age, which suggests interplay between age, civil state and care-taking responsibilities. In order to analyze this interplay, respondents were divided into seven categories depending on age, whether they were married and/or had children or not, and whether they were in a civil partnership or not.¹⁰ This categorization (Fig. 2.2) illustrates the heterogeneity of university students in terms of age and life experiences and in relation to case study. An illustrative example of this is that none of the case studies resembles the total distribution. However, the figures also illustrate that heterogeneity is not only found when case studies are compared, but is also a result of internal heterogeneity.

The analysis of subcategories amongst university students suggests interesting similarities and differences. First, in spite of the assumptions from a developmental perspective, age does not appear to be a weighing factor for the extent to which university students report long-term relational commitments. The average age amongst the students in the Canadian and Indian cases is similar, but while the Canadian case study is characterized by one of the highest rates of marriage and cohabitation (23%), the same is not true for the Indian case (5%). Second, this analysis establishes that experiences of cohabitation appear to be related to social factors rather than age, since the category of co-habitant 25–30-year olds does not correspond to the proportion of this age group in the case studies. Figures for respondents aged between 26 and 30 years exceeds 10% in Ghana, India and Peru (11%, 18% and 11% respectively), but the proportion of respondents who report that they are in a domestic partnership in these countries ranges between 0.3% and 1.2%.

The analysis thereby points to two ways in which the national origin of university students shape the category of university students, and consequently, who the young adults in YARG are. First, the national structures of higher education have

⁸The question was worded “Do you have children (either own or adopted) or close relatives you are responsible for?”.

⁹Chi-square: $\chi^2(12) = 75.70, p < .001$.

¹⁰Some categories were omitted from this analysis due to the small number of respondents. The civil state categories “widow/widower”; “divorced and separated” and respondents aged 16–20 who were married/responsible for children ($n = 33$) or in a common-law marriage ($n = 30$) were omitted for this reason.

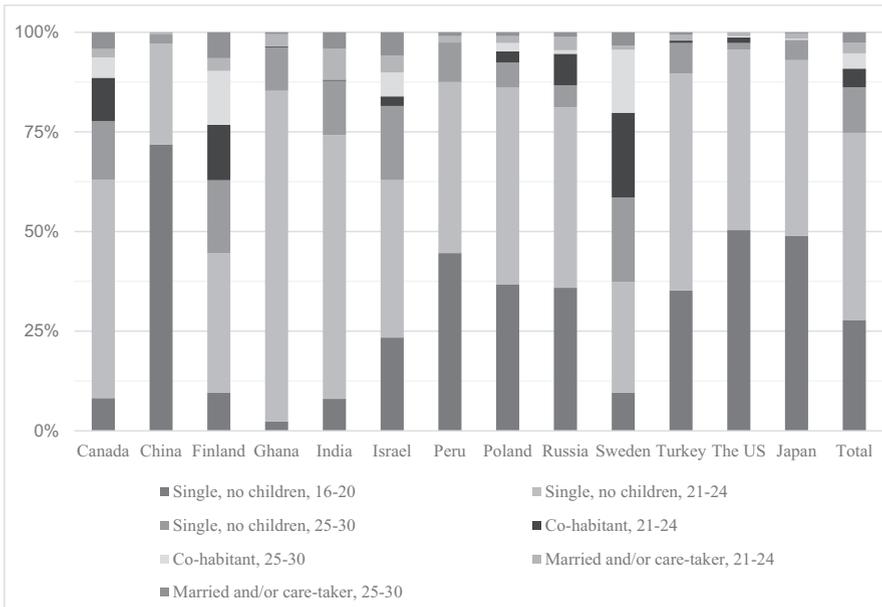


Fig. 2.2 University students in respective case studies, sorted into seven categories according to age, caretaker responsibilities, marriage and cohabitation per case study. (Note. Differences between case studies were tested through Pearson chi-square: $\chi^2(72) = 1886.40, p < .001, (n = 4698)$)

important implications on how old university students are, resulting in an age span of 15 years between the youngest and oldest respondents in the YARG study. Second, the cultural expectations on young adults in a given context make it more or less likely for university students to have gained certain experiences. These findings illustrate that while the “typical” young adult in this study is between 21 and 24 years old and single (47%), the majority of respondents are either younger or older, and some of them are also characterized by having made relational commitments generally not associated with emerging adulthood.

Are there, then, associations between age and life experiences on the one hand, and ways of being religious on the other? As a final step in the analysis of young adults from a developmental perspective, the seven subcategories of university students presented in Fig. 2.2 were related to self-assessed religiosity. Figure 2.3 illustrates that there are notable differences in self-assessed religiosity between the subcategories.¹¹ The highest degrees of religiosity are found in the groups who are married or have caretaker responsibilities, regardless of age. Does this suggest that the transitional phase of young adulthood provides weak conditions for religious commitment, and that stable living conditions will result in higher commitment in

¹¹ Differences in means between categories were tested with ANOVA: $F(6, 4691) = 32.26, p < .001$.

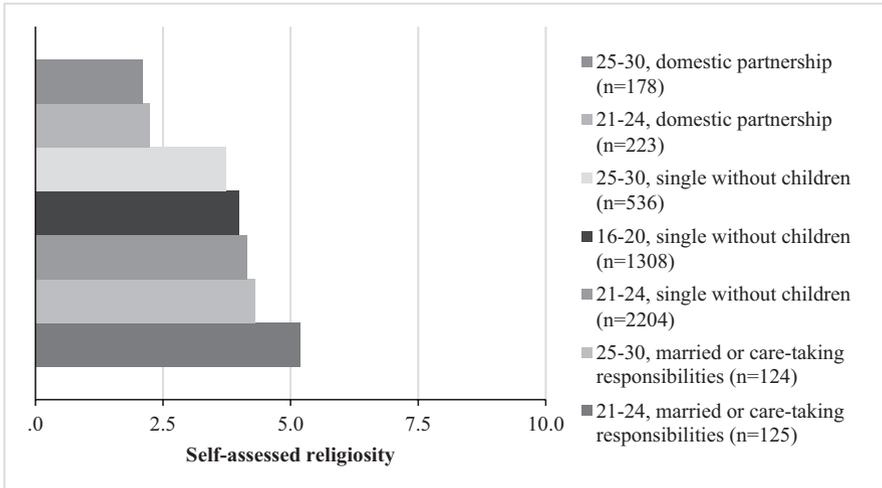


Fig. 2.3 Self-assessed religiosity per categories based on age, civil state and care-taker responsibilities, sorted from highest to lowest degree

other areas of life as well? The direction of influence is difficult to establish. The findings may point to the influence of religiosity on those lifestyle choices that make long-term relational commitments such as marriage a viable option. Support for such an interpretation is found in the association between co-habitation and lower degrees of religious self-identification. Furthermore, the previous analyses have also shown that case study influence may affect both relational commitment and self-assessed religiosity.

The analyses presented in this section provide valuable knowledge about the category of young adults in the YARG study. When the data is analyzed from a developmental perspective, the analysis has pointed to heterogeneity amongst the participants in terms of age. The variation, which can largely be attributed to the systems of higher education in the participating countries, calls for caution regarding how meaningful it is to apply contextual understandings to university students from another national context. Second, as there are strong relations between self-assessed religiosity and civil state and caretaker responsibilities, the analysis has pointed to context-dependent contingencies related to university students as a segment of the young adult category. The contextual variation regarding how old “university students” are and how they lead their lives thus suggest some caution regarding the application of a developmental perspective on this category.

2.4 Young Adults from a Cohort Perspective – Attitudes and Behaviors

An underlying idea in studies of change is that cohorts characterized by value change can be defined as generations. The study of generations has been particularly common in the North American context (Roof, 1999). In line with Karl Mannheim's (1952) reasoning, all cohorts do not form generations. A task for sociology thus becomes to explore whether the values of young cohorts indicate not only minor value change, but generational change.

When young adults are viewed from a cohort perspective, two main ideas are at play. First, young people's transition into independence and adulthood make them susceptible to cultural currents. Because of young peoples' adaptation to and incorporation of cultural and social developments, indications of value change will be most visible in the youth cohort (Collins-Mayo, 2010). Second, the values of young people are not temporary in character: the values that people adapt in their youth tend to settle into patterns brought into adulthood (Roof, 2011). This reasoning implies that value changes amongst youth are indicators of long-term societal change (Shildrick et al., 2009).

In contrast to a life-cycle perspective on youth, a cohort perspective thus considers how social, historical and cultural circumstances influence values, including religion and spirituality. Previous research has pointed to decline in religiosity between generations, but also, that the decline amongst contemporary youth is much steeper, suggesting generational change (Voas & Crockett, 2005; Crockett & Voas, 2006; Niemelä, 2015). If we return to Table 2.1 and self-assessed religiosity in relation to one's childhood home and interpret the findings from a cohort perspective, the findings would not only imply difference in religiosity between generations: they could also be understood as an indication of religious decline.

References to young people as forming distinct generations are frequent in contemporary studies on religion and youth. Following the idea of Generation X, the cohort born between the early 1960s and the early 1980s, the present generation of young adults has been called Generation Y. Broadly defined, Generation Y includes those born between 1981 and 1999. This generation has also been referred to as the Millennial Generation or Millennials (e.g. Brodahl & Carpenter, 2011). Highlighting the centrality of media and technology to this generation, contemporary young adults have also been titled Digital Natives, the Media generation or the Net Generation (e.g. Persky, 2001; Margaryan et al., 2011). The younger participants in our study could also be argued to be a part of Generation Z, usually argued to be born between 1995 and 2010 (see for example Bencsik et al., 2016).

When the cohort idea is applied to the YARG study, it could be argued that youth culture has never been as globalized as it currently is. At the same time, such a conclusion calls for caution. When writing on age, generation, and cohort as shaping factors for the construction of religion and religious practice, Dillon confines her discussion to one context, due to religion being "heavily contextualized" (2007, p. 526). Furthermore, even within the same context, Roof contends that

“generational identities are contextually variable and ambivalent” (2011, p. 621), meaning that all members of the same generation are not equally influenced by historical events or social developments. It would thus be asking a lot to attempt to find indications of generational formation in a study of a transnational character. A more feasible solution is to explore some of the social and cultural indicators said to characterize contemporary youth. In this chapter, we approach the question of cohort change in two ways: through an analysis of attitudes and through an analysis of media use.

2.4.1 *The Prevalence of Conservative-Liberal Values Amongst Young Adults*

Before we present our data on values, we turn to data from the World Value Survey (WVS; Inglehart et al., 2014b). With the exception of Israel, all the contexts studied in YARG are part of one or both of the latest two waves of WVS (Wave 5, 2005–2008, and Wave 6, 2010–2014). WVS includes questions regarding views on how justifiable homosexuality and abortion is. The purpose of this analysis is not to compare the findings from WVS and YARG, as the survey questions are not worded in the same way. However, the findings from WVS indicate whether or not the attitudes towards homosexuality and abortion suggest cohort differences that could imply a more profound value change.

The findings from Wave 6 in WVS (Inglehart et al., 2014a) indicate that the national contexts studied in YARG are characterized by younger generations generally being more liberal. Regardless of case study, people under the age of 29 come across as more liberal in their attitudes towards homosexuality than those aged 50 and above. In many countries, the difference is larger than one step on a five degree scale. However, the most striking value differences in WVS do not lie in the differences between cohorts, but in the differences between countries studied in the YARG-project. The most conservative attitudes towards homosexuality in the age group 18–25 are found among the Ghanaians ($M = 1.39$), which can be compared to Sweden where attitudes are the most liberal ($M = 8.19$).¹² For abortion, the results are similar: abortion is seen as least justifiable in Ghana ($M = 1.66$), followed by India ($M = 1.86$) and Turkey ($M = 2.15$). The highest mean is again found in Sweden ($M = 7.68$), followed by Finland ($M = 6.01$). While it is true that the WVS data are characterized by cohort differences, such differences are rather modest compared to the differences between national contexts. We turn to the findings from the YARG

¹²Other countries with low approval of homosexuality include India ($M = 1.71$) and Turkey ($M = 1.8$). Countries with high approval include Japan ($M = 7.14$), Finland ($M = 6.77$).

survey to explore whether questions about attitudes towards homosexuality,¹³ abortion¹⁴ and euthanasia¹⁵ reveal similar case study differences.

The analysis of attitudes amongst university students is based on seven survey questions worded as statements on a five-degree scale. As the statements expressed approval, attitudes were measured in terms of to what extent participants' views resonated with a liberal attitude towards homosexuality, abortion, and euthanasia. A reliability analysis indicated high inter-item correlation between the items measuring attitudes on each issue.¹⁶ Sum variables for attitudes towards same-sex marriages, abortion and euthanasia respectively were therefore constructed in the form of means on a five-degree scale (disapproval-approval). When means were aggregated to case study level, the means of many case studies indicate strong opinions on the matters studied.¹⁷ The five-degree scale was reduced to three categories: "disapproval", "neither disapproval nor approval" and "approval". Our presentation focuses on the extent to which university students expressed approval of the issues probed.

In total, 54% of the university students expressed approval of same-sex marriages, 77% expressed approval of abortion, and 41% expressed approval of euthanasia. However, Fig. 2.4 illustrates the variation across case studies. The case studies are particularly divided in their attitudes on same-sex marriages.¹⁸ The strongest expressions of disapproval are found in Ghana (88%). For abortion, differences between countries are not as big. The attitudes towards euthanasia are characterized by the least extent of approval in the data.

The findings on how young adults approve of euthanasia, abortion and same-sex marriages suggest that young adults in this study are far from forming a generation in terms of attitudinal consensus. While survey data from WVS (Inglehart et al., 2014a, b) suggests slow value change in the form of values becoming increasingly liberal, both WVS and the YARG data demonstrate how the differences between case studies are far more striking when internal variation is analyzed. This analysis has therefore pointed to the importance of caution when applying a cohort perspective on transnational empirical data.

¹³ Statements included in the survey were "Same-sex marriage should be treated the same as marriage between a man and a woman" and "Same-sex couples should have the same rights for adoption as heterosexual couples."

¹⁴ Statements included in the survey were "If a woman became pregnant as a result of rape she should be able to obtain a legal abortion"; "When a woman's own health is seriously endangered by a pregnancy she should be able to obtain a legal abortion" and "A pregnant woman should be able to obtain a legal abortion if the woman wants it for any reason."

¹⁵ Statements included in the survey were "Doctors should be allowed to end the patient's life if the patient requests it" and "Doctors should be allowed to assist the patient to commit suicide if the patient requests it."

¹⁶ For tests on inter-item reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used. Items on homosexuality: $\alpha=.92$ Items on abortion: $\alpha=.76$. Items on euthanasia: $\alpha=.79$.

¹⁷ Due to the skewed distributions of means, standard tests of differences between the distributions of means across case studies were not an option.

¹⁸ Differences between case studies for the distribution over these three categories were tested with Pearson chi-square with the following results: Euthanasia: $\chi^2(24) = 920.21, p < .001$; Abortion: $\chi^2(24) = 929.72, p < .001$; Same-sex marriage: $\chi^2(24) = 1748.413, p < .001$.

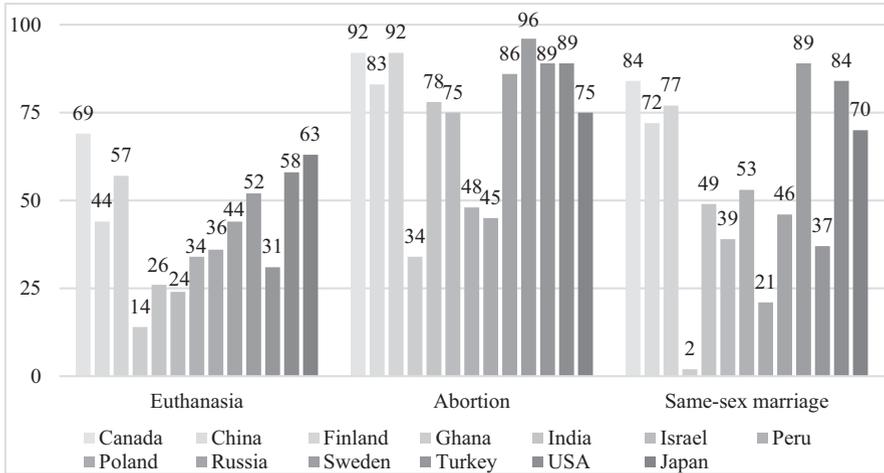


Fig. 2.4 Approval of euthanasia, abortion, same-sex marriage in case studies, reported in percent (n = 4336–4964)

2.4.2 Media use

Following developments in digital communication and increasing Internet accessibility, Internet use has grown exponentially on a global scale across all age groups (e.g. International Telecommunication Union, 2016; Statista, 2018; Pew Research Center, 2018). Notwithstanding the enduring presence of a “digital divide”, the number of active Internet users worldwide as of July 2018 was estimated at around 4.1 billion (Statista, 2018). A Pew Research Center study from 2018 and recent Eurostat figures (Eurostat, 2017) reflect that, from an international perspective, young people (aged between 18 and 36 years) are more likely than older individuals to use the Internet. Internet use also correlates with education; highly educated adults are more likely to use the Internet (Pew Research Center, 2018). Recent international statistics thus support the view of young adults as frequent Internet users.

Table 2.3 confirms widespread Internet use among the YARG participants. Eighty-five percent report daily use of the Internet, and in nine out of thirteen case studies, the proportion of daily users exceeds 90 percent. When compared to daily use of television (21%), newspapers/magazines (13%), and radio (11%), the special status of the Internet is apparent. It is also worth noting that in the countries where Internet is used the least frequently, Internet is still widely used.

In order to further explore the function of media use amongst respondents, the survey included a question about purposes for Internet use.¹⁹ Daily Internet use was most often reported for the purpose of “communication” (72%) and “finding

¹⁹The question was worded “If you ever use the Internet, for which of the following activities do you use it?”. Responses were made on a five-point frequency scale, ranging from “every day” to “never”.

Table 2.3 Internet usage according to case study

Case study	Occasionally/weekly %	Almost every day	Every day	Total	n
Sweden	1	2	97	100	328
Finland	0	4	96	100	484
United States	3	3	94	100	304
Israel	2	5	93	100	761
Poland	1	7	92	100	299
Russia	1	6	92	100	343
Turkey	0	10	90	100	347
Canada	2	8	90	100	410
China	2	8	90	100	325
Ghana	9	22	69	100	420
Peru	5	22	73	100	321
Japan	11	29	60	100	323
India	24	20	57	101	288
Total	4	11	85	100	4953

Differences between case studies were tested through Pearson chi-square: $\chi^2(24) = 808.70$, $p < .001$

information” (63%). A little more than half the sample (53%) reported daily Internet use for the purpose of “entertainment”. In contrast, using Internet daily for the purpose of “religious or spiritual services and issues” was only reported by 2% with 54% reporting never using Internet for this purpose. In comparison to the value patterns reported previously, which pointed to heterogeneity, the data on Internet use suggests many similarities. The findings indicate that for the university students in our study, Internet use is a natural part of everyday life. In this somewhat limited sense they can be viewed as “digital natives”. However, our material does not allow us to explore this topic in more detail (for more on media use among the YARG participants see Moberg & Sjö, 2020).

It is not possible to make general claims about Internet use among young adults based on this data alone: due to their main occupation, university students are likely to be amongst the most frequent users in their age groups. Such reasoning leads to the final question in this chapter: how particular are the young adults in this sample?

2.5 The University Experience – Issues of Access and Privilege

In this section, we address how particular university students are in their national context. The extent to which young adults from different socioeconomic strata attend higher education depends on a range of factors, such as possible tuition fees and the national educational level. Consequently, figures on education must be selected and viewed with caution. Due to rapid structural changes in some societies, figures on educational attainment does not always provide a correct image.

Increasing numbers of governments have come to recognize the importance of higher education for social and economic development and for countering structural inequalities. China and India are examples of countries that have seen rapid changes in education systems (Wang, 2015, pp. 1–2; Tilak & Biswal, 2015, p. 47) and it is unlikely that data on educational attainment reflects recent transformations. A focus on the proportion of younger age cohorts who have a university degree is thus a more reliable option, but it carries its own challenges. As discussed, the admission ages across different national educational structures vary, as do the extent to which university studies are carried out according to set structures. Comparative figures on enrollment into or graduation from higher education amongst younger age cohorts will therefore not provide fully reliable figures of educational attainment.

Our first analysis targets two key figures that provide information on the national settings of YARG. Both indicators have been retrieved from databases that take contextual variations into account and thereby present comparable figures. The first key figure could be understood as a threshold indicator, namely, to which extent young people (aged 20–24) have completed secondary education. In many countries, completed secondary education is a requirement for higher education. The second key figure concerns the percentage of people aged 18–22 years who attend higher education. Such data provides a rough image of how common higher education is.

Table 2.4 demonstrates that the extent to which completed secondary schooling is common among young people varies greatly between the case studies in YARG. While the vast majority of young people in Israel, Finland, Poland and Sweden have completed secondary education, merely one-third of young people in China, Ghana and Russia fill the requirements. As expected, the numbers regarding enrollment into higher education are lower than the numbers on completed secondary education, and they further attest to contextual variation of educational level between the countries. Furthermore, these numbers illustrate that high numbers of completed secondary education do not correspond with high numbers of enrollment into higher education.

Taken together, both indicators confirm the notion that university students are far from representative of young adults. Furthermore, the varied proportions of completed secondary schooling could be understood as an indicator of the extent to which higher education should be understood as an indicator of privilege. In countries where secondary education is not a given, enrollment into higher education is to a higher extent a privilege of a chosen few.

To what extent do the indicators in Table 2.4 imply that university students constitute a privileged subgroup? We explore this issue further by turning to survey data that probes understandings of privilege in terms of the income level of one's family in relation to a perceived national average.²⁰ When we look at the total distribution,

²⁰The question was worded: "In considering your family's monthly income relative to the average in your country, is it..." The response alternatives were "Much higher than the average", "Somewhat higher than the average", "About the average", "Somewhat lower than the average", "Much lower than the average", and "I don't know". Those who responded "I don't know" (6.9%) are not included in the presented analysis.

Table 2.4 Educational attainment in case study countries

Country	Completed secondary schooling, 20–24 (2010) ^a	Enrollment into higher education, 18–22 ^b
	%	
Israel	80	N.A.
Finland	76	37
Poland	77	54
Sweden	73	57
Peru	65	29
Canada	48	N.A.
Turkey	48	17
Japan	47	N.A.
India	39	2
United States	38	N.A.
China	35	28
Ghana	34	4
Russia	25	N.A.

^aThe information is retrieved from Barro-Lee Educational Attainment Set (World Bank Group, 2018)

^bThe information is retrieved from World Inequality Database on Education (UNESCO, 2018), which combines the results of several large-scale international surveys

the largest category consists of those who have assessed their family's income level as being higher or much higher than the average in their country (38%). While such findings suggest that university students generally understand their background as more privileged than average, it is notable that the responses are quite evenly distributed between the response categories. Roughly one-third (34%) considers their family income to correspond to the national average, and 28% have assessed their family income as lower than the national average.

Is there a relation between how university students understand their family's financial status and the general income level of their country? In this analysis, we use the categories of national income levels used by the World Bank. When the study was conducted in 2016, the case study countries were placed in three different categories. Most case studies belonged to the high-income economies (Canada, Finland, Israel, Poland, Russia, Sweden, The United States, and Japan), three case studies were conducted in upper-middle-income economies (China, Peru and Turkey), and two case studies were conducted in lower-middle-income economies (Ghana and India).

The findings presented in Table 2.5 suggest that university students who live in upper-middle-income economies most often assessed their family income as higher than the national average. This was also the most common response for respondents in high-income economies. In other words, students in these economies who assess their income level as much or somewhat lower than average are more likely to stand out in relation to their student peers, since the majority is more privileged. However, in lower-middle-income economies, the opposite seems to be true. It is more common for university students to estimate their family income as lower than average,

Table 2.5 Assessed income level of one’s family in comparison to average, percent

Family income	Much/somewhat lower	Average	Somewhat/much higher	Total	n
	%				
High-income economies	28	33	39	100	3100
Upper-middle-income economies	23	34	43	100	931
Lower-middle-income-economies	42	38	20	100	592
Total	28	34	38	100	4623

Differences between categories were tested through Pearson chi-square: $\chi^2(4) = 104.30, p < .001$

and eight students out of ten assess their family income to correspond to the national average or to be lower. In lower-middle-income economies, students who assess their family income to be much lower or somewhat lower than average are therefore likely to meet their peers in their university settings to a higher extent.

The analysis suggests that assumptions regarding university students as a privileged strata of young adults should not be made prematurely. On the one hand, the analysis has demonstrated that the proportion of young adults who meet the basic requirements for higher education vary. In countries with low proportions of completed secondary education, enrollment into higher education places a young adult in a special position. However, once enrolled in higher education, students from lower-middle-income economies are more likely to encounter students who do not describe their family backgrounds as privileged. In countries where higher education is more common, higher education comes across as an indicator of privilege at an individual level. The findings suggest that the differences regarding privilege are further accentuated at a personal level, as expressed by how the participating students assess the level of family income.

2.6 Conclusions

The beginning of this chapter provided a general presentation of religious identifications and practices reported in the YARG survey. The findings revealed that the majority of the young adults included in the study assess their personal religiosity on the lower end of the scale, and describe the religiosity of their families as being stronger than their own. Furthermore, while participants report similar frequencies of participation in public and private religious practice, private practice was reported as occurring more frequently. The heterogeneity in the data implies that the total distributions for self-assessed religiosity and religious practice reflect the situation in some national contexts better than others. Other contributions to this volume offer more detailed analyses of these findings (see for example Chap. 11 in this volume).

In this chapter, we have stated that the most common perspectives on young adults tend to understand this social category from either a developmental perspective or as a cohort. Both of these perspectives are based on certain assumptions

regarding shared characteristics of young adults as a category. These assumptions have important implications for the interpretation of research findings. The aim of this chapter has been to provide insights into who the young adults in our study are in terms of background characteristics, values, religious preferences, media use, and perceived social status/class. In this final section, we highlight our most significant findings and the conclusions they allow us to draw.

The participants in this study are not just any young adults, but university students. As our overview of the character of the higher educational fields of the included countries shows, in most cases, the people included in the YARG sample occupy a position not shared by the majority of their peers. However, this does not imply that our sample of university students view themselves as privileged. Assessments of family income compared to a perceived national average pointed to fluctuations depending on the general income level of the country studied. A first main point that emerges from the findings is therefore that while higher education often constitutes a threshold to professional career paths that are more likely to result in privileged societal positions, enrollment into higher education does not necessarily imply a privileged background for the YARG participants.

The internal heterogeneity found between our different case studies leads us to our second main point: the category of university students is context-dependent. The analysis of the age distribution in the sample as well as the participants' experiences of permanent life decisions point to some common themes in the data, such as the majority of the participants describing themselves as 21–24 years old as well as single. However, there were notable differences in the age distributions of the respective case studies. Furthermore, some case study contexts included notable proportions of young adults who were married, or reported having responsibility for children and/or close relatives. The analysis therefore suggests that in this study, university students not only come from different cultural contexts; they also make up a mixed crowd in terms of age and life experiences. While the developmental perspective, which points to age and life transitions as markers of emerging adulthood, resonates well with the findings from some case studies, it is not equally compatible with others. This finding highlights that transnational research on university students and young adults needs to be sensitive to the variations between young adults' life experiences and understandings of the young adult category across social and cultural contexts. Higher education may be characterized by increasing globalization and standardization (Maringe & Foskett, 2010), but the features of university students clearly vary between individuals and national contexts. This chapter therefore underlines the need to acknowledge the complexity evident in our material.

Furthermore, the findings illustrate the ways in which implicit assumptions of similarity may lead to overlooking important variations. A cohort perspective on youth explores whether certain features of a specific age cohort differ from other cohorts and suggests that such differences are attributable to broader processes of change. Here, we used cohort data from WVS on attitudes towards same-sex marriage and abortion to help us understand how the YARG data relates to the value orientations of other age cohorts. The YARG data revealed great differences between

attitudes towards euthanasia, same-sex marriage and abortion across the case studies. While longitudinal data from WVS suggest slow cohort change, such cohort change is not as conspicuous as the lack of attitudinal consensus amongst our participants. These findings point to heterogeneity rather than consensus as the most distinctive feature of the YARG data on values.

Overall, the findings reveal great variation across the case studies. While the focus on university students reduces the heterogeneity that any transnational study inevitably entails, this chapter has demonstrated that people who are enrolled in higher education in different social and cultural contexts still are far from similar in terms of age, life situation, social background, or attitudes. The transnational scope on university students also has implications for how the findings should be interpreted, as it points to the context-dependent nature of previous depictions of “university students” that do not hold for the YARG study as a whole. The study provides a valuable contribution to the study of religion and higher education, precisely because of its variable character.

Considering that the indicators that underpin cohort perspectives on youth have pointed to variation rather than homogeneity at a transnational level, one can question the usefulness of cohort perspectives on young adults. However, this is not the conclusion we wish to end with. It is true that our analysis points to the importance of testing underlying assumptions regarding the category of young adults against an empirical background. The poor fit between the age distribution in this sample and depictions of emerging adults in previous research is a good example of why. However, the mismatch between the total sample of university students included in this study and earlier depictions of emerging adults does not necessarily mean that the previous depictions are wrong. Previous depictions are likely to hold true for studies of limited contexts. Our exploration points to the need for future studies to be attentive to the context-dependent character of how the categories of “young people”, “emerging adults” and “young adults” are described in order to avoid making premature assumptions about these social categories.

Furthermore, while cohort change does not seem to be the conspicuous feature of the attitudes of young adults studied here, it does not mean that cohort change is not worth studying. The identification of the main processes of social change and the forces driving them constitutes a central topic of inquiry in both the study of religion and the study of young adults. However, the analysis points to the dangers of studying young adults with a sole focus on their attitudes and values from a perspective of change. This overshadows the lived realities of young adults and the fascinating variations found within this group.

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Chapter 3

Who Are They and What Do They Value? – The Five Global Worldviews of Young Adults



Peter Nynäs , Ariela Keysar , and Martin Lagerström

Abstract In this chapter, we present five distinct worldview profiles that describe ways of being religious, spiritual and secular. The findings emerge from our international study with young adults in twelve countries worldwide, and it is based on the Faith Q-Sort (FQS) and Q-methodology. FQS is a novel way to assess worldviews based on what is called prototypes from a factor analysis of how people respond to a set of statements. We implemented the FQS as part of our mixed-method approach, and results from the survey part allows us to further explore the five prototypes closer. How are the worldviews different from each other in terms of national distribution, demographic data, measure of religiosity, basic values, life satisfaction, where they get information, and aspects of trust? Since FQS is a new instrument in the study of religions, the investigation based on the mixed method approach helps us to evaluate its usefulness and quality as a method for assessment of ways of being (non)religious.

Keywords Religion · Secular · Spiritual · Worldview · Gender · Well-being · Values · Attitude · Q-methodology · Faith Q-Sort

3.1 Introduction

What kind of way of being religious and non-religious can we find in a cross-cultural perspective? This question was at the core of our international project Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG), and the challenges it posed required us to consider and try out new methods (see Chap. 1 of this volume). Q-methodology was in general rather unknown and mentioned primarily in specialized publications

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P. Nynäs et al. (eds.), *The Diversity Of Worldviews Among Young Adults*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94691-3_3

on method (e.g., Newman & Ramlo, 2010; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). It was usually not referred to in volumes on methodology in the study of religions. Nevertheless, when we came into contact with Prof. David Wulff's (2019) work on the Faith Q-Sort (FQS), we concluded that it met our needs.

The logic behind the FQS is adapted to the need for new approaches that correct the shortcomings and bias of earlier methods in the field. This need has been addressed in the study of religions in conjunction with a growing demand to explore religious subjectivities, and in particular as these are expressed by respondents themselves beyond normative and institutional definitions. Contemporary cultural and social processes have affected how being (non)religious and spiritual is formed and expressed and with people increasingly mixing ideas, practices, and identities in novel ways following the changing organization of religion, secularization, and increasing religious diversity. Against this background, the need for a more differentiated and sensitive approach has been underscored, especially from a cross-cultural perspective (e.g., Bowman & Valk, 2012; Bruce & Voas, 2007; af Burén, 2015; Droogers & van Harskamp, 2014; Gilhus & Sutcliffe, 2013; Lassander, 2012, 2014; McGuire, 2008; Nynäs et al., 2015; Woodhead, 2012, 2013).

When using Q-methodology in research on religiosity, religion can more easily be understood and investigated in light of more than just religious beliefs, institutional belonging, or predefined categories such as extrinsic vs. intrinsic or fundamentalist vs. liberal religiosity. In contrast, Q-methodology puts subjectivity at the center of investigation (see Stephenson, 1993/1994), and enables methodological attentiveness to the many different ways of living, experiencing, and expressing religiosity including contradictory configurations. In this chapter, we show how Q-methodology and FQS open up new possibilities for the assessment of religiosity, and provide a turn away from taken-for-granted ideas and predefined assumptions of religion and spirituality. Still, the focus in this chapter is on the part of our main findings from using FQS in an international study, namely the five global prototypes, or worldview profiles.

When a researcher conducts a study with Q-methodology, he or she presents to the respondents statements that in a significant way reflect a broad enough array of viewpoints on a subject matter (e.g., the domains of personality or religion). The respondents are then required to rank-order these statements, and this process makes it possible to capture patterns of subjective views. The study presented in this chapter is based on FQS-sorts from our total sample with university students ($N = 562$) from twelve countries, namely Canada, China, Ghana, Finland, India, Israel, Peru, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Turkey and the United States. As a research instrument, the FQS is not a scale or a questionnaire. It is a qualitative procedure that involves and is assisted by quantitative analyses. This makes it an inherently mixed-methods tool (Newman & Ramlo, 2010). A factor analysis is central to extracting what we call prototypes in an FQS-study. Prototypes are general patterns or profiles that are distinct from each other and shared by parts of the respondents, and in our case, they reflect (non-)religious and spiritual worldviews. Prototypes are the final result of both the statistical analysis and the careful investigation, interpretation and presentation of this complex set of data.

FQS and Q-methodology do not require a large number of respondents, but it is important to find enough respondents representing a variety of viewpoints (Watts & Stenner, 2012). For this purpose, our initial survey with a larger sample (total $N \approx 300$) in each country contributed to a broad selection of participants for the FQS-study ($n \approx 45$ per country) with regard to gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, language groups, class and field of study. These, in combination with other characteristics (e.g., value priorities based on Schwartz's PVQ [Schwartz, 1992, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012]) guaranteed diversity among the participants and their FQS-sorts. Yet, our convenience samples are not representative of populations in respective countries, nor of any specific segment of this. As part of a mixed-method approach, the results from the survey also point to additional differences between prototypes and how they are distinct from each other (cf. Leech & Onwuegbuzie, 2009). These samples include, however, all individuals that are significant to respective prototypes and representative of these 'snapshots'.

For a more detailed information on the research project *Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective*, the mixed method design and related issues we refer to the introductory chapter in this volume (Chap. 1).

3.2 The Faith Q-Sort in the Study of Religions

Q-methodology has been used in a variety of fields (Block, 2008; Brown, 1980; Gabor, 2013; Watts & Stenner, 2012), including studies on worldviews (Nilsson, 2013). McKeown (2001) developed a Q-set for Christian Orthodoxy, but the FQS designed by Wulff (2019) is currently the only tool for assessment of religiosity in cross-cultural research and research not limited or defined by certain traditions or denominations.

The FQS does not limit itself to predefined ideas and assumptions of religion and spirituality. It is rather characterized by flexibility in terms of methodological attentiveness to the many different ways of living, experiencing, and expressing (non-) religiosity, also in the form of contradictory configurations. Wulff (2019) did a thorough work to include elements and aspects from both various religious traditions and academic perspectives on religion when he initially defined the FQS-set consisting of 101 statements. This version of FQS was developed and tested in a North American context, and has also been successfully used in several studies with both religious and non-religious groups in Finland (Terho, 2013; Pennanen, 2013; Lassander & Nynäs, 2016; Kontala, 2016). In order to validate the instrument for cross-cultural use as well, the FQS was evaluated by our international partners in YARG. With regard to the religious and spiritual views in their respective cultures, they proposed both revisions of statements and suggested new ones. The new version of FQS was thus more attentive to local forms of religiosity, non-religiosity and secular positions.

Validity and reliability of Q-methodology is further discussed in Chap. 1 of this volume, but we need to keep in mind that any method will always be limited in one

way or the other. Kontala (2016) illustrates the Q-set's problem with Lego. The sorting process could be compared to a test, where respondents are given 101 Lego-blocks and a task to build something familiar out of these blocks. The possibilities are endless, yet at the same time constrained by the available blocks; how the Q-set has been determined by the scholar. The respondent cannot suddenly wish to manifest their preferences by constructing a game of softball. The validity of FQS rests on its items being representative of the entire domain (concourse) of the field or discourse being studied.

The prototypes found in a sample can be described with more or less nuance, but they are always an informed interpretation of the preliminary factor analyses that is at the core of every Q-methodology. The outcome from this includes tables with for instance factor loadings, item factor scores, and distinguishing statements for each one of the factors (prototypes). The final reflective part of the analysis is done by the researcher and results in the extraction and labeling of the prototypes. This requires fine-tuned interpretations of the extensive and detailed data output from a Q-study (Wulff, 2019, p. 647). The configuration of items for each prototype has to be interpreted both independently and in relation to the other prototypes. The prototypes are distinguished by particular characteristics, but they may also share characteristics with some of the other prototypes. Because of this, the researchers have to take into account both which statements *define* a particular prototype, and which statements *distinguish* one prototype from the other. The aims of a study and the theoretical concerns involved might affect how a prototype is described.

Results from Wulff's (2019) study in the United States with respondents of various backgrounds are the most relevant previous research we can refer to (except for studies pertaining to very specific samples and research on typologies of religion which is the topic of Chap. 5). Wulff's (2019) results of initial prototypes can be seen to reflect the religious landscape of North America, but also functioning as good examples of the kinds of results one can obtain from an FQS study. Wulff labeled his main three prototypes as (1) Spiritually Attuned, (2) Secular-Humanistic, and (3) Traditionally Theistic.

The Spiritually Attuned Prototype

Sensing a transcendent or universal luminous element within themselves, persons of this prototype reject religious authorities or exemplars as sources for understanding and direction. Religious faith is conceived of as a never ending quest; the transcendent, as a deep mystery that can be pointed to but never grasped. Indeed, these persons take delight in mystery and paradox, and music, art, or poetry provide sustenance. Moments of profound illumination are familiar, especially in the midst of the natural world. Following a spiritual path that above all is in harmony with the Earth, these persons represent themselves as dedicated to making the world a better place to live. The full realization of human potentialities is seen as the goal of human life, and ultimate truth is thought to be reflected in the qualities of symmetry, harmony, and balance. Being religious in the conventional sense is not considered a prerequisite for being a deeply moral and compassionate person. (Wulff, 2019, p. 656)

The Secular-Humanistic Prototype

Representatives of this prototype view the religious traditions as illusory creations of human fears and desires, their scriptures as mythic and metaphoric, the products of human authorship rather than divine inspiration. All religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles are rejected. Whereas no higher purpose or ultimate destiny is discerned for the human species, there is nevertheless hope for human progress on a worldwide scale. Indeed, persons of this prototype report that they are actively working to relieve the suffering of others and to making the world a better place to live. A fundamental affirmation of a core of values and moral principles undergirds this perspective, according to which being religious is not a prerequisite for being deeply moral and compassionate. Music, art, or poetry, not scriptural passages or religious convictions, are important sources of sustenance. (Wulff, 2019, p. 656)

The Traditionally Theistic Prototype

Firmly grounded in the religious values taught in childhood, persons of this prototype feel personally protected and guided by a spiritual being who is turned to with joy and thanksgiving and from whom is received forgiveness for earlier thoughts and deeds. Guided and sustained by familiar religious scriptures and private spiritual practices, these individuals are at the same time active, contributing members of some religious community. A fundamental core of values and a well-defined set of moral principles are embraced. Self-described as caring and compassionate, these persons express their faith by reaching out to those in need. They feel at home in the universe and a sense of peace, even in the face of life difficulties. (Wulff, 2019, p. 657)

The fact that FQS-sorts from only a small number of individuals have contributed forming a specific prototype is not a problem in Q-methodology. Rather, it shows the strength of the method to empirically bring to the surface distinct viewpoints that might not otherwise become known (Watts & Stenner, 2012). Besides the three main prototypes above, Wulff (2019) found five smaller prototypes within the same sample named Reluctantly Skeptical, The Religiously Extraverted, Situationally Religious, Religious-Humanistic, and Institutionally Anchored. Already this exemplifies that contemporary religiosity should be seen in terms of a continuum of which we can capture only temporary snapshots. These follow from the many diverse configurations of religious and secular ideas, practices, notions, attitudes, and emotions that are possible today. We continue this discussion in Chap. 4, where we look closer at how prototypes differ across countries.

3.3 Five Global Prototypes

In our global sample ($N = 562$) based on respondents from twelve countries, we could identify five distinct prototypes. We have labelled the five global prototypes in a conventional way with regards to the most central elements at play. These are: (1) Secular Humanist; (2) Active Confident Believer; (3) Noncommitted

Traditionalist; (4) Spiritually Attuned; and (5) The Disengaged Liberal. The fact that the descriptions below can be defined as short narrative descriptions means that many nuances have been disregarded in this presentation, yet they catch the most defining and distinguishing elements.

Short Narrative Description of Global Prototype 1, Secular Humanist

The Secular Humanist takes a clear distance to all religious ideas and practices. One is critical of the religious tradition of one's people, and one actively seeks to change societal structures and values, believing that human progress is possible on a worldwide scale. Individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality is an important value, and one believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious. Consequently, the thought of dedicating one's life to serving the divine is a very foreign idea. One cannot identify with those who rely on religious authorities, who observe prescribed religious practices and laws, whose sexuality is strongly guided by a religious or spiritual outlook, and who experience the presence of the divine. In contrast, one views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires, and rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles. One views religious content as metaphoric, rather than literally true. The Secular Humanist feels spiritually moved and sustained by music, art, or poetry.

Short Narrative Description of Global Prototype 2, Active Confident Believer

The Active Confident Believer centers life on religion. One believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship, experiences the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent who guides and protects. One is an active, contributing member of a religious or a spiritual community, and engages regularly in religious or spiritual practices also in private. One views religion as a central means for becoming a better and more moral person. Longing for a deeper, more confident faith is an essential part of one's life, and the idea of having a vague and shifting religious outlook feels foreign. One feels different from people who see no higher purpose or ultimate destiny for the human species. Neither can one identify with people who take no interest in religious or spiritual matters, or who feel distant, uncomfortable or fearful in turning to the divine. One feels foreign to consider all religious scriptures to be outdated or misguided, or to experience the idea of divinity empty of significance or meaning. One would not participate in religious practices chiefly to meet others' wishes or expectations: being religious or spiritual is central to whom the Active Confident Believer is.

Short Narrative Description of Global Prototype 3, Noncommitted Traditionalist

The Noncommitted Traditionalist values the cultural and societal role of religion. One feels the importance of remaining loyal to the religion of one's nation and of maintaining continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors. Personally, one prefers to claim that one believes in some way, but would not identify as religious. One is moved by the atmosphere of sacred or venerated places. One thinks that the world's religious traditions point to a common truth, perhaps that the ultimate is a life force or creative energy, rather than a supernatural being. Accordingly, one views religious faith as a never-ending quest. Yet, there is no place in one's life for frequent doubts about long-held religious convictions, nor does one feel adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal. One does not identify with people who consider all religious scriptures to be outdated, misguided and of human

authorship, who view religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires, or who feel contempt for all religious institutions, ideas and practices. One feels very foreign to thinking that the idea of divinity is empty of significance or meaning, or to relate to the divine as feminine. One also takes comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will face suffering or punishment, and the Noncommitted Traditionalist values purity and strives to safeguard it.

Short Narrative Description of Global Prototype 4, Spiritually Attuned

For the Spiritually Attuned religion and spirituality are important sources of life. One believes in some way, but does not view oneself as religious and has not dedicated one's life to serving the divine. Nevertheless, one sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life. One feels spiritually moved and deeply sustained by music, art, or poetry, but can also sense a spiritual or higher order of reality in the midst of nature. One is positively engaged by and interested in other peoples' religious traditions and inclined to embrace elements from various religious and spiritual traditions. One thinks about the ultimate as a life force or creative energy rather than as a supernatural being. One does not rely on religious authorities for understanding and direction, and takes a clear distance to ideas about certain beliefs being crucial for salvation and to claims that regular attendance at places of worship are essential expressions of faith. One does not take part in religious activities to form or maintain social relationships. Rather, one embraces an outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values, and actively works towards making the world a better place to live. The Spiritually Attuned cannot identify with notions about men and women being by nature intended for different roles, and is committed to following a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment.

Short Narrative Description of Global Prototype 5, Disengaged Liberal

The life of the Disengaged Liberal does not center on a religious or spiritual quest. One does not identify as an active, contributing member of a religious or a spiritual community, nor as having thorough knowledge of religious scriptures or texts. Rather, one participates in religious activities chiefly on special occasions. One believes in some way, but does not view oneself as religious. The divine is viewed as a deep mystery that can be pointed to but never fully understood, but still also as a sheltering and nurturing parent with whom one can have a personal relationship. One becomes more religious or spiritual in times of crisis or need, and prays chiefly for solace and personal protection. One is profoundly touched by the suffering of others, and charitable acts or social action are the primary expressions of one's religiosity. One does not identify with claims that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation, or that one should remain loyal to the religion of one's nation. The Disengaged Liberal stresses that one can be deeply moral without being religious. One cannot see oneself letting a religious or spiritual outlook guide one's sexuality or giving up worldly or bodily pleasures for religious or spiritual reasons.

These findings confirm that some religious subjectivities can be seen as universal categories and represent main ways of being religious, non-religious and spiritual, and configurations of these. They can also be considered prominent to varying degrees. The cumulative variance of the global prototypes accounted for 43% with rather significant differences between single prototypes. Prototype 1 accounted for

17% of the variance, prototype 2 for 10%, prototype 3 for 5%, prototype 4 for 6% and prototype 5 for 5%.

The given categories secular, religious and spiritual are well reflected in these results, but two more factors have emerged that are distinct enough to present material for defining prototypes. One of these, global prototype 3, Noncommitted Traditionalist, seems to be a ‘religious’ prototype, yet in a different way than prototype 2, Active Confident Believer. A brief look at factor score correlations provide a good measure of how distinct the global prototypes are and how they are related to each other. This is presented in Table 3.1. The table confirms that global prototype 2 Active Confident Believer and global prototype 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist are close to each other and present a strong correlation ($r = .54$). Yet, the highest correlation is found between the global prototype 1 Secular Humanist and global prototype 4 Spiritually Attuned ($r = .59$). The correlation between global prototype 5, Disengaged Liberal and both global prototypes 1 Secular Humanist and 4 Spiritually Attuned are also high ($r = .47$; $r = .54$). Do these three represent a secular trio?

The correlation between global prototype 2 Active Confident Believer and global prototype 4 Spiritually Attuned, by contrast, is low ($r = .17$). This is also the case for the correlation between 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist and 1 Secular Humanist ($r = .03$). Yet, not until we compare global prototype 1 Secular Humanist and global prototype 2 Active Confident Believer, do we find a negative correlation ($r = -.27$). The negative correlation between these two comes as no surprise, but it is still noteworthy that they are the only two that are negatively correlated in this sample and among these prototypes.

Here we still need to underscore the difference between the global prototype 1 Secular Humanist and global prototype 2 Active Confident Believer. This divide stands out as one polarizing and organizing aspect for the prototypes, and makes it meaningful to group them into two main overarching categories. Among the main distinguishing differences we find the statement about believing “in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship” (FQS53) and the statement on viewing “religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires” (FQS60). Participants in our study are also mostly represented by these two opposite prototypes reflecting the secular versus the religious ones: the Secular Humanist prototype represents the largest group, followed in size by the Active Confident Believer

Table 3.1 Factor score correlations for global prototypes

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1. GP 1	–				
2. GP 2	–.27	–			
3. GP 3	.03	.46	–		
4. GP 4	.59	.17	.23	–	
5. GP 5	.47	.12	.31	.54	–

Note. GP = Global prototype

(see Table 3.3). This further indicates that the extent to which people see themselves as either religious or secular is still a meaningful distinction.

Yet, the FQS presents a much more nuanced picture on how internal differentiations can be made within these categories and the other worldview profiles that exist alongside these. In a separate chapter (Chap. 5) we look in more detail into how the prototypes are distinct from each other in terms of the sorting of statements. However, already here we need to address what seem to be relevant issues. The two ‘religious’ global prototypes, 2 Active Confident Believer and 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist, are divided on issues such as the relevance of personal belief and practice (positively emphasized by global prototype 2) and the relevance of religious identity in terms of one’s tradition and nation (positively emphasized by prototype 3) (cf. Saroglou, 2011). In comparison, even though prototype 4, Spiritually Attuned and prototype 1, Secular Humanist are strongly correlated, they still differ on certain issues. This is mainly about to what extent one “rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles” (FQS70) and “views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires” (FQS60), like prototype 1 in contrast to the relevance one attributes in prototype 4 to experiences of a higher or spiritual reality or presence (FQS10; FQS44; FQS68).

3.4 Some Descriptive Characteristics of the Global Prototypes

For all persons of a specific prototype in the YARG study, we have additional data from our mixed method design. For a closer investigation of the prototypes, we selected all participants that were marked by the software tool for Q-analysis (KenQ) for having a high correlation with only one specific prototype and can be seen as representative of this prototype. This provided us with a subsample ($N = 427$) of our total sample ($N = 562$), since 24% of our participants ($N = 135$) were not representative of only one prototype. These presented a rather low similarity with several prototypes. How to comprehend the worldviews of these individuals that escape our effort to categorize them is further explored in Chap. 6. Table 3.2 presents the number of individuals representative of each prototype. Naturally the lowest correlation is different between the prototypes.

The distinct characters of these five prototypes are well reflected in our different measures of religiosity. We asked questions in the survey about belonging to religious groups, how religious people experience themselves to be, how religious their family had been, and how often they take part in religious services or engage in private religious or spiritual practices. Table 3.3 presents these results, and we can see that the difference between the secular prototype 1 and the religious prototype 2 is replicated over all measures including how the religiosity of one’s family is assessed.

Table 3.2 Global prototypes subsamples

Global prototype	N	<i>r</i>
1 Secular Humanist	195	>.20
2 Active Confident Believer	114	>.30
3 Noncommitted Traditionalist	40	>.20
4 Spiritually Attuned	58	>.40
5 Disengaged Liberal	20	>.25

Table 3.3 Global prototypes and measures of religiosity

Global prototype	Q1 (% Yes)	Q2 M (SD)	Q3 M (SD)	Q4 M (median)	Q5 M (median)
1 Secular Humanist	19%	1.64 (1.90)	3.8 (2.74)	6.12 (6)	6.16 (7)
2 Active Confident Believer	85%	7.70 (1.93)	7.67 (2.03)	2.95 (3)	1.54 (1)
3 Noncommitted Traditionalist	48%	4.97 (2.60)	5.95 (2.93)	4.97 (5)	4.08 (5)
4 Spiritually Attuned	41%	4.64 (2.54)	4.95 (2.92)	5.42 (6)	4.05 (4)
5 Disengaged Liberal	50%	4.25 (1.83)	5.85 (2.41)	5 (5)	3.8 (4)

Note. (Q1) “Do you consider yourself as belonging to one or more religious groups, communities, or traditions?”; On a scale from 0 (not at all religious) to 10 (very religious) (Q2), “Regardless of whether you consider yourself as belonging or close to a particular religious group, community, or tradition, how religious would you say you are?; and (Q3) How religious would you say the family you grew up in was?; On a scale from 1 every day to 7 never (Q4) Apart from special occasions such as weddings and funerals, about how often do you take part in religious ceremonies or services these days?, and (Q5) Apart from when you are at religious ceremonies or services, how often do you engage in private religious or spiritual practices, such as worship, prayer, or meditation?

This validates the power of the FQS as a methodology to distinguish between religious and secular tendencies. Moreover, the nuanced variations on the religious-secular scale are captured by the scores of the other prototypes which represent the middle range, interestingly, not too far from each other. The global prototype 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist provides in this respect an interesting example.

Close to 50% of the global prototype 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist report a form of belonging, and in comparison with 1 Secular Humanist they stand out as religious in this survey primarily based on their self-evaluation and the fact that they quite often view the family they come from as rather religious. In contrast, they cannot be said to practice religion very actively. The identification they present with certain aspects of religion is something that we can put into context with the help of the FQS-results. When we look at the survey measures, the global prototype 3, Noncommitted Traditionalist is rather similar to 5 Disengaged Liberal who presents

a more situational form of religiosity in the sense that persons of this prototype tend to become “more religious or spiritual at times of crisis or need” (FQS17). However, as we shall learn below, their forms of religiosity comes with rather different attitudes and values, which in practice positions them very differently.

With the help of conventional measures of religiosity, we can confirm some of the main dividers between the prototypes. Yet, the strength of the FQS appears clearly in the nuances that are difficult to pinpoint with regular surveys, such as the difference between the 2 Active Confident Believer and the 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist, and the liquidity of how religious, spiritual and secular can be configured in practice and in ways that frustrates our taken-for-granted categories and concepts. The relevance of this is amplified in a cross-cultural perspective when we can account also for the relevance and influence of cultural contexts. Table 3.4 describes how the prototypes are distributed over the countries in which we conducted case studies. From this we can, on the one hand, see that specific prototypes might be strongly anchored in certain contexts, and on the other, that they are still, in general, built from individuals across the whole sample and country cases.

Table 3.4 shows that cross-cultural and international differences are apparent especially in how clusters of countries are represented in the various prototypes. The table indicates a dominant secular cluster that includes Sweden, Russia and Canada, with at least two-thirds of respondents represented in prototype 1. The religious cluster, in contrast, is dominated by Ghana and Israel, with a smaller but relevant influence also from Finland and Poland. The table also reminds us that our samples are not representative, and how we should read and reflect on our results. From the fact, for instance, that there are no individuals of 2 Active Confident Believer coming from Canada says nothing about the relevance of this worldview in Canada, only about the Canadian sample. Including more participants could have changed this, but that does not necessarily affect our results. The important question

Table 3.4 Global prototypes and their distribution across countries, N

Country	Global prototype					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Canada	19	0	1	8	1	29
China	14	3	1	10	1	29
Finland	24	13	1	7	0	45
Ghana	0	40	0	1	1	42
India	14	4	10	1	4	33
Israel	19	18	23	3	1	64
Peru	21	8	0	7	1	37
Poland	16	13	1	1	1	32
Russia	25	0	1	9	2	37
Sweden	19	4	0	3	0	26
Turkey	10	5	1	0	4	20
USA	14	6	1	8	4	33
Total	195	114	40	85	20	427

is to what extent the current samples together have entailed variety and richness enough in order to be able to bring to the surface the most relevant distinctions.

Also, some gender differences between the samples can be observed. From Fig. 3.1 we can see that male participants are over-represented in global prototype 1, the Secular Humanist, while females are over-represented in 5, the Disengaged Liberal. Women are usually more religious (see de Vaus & McAllister, 1987; Francis & Penny, 2014; Stark, 2002; Miller & Stark, 2002), which is not very obvious in our study based on prototypes. In contrast, females are most clearly over-represented in prototype 5, which might partly explain why prototype 5 is the one where we find the lowest number that see themselves as not being members of a group that is discriminated against (40%), even though also prototype 3 stands out in this respect (43%). As a contrast 61% of the Active Confident Believer and 64% of the Spiritually Attuned do not at all see themselves as members of a group that is discriminated against in their country. Both prototype 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist and 5 Disengaged Liberal present a stronger identification with experiences of being discriminated against. One can maybe raise the questions of whether experiences and awareness of aspects of gendered identities – and perhaps also about national and ethnic identities – bring in more discrimination.

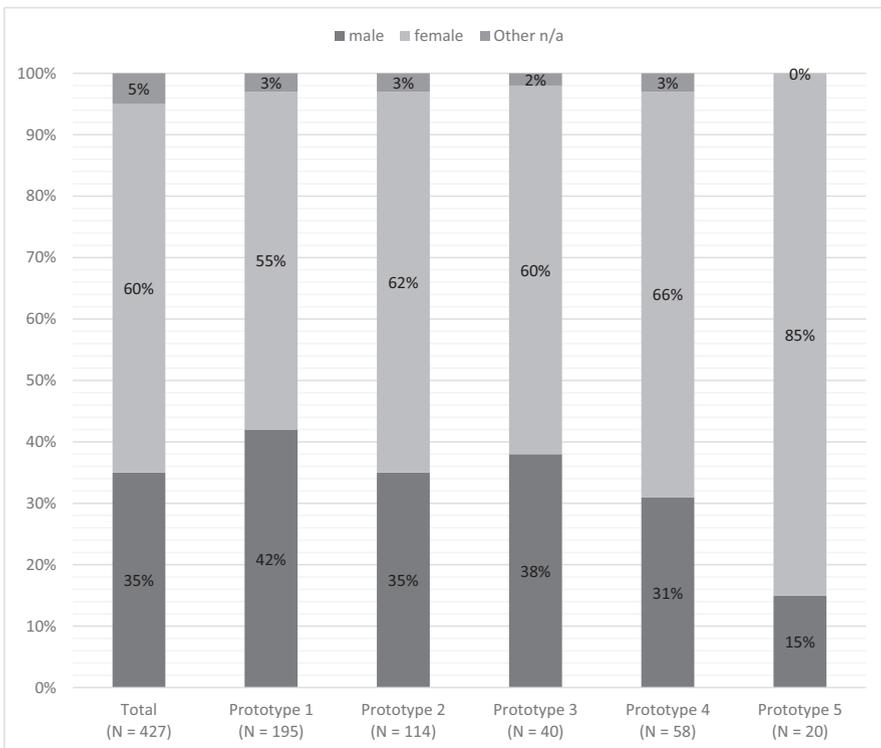


Fig. 3.1 Global prototypes and gender

Participants in this study reflect the proclivities of digital-age millennials worldwide (see Moberg & Sjö, 2020). Regardless of their religious or secular orientations, they consume social media and online news sources, as seen in the small variations between the prototypes in the frequencies of the respondents (see Fig. 3.2). There are differences, however, in the consumption of newspaper and radio, which are more prevalent among prototypes 1 and 4, Secular Humanist and Spiritually Attuned. Figure 3.2 also indicates that persons of global prototype 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist in general use these sources less.

Table 3.5 shows some interesting differences regarding to whom persons of different prototypes turn for guidance for how to live their life and make decisions. Overall sources such as their family, their own intuition or feelings, and own reason and judgement stand out as important to persons of all five prototypes, even though not to the same extent for global prototypes 1 Secular Humanist, and 4 Spiritually Attuned. Instead, global prototype 1 Secular Humanist rely more on their friends. In terms of the item own intuition or feelings we can see that only 65% of persons of prototype 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist rely on this in comparison with the other prototypes for which the same number is between 80% and 93%. We naturally find that persons of global prototype 2 Active Confident Believer rely on many of the sources associated with religion such as God or 'higher power', different religious leaders and groups, and the teachings of their religion, and it is important to note that again global prototype 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist takes on a different route. For persons of this prototype, religiosity is to some extent manifest in how they rely on teachings of their religion. Persons of the global prototype 4 Spiritually Attuned tend to share a trust in science with 1 Secular Humanist, for which this source is still much more relevant than all the other ones. In comparison with the

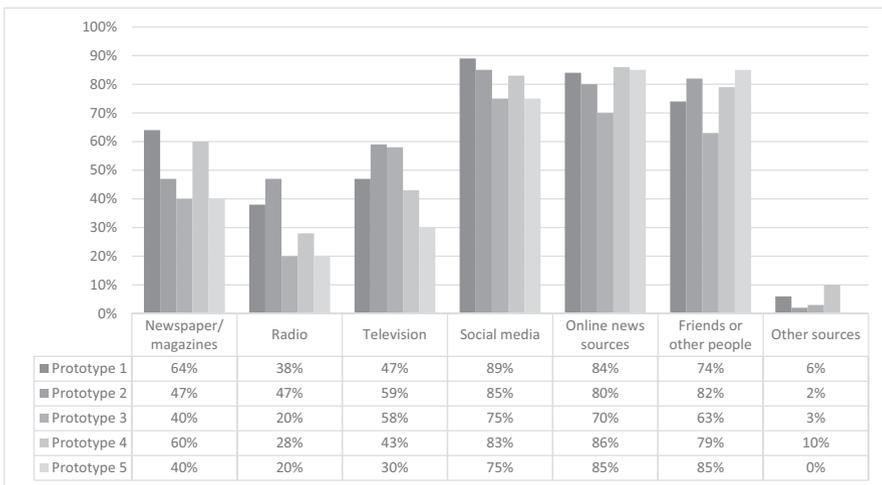


Fig. 3.2 Global prototypes and sources of information, % yes
Note. Percentage yes on the question: “From where do you get information about news or current affairs? Please, select all that apply”

Table 3.5 Global prototypes and sources of guidance in life

Which of the following do you rely on for guidance as you live your life and make decisions? Please, select all that apply.	Prototype N Yes (%)				
	1	2	3	4	5
Family	76	94	90	79	90
Trusted friends	83	72	68	48	75
God or 'higher power'	4	96	35	28	45
Past masters, saints, or teachers of my tradition	2	28	5	10	0
Deceased loved ones	6	10	8	19	0
Own intuition or feelings	75	69	65	88	55
Own reason and judgement	93	88	65	91	80
The teachings of my religion	2	73	25	9	15
The religious or spiritual group to which I belong	1	37	13	5	5
Local religious leaders	0	15	0	2	0
National religious leaders	0	13	0	0	0
The leaders of my religious tradition	0	25	8	0	5
Social media	14	11	13	16	15
Science	63	32	13	38	30
Great literature and art	37	22	10	40	20
School or university teachers	41	29	35	41	50
Government authorities	8	10	0	2	0
Political party or politicians	6	2	0	0	0
None	1	0	3	7	0
Some other, which...	7	4	3	2	10

other prototypes, also great literature and art are somewhat more important to both of them. After the common sources that most share such as family, friends, own reason and intuition, it is difficult to find anything that is markedly characteristic to the global prototypes 5 Disengaged Liberal and 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist, even though God or 'higher power' is somewhat relevant in these cases, and 5 Disengaged Liberal is the one prototype that relies the most on a school or university teachers (50%).

3.5 Attitudes, Values and Aspects of Well-Being

In order to assess moral attitudes, participants in our study were asked to rate how much they agreed on statements on abortion, same-sex relationships and euthanasia on a scale from 1 to 5. From Table 3.6 we see that the least support for liberal social values – same sex marriage and legal abortion – is consistently found in prototype 2, the Active Confident Believer even though persons of this prototype present somewhat more liberal attitudes towards abortion issues. Noteworthy are therefore also similar variations among the other prototypes with regard to

Table 3.6 Means and standard deviations on liberal social values per prototype

	Strongly disagree (1) and strongly agree (5) <i>M (SD)</i>				
	Prototype				
	1	2	3	4	5
Same-sex marriage should be treated the same as marriage between a man and a woman.	4.49 (1.09)	1.98 (1.39)	2.73 (1.66)	4.40 (1.18)	3.75 (1.52)
Same-sex couples should have the same rights for adoption as heterosexual couples.	4.35 (1.17)	2.00 (1.43)	2.67 (1.64)	4.31 (1.25)	3.80 (1.54)
If a woman became pregnant as a result of rape she should be able to obtain a legal abortion.	4.85 (0.65)	3.31 (1.55)	4.30 (1.20)	4.79 (0.52)	4.80 (0.52)
When a woman’s own health is seriously endangered by a pregnancy she should be able to obtain a legal abortion.	4.83 (0.63)	3.87 (1.35)	4.35 (1.19)	4.83 (0.53)	4.35 (1.31)
A pregnant woman should be able to obtain a legal abortion if the woman wants it for any reason.	4.36 (1.07)	2.23 (1.39)	3.38 (1.55)	4.05 (1.33)	3.50 (1.57)
Doctors should be allowed to end the patient’s life if the patient requests it.	4.12 (1.10)	2.44 (1.42)	2.12 (1.22)	4.05 (1.18)	3.75 (1.12)
Doctors should be allowed to assist the patient to commit suicide if the patient requests it.	3.79 (1.36)	1.93 (1.24)	1.52 (0.93)	3.53 (1.39)	3.15 (1.39)

legalizing abortion. As for attitudes towards same-sex marriage, prototype 3, the Noncommitted Traditionalist, is quite similar to the more religiously traditional prototype 2. We addressed earlier the differences and similarities between the global prototype 5, Disengaged Liberal and prototype 3, the Noncommitted Traditionalist, especially on measures of religiosity. With regard to attitudes towards abortion, same-sex relationships and euthanasia we can see that they are quite different and prototype 3, the Noncommitted Traditionalist, is positioned closer to prototype 2, the Active Confident Believer especially in conforming to heteronormative values.

When we further compare how persons of different prototypes think that other people in general can be trusted and if they feel safe where they live, we find that the aspect of trust divides them. The three global prototypes 1 Secular Humanist, 2 Active Confident Believer, and 4 Spiritually Attuned express more trust in other people than 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist and 5 Disengaged Liberal who present lower mean values. Table 3.7 further shows in contrast no obvious differences regarding the feeling of safety.

The above observations confirm that values and attitudes are often intertwined with worldviews. Previous studies have also demonstrated that value systems are related to religiosity (e.g. Krok, 2015; Saroglou et al., 2004; Schwartz & Huismans, 1995). Next we also examined if there were differences in values between the five prototypes based on Schwartz’s theory of basic human values (Schwartz, 1992; see also Maio, 2017). In Schwartz’s theory, values are seen as motivational goals, i.e. a set of beliefs about what is desirable and what means are appropriate for pursuing the desires. In a later refined theory of basic values (Schwartz et al., 2012; Schwartz, 2017), a more nuanced categorization of values and a model based on 19 value types

in contrast to the initial ten is provided. Figure 3.3 does not include new values, but the new categorization was present already in the definition of the ten values. In the refined model, the benevolence value is divided into caring and dependability, security into societal and personal etc.

Schwartz's theory of basic values are consequently organized along a motivational continuum forming a circular value structure (Schwartz, 2017) as depicted in Fig. 3.3. Values close to each other are complementary or compatible motivational goals, such as the conformity and tradition values. Value types opposite to each other are seen as incompatible, such as conformity and self-direction. An important aspect of the theory is that the relative order between the values is stable. Value priorities change from group to group, but due to the associations between values in groups (e.g. conformity opposes self-direction), the relationship between them remains more or less stable.

Table 3.8 displays centered means for each value per prototype. An overall mean was calculated for all 19 values, and centered means represent the distance from this overall mean. Thus, positive centered means indicate that persons of a certain prototype scored this value higher than the overall mean and vice versa for negative centered means. Global prototype 1 Secular Humanist scores lowest on tradition (−1.78) and has the second highest score on self-direction (thoughts and action) (0.91 and 0.86). This is similar to the scores of global prototype 4 Spiritually Attuned (0.93 and 0.97). Global prototype 2 Active Confident Believer, not surprisingly, scores highest on conformity, both interpersonal conformity and rules.

Figure 3.4 vividly illustrates where the five prototypes converge and where they diverge. In their study, Schwartz and Huisman (1995) showed that religion was positively associated with tradition and conformity, and to a lesser extent or negatively with values such as security, benevolence, hedonism, stimulation and self-direction, achievement, power and universalism. We find unison on opposite sides of the values circle—small differences in power as well as in benevolence-caring. Gaps logically emerge in values relating to tradition. The religious prototypes, global prototypes 2 Active Confident Believer and 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist, score high on tradition, on conformity and societal security. In contrast, global prototype 1 Secular Humanist scores the lowest on tradition, followed by the global prototype 4 Spiritually Attuned and 5 Disengaged Liberal. How the global prototypes 2 the Active Confident Believer and 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist are

Table 3.7 Global prototypes and social trust

Variable	Prototype 1		Prototype 2		Prototype 3		Prototype 4		Prototype 5	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
B5	4.93	2.63	5.09	2.77	3.08	2.42	5.34	2.66	3.45	2.87
B6	2.80	0.80	2.78	0.87	2.57	0.83	2.75	0.95	2.32	0.95

Note. B5 refers to “Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?” was measured on an 11-grade scale ranging from 0 = “You can’t be too careful” to 10 = “Most people can be trusted”. B6 refers to “Do you feel safe walking alone at night in the city or area where you live?” and was measured on a 4-grade scale ranging from 1 = “Very unsafe” to 4 = “Very safe” with an additional “I don’t know” option.

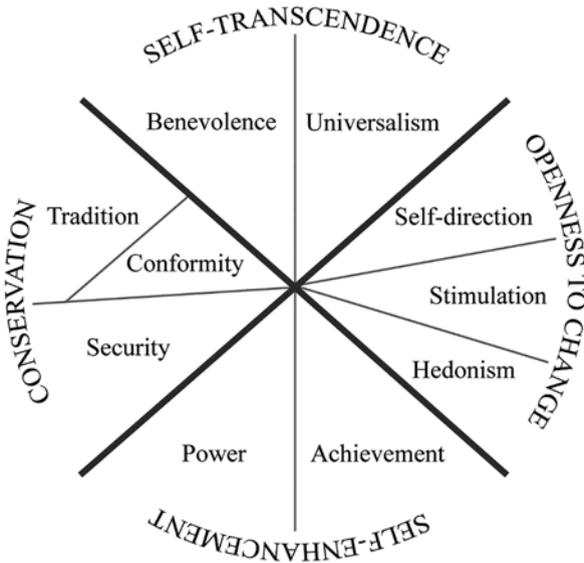


Fig. 3.3 Schwartz (1992) value structure. See also Lassander (2014) and Lassander and Nynäs (2016)

conflated in many respects is evident here from how these in relation to most of the basic values follow each other. Prototype 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist scores the lowest on the various aspects of universalism (tolerance, nature and concern), and aspects of benevolence (dependability and caring). Overall, the relevance of the secular-religious divide is reflected also in measures of basic values, and also with regards to how global prototype 5 Disengaged Liberal, is not necessarily associated with only one side, and also here presents a ‘situational’ pattern. In terms of self-direction, for instance, this prototype aligns closer to the religious prototypes, whereas the opposite happens when we compare how the prototype is positioned in relation to tradition and conformity, and we find an affinity to the global prototypes 1 Secular Humanist and 4 Spiritually Attuned.

Satisfaction with one’s life is an indicator of an individual’s well-being. Findings on the relationship between life satisfaction and measures of religiosity have been seen as relevant but not found to be consistent (see Ellison & Lee 2010; Koenig and Larson 2001), and the relationship between deprivation, subjective well-being and religiosity is even more complex (Hoverd & Sibley, 2013). Yet, among the participants in this study, prototype 2 Active Confident Believer consistently exhibits higher satisfaction with their life as a whole, are happier, and are more satisfied with their standard of living. The lowest levels of satisfaction are exhibited among the small group of persons of the global prototype 5 Disengaged Liberal and the larger group of persons of the prototype 1 Secular Humanist as shown in Table 3.9.

Persons of prototype 2 Active Confident Believer are also the most likely to feel optimistic about their future, to feel positively about themselves and about their success. They are followed by prototype 2 Noncommitted Traditionalist. Persons of

Table 3.8 Centered means for values per prototype

	Prototype 1 <i>OM</i> = 4.34	Prototype 2 <i>OM</i> = 4.64	Prototype 3 <i>OM</i> = 4.98	Prototype 4 <i>OM</i> = 4.40	Prototype 5 <i>OM</i> = 4.64
Achievement	0.28 (<i>M</i> = 4.62, <i>SD</i> = 1.27)	0.18 (<i>M</i> = 4.82, <i>SD</i> = 1.39)	0.16 (<i>M</i> = 5.14, <i>SD</i> = 1.22)	0.12 (<i>M</i> = 4.52, <i>SD</i> = 1.47)	0.66 (<i>M</i> = 5.30, <i>SD</i> = 1.15)
Benevolence: caring	0.83 (<i>M</i> = 5.17, <i>SD</i> = 1.04)	0.67 (<i>M</i> = 5.31, <i>SD</i> = 0.92)	0.56 (<i>M</i> = 5.54, <i>SD</i> = 0.71)	0.77 (<i>M</i> = 5.17, <i>SD</i> = 1.10)	0.65 (<i>M</i> = 5.28, <i>SD</i> = 0.99)
Benevolence: dependability	0.82 (<i>M</i> = 5.17, <i>SD</i> = 1.05)	0.72 (<i>M</i> = 5.36, <i>SD</i> = 0.94)	0.40 (<i>M</i> = 5.38, <i>SD</i> = 1.10)	0.89 (<i>M</i> = 5.29, <i>SD</i> = 1.18)	0.61 (<i>M</i> = 5.25, <i>SD</i> = 0.95)
Conformity: interpersonal	-0.49 (<i>M</i> = 3.85, <i>SD</i> = 1.56)	-0.19 (<i>M</i> = 4.45, <i>SD</i> = 1.46)	-0.13 (<i>M</i> = 4.86, <i>SD</i> = 1.44)	-0.55 (<i>M</i> = 3.84, <i>SD</i> = 1.60)	-0.25 (<i>M</i> = 4.38, <i>SD</i> = 1.46)
Conformity: rules	-0.67 (<i>M</i> = 3.67, <i>SD</i> = 1.44)	-0.17 (<i>M</i> = 4.47, <i>SD</i> = 1.42)	-0.26 (<i>M</i> = 4.72, <i>SD</i> = 1.33)	-1.09 (<i>M</i> = 3.30, <i>SD</i> = 1.63)	-0.97 (<i>M</i> = 3.67, <i>SD</i> = 1.28)
Face	-0.13 (<i>M</i> = 4.22, <i>SD</i> = 1.45)	0.04 (<i>M</i> = 4.68, <i>SD</i> = 1.38)	0.34 (<i>M</i> = 5.33, <i>SD</i> = 1.08)	-0.31 (<i>M</i> = 4.09, <i>SD</i> = 1.57)	0.31 (<i>M</i> = 4.95, <i>SD</i> = 1.21)
Hedonism	0.41 (<i>M</i> = 4.75, <i>SD</i> = 1.28)	-0.16 (<i>M</i> = 4.48, <i>SD</i> = 1.40)	0.21 (<i>M</i> = 5.20, <i>SD</i> = 1.12)	0.44 (<i>M</i> = 4.83, <i>SD</i> = 1.33)	0.26 (<i>M</i> = 4.90, <i>SD</i> = 1.19)
Humility	-0.40 (<i>M</i> = 3.95, <i>SD</i> = 1.59)	-0.14 (<i>M</i> = 4.50, <i>SD</i> = 1.52)	-0.02 (<i>M</i> = 4.97, <i>SD</i> = 1.40)	-0.48 (<i>M</i> = 3.91, <i>SD</i> = 1.70)	-0.35 (<i>M</i> = 4.28, <i>SD</i> = 1.44)
Power: dominance	-1.4 (<i>M</i> = 2.95, <i>SD</i> = 1.43)	-1.63 (<i>M</i> = 3.01, <i>SD</i> = 1.52)	-1.54 (<i>M</i> = 3.44, <i>SD</i> = 1.60)	-1.61 (<i>M</i> = 2.78, <i>SD</i> = 1.50)	-1.7 (<i>M</i> = 2.93, <i>SD</i> = 1.23)
Power: resources	-1.31 (<i>M</i> = 3.04, <i>SD</i> = 1.56)	-1.27 (<i>M</i> = 3.37, <i>SD</i> = 1.62)	-1.05 (<i>M</i> = 3.93, <i>SD</i> = 1.69)	-1.84 (<i>M</i> = 2.56, <i>SD</i> = 1.58)	-1.02 (<i>M</i> = 3.62, <i>SD</i> = 1.67)
Self-direction: Action	0.86 (<i>M</i> = 5.21, <i>SD</i> = 0.97)	0.22 (<i>M</i> = 4.87, <i>SD</i> = 1.13)	0.45 (<i>M</i> = 5.43, <i>SD</i> = 0.93)	0.97 (<i>M</i> = 5.37, <i>SD</i> = 0.87)	0.53 (<i>M</i> = 5.17, <i>SD</i> = 0.87)
Self-direction: Thoughts	0.91 (<i>M</i> = 5.25, <i>SD</i> = 0.87)	0.24 (<i>M</i> = 4.88, <i>SD</i> = 1.16)	0.19 (<i>M</i> = 5.17, <i>SD</i> = 1.07)	0.93 (<i>M</i> = 5.33, <i>SD</i> = 0.91)	0.38 (<i>M</i> = 5.02, <i>SD</i> = 1.03)
Security: personal	0.15 (<i>M</i> = 4.50, <i>SD</i> = 1.39)	0.42 (<i>M</i> = 5.06, <i>SD</i> = 1.24)	0.48 (<i>M</i> = 5.47, <i>SD</i> = 1.00)	0.14 (<i>M</i> = 4.53, <i>SD</i> = 1.54)	0.43 (<i>M</i> = 5.07, <i>SD</i> = 1.13)
Security: societal	0.37 (<i>M</i> = 4.71, <i>SD</i> = 1.36)	0.51 (<i>M</i> = 5.15, <i>SD</i> = 1.12)	0.47 (<i>M</i> = 5.46, <i>SD</i> = 0.97)	0.39 (<i>M</i> = 4.79, <i>SD</i> = 1.24)	0.60 (<i>M</i> = 5.23, <i>SD</i> = 0.79)
Stimulation	0.05 (<i>M</i> = 4.40, <i>SD</i> = 1.45)	-0.28 (<i>M</i> = 4.36, <i>SD</i> = 1.37)	-0.36 (<i>M</i> = 4.62, <i>SD</i> = 1.37)	0.40 (<i>M</i> = 4.79, <i>SD</i> = 1.29)	0.20 (<i>M</i> = 4.83, <i>SD</i> = 1.12)

(continued)

Table 3.8 (continued)

	Prototype 1 <i>OM</i> = 4.34	Prototype 2 <i>OM</i> = 4.64	Prototype 3 <i>OM</i> = 4.98	Prototype 4 <i>OM</i> = 4.40	Prototype 5 <i>OM</i> = 4.64
Tradition	-1.78 (<i>M</i> = 2.57, <i>SD</i> = 1.47)	-0.06 (<i>M</i> = 4.58, <i>SD</i> = 1.31)	-0.1 (<i>M</i> = 4.88, <i>SD</i> = 1.33)	-1.51 (<i>M</i> = 2.89, <i>SD</i> = 1.58)	-1.04 (<i>M</i> = 3.60, <i>SD</i> = 1.45)
Universalism: concern	0.77 (<i>M</i> = 5.11, <i>SD</i> = 1.17)	0.62 (<i>M</i> = 5.26, <i>SD</i> = 1.01)	0.41 (<i>M</i> = 5.39, <i>SD</i> = 1.06)	0.89 (<i>M</i> = 5.28, <i>SD</i> = 0.98)	0.58 (<i>M</i> = 5.22, <i>SD</i> = 1.01)
Universalism: nature	0.03 (<i>M</i> = 4.38, <i>SD</i> = 1.47)	-0.14 (<i>M</i> = 4.50, <i>SD</i> = 1.38)	-0.33 (<i>M</i> = 4.66, <i>SD</i> = 1.43)	0.42 (<i>M</i> = 4.81, <i>SD</i> = 1.30)	-0.22 (<i>M</i> = 4.42, <i>SD</i> = 1.34)
Universalism: tolerance	0.73 (<i>M</i> = 5.07, <i>SD</i> = 1.10)	0.43 (<i>M</i> = 5.07, <i>SD</i> = 1.13)	0.13 (<i>M</i> = 5.12, <i>SD</i> = 1.15)	1.01 (<i>M</i> = 5.41, <i>SD</i> = 0.83)	0.31 (<i>M</i> = 4.95, <i>SD</i> = 1.13)

Note. Reported values are centered means, raw means and standard deviations are displayed in parentheses. *OM* = Overall mean, the mean of all 19 values

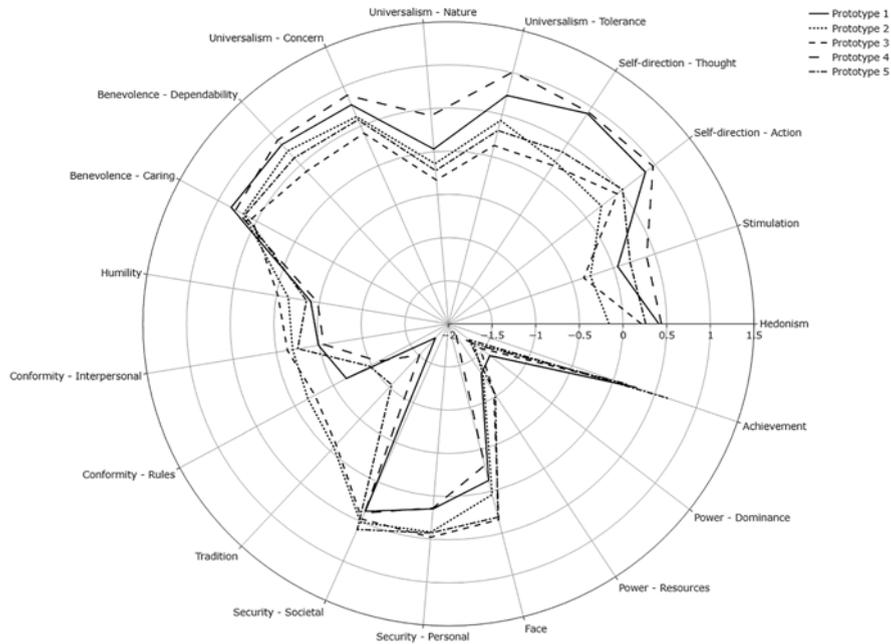


Fig. 3.4 Global prototypes and Schwartz values

prototype 1 Secular Humanist are the least positive about themselves and the least likely to be optimistic about their future. In short, young ‘believers’, regardless of their religious affiliation, express satisfaction with their life and feel optimistic about their future (see Fig. 3.5). Berthold and Rush (2014) looked at respondents from Germany, Austria and Switzerland and found higher satisfaction with life

amongst those individuals who practiced their religion, explaining their findings by the benefits gained from the social support that a religious community provides, by the healthy lifestyle recommended in various religious systems, and by the growth in self-fulfillment amongst those who frequently use their strengths and thus bring to the fore their satisfaction with life (Seligman et al., 2005). In the World Happiness Report (Helliwell et al., 2012), religion was found to be an external community-based factor with a positive effect on well-being; religion can have a buffering and protective function.

In this study, we can corroborate and expand these findings to include various cultures globally – not only in other Western cultures, but also across Eastern ones, such as India and China. Overall, those who participated frequently in religious ceremonies or services scored higher than those who never participated on the positive-life orientation 5-point scale. Apart from religious ceremonies or services, YARG participants, who were engaged in daily private religious or spiritual practices, such as worship, prayer, or meditation, also scored higher on the positive life orientation: 3.8 versus 3.3 among those who were engaged in private religious or spiritual practices. Specific items on that scale are also revealing. For instance, among persons of prototype 2 Active Confident Believer, feeling very positive about yourself and optimism about your future are more prevalent the more frequent the attendance in religious services as well as with more frequent engagement in private religious or spiritual practices similar to the findings of Berthold and Rush (2014). Self-assessment of well-being splits respondents in this study. There are gaps among the prototypes in who feels happy most of the time; does not feel sad or depressed; feels really rested when waking up most mornings; or on the contrary, whose sleep was restless. Again and again, persons of prototype 2 Active Confident Believer report feeling happy most of the time, more so than persons of prototype 1 Secular Humanist, 70% and 62% respectively, and they are more likely to feel rested upon waking up – 43% and 28% respectively. At the time, 2 Active Confident Believer reports less depression and less sadness compared with prototype 1.

Table 3.9 Life satisfaction by global prototype

Prototype	N	Q1		Q2		Q3	
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Prototype 1	194	6.99	1.90	7.00	1.98	6.58	2.26
Prototype 2	114	7.39	2.02	7.51	1.73	7.12	2.14
Prototype 3	40	6.77	2.18	6.97	2.01	6.75	2.14
Prototype 4	58	6.81	2.39	7.00	2.42	6.44	2.53
Prototype 5	20	5.35	1.75	5.75	2.19	5.70	1.65
Total	426	6.97	2.06	7.07	2.02	6.68	2.25

Note. All items were measured on the scale 0 – 10, 0 indicating “Extremely dissatisfied” and 10 “Extremely satisfied”. Q1 = “All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays?”, Q2 = “Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are?” and Q3 = “How satisfied are you with your present standard of living?”

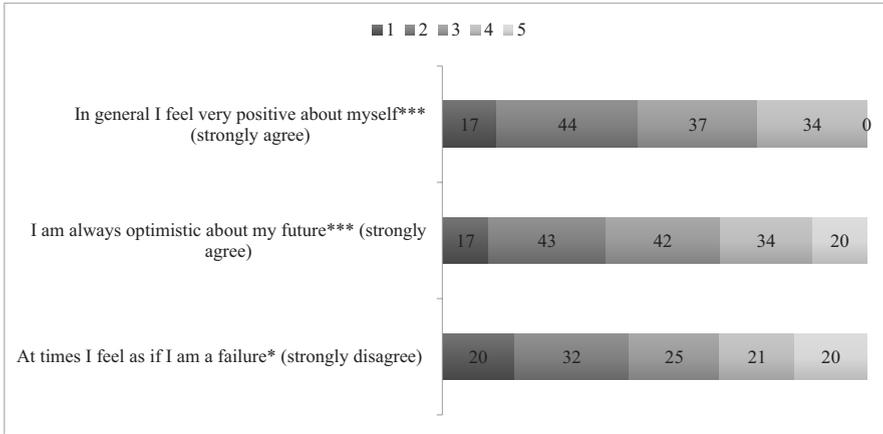


Fig. 3.5 Global prototype by optimism *Note.* Global Prototype: 1 Secular Humanist; 2 Active Confident Believer; 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist; 4 Spiritually Attuned; 5 Disengaged Liberal. “How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?” On the scale 1–5, 1 indicating “strongly disagree” and 5 “strongly agree.” The numbers inside the bars refer to the percentage of each of the five global prototypes who strongly agreed with the first two statements and strongly disagreed with the third statement. * $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$

3.6 Concluding Summary

In this chapter we presented the five global worldview prototypes that we identified with the FQS: the Secular Humanist; the Active Confident Believer; the Noncommitted Traditionalist, the Spiritually Attuned, the Disengaged Liberal. These findings clearly reflect the categories secular, religious and spiritual, and a polarizing and organizing function of the religious-secular divide on an overarching level. Nonetheless, correlation analyses validated both this general pattern as well as the distinctiveness of these five separate prototypes. Also, our survey measures of religiosity basically indicated similar patterns. They pointed to a significant affinity between the global prototypes 1 Secular Humanist and 2 Spiritually Attuned, as well as between global prototype 2 Active Confident Believer and global prototype 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist. Global prototype 5 Disengaged Liberal presents more situational and varying identifications.

Our findings with the FQS also point to a greater diversity between these prototypes and important nuances in contemporary forms of religious, spiritual and secular worldviews. These prototypes are also clearly differentiated in how they rely on and give authority to, for instance science, independent agency, personal experience, in-group affiliations etc. Differences are also reflected in which sources persons of different prototypes turn to for both information and guidance in life. Nevertheless, the impact of social media was more of a rule in our sample of university students, and it should not be neglected that despite obvious differences, all

prototypes tend to view e.g. family, their own intuition, reason and judgement as important to the making of their lives.

In addition, we found notable differences between the prototypes across multiple characteristics. Our results indicated that both gender and cross-cultural contextual differences influence how different worldview configurations are formed. In this complex equation we also need to account for aspects of personality, such as levels of openness, trust and well-being. The three global prototypes 1 Secular Humanist, 2 Active Confident Believer, and 4 Spiritually Attuned stand out in how they trust other people. Persons of prototype 2 Active Confident Believer are the most likely to feel positively about themselves and their future.

Social moral attitudes and basic human values also play a relevant role. The global prototypes 1 Secular Humanist, and 4 Spiritually Attuned clearly express liberal social values in contrast to in particular prototypes 2 Active Confident Believer and prototype 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist. The global prototypes 1 Secular Humanist and 4 Spiritually Attuned also tend to feel that other people can be trusted, but in this case they are accompanied by persons of prototype 2 Active Confident Believer. A similar pattern emerges from our analyses of differences between global prototypes and basic human values. The global prototypes are especially divided along an axis consisting of universalism and self-direction versus tradition and conformity. It is apparent that there is a close affinity between the value types of 2 Active Confident Believer and 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist.

In conclusion, our findings showed that our mixed method approach provided an added value for our aim to assess contemporary forms of worldviews with regard to how religious, spiritual and secular elements are on the one hand combined into distinct subjectivities and, on the other hand, determined by significant fluidity. FQS showed a methodological strength for assessing these worldviews with relevant levels of nuances. It allows for distinguishing differences related to cross-cultural diversity, gender, attitudes and values to emerge and surface. The mixed method approach built around the FQS frustrates our taken-for-granted categories and concepts, but also opens up new outlooks on current religiosity in an international perspective. This investigation continues over the following chapter on the cross-cultural variation and typologies.

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Chapter 4

Family Resemblance in Variations of Contemporary Religiosity and Spirituality: Findings from a Cross-Cultural Study



Peter Nynäs , Janne Kontala, Mika Lassander, Nurit Novis-Deutsch , Sofia Sjö , and Paul Stenner 

Abstract How can we make sense of religion and spirituality in a cross-cultural perspective? Is it at all possible to compare what we are used to calling ‘religion’ across different cultures? In this chapter we use findings from Faith Q-studies (FQS) in 12 different countries to investigate variance of religion and spirituality from an international perspective. Our results shed light on themes and variations and show the capacity of the FQS to systematically recognize recurring themes while also remaining sensitive to unique but significant nuances across samples. We further propose that the term *family resemblance* catches well how to comprehend the complexity of variation and provides a conceptual contribution to the debate on universalism vs. particularism.

Keywords Faith Q-Sort · Family resemblance · Variance · Cross-cultural

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4.1 Introduction

How can we in a sensible way comprehend variations of religiosity across cultures or in a global perspective, i.e. make sense of a significant variety of distinct cultures from across the world? Our research within the project Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG) has aimed to address certain limitations within the field of religious studies and move beyond Eurocentric assumptions by investigating beyond the cultural and religious boundaries of Europe and the West. This required us to traverse a difficult road and to contribute to new methodologies in the field. The background and the methodology of this study are addressed in more detail in Chap. 1 of this volume. Here we concentrate on presenting some of the core findings from using the Faith Q-Sort (FQS) in 12 different countries pertaining to the cross-cultural variation of religion and spirituality.

It is important to contribute to the study of contemporary religiosities with research of a systematic and cross-cultural nature. In a fast-changing and increasingly interconnected world, re-locations, re-configurations and transformations in the field of religion and spirituality have come to increasingly underscore the demand for a sensitive conceptual and methodological toolbox. Naturally, this claim taps into many on-going discussions about how to understand contemporary religion and spirituality, and many scholars also address the need for critical methodological reflection (e.g., Bowman & Valk, 2012; Bruce & Voas, 2007; af Burén, 2015; Droogers & van Harskamp, 2014; Gauthier, 2020; Gilhus & Sutcliffe, 2013; Lassander, 2012, 2014; McGuire, 2008; Nynäs et al., 2015; Woodhead, 2012). Altogether, it has become difficult to think “about religions which organizes them into a set of discrete traditions with a supposedly ‘global’ import” (Cotter & Robertson, 2016, p. vii) and to uphold a “World Religions Paradigm”. For instance, the distinction between Eastern and Western religions is questioned (Campbell, 2007).

The debate on universality vs. particularism is of initial relevance for the methodological development presented here. Within the research field, religion has often been perceived one-sidedly as a transhistorical essence, while religion as a concept has often in practice been provincial (e.g. Asad, 1993, 2003; Balagangadhara, 2005; Chakrabarty, 2000; Masuzawa, 2005; Winzeler, 2008). Despite a growing awareness of these problems, scholars often presuppose a conceptual correspondence between religions that might be overstated or even illusory. A critical view of such premature assumptions of universality is essential to aspirations regarding cross-cultural studies on religion and spirituality. Nevertheless, we also, in contrast, need to stress the risks of becoming the victim of an opposite methodological and conceptual trap that is based on assumptions of, for instance, ‘the totally different western culture’ or the ‘totally different Asian or African culture’ or similar notions attributed to national and cultural geographies. This is equally problematic and challenging since it might become dependent on the process of essentializing differences and historicities in terms of incommensurable particularities. There are problems involved in cross-cultural comparative approaches. Yet they are important in order to bring in knowledge on religion from a “wider range of contexts” and to be able to “introduce significant variation” along different axes (Altinordu, 2013, p. 86).

Is there a third option beyond the dichotomous academic positions on universality versus particularism? de Roover claims that, “the contemporary study of religion has a unique opportunity to settle the debate on the cultural universality of religion” (de Roover, 2014, p. 7). Lambek (2014, p. 147) calls for a “moving balance between distinct epistemological positions”. Our ambition is not to settle the debate, but we do aim to contribute to this discussion. We suggest that the notion of *family resemblance* as introduced by Wittgenstein (1998) can shed some further relevant light on the play of themes and variations. This chapter therefore presents a bird’s-eye view and is by necessity limited to addressing the main categories related to religiosity with a focus on how they vary across cultures, and we refrain from in-depth analyses of such variations.

4.2 The Faith Q-Sort as a Lens to Contemporary Diversity

David Wulff (2019) developed the FQS with an explicit aim to methodologically meet a range of “understandings of faith”, encompassing both religious and nonreligious attitudes in order to be used “with people of diverse traditions, experiences, and attitudes” (Wulff, 2019, p. 646). The chapter exemplifies this capacity by comparing the so-called prototypes and how they vary from one country to another. Prototypes are the results of an FQS-study and depict reoccurring patterns or schemes for being religious (or spiritual or secular) in a specific sample. We already presented the five global prototypes based on data from all participants ($N = 562$) in Chap. 3 of this volume. In this chapter, we compare similar results that we have received from country-specific samples with these global prototypes as a means of addressing themes and variations of being religious and spiritual in a cross-cultural perspective.

The methodological character and the novelty of the FQS are presented more in detail in Chap. 1 of this volume, and here we primarily underscore some features of relevance for this chapter in particular, namely FQS’s strength for being implemented in cross-cultural studies as well as for capturing contemporary religious diversity (for more on Q-methodology, see: Block, 1971, 1978, 2008; Brown, 1980; Gabor, 2013; McKeown, 2001; McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Nilsson, 2007, 2015; Stephenson, 1993/1994; Watts & Stenner, 2012). When David Wulff (2019) designed the FQS based on Q-methodology, he explicitly worked on the limitations and bias of earlier methodological approaches. He derived the FQS-set of 101 statements from a range of religious traditions including non-religion and from findings and literature in the psychology of religion and related fields. These reflect, for instance, attitudes towards religious texts, practices, and materiality; various scales of religiosity; different representations of God; and underlying cognitive dispositions and options for those holding non-religious and pluralist views. With cross-cultural applicability in mind, the FQS statements have been formulated using general terms so that the essential substance of the various religious traditions does not become a distinguishing factor. Particular and specific ideas and practices have

been incorporated without reference to the traditions they are part of. Instead of naming, for example, Jesus or Buddha, item 66 of the FQS reads: “Deeply identifies with some holy figure, either human or divine.” This means that at the stage of data analysis, the underlying disposition of identifying with a role model with a sacred status becomes the defining factor, not the name of the object of identification, or the particular religious/secular tradition. Statements that are based on earlier instruments with Christian overtones have been modified to be relevant for people from many different backgrounds and orientations.

To achieve true multi-cultural validity involves item-by-item international, multilingual, and cross-cultural validation – before scales are made or any items put together (cf. Wolf et al., 2020). This is also a concern for both the development and translation of any Q-set to be used in a cross-cultural setting. Despite Wulff’s attempts to widen the methodological horizon, our use of the FQS in case-studies in Finland (Kontala, 2016; Lassander & Nynäs, 2016) brought to our attention remains of some potential limitations and biases. The FQS was therefore systematically revised and validated by cross-cultural and multidisciplinary teams of scholars that included international experts that also represented all 12 respective countries taking part in YARG. With regard to the religious and spiritual viewpoints in different countries, statements were revised, and new ones were included. Throughout this process, we strived to be attentive to more local forms of religiosity, non-religiosity and secular positions. It resulted in a new version of the FQS named the FQS-b (Appendix 1).

Translating the new set of statements into target languages was equally important for the cross-cultural adaptation and validity. The FQS-b was translated from English into Arabic, Bengali, Finnish, French, Mandarin Chinese, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Swedish and Turkish. The back-translation is perhaps the most widely used technique to detect item bias in surveys, i.e., when some items in a test might function differently for different groups in a study (Brislin, 1970, 1980; Geisinger, 1994; Harkness, 2003; Lin et al., 2005; Plake & Hoover, 1979). In our study, we used the double and back-translation process, i.e. the use of two independent parallel translations since this ensures even higher reliability (Hambleton, 1993, 1994; van de Vijver & Hambleton, 1996), because the researchers can better assess translations and select the ‘best’ version (Harkness, 2003). We could see that translating religious and spiritual vocabulary is marked by various forms of biases. Hence, the double and back-translation process provided a higher degree of sensitivity to subtle ambiguities, but in many cases, the translation process also required the expertise of our cross-cultural team.

Despite all the efforts put into defining the specific items used in the FQS-set, this remains a challenging project. The particular expressions still need to be generalized for a variety of different contexts. This means that the ambition to produce a version of the FQS that has multicultural validity requires modesty. It seems far simpler to design a Q-set for a well-defined small group of people that shares some specific interest, engagement or relationship. A related problem is that the process of producing a valid Q-set also pushes the linguistic expressions to a level of sophistication that not necessarily echoes the particular viewpoints and discourse of

relevance for people. If the statements in the Q-set become too distanced from a real-life discourse, they may end up hard to comprehend; inviting participants to play a guessing game or, alternatively, making them lose interest in the process.

4.3 Variation and Family Resemblance of Prototypes

For this chapter we conducted country-specific analyses on samples from the 12 countries included in the YARG project, namely Canada, China, Ghana, Finland, India, Israel, Peru, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Turkey and the United States. The results from these analyses have been carefully investigated for defining and labelling the country specific prototypes respectively. Yet, the narrative descriptions we have produced for this study are very short, and many nuances have by necessity been disregarded in our presentations in order to facilitate a bird's-eye view. We comprehend our country-specific studies as case studies and as a snapshot of a certain time and place; our results address a meaningful and significant variation within each sample, but this is necessarily neither exhaustive nor representative of respective countries.

In Chap. 3 we presented the five global prototypes from our analysis of the total sample, including all respondents from all countries ($N = 562$): (1) the Secular Humanist; (2) the Active Confident Believer; (3) the Noncommitted Traditionalist; (4) the Spiritually Attuned; and (5) the Disengaged Liberal. These findings indicate that some religious subjectivities can be seen as categories that are more or less universally valid. For our purpose in this chapter, we see them as reoccurring main themes, and in light of these we can investigate how the prototypes from our case study in the 12 countries stand out. In some countries we could identify only three prototypes (Finland, Peru and Sweden), whereas in China and Israel there were six prototypes and in India eight. The level of diversity differs across countries. Altogether we identified 57 different prototypes representing to a greater or lesser extent variations of these main themes. These findings are summarized in Table 4.1 below, including the sample size for each analyzed sample (n), the number of prototypes received from each analysis (prototypes found), and the percent of variance they explain including the cumulative percentage for each sample. The average amount of variance accounted for (taking into consideration all the different Q analyses undertaken) was approximately 50% with rather significant differences between single prototypes.

The 57 prototypes are not presented and discussed here in detail. This would not be in accordance with our aim in this chapter. Short narrative descriptions of the 57 country specific prototypes are found in Appendix 2. Here we focus on to what extent and how the FQS helps us to identify reoccurring patterns and variations.

The quality of the FQS is, of course, dependent on how the Q-set is designed. In general, a well-designed Q-set will allow the participants to sort the statements in ways that generate variety. A first measure of this is the distribution of cards in the initial three piles done by the participants. This gives a rough indication of how

Table 4.1 The table lists samples and sample sizes with the amounts of prototypes found in each sample and explained variances in each country case

Case study (prototypes found)	<i>n</i>	Explained variance (%)								Cumulative %
		Prototype number								
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Global (5)	562	17	10	5	6	5				43
Canada (5)	37	16	9	11	13	8				57
China (6)	46	15	12	6	7	10	6			56
Finland (3)	50	19	15	15						49
Ghana (4)	45	21	7	6	5					39
India (8)	45	12	6	8	5	5	5	5	7	53
Israel (6)	90	9	14	9	11	5	4			52
Peru (3)	43	20	12	9						41
Poland (4)	45	17	18	5	11					51
Russia (5)	45	9	18	6	8	6				47
Sweden (3)	30	30	10	9						49
Turkey (5)	37	9	20	5	19	5				58
USA (5)	49	19	10	7	6	7				49

balanced the Q-set is, with the ideal being an equal proportion of items that are identified with and distanced from. In Kontala's (2016) study of atheists, the respondents could experience problems finding statements in the FQS which they identified with, because the sample was very secular and the majority of items in the FQS refers to religion in positive ways. In our study, with a slightly revised version of the FQS (FQS-b), we found that in some rare cases, participants identified only 15 statements for the positive or the negative pile. In general, however, the distribution was slightly uneven and varied amongst the samples, with some showing a slight skew to the negative, and some to the positive. In sum, the concourse of the FQS worked well across these 12 countries and different traditions. This observation and the explained variance across cultures both indicate that the FQS has a relevant degree of validity.

A closer look at our results affirms that, despite the great variation between the country specific prototypes, it is possible to detect a certain and relevant degree of family resemblance in how certain prototypes vary from one sample to another across cultures. The members of a family reflect the main themes of the global prototypes. Thus, most country specific prototypes can be seen in relation to the global prototypes we have identified and as reflections of these. Yet, members in one family are not necessarily connected by one essential common feature. Rather, and following Wittgenstein's view, family resemblance is a matter of a series of overlapping shared features, where none of them is common to all of the members, and the taxonomies are dynamic (Wittgenstein, 1998, pp. 77, 84, 112, 247; Andersen, 2000). This indicates that within a family of prototypes, we might find some individual prototypes that do not necessarily have much in common when compared separately. Their family resemblance becomes evident only when investigated in light of all the members in the family. Hence, the taxonomies might also be subject to

change, and should be considered open in contrast to a closed definition (Andersen, 2000).

In the following section, we will look first at some of the variation of being religious, and thereafter explore spirituality. Non-religious and secular worldviews are investigated in a separate chapter in this volume (Chap. 8), and are not discussed here.

4.4 The Variety of Being ‘Religious’

In (almost) all 12 countries included in this study, we find at least one prototype that reflects some central characteristics of the global prototype 2 Active Confident Believer. These cases are often defined by agreement with the theistic statement FQS53 (“Believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship”). This is a distinguishing statement ($p < .01$) for the global prototype 2 Active Confident Believer with a z-score that is higher than in all other prototypes in the sample. Among the country specific prototypes of a similar religious character, we find that this statement is often accompanied by statement FQS74 (“Feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual being”) and statement FQS41 (“Thinks of the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent”).

In Fig. 4.1 we have presented some examples of the cross-cultural variation. From this we can see how certain aspects emerge as relevant to the religious prototypes in respective country. Turkey 4 and USA 2 affirm the relevance of being personally protected (FQS74) and viewing the divine as a parent (FQS41), whereas we do not find this to be central to China 2 and Poland 2 where other statements are

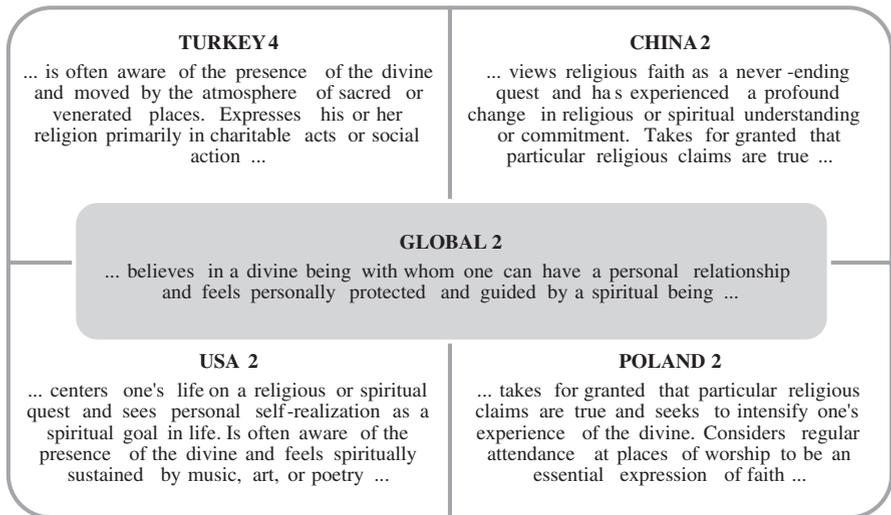


Fig. 4.1 Examples of cross-cultural variety of being ‘religious’

defining of the prototypes. In other words, we can see that they all, to some extent, share distinguishing or defining statements with global prototype 2, but in addition they simultaneously also present unique features that are crucial to asserting their character, such as taking “for granted that particular religious claims are true” (FQS92), which is the case for both China 2 and Poland 2.

In both Ghana and Peru, two of the prototypes are defined by the same two statements as global prototype 2, indicating a similar theistic position. Yet, in Ghana, we can see that prototype Ghana 1, which could be called a “Confident and Devout Believer”, expresses a strong faith in a way that differs from the global prototype 2. One “has a thorough knowledge of religious scriptures or texts” (FQS42), “has dedicated his or her life to serving the divine” (FQS36), and “feels confident of attaining eternal salvation” (FQS38). Ghana 3 in contrast “is consumed by day-to-day responsibilities, leaving little or no time for spiritual matters” (FQS43). Still, one puts emphasis on ritual or practice and “gives substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization or worthy cause” (FQS1). This prototype also views “personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life” (FQS93) and “feels spiritually moved and deeply sustained by music, art, or poetry” (FQS33).

Ghana 1 and 2 both express variations of being religiously anchored in the idea of a personal relationship with a divine that one also feels personally protected and guided by. Even though both prototypes Peru 2 and Peru 3 share this position, they also present other features. Peru 2 embraces “elements from various religious and spiritual traditions” (FQS29) and identifies “with some holy figure, either human or divine” (FQS66). One further “furnishes one’s living space with objects for religious or spiritual use or inspiration” (FQS65), and “observes with great care prescribed religious practices and laws” (FQS67). In contrast to Peru 2, Peru 3 does not show any such features. Rather, one is “critical of the religious tradition of his or her people” and has “frequent doubts about long-held religious convictions” even though one, like many other theistic prototypes, thinks of the divine as a “sheltering and nurturing parent”.

From the Indian sample, we find one prototype that shows a family resemblance to the theistic prototype, but in this case (India 3) we lack statement FQS53 (“Believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship”) as a defining statement. Rather, a family resemblance with global prototype 2, the Active Confident Believer, is primarily anchored in the notion of feeling “personally protected and guided by a spiritual being”. In both Russia and Canada, we lack this altogether.

This cross-cultural variation is evident from the Table 4.2 below, where factor score ranks for statement FQS23, FQS41, FQS53, FQS74, and FQS97 are compared between the Global, Russian and Canadian prototypes. In none of the prototypes from the Russian and Canadian sample do we find any of these statements; they have not in the analysis received sufficient z-scores to receive a defining ranking, and do not stand out as distinguishing. The statements have not been relevant to how the Canadian and Russian prototypes have been defined. However, the statement FQS23 (“Engages regularly in religious or spiritual practices in private”) is included in Table 4.2. In the global theistic prototype 2, this statement is also among

Table 4.2 Factor Score ranks for defining statements of being religious

FQS Statement Number	Prototype 1		Prototype 2		Prototype 3		Prototype 4		Prototype 5		
	Z	Rank	Z	Rank	Z	Rank	Z	Rank	Z	Rank	
	Global										
23	-1.04	82	1.53	4	-0.73	75	-0.20	52	0.13	46	
41	-0.84	77	1.53	3	0.33	39	-0.50	68	1.44	9	
53	-0.88	79	2.11	1	-1.20	86	-0.20	53	1.55	8	
74	-1.06	83	1.55	2	0.18	47	0.47	35	1.38	12	
97	-1.36	96	1.18	12	-1.02	82	-0.94	82	-1.70	100	
	Russia										
23	0	48	-0.67	74	0	48	-0.55	66	-1.26	86	
41	0	51	0.72	23	0.29	37	-1.63	98	-0.38	67	
53	-0.92	83	0.09	47	-0.01	50	0.34	42	-0.02	56	
74	-0.73	75	0.52	28	0.28	39	-0.55	70	-1.10	85	
97	0	53	-0.74	77	-0.84	85	-0.14	55	1.10	14	
	Canada										
23	-1.36	92	1.79	5	-1.26	90	-0.69	75	0.37	37	
41	-0.85	82	0.19	47	-1.15	86	0.78	26	0.87	20	
53	-0.41	69	-0.20	58	-0.35	59	0.32	34	0.52	33	
74	-0.79	79	0.80	22	0.02	47	0.32	36	0.55	31	
97	-1.44	94	-1.19	88	-0.35	60	-0.32	63	-0.62	70	

Note. Z refers to z-scores in the analyses and Rank shows how statements are ranked in respective prototypes. The statements are FQS23 (“Engages regularly in religious or spiritual practices in private”); FQS41 (“Thinks of the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent”); FQS53 (“Believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship”); FQS74 (“Feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual being”); and FQS97 (“Is an active, contributing member of a religious or a spiritual community”)

the distinguishing statements ($p < .01$), the z-score is also higher than in all other prototypes in the sample, and it is lacking below. Here Canada 2 makes an exception. For this prototype, it is important to engage “regularly in religious or spiritual practices in private” (FQS23), but as part of an experience-oriented spirituality and not as part of a theistic view.

The above Table 4.2 from which we can see that our samples from Canada and Russia do not present us with any prototypes where statements usually associated with theistic forms of religiosity are defining should not, of course, be interpreted as meaning that there is no ‘religious’ prototype in Canada and Russia. Rather, our results with a specific sample present prototypes from these countries that are configured somewhat differently, and other statements dominate as distinguishing statements. Nevertheless, in Russia we do find a ‘religious prototype’ who “thinks that certain specific beliefs are crucial for salvation” (FQS22) and “believes in some way but does not view him- or herself as religious” (FQS28), but this seems not to be rooted in the idea of a positive personal relationship with a divinity. This prototype 5 from Russia is of a more anxious nature and puts strong emphasis on “a sense of guilt and personal inadequacy” (FQS69). From the short narrative also some ambiguity and tension is evident:

Short narrative description of Russia prototype 5, Anxious Believer.

Russia 5 expresses insecurity as part of one's religious beliefs. One thinks that certain specific beliefs are crucial for salvation and feels confident of attaining salvation even though one cannot see oneself as facing the prospect of death with courage and calmness. One feels foreign to being critical of the religious tradition of one's people, yet one does not think religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation. One claims that one rather believes in some way, than views oneself as religious and rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles. Dedicating one's life to serving the divine feels foreign, and one does not give substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization. Rather, one sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life and supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality.

Subjective forms of being religious, spiritual or secular are seldom as clear-cut as the making of distinctions between given categories such as religious, spiritual and secular might make us expect, and some subjectivities might at a closer look qualify for all labels. From the above we have still seen that such categories, and in this case the category of being religious, is universal and reoccurring in our samples. At the same time the contextual configurations through which these are reflected are just as important. FQS is a good tool for identifying the balance between the universal and the particular.

4.5 A Fractal Analysis of 'Being Religious'

The prototypes extracted from samples from different countries vary with regards to what 'being religious' involves. Each sample adds individual features and emphases to the family resemblance. In order to shed light on this diversity further, we also conducted a fractal analysis of the individual Q-sorts ($N = 154$) from both global prototype 2 Active Confident Believer and 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist. In Chap. 2 of this volume, we argued that also global prototypes 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist stood out as religious and aligned with prototypes 2 Active Confident Believer in light of many other measures. It was therefore included in this analysis in order to enhance the potential diversity even more. This analysis amply demonstrates how a further analysis of larger factors can yield a 'fractal' effect, displaying renewed internal complexity and differentiation, while also exposing more nuanced aspects of the family resemblance in question. By nature, however, these differentiated religious prototypes (DRP) are of course relatively homogenous and show relatively high levels of intercorrelation (see Table 4.3 below).

A closer look at these 'religious' prototypes reveals that many of the dimensions discussed above also differentiate these prototypes. A more theistic belief-orientation seems to unite DRP 1, DRP 3 and DRP 4. DRP1 is characterized by e.g. feeling "personally protected and guided by a spiritual being" (FQS74), and "confident of attaining eternal salvation" (FQS38). Persons of prototype DRP3 emphasize "that certain specific beliefs are crucial for salvation" (FQS22), and tend to affirm that they have "experienced moments of intense divine, mysterious, or supernatural presence (FQS10). DRP4 is more about the role of "religion as a central means for

Table 4.3 Factor correlations for differentiated religious prototypes

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. DRP 1	–						
2. DRP 2	.28	–					
3. DRP 3	.62	.14	–				
4. DRP 4	.61	.34	.34	–			
5. DRP 5	.54	.25	.50	.25	–		
6. DRP 6	.35	.27	.28	.32	.34	–	
7. DRP 7	.62	.29	.49	.48	.37	.34	–

becoming a better and more moral person” (FQS3), an ascetic willingness to “give up worldly or bodily pleasures for religious or spiritual reasons” (FQS98). In Table 4.4 we summarize these prototypes briefly with a focus on distinguishing statements but without providing any labels.

Besides expressing a theistic orientation, DRP6 is especially distinguished by a tendency to express “his or her religion primarily in charitable acts or social action” (FQS27). This is shared with DRP7 where the social action is coupled with societal activism. This prototype is also more geared towards the ritual side of religion and “engages regularly in religious or spiritual practices in private” (FQS23). Only in this prototype can we find an affirmation of having “used methods of attaining altered states of consciousness” (FQS50), even though this is very mildly ranked. Also DRP2 is more ambiguous, namely believing “in some way” without viewing “him- or herself as religious” (FQS28) while affirming relatively strong traditionalist values such as the need to “remain loyal to the religion of one’s nation” (FQS46) and maintaining “continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors” (FQS58). Persons of DRP 5 are, on their part, among the few who “understands and relates to the divine as feminine” (FQS19) and “often keenly aware of the presence of the divine (FQS78). They have “experienced a profound change in religious or spiritual understanding or commitment” (FQS37), and also view “the divine or a higher reality as a deep mystery that can be pointed to but never fully understood” (FQS88).

The fractal analysis illustrates variations within the religious family, and reproduce some essential aspects of the global prototypes. Interestingly, these are not limited to the two religious prototypes only. Also, for example, pluralism characteristic to global prototype 4 Spiritually Attuned is reflected in differentiated religious prototypes 5 and 6 who “embrace elements from various religious and spiritual traditions” (FQS29). The two global prototypes 2 and 3 that provided data for the fractal analysis are either negatively ($r = -.27$), respectively weakly ($r = .03$) correlated with global prototype 1 Secular Humanist. From this should follow that the latter prototype is only weakly present in the differentiated religious prototypes. Still, the tendency to reject “religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles” (FQS70) that distinguishes global prototype 1 Secular Humanist is central also to DRP4. The fact that prototypes can be internally contradictory or inconsistent is further obvious from how prototype DRP4 also “takes for granted that particular religious claims are true” (FQS92).

Table 4.4 Differentiated religious prototypes – a summary

<p><i>Differentiated religious prototype 1</i> <i>One believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship, and feels personally protected and guided by. One has dedicated one's life to serving the divine and feels confident of attaining eternal salvation. One thinks of the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent and prays chiefly for solace and personal protection.</i></p>
<p><i>Differentiated religious prototype 2</i> <i>One believes in some way, but does not view oneself as religious. Thinking of the ultimate as a life force or creative energy, also the idea of reincarnation, the cycle of birth and rebirth is meaningful. One believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious and values one's own purity and strives to safeguard it.</i></p>
<p><i>Differentiated religious prototype 3</i> <i>One has experienced an intense divine or mysterious presence, but is also burdened by a sense of guilt and personal inadequacy. One thinks that certain specific beliefs are crucial for salvation. Feeling closest to those who share the same faith or outlook, one takes part in religious activities to form or maintain social relationships.</i></p>
<p><i>Differentiated religious prototype 4</i> <i>Views all events in this world within a religious framework and considers the meaning of religious texts and teachings to be clear and true. Longing for a deeper, more confident faith, one willingly gives up worldly or bodily pleasures. Religion is seen as a central means for becoming a better and more moral person.</i></p>
<p><i>Differentiated religious prototype 5</i> <i>One has experienced a profound change in religious or spiritual understanding, and is often keenly aware of the presence of the divine. One views religious content as metaphoric, rather than literally true and relates to the divine as feminine. One engages regularly in religious or spiritual practices in private.</i></p>
<p><i>Differentiated religious prototype 6</i> <i>One considers the meaning of religious texts and teachings to be clear and true. One is moved by the atmosphere of sacred places, and thinks of the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent. Expressing one's religion mainly in charitable acts, one participates in religious activities chiefly on special occasions and for social reasons.</i></p>
<p><i>Differentiated religious prototype 7</i> <i>Being religious or spiritual is central to whom one is, one engages regularly in religious or spiritual practices in private but participates in religious activities chiefly on special occasions. One actively seeks to change societal structures and values, one works towards making the world a better place to live.</i></p>

4.6 The Variety of Being Spiritual

The global prototype 4 was labelled Spiritually Attuned, a label that resonates with Wulff's (2019) findings. The term spirituality has many different meanings and Huss claims that we today need to account for spirituality as a new cultural category (Huss 2014). When referring to a contemporary trend spirituality usually differentiates itself from religion in a value-laden way and puts the individual, seeking, openness, and holism at the center. It is often in discussions of current forms of being religious and secular associated with an emphasis of practices and means to attain insights, and sustains a connection to progressive liberal values and activism (Woodhead, 2013). How is the category 'spiritual' reflected in light of our data and results? This is a more difficult question and the reason for this is evident already

when we look at the global prototype 4 and how this is configured. In the case of the theistic global prototype 2 we found a relatively small number of defining statements, and these were also reoccurring in the country specific studies (with some exceptions). They constituted a rather distinct pattern of family resemblance.

For ‘the spiritual’ prototypes the pattern of family resemblance unfolds somewhat differently. First, the global prototype 4 Spiritually Attuned is characterized by nine distinguishing statements out of the 13 statements that are ranked on the highest level 3 or 4, and we can claim that a more complex multidimensionality is at play. Second, and as a consequence of the way in which they are replicated across different cultures, they show even more variation than what was the case for the religious prototypes. This is evident from Fig. 4.2 below.

A family resemblance based on a combination of statement changes from one country to the other is evident also in this case. Yet, the fact that the pattern is determined by a greater number of features or, in this case statements, the pattern could be defined as more vague. The quality of the FQS is also evident from the extent to which it allows us to observe empirically religious subjectivities and spiritualities in contexts where they are unclear or difficult to access with other instruments.

The Chinese results provide an interesting example since they, on the surface, tend to be rather secular but still are distinguished by other features. In Chap. 2, we could see that measures of religiosity in China in general were relatively low. For instance, less than 10% of the Chinese respondents ($n = 309$) considered themselves as “belonging to one or more religious groups, communities, or traditions”. This

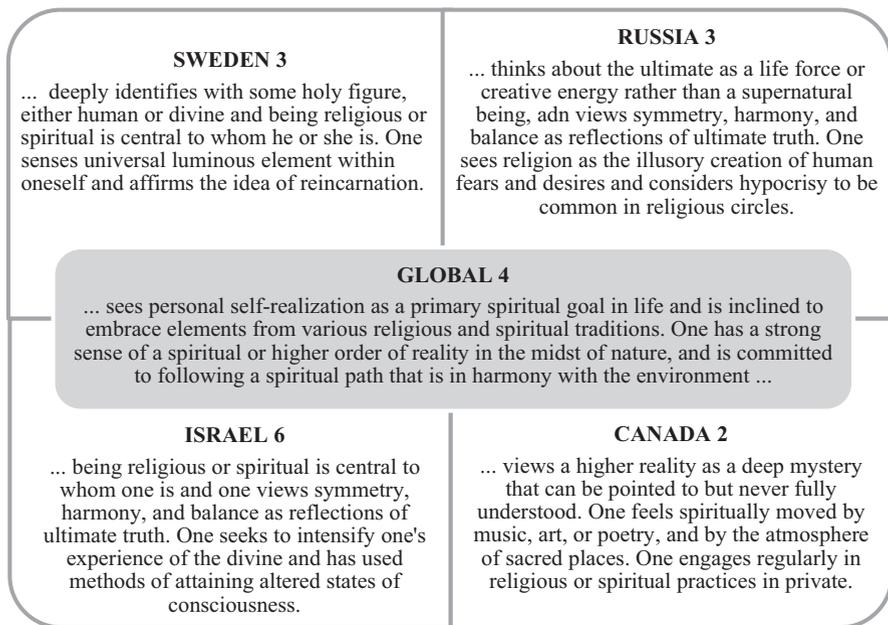


Fig. 4.2 Examples of cross-cultural variety of being ‘spiritual’

confirms the findings of previous surveys on religion in China, such as the results from the World Values Survey; among all national contexts studied as part of this project, China has the lowest number of individuals reporting that religion is very important (3%) or rather important (8%) to them (Inglehart et al., 2014). We are in other words dealing with a highly secular context. Also, many defining statements for the Chinese prototypes reflect a secular position.

Yet, another picture emerges when we turn to the results from the FQS. Common to several of the prototypes is a salient identification with believing “in some way but [the person] does not view him- or herself as religious” (FQS28). This item surfaces as central in the majority of the Chinese prototypes, even though they differed in terms of the relevance which they additionally gave to societal activism, personal belief or experience, or religious or spiritual matters. Four out of the six Chinese prototypes embrace in different ways spirituality as a potential valuable life-source, without making this a very prominent part of their own life-view. This supports recent research pointing to a highly diverse and vibrant religious landscape in China, despite heavy secular regulation (e.g. Yang & Hu, 2012, p. 96; Sun, 2013). Let us look closer at a Chinese prototype that primarily should count as spiritual.

Short narrative description of China prototype 4, Experience-Oriented and Spiritually Inclined Traditionalist:

For China 4, spiritual experiences are essential. One has a sense of a spiritual or higher order of reality in nature and has experienced moments of intense divine, mysterious, or supernatural presence. One is moved by the atmosphere of sacred places, spiritually moved and sustained by music, art, or poetry. Feeling contempt against religious institutions, ideas and practices is alien to whom one is and one also finds it foreign to reduce religion to a creation of human fears and desires. Still, one has not dedicated one’s life to serving the divine, nor used methods of attaining altered states of consciousness. One does not take comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will suffer. One believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious and works towards making the world a better place.

This spiritual prototype from China is unique in the sense that it is the only prototype among the Chinese prototypes that affirms the idea that “religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation” (FQS71). The statement is not ranked very highly, but still becomes distinguishing since it presents a clear contrast to other prototypes that rank this statement negatively. This detail also makes the Chinese spiritual prototype 4 stand out in relation to the global prototype 4 Spiritually Inclined where we find this statement ranked as -4 , that is to say among the most negatively ranked. In other prototypes where this idea is ranked positively, it usually surfaces as part of a more theistic or religious viewpoint. This exemplifies that in terms of family resemblance, there are no fixed boundaries between the categories and they can involve tensions and contradictions.

The Chinese prototypes defined by the notion of “believing in some way” (FQS28) without being religious all lacked the strong identification with religious belief and engagement that is characteristic of the Chinese prototype 3 which could be labelled “Committed and Communally Engaged Believer”. From Fig. 4.2 above we recall that persons of this prototype tend to affirm a personal relationship to a

god, and find it important to participate in religious services. Religion is also “a central means for becoming a better and more moral person” (FQS3). In addition to the FQS’ capacity to uncover the complex multidimensional side of a worldview, the Chinese case shows that it can thereby also help us to expose more hidden aspects that may fall in the shadow when using other methods. The FQS assists in nuancing our comprehension of what it can mean and not mean to hold a non-religious or secular view and just “believe in some way”.

4.7 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter we have investigated how religiosity and spirituality varies in samples from 12 different countries worldwide: distinct patterns of being religious, spiritual and non-religious in country-specific samples were identified, and resulted in three to eight prototypes per country. We compared some of these with our results from the analysis based on a sample consisting of all participants, i.e. five global prototypes. Based on this we concluded that both religion and spirituality is respectively constituted by a range of elements that vary in significant ways from one context to another and in relation to the global prototypes. A fractal analysis of the two global prototypes of a religious character exposed more of the internal variation that can constitute ‘being religious’.

The term family resemblance that was introduced by Wittgenstein (1988; Andersen, 2000) presents a way to conceptualize this dynamic well. It accounts for how religion and spirituality are constituted by overlapping shared features, without any of them necessarily being common to all manifestations. The taxonomies of being both religious and spiritual are dynamic, open and subject to change. Our observations show that the FQS can produce systematically comparable results that strike a significant methodological balance between the universal and the particular. The term family resemblance seems to further strengthen the called-for dialogical position between the two epistemological positions which the FQS enables.

A key asset of FQS is that it is anchored in self-reference rather than in preconceived theories or systems of classification. The Q-set is at the core of validity of any application of Q-methodology, and needs to reflect a variety of relevant viewpoints. It is evident to any scholar of religion that this remains a challenging ambition, especially in light of cross-cultural variations. Yet, the FQS includes a broad variety of statements pertaining to religion, spirituality and non-religion that fosters the process of making meaningful distinctions, and presents important qualities in this respect. For example, also ideas that at the stage of designing the FQS-b were expected to be more particularistic and marginal came to resonate in unexpected ways with our samples. The statement referring to the idea of believing “in some way” (FQS28) that was derived from a Nordic context stood out as surprisingly salient for the participants in China, and the statement “Values his or her own purity and strives to safeguard it” (FQS48) was relevant in several samples.

Nevertheless, also some critical remarks regarding the design of the FQS are required. Kontala (2016) illustrates the Q-set's problem with help of Legos. The sorting process could be compared to a test, where the respondents are given 101 pieces of Lego and a task to build something out of these blocks. The possibilities are almost endless, yet at the same time constrained by the available blocks. The respondents cannot suddenly wish to manifest their preferences by constructing a mini railway, or a game of softball, and furthermore, in actual fact people tend to produce variations on a quite finite number of recurrent themes, such as an airplane, a house, a car and a boat. Of those who build cars, no two cars are absolutely the same, and in this sense there are many variations on the car theme. Some of the variations may actually be hard to classify as to whether they are a car or a boat (and come close to being a hovercraft). Some houses acquire wheels and start to become more like caravans. In understanding the prototypes and the variations, it is obvious that they are each built from many individual pieces, and so the prototype is always more than the sum of its pieces – it is the pieces arranged into a particular pattern. Some pieces, however, come to define a prototype more than others. Round pieces, for example, might suggest wheels, but for some who first got attracted to the flat wing like pieces, these round pieces are the wheels of an airplane, whilst for others they are the wheels of a car. For those who built boats, they become the safety life-rings on the side of the boat. Obviously, a different set of Lego pieces might prompt different models to be built. These variations cannot be reduced to single features or items. Rather, the notion of family resemblance seems to be relevant in understanding the complex configurations of multiple features or items, as a matter of a series of overlapping shared features, where none of them is necessarily shared by all members.

Some prototypes were built on what we tend to see as conflicting or incompatible elements, such as being both religious or secular, or rooting spirituality in nationalism. A specific quality of the FQS is that it has proven to be sensitive to such ambiguities, liquidities and simultaneities in how religious subjectivities are configured. Nevertheless, this also has to be critically discussed in terms of how we understand the method, what we can achieve with it, and how it relates to an empirical reality of e.g. everyday discourses and practices. We cannot neglect that in the more radical end of the discussion of reliability in Q-methodology, McKeown and Thomas (2013, p. 5) cite Heisenberg (1962, p. 58) on the interpretative nature of measurement: “We have to remember that what we observe is not nature itself but nature exposed to our method of questioning”. When we design or revise a Q-set for a certain research purpose, we tend to make assumptions about what is universal, particular, reoccurring, central or peripheral. These assumptions affect our understanding of the concourse, and the choices we make. This means that the universal and particularistic features between which we would like to strike a balance are also dependent on the idea of a difference that is constructed by us and others. Or in other words, the question “what is a pattern and who can define this?” lies at the core of the notion of family resemblance. The results we receive need to be critically viewed in this light.

The FQS differs from many methodological approaches used in the study of religions, and it is the first instrument for assessing religiosity that is based on Q-methodology. It is designed to be sensitive to both commonalities in religious beliefs and practices, while at the same time exposing the limitations of thinking in terms of universal patterns and categories. The FQS can help us identify some new relevant ways of being religious, spiritual, or secular, or perhaps even more importantly, it can assist us in observing emerging forms combining these points of view. It also reveals that worldviews present a dynamic family resemblance across cultures that have a multidimensional nature, often constituted by simultaneity, ambiguity and even contradictions.

The FQS opens up new vistas in light of challenges posed by religious change and religion in a global cross-cultural perspective. The FQS has the potential to produce relevant systematical observations that are well grounded empirically. As is the case in every academic study, we need to be attentive to the limitations of the instruments and approaches we use, but on a methodological level, the FQS designed by David Wulff (2019) represents a promising pragmatic and dialogical instrument. It helps us navigate the global landscape with regards to religion, spirituality and secular views in spite of epistemological pitfalls associated with ideas about universalism and particularism.

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Chapter 5

Common Patterns of Religion and Spirituality: A Contribution to the Discussion on Typologies



Peter Nynäs , Nurit Novis-Deutsch , and Paul Stenner 

Abstract The aim to discern variation in religion and spirituality has been central to the Study of Religions, and in particular, it has fueled the discussion on typologies. In this chapter, we analyze five distinct worldview profiles (prototypes) that we extracted from our study in 12 countries with the Faith Q-Sort (FQS). The FQS enables us to investigate in detail how certain ideas, practices, attitudes etc. vary in relevance between prototypes, and reveals patterns of importance for the discussion on typology. It provides a meaningful methodological tool for assessing and comprehending worldviews and how these are configured. Our findings show that our five prototypes, on the one hand, are distinguished by certain characteristics and that they, on the other hand, also are multidimensional and emerge as variations of how several elements are combined and emphasized.

Keywords Religion · Spirituality · Typology · Faith Q-Sort · Q-methodology

5.1 Introduction

Is there an essence to religiosity? What about spirituality and secularity? Can this ‘essence’ be typologized as a universal set of dimensions? In this chapter, we will address these controversial questions by comparing the main findings of our study to some of the field’s most prevalent typologies. Wulff (2019) writes that typologies have long been rejected by “social scientists under the mistaken assumption that they were intended as categories for sorting

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P. Nynäs et al. (eds.), *The Diversity Of Worldviews Among Young Adults*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94691-3_5

individual cases” but are now undergoing a comeback. Wulff underscores the need to conceive of any typology as a work in progress, noting that “as early typologists – e.g., James, Spranger, Jung, and Kretchmer – emphasized, typologies are mainly intended, rather, as intuitively distilled “idealized” portraits, intellectual tools for discerning and analyzing patterns of variation.” (ibid, p. 661).

Typologies serve as theoretical devices, which help their user to reduce the complexity of actual existence. A typology identifies the abstract characteristics assumed to be exemplified within the complexity of empirical reality. The relation between characterizing and exemplifying runs two ways: the abstract *characteristics* are supposed to be *exemplified* in fact, and the *exemplified* facts are supposed to be *characterized* by the abstract dimensions. While identifying these key religious-spiritual types is a bold and important endeavor, we must retain a critical awareness of the limits and purpose of any typology, and this means insisting upon the two-way traffic between data and categories. Maintaining a critical stance is particularly important, given that much of the research conducted in this area has had an ethnocentric Western bias and has often presupposed a limited range of religious (and non-religious) cultures. Most typologies suffer from a limited underlying pool of data, and hence risk projecting a highly distorted picture of the ‘essence of religion’. Indeed, we must surely entertain the possibility that there may be no essence to religion and that the question may be poorly posed. In this chapter, we use our Q-methodological findings to hold to scrutiny several existing religious (and other) typologies in the literature.

The question of religious typologies is not limited to the Study of Religions. More recently, such mapping of religiosities has also emerged from an interest in worldviews, and has been conducted under a range of conceptual frameworks such as ideologies (Tomkins, 1964), values (Schwartz, 1992), social attitudes (Saucier, 2000), social axioms (Leung & Bond, 2004) and moral foundations (Haidt, 2007). Although these conceptual frameworks clearly differ from each other, they all identify general principles of human variation. Some of these conceptual frameworks construe religiosity as a subset or a single dimension within broader worldview classifications, while others explore religiosity as a variable that correlates or intersects with various worldviews. In this chapter we will investigate such typologies of relevance for the study of religions from a novel methodological perspective, based on Q-methodology and David Wulff’s Faith Q-Sort (2019). The chapter starts from a brief discussion of method, after which we look into different typologies and finally investigate our results from the international study we conducted. The approach and method behind this study is presented more in detail in Chap. 1 of this volume (see also Nynäs et al., 2021). We pay more attention to religiosity in this chapter, since secular worldviews are discussed in Chap. 8 of this volume.

5.2 A Methodological Account

Ultimately, typologies should be judged by their correspondence to empirical data. In this sense, survey findings are far less useful at validating typologies, since religious categories are predefined while semi-structured interviews can be far more helpful in this respect. But even interviews are not exempt from difficulty in validating typologies, since the process of analysis and theory-building often allows researchers to re-create the same typologies they were familiar with in the first place. This means that typologies, classifications and categorization systems can be self-perpetuating, particularly when the categories are built-in by way of the questions that are asked and embedded in the very instruments which discover them. Thus, different methods for data collection and data-analysis can have important effects on typology structuring.

David Wulff's (2019) Faith Q-Sort (FQS) instrument is sensitive to participant-driven variations, and does not merely reproduce existing categories based on pre-existing classifications. It offers new ways of exploring the relevance of previous typologies also to culturally-diverse samples. For a comprehensive overview of Q-methodology we refer to literature in the field (see Brown, 1980; Watts & Stenner, 2012), and for a presentation of FQS see Wulff (2019). Our use of the FQS with an international sample allowed us to identify a set of distinct ways of being religious, spiritual and secular and to examine how these varied across cultures (see Chaps. 3 and 4 in this volume). In the current chapter, we take the study a step further by considering the results in light of some key typologies in the study of worldviews and religions. How do our findings reflect such typologies? What general principles for comprehending human variation in religiosity, non-religiosity and spirituality can we extract from them?

Wulff (2019) designed the FQS in order to assess multiple forms of religiosity in individual lives. When selecting the 101 statements for the FQS, Wulff (2019) aimed to be both systematic and globally inclusive. He sought to include items potentially relevant to all major world religions; to the more subjective sides of 'religion' and/or 'spirituality'; and also to humanistic, existential and even spirituality-rejecting perspectives (Wulff, 2019). We developed the FQS further through a process of cross-cultural validation, and defined a revised version, the FQS-b (Appendix 1). This involved double- and back translation into the target languages: Arabic, Bengali, Finnish, French, Mandarin Chinese, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Swedish and Turkish (see Chap. 1 in this volume; Nynäs et al., 2021).

In a study with FQS, participants rank all statements into a quasi-normal distribution, ranging from +4 ("most descriptive" of me) through 0 (neutral) to -4 ("least descriptive" of me). The statistical analysis of each 'Q sort' reveals the existence of a small set of shared ways of sorting, each distinct from the next. Hence, the basic mechanism is simple: if a group of participants share the same perspective, they sort the statements in a recognizably similar fashion and populate the same factor. Each factor that emerges should thus express a different perspective. These results are ultimately in the service of a 'qualitative' aim:

reconstructing each perspective by interpreting the meaning expressed in the prototypical Q-sort pattern that has been identified as a factor. Each so-called prototype is thus a reconstruction of the meaningful perspective that has been statistically captured by each factor.

The capacity of the FQS to reveal different patterns within a certain sample can be called emergent self-categorization. This means that in comparison with many regular studies, distinct patterns identified through a Q-study – prototypes – are less dependent on the judgement of the researcher or on pre-defined classifications. The complete set of interpreted so-called prototypes is parallel to a typology of perspectives or, in the case of FQS, worldviews with regards to (non-)religion. Each prototype is an “idealized” (or generalized) portrait that is in fact composed of all of the individual Q sorts that exemplified the factor in question (technically, all these Q sorts are statistically merged into a weighted average). Q-methodology thus allows the identification of a bottom-up typology, which’ characteristics emerge as a function of the selective sorting activity of the various participants. Hence, the qualitative sense-making activity of participants yields a quantitative result that – after statistical analysis – can be qualitatively reconstructed by means of the researchers’ interpretations.

For our study, we collected data with the FQS from Canada, China, Ghana, Finland, India, Israel, Peru, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Turkey and the United States (see Chap. 1). Q-methodology does not require this large number of respondents, but it is important to find enough respondents representing a variety of viewpoints, and since we aimed for a large variety of nationalities, we also needed a relatively large sample. For this purpose, our initial survey with a larger sample (total $N \approx 300$) in each country enabled a broad selection of university students for the FQS-study ($n \approx 45$ per country), balanced as far as possible with regard to gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, language groups, class and field of university studies. These, in combination with other features (e.g. a diversity in value priorities as expressed in our survey) guaranteed a high degree of diversity among the participants. In this study, we collected a total of 562 responses based on the FQS-b.

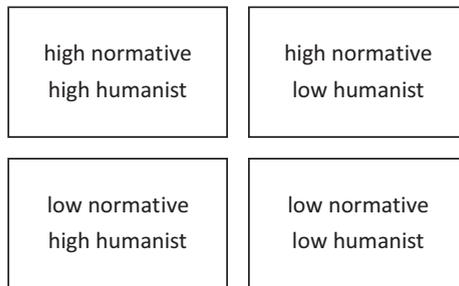
In Chap. 3 of this volume, we presented the joint analysis of all 562 sorts which we collected that resulted in five distinct global prototypes alongside the three to eight prototypes (in total 57 prototypes) that we received from analyzing the data by country (Appendix 2). In this chapter, we investigate the characteristics of the five global prototypes in light of our review of typologies: we compare how statements that are characteristic to a specific prototype are ranked by other prototypes. This helps us identify how the prototypes are formed.

It is, of course, important not to overstate the case for the emergent self-categorization possible with Q-methodology. To the extent that a prototype is seen as an ideal type, it also conceals a degree of real variety, being composed of a number of individual Q sorts, each unique to some degree. Our approach means an effort to transcend the locale, and this is a significant limitation in this study.

5.3 Typologies of Worldviews and Religion

Scholars have made various attempts to classify and organize worldviews in general and religious types in particular, ranging from deductive “armchair typologies” to inductive empirically-based studies. We begin by reviewing several general worldview typologies, and then shift to the ones that pertain specifically to religiosity. We present only a brief review of the diverse classifications at hand. More complete lists of such typologies can be found in Wulff (1985, 1997, 2007) and in Hood et al. (2018, pp. 26–56). We start by looking at general worldview classification and thereafter we briefly turn to typologies of religiosity, spirituality and non-religion.

Ideology has been one important concept for attempts to define valid typologies, referring mostly to sets of ideas about how life should be lived and what forces influence it. Some scholars distinguish between group and personal ideologies, while others argue that the two are closely related in such a way that a person’s traits direct them towards certain ideologies, and the ideology they embrace reinforces these traits by framing their experiences in scripted ways (de St. Aubin, 1996). Tomkins’ Polarity of Ideology theory (1964) and Script theory (1987) suggest that ideological thought on both group and personal levels reflects two central dimensions that closely relate to affective experiences. The dimension of *humanism* highlights the intrinsic value of the person, and reflects an affective tendency towards joy, distress, fear, and shame. *Normativism* by contrast emphasizes conformity to norms and rules and reflects an affective tendency towards excitement, surprise, contempt, disgust, and anger. These dimensions are found across cultures and periods, and result in a fourfold ideological typology:



This structure was empirically confirmed (de St. Aubin, 1996 and others), and was found to distinguish well between political left/liberal and right/conservative ideologies in a robust, cross-cultural study (Nilsson & Jost, 2017).

Ideologies are sometimes conceptualized as “social attitudes.” When classifying social attitudes, a *traditional-secular* dimension seems to be accepted by most scholars, but the existence and possible meaning of additional dimensions is contested. Saucier (2000) conducted an extensive review of previous classifications, including a lexical study of every “ism” in the English dictionary. Four distinct factors of social attitudes or “isms” were found: (1) reverence for traditional and

religious sources of authority versus skepticism about absolute and traditional accounts. This factor combines elements of conservatism, religiousness, and authoritarianism and is the factor consistently identified in previous studies; (2) hawkishness and exploitation versus dovishness and cooperation. This factor combines ethnocentrism, social dominance and materialism, and reflects a self-serving tendency which may involve assigning a low importance to values in general; (3) a pro-group attitude versus a pro individual one; (4) high vs. low mystical spiritualism. According to the authors, factors 3 and 4 both reflect Western, democratic, social justice elements and constitute two separable strands in normative thinking in Western democracies. Factor 3 relates to political community issues and support for freedom through institutions, while factor 4 relates to a more personal reverence for intuition, enlightenment and spirituality.

The literature on values presents a second point of entry to worldview typologies. Values are desirable, trans-situational goals, which vary in importance and serve as guiding principles in peoples' lives (Schwartz, 1992). Today's most influential theory on values, Schwartz's Theory of Universal Values (Schwartz, 1992, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012), identifies two diametrically opposed motivational dimensions according to which human values are (empirically) organized. One dimension contrasts *openness to change* to *conservation*, reflecting a conflict between independent thought versus preservation of tradition and stability. The second dimension opposes *self-transcendence* to *self-enhancement*, reflecting a conflict between concerns for the welfare of others versus pursuit of personal goals (Schwartz, 2012). We present the relation between basic values and the five global prototypes already in Chap. 3 of this volume.

In a different attempt, Inglehart et al. (2014) devised the World Values Survey to map 60 countries according to their underlying values. The findings confirmed two major dimensions of cross-cultural variation in the world: *traditional vs. secular/rational* values and *survival vs. self-expression* values. Traditional values emphasize the importance of religion, custom, family and other sources of authority and have been related to nationalism and to right-wing ideologies, while secular-rational values reflect a rejection of traditional authority sources in favor of autonomous choice. Survival values emphasize economic and physical security, and are related to higher levels of ethnocentricity and less tolerance, while self-expression values prioritize democracy, environmental protection, and pluralism (Inglehart et al., 2014). As countries become industrialized and then democratized, they tend to shift from traditional values to rational ones and from security values to self-expression ones. There is evident overlap here with Tomkins' ideological polarity, with self-expression values mapping onto person-centered humanism and traditional authority resembling norm-centered conformity (in this sense Tomkins' ideological orientations are expressions of different 'values').

Moral foundations of worldviews represent a separate entry to typologies. An ongoing debate on the underlying foundations of different worldviews touches upon what is considered 'moral.' Turiel et al. (1987) argue that from a very young age, individuals identify issues of justice and harm as 'moral', and distinguish them from other social issues, which they deem 'conventional'. This implies that *justice* and

harm are the sole and universal foundational principles of morality (as suggested by Kohlberg and by Kant before him). However, Schweder (1991), Haidt (2007) and others argue that many non-Western cultures (e.g. Asian, African and Arab) as well as many religious or conservative Westerner groups, hold multiple moral foundations, which include, in addition to care and fairness, also, *loyalty*, *authority*, and *sanctity*. These additional moral foundations involve an additional layer of what is “right,” pertaining not to the interaction between individuals, but to that among and between groups. Thus, another way to classify worldviews is by the number and content of their defining moral foundations.

In sum, our overview of general worldview classifications show typologies that tend to revolve around a primary axis which distinguishes between support for rules, norms and traditions and support for human autonomy and rationality. Suggestions for what secondary (and possibly tertiary and quaternary) dimensions consist of vary, but a fairly common proposal is an emphasis on the needs of the self, versus the needs of others.

The issue of distinguishing between spirituality and religiosity has been discussed at length (see e.g. Hodge & McGrew, 2006; Zinnbauer et al., 1997, 1999). Some consider religion and spirituality to be two facets of the same construct, each with a different emphasis on personal or group tendencies towards the transcendent (e.g. Miller & Thoresen, 2003; Hood et al., 2009, pp. 8–9). Other view religiosity and spirituality as independent constructs. Saucier and Skrzypinska (2006, p. 1288) claim that “individual differences in religious/spiritual beliefs cannot be captured by a single dimension” and present in contrast two highly divergent and independent constructs. Typically, spirituality is seen as involving an intrinsic, personal openness to experience, whereas religiosity involves a group- and worship-focused concern with the sacred (Fontaine et al., 2005). This distinction leads to the well-known 2X2 typology of “religious but not spiritual,” “religious and spiritual,” “spiritual but not religious,” and “neither spiritual nor religious (secular)” (Hood et al., 2009).

There are also sub-divisions of each concept, creating typologies of religion, of spirituality and of non-religion. The latter will be discussed separately, since non-religiosity was such a predominant worldview in our findings. Non-religiosity and its subtypes are therefore given due attention in Chap. 8 of this volume, where it is compared to recent typologies of ‘unbelief’ (see e.g. Lee, 2014, 2015; Kontala, 2016). Here, we focus on ways of classifying religiosity and spirituality.

When focusing solely on religion, the question of whether religiosity is a uni- or multi-dimensional construct arises (Wulff, 2019, p. 645). Evidence suggests that it is both, depending on the mix of questions and the demographics of the sample (Wulff, 1997). As a unidimensional construct, religiosity-related worldviews can be construed either as dichotomous (religious or non-religious) or as a continuum on which individuals can be more or less religious. The major B’s of religion, i.e. Believing, Behaving, Belonging, and Bonding, are often considered to be central to the construction of religious typologies (Saroglou, 2011). These can be said to reflect the multidimensionality of religion, insofar as they are seen as different aspects of being religious which to varying degrees together constitute forms of religiosity.

As a multidimensional construct, various types of religiosity have been enumerated. One classic typology is James' (1902) distinction between the *once-born* religious type, whose religious impetus stems from a "healthy-minded" joy of living, and breeds an optimistic social faith, and the *twice born* religious type whose motivation stems from a "sick-souled" pessimistic and sorrowful perspective on the world and lends itself to religious transformation and conversion. Another classic distinction follows the main ideological dimension outlined above: Fromm (1950) distinguishes between *humanistic religiosity*, which emphasizes human self-realization, and *authoritarian religiosity* which focuses on obedience. A third well-known classification describes four religious orientations: *extrinsic religiosity* involves viewing religiosity as a means to other, usually social, ends, *intrinsic religiosity* considers religion as an end in itself (Allport & Ross, 1967), *quest-focused religiosity* treats religion as an ongoing search for truth (Batson & Schoenrade, 1991) while *fundamentalist religiosity* connotes a literal certainty in a particular set of religious truths (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 2004). Since each of these orientations is considered to reflect a distinct dimension, various combinations are possible, such as high extrinsic/high intrinsic religiosity.

Contemporary empirically-grounded typologies of religion have been making a comeback, and we will consider two of them here, both reported at length in Wulff (2019), and both reflecting nationally- and culturally-limited data sources. First, in a study of 1186 Swiss Christians (Stolz et al., 2014/2016), researchers identified four types: institutional, (core members of religious communities); alternative (spiritual and experiential rather than religiously faithful); distanced (religiously affiliated, but minimally so) and secular (who claim no religious beliefs or practices but are nevertheless engaged in existential concerns and social action). This typology seems to reflect the classic division into religious, spiritual and secular, with an added category of distanced, who are uninvolved and less principled in all of these directions.

Second, in a study based solely on a US sample conducted by Pew Research Center 2018, seven types emerged in a cluster analysis: (1) *Sunday Stalwarts* are active traditionalists in their faith and congregational involvement; (2) *God-and-Country Believers* tend to hold strongly Republican political opinions; (3) *Diversely Devout*, are traditionally religious but also embrace New-Age beliefs; (4) *Relaxed Religious* say religion is important to them but seldom engage in religious practices; (5) *Spiritually Awake* subscribe to New-Age beliefs and seldom engage in traditional religious practices; (6) *Religion Resisters* are convinced that religious organizations do more harm than good, and (7) *Solidly Secular* reject both traditional and New-Age beliefs. This typology seems to reflect a nuanced version of the 2X2 religious-spiritual mapping in that types 1, 2 and 4 are religious but not spiritual, with differences in levels of religious commitment and meaning, type 3 is religious and spiritual, type 5 is spiritual but not religious and types 6 and 7 are neither spiritual nor religious.

Spiritual orientations too have been sub-categorized and the term has been used in many ways (Huss, 2014). MacDonald (2000) views spirituality as an inherently experiential and intrinsically religious construct, which is multidimensional and

includes complex experiential, cognitive, affective, physiological, behavioral, and social components. Another classification sets spirituality apart from mysticism (characterized by loss of self-boundaries and a sense of unity with the “beyond” [Hood, 1975]). One can distinguish between spiritual individuals who affirm a vertical transcendence, and those who affirm a horizontal transcendence, the latter being an immanent form of spirituality. Others parse spirituality into multiple dimensions. For example, Elkis et al. (1988) categorized the transcendental dimension, the sacredness of life, altruism and six other dimensions of spirituality.

5.4 The Distinctiveness of Contemporary Worldviews

In Chap. 3 of this volume, we presented five distinct global prototypes from our analysis of the sorts conducted by all participants in all countries ($N = 562$). These were named: (1) Secular Humanist (GP1); (2) Active Confident Believer (GP2); (3) Noncommitted Traditionalist (GP3); (4) Spiritually Attuned (GP4) and (5) Disengaged Liberal (GP5). We use abbreviations GP1-GP5 for these when needed. The global prototypes on the one hand reflected Wulff’s (2019) original prototypes, and on the other hand most of the 57 country specific prototypes could be matched to them and suggested a form of family resemblance across cultures. We can conclude that the five distinct global prototypes represent ideal-types and a typology of (non-)religious worldviews.

A closer look at the five prototypes reveals a general pattern rooted in the well-known distinction between the secular, the religious and the spiritual, with GP1 and GP5 appearing ‘secular’; GP2 and GP3 appearing ‘religious’, and GP4 appearing ‘spiritual’. In addition, our results overlap considerably with the four types of Stolz et al. (2014/2016), with GP2 mapping onto their ‘institutional’ category, GP4 their ‘alternative’ category, GP1 their ‘secular’ category, with GP3 being a possible variation on their ‘distanced’ category and GP 5 being ‘distanced’ in a different way (i.e. disengaged from full commitment to liberal values). However, there are two important differences when we compare our results with Stolz et al. (2014/2016): we identify two and not only one prototype as religious (see Chap. 3 of this volume).

In order to understand more fully differences between the five prototypes, we will explore how each prototype is distinct from the other prototypes, through an analysis of how each prototype orients towards specific statements. In a study with FQS, all 101 statements are ranked between +4 and -4. Naturally, some statements are ranked highly by all prototypes, and thus represent shared characteristics of the viewpoints. For example, statement 77 “Is profoundly touched by the suffering of others” is ranked +3 in all prototypes. Other statements might be ranked highly by just one prototype, playing either no role or a negative role for the other prototypes. Such statements can help us distinguish the prototypes from each other, and we will first explore our prototypes from this perspective.

The three statements that most clearly distinguish the Secular Humanist global prototype (GP1) from the others are shown in Table 5.1.

This result indicates that persons of this secular prototype stand out from people of other prototypes through their identification with the statements in Table 5.1. GP1 represents a worldview that affirms an outspoken trust in scientific reasoning, a view of religion as an all-too-human creation, and – consistent with both – no trace of a ‘keen awareness’ of any divine presence. From Table 5.1 we can also see that this contrasts most clearly with the rankings of GB2’s Active Confident Believer. In this respect, GP1 and GP2 reflect diametrically opposed worldviews on the truth of divinity versus the power of rationality. They clearly differ on what can be considered valid and reliable sources of knowledge. Next, we consider those statements that most clearly distinguish GP2 Active Confident Believer from the other prototypes.

From the point of view of GP2 Active Confident Believer, matters of truth and knowledge are not necessarily given highest priority. Rather, Table 5.2 indicates GP2’s emphasis on religious practice and identity. GP2 is hence alone amongst the prototypes in claiming a consistent religious identity at the core of their being, maintained in religious/spiritual practices. This prototype also strongly affirms statement 53 “Believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship”, but because this feature also appears as important in other prototypes (e.g. GP5), it is not uniquely distinctive of GP2.

Turning to global prototype 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist, we find that by contrast, that statement 53 ranks negatively. Even though GP3 can also be seen as a religious prototype, persons of this prototype are in many ways different from the Active Confident Believer. Table 5.3 shows three of the statements that most clearly distinguish GP3 “Noncommitted Traditionalist” from the other prototypes.

For global prototype 3 the Noncommitted Traditionalist, we find that notions about religion, nation and tradition are at the center of this worldview and further coupled with a trust in a higher justice that will take effect as punishment or suffering for those “who do not live righteously”. This form of religiosity is clearly different from the one affirmed by GP2, yet it is also defined by thinking that “the meaning of religious texts and teachings” is “clear and true” (FQS15), and “that men and women are by nature intended for different roles” (FQS54). Several of these statements connote in-group and tradition-related perceptions of what is moral. According to Haidt (2007, p. 1001), such statements are often affirmed by members of traditional societies and by religious and cultural conservatives in Western societies.

Table 5.1 Distinct features of global prototype 1 Secular Humanist (GP1)

FQS statement	GP1	GP2	GP3	GP4	GP5
70. Rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles.	4	-2	0	0	1
60. Views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires.	4	-3	-4	0	0
78. Is often keenly aware of the presence of the divine.	-4	2	1	0	2

Note: Numbers -4 to 4 refer to how the statements were ranked by respective prototype

Table 5.2 Distinct features of global prototype 2 Active Confident Believer (GP2)

FQS statement	GP1	GP2	GP3	GP4	GP5
23. Engages regularly in religious or spiritual practices in private.	-2	4	-1	0	0
16. Being religious or spiritual is central to whom he or she is.	-2	4	-1	0	-1
84. Has a vague and shifting religious outlook.	0	-3	-1	2	-1

Note: Numbers -4 to 4 refer to how the statements were ranked by respective prototype

Table 5.3 Distinct features of global prototype 3 Noncommitted Traditionalist (GP3)

FQS statement	GP1	GP2	GP3	GP4	GP5
46. Feels that one should remain loyal to the religion of one’s nation.	-3	-1	4	-4	-4
58. Feels that it is important to maintain continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors.	-1	-1	3	-1	0
99. Takes comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will face suffering or punishment.	-2	-2	3	-4	0

Note: Numbers -4 to 4 refer to how the statements were ranked by respective prototype

In many respects, global prototype 4 the Spiritually Attuned stands in clear contrast to GP3. This is evident from Table 5.3, and by the opposed rankings of “Feels that one should remain loyal to the religion of one’s nation” (FQS46) and “Takes comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will face suffering or punishment” (FQS99). These statements divide people on worldviews. The chief distinguishing statements for global prototype 4 Spiritually Attuned are listed in Table 5.4. For example, the worldview associated with this prototype connotes the centrality of nature, and is characterized by openness, harmony and inclusivity. In other respects, GP4 contrasts with GP2 (and comes closer to GP3), affirming the idea of “the ultimate as a life force or creative energy” (FQS9) over the belief in “a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship” (FQS53). Other aspects again can be considered in light of Haidt’s (2007) moral foundation of “sanctity” that might be endorsed by persons of this prototype. How should we comprehend these, since they align with on the one hand notions of sanctity representative of traditional societies in Haidt’s perspective, and on the other hand post-materialist ideals about modernist and liberal nature (Inglehart’s view et al., 2014)?

Where does all this leave us with global prototype 5, the Disengaged Liberal? Earlier we indicated that this can be seen as a prototype reflecting a secular worldview, but it can equally be interpreted as religious in a way. This is somewhat contradictory, but evident from how persons of this prototype tend to affirm statement 28 “believes in some way, but does not view him- or herself as religious”. Yet, they tend to distance themselves from things that are important to GP2 Active Confident Believer, such as the notions of being an “an active, contributing member of a religious or a spiritual community” (FQS97), willingly giving “up worldly or bodily pleasures for religious or spiritual reasons” (FQS98), and claiming that “his or her sexuality is strongly guided by a religious or spiritual outlook” (FQS59). In contrast, they tend to agree with statements that are more characteristic of a secular

Table 5.4 Distinct features of global prototype 4 Spiritually Attuned

FQS statement	GP 1	GP 2	GP 3	GP 4	GP 5
29. Is inclined to embrace elements from various religious and spiritual traditions.	1	-1	0	3	1
11. Has a strong sense of a spiritual or higher order of reality in the midst of nature.	0	1	2	3	0
86. Is committed to following a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment.	1	0	0	3	-2

Note: Numbers -4 to 4 refer to how the statements were ranked by respective prototype

Table 5.5 Distinct features of global prototype 5 The Disengaged Liberal

FQS statement	GP1	GP2	GP3	GP4	GP5
17. Becomes more religious or spiritual at times of crisis or need.	0	1	1	1	4
12. Participates in religious activities chiefly on special occasions.	1	-1	0	1	3
76. Mainly associates with persons of the same religious tradition or outlook.	1	0	0	-1	-3

Note: Numbers -4 to 4 refer to how the statements were ranked by respective prototype

worldview, such as “Views religious content as metaphoric, rather than literally true” (FQS87), and “Considers all religious scriptures to be outdated or misguided” (FQS32).

A tension between the religious and the secular is also evident from the examples in Table 5.5 addressing distinct features of global prototype 5 The Disengaged Liberal. In spite of the fact that distancing views on religion define this prototype, we note a significant tendency to self-identify as religious or spiritual on certain occasions, but this does not affect the social life of persons of this prototype in any obvious ways. This brings to mind Stolz et al.’s (2014/2016) typology of four religious types, one of which was termed *distanced* and was described as religiously affiliated, but minimally so. It is possible that the distanced perspective comes in various cultural varieties. For example, in less traditional societies, detached liberals may be ‘distanced’ from the enthusiasm of devout secularists or religionists, and so ‘waver’ in their convictions. In more traditional societies, the ‘distanced’ prototype might reflect individuals who ‘pass’ as religious in their community but don’t actually believe. Maybe we can claim that the dichotomy between the religious and the secular is not relevant to persons of this prototype and does not contribute to how it is formed to any great degree.

Reviewing the statements that define the five prototypes, we can conclude that a simple typology of secular, religious and spiritual, whilst certainly apparent, is not sufficient to make sense of our findings. We can see that being religious clearly unfolds in at least two different ways in this analysis, and that there is a separate prototype global prototype 5, the Disengaged Liberal that seems to be both secular and religious or, put another way, neither secular nor religious. In Chap. 3 of this volume, we described this worldview as situational. This gives rise to the question of whether we need to bring into the discussion of worldview typologies notions of category-fuzziness. For instance, af Burén (2015) has addressed what she describes

as “simultaneities of religious identities” referring to the “both/and” character of everyday religious and secular identifications, where elements from various worldviews are combined in personal outlooks on life in different ways (Kalsky & van der Braak, 2017). Our study may be supporting such an interpretation of religious subjectivities.

For GP4 Spiritually Attuned, the distinguishing items were less polarized (unlike other prototypes, we could not clearly show that it gravitated toward statements ranked as +4 that were simultaneously repellent to all other prototypes and hence ranked negatively). This indicates that the distinctiveness of this particular worldview is less marked than the other prototypes, and that there are more shared elements. We indicated above that some previous research suggests that religious and spiritual worldviews share features which contrast them with secular worldviews. Our findings suggest that this may be incorrect. Factor score correlations between the prototypes in Table 5.6 show the highest correlation between the global prototype 1 Secular Humanist and global prototype 4 the Spiritually Attuned ($r = .59$). The correlation between the latter and global prototype 2 Active Confident Believer, by contrast, is low ($r = .17$). Even though spirituality is not necessarily very distinct as a worldview, the distinctiveness of the spiritual worldview is still marked in relation to religious worldviews rather than to secular ones. Global prototype 1 Secular Humanist and global prototype 2 Active Confident Believer are negatively correlated ($r = -.27$), and this indicates as discussed in Chap. 3 of this volume that the dichotomy between religiosity versus secularity represents one clear dimension.

5.5 Towards a Differentiation of Religious Worldviews

As we have learnt from the above, it is not evident how to define the essence of religion, and some additional observations can help us gain a more differentiated comprehension. The four major B’s of religion (Saraglou, 2011) are represented by the FQS statements, and can help us reveal more about how the prototypes differ from each other. The four dimensions Believing (in a “truth”), Behaving (“virtuously”), Belonging (to “transhistorical” groups), and Bonding (with “transcending realities”) are understood to be universal and hence constitutive for religious typologies (Saraglou, 2011).

Table 5.6 Factor score correlations for global prototypes

	1	2	3	4	5
1. GP 1	–				
2. GP 2	–.27	–			
3. GP 3	.03	.46	–		
4. GP 4	.59	.17	.23	–	
5. GP 5	.47	.12	.31	.54	–

The dimension Believing, stands out as a strong organizing dimension among our five prototypes. From looking at a sub-set of statements pertaining to the notion of belief, we can identify a simple ordering of the prototypes (see Stenner et al., 2000, p. 449). The general pattern GP2 > GP3 > GP5 > GP4 > GP1 is presented in Table 5.7.

The dimension at play here appears to express the degree of epistemic commitment to the enduring value of religious precepts, and one can ask if such a dimension is given enough importance in capturing worldview differences. In this respect, it is notable that exactly this order of relationships can be discovered in the correlations between GP1 and the other prototypes, as shown in Table 5.6 on factor score correlations for global prototypes. Hence, GP1 correlates highest with GP4 at 0.6, indicating that these two prototypes share the closest relationship, justifying the placing of GP4 next to GP1. The next highest correlation is with GP5 (at 0.5), then GP 3 (0.1). Finally, the placement of GP2 at the other pole of the dimension is justified by the fact that GP2 is negatively correlated with GP1 at -0.3 . Hence, showing these correlations with GP1, we have: GP2 (-0.3), GP3 (0.1), GP5 (0.5), GP4 (0.6) and GP2 (1).

The dimension Belonging does not come out as an equally strong and dividing dimension between the five prototypes. Rather, this dimension exemplifies well how the combination of dimensions creates differences between different types of religiosity. The dimension of Belonging is also represented by several statements. Being “an active, contributing member of a religious or a spiritual community” (FQS97) is negatively ranked in all prototypes, except in the case of Active Confident Believer (GP2). GP2 is the only prototype that expresses a clear and positive identification with this notion. The emphasis of a religious or spiritual identity (FQS16) replicates more or less this pattern. Yet, when we turn to other expressions of religious belonging in the FQS, GP3 stands out among the prototypes. This is the only prototype that identifies strongly and positively with the importance of remaining “loyal to the religion of one’s nation” (FQS46) and maintaining “continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors” (FQS58). Table 5.8 shows the ranking of global prototypes on aspects of belonging.

The dimension Belonging catches well central differences, and varying forms of identifications with real or imagined communities affect ways of being religious. Political and historical circumstances probably contribute to these differences, but we can also raise another question. Is this an example of how our global prototypes emerge from differences in how the dimensions are emphasized and combined?

Table 5.7 Ranking of prototypes on aspects of ‘believing’

FQS statement	GP2	GP3	GP5	GP4	GP1
60. Views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires.	-4	-3	-1	0	4
32. Considers all religious scriptures to be outdated or misguided.	-4	-3	-2	-1	1
18. Considers religious scriptures to be of human authorship.	-1	-1	1	3	3
15. Considers the meaning of religious texts and teachings to be clear and true.	2	2	0	-2	-2
22. Thinks that certain specific beliefs are crucial for salvation.	2	1	0	-3	-2

Note: Numbers -4 to 4 refer to how the statements were ranked by respective prototype

Table 5.8 Ranking of prototypes on aspects of ‘belonging’

FQS statement	GP1	GP2	GP3	GP4	GP5
97. Is an active, contributing member of a religious or a spiritual community.	-3	3	-2	-2	-4
16. Being religious or spiritual is central to whom he or she is.	-2	4	-1	0	-1
46. Feels that one should remain loyal to the religion of one’s nation.	-3	-1	4	-4	-4
58. Feels that it is important to maintain continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors.	-1	-1	3	-1	0

Note: Numbers -4 to 4 refer to how the statements were ranked by respective prototype

GP3 is rather unique in both its strong emphases of the need to value and safeguard one’s own purity (FQS48) and in taking “comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will face suffering or punishment“ (FQS99). These are both viewpoints that might be interpreted to catch something essential from the dimension Behaving, i.e. issues around correct behavior in terms of priorities “given to interpersonal versus impersonal morality” (Saraglou, 2011, p. 1333). People of these prototypes tend to take opposite positions on these issues, and GP3 seems to express the dimension Behaving more. In comparison, the bonding dimension is central to GP2. This is, according to Saraglou (2011, p. 1332), a matter of “the specific emotional quality” that is “experienced through the connection with the transcendence”. If we look at statements such as “feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual being” (FQS74) and “engages regularly in religious or spiritual practices in private” (FQS23), they are rather unique to GP2, where they are both ranked +4. Naturally, these statements are ranked negatively in global prototype Secular Humanist (GP1), but this is also the case for Noncommitted Traditionalist (GP3). Bonding is not defining this prototype.

From the above one can conclude that both global prototypes 2 and 3 (Active Confident Believer and Noncommitted Traditionalist) to some extent express essential aspects of what is usually understood as essential to being religious. They both reflect the dimension believing well, and are thus also positively correlated to each other. This means that they both also represent a clear contrast to the global prototype Secular Humanist (GP1), and in one case present a negative correlation (see Table 5.6). Still, where the global prototype Active Confident Believer expresses a personal engagement, the global prototype Noncommitted Traditionalist embraces religiosity more as part of their identification with nation and tradition.

5.6 Discussion

In this chapter, we explored the results from our FQS study across 12 countries globally, in light of some key typologies in the Study of Religions. This enabled us to consider the use of a number of general principles for comprehending the variations presented in our data. The emergent self-categorization of the FQS method enables new ways of identifying, describing and distinguishing diverse worldviews

from the bottom-up. Still, we need to keep in mind that Q-methodology is not concerned with generalizations from sample to population (e.g. it does not inquire after the proportion of a larger population that is associated with each prototype). The results are not about making claims like ‘the large majority of birds are pigeons’, but rather should be thought of in terms of establishing *that* ‘ravens exist’ (and offering a description of what they look like).

In this chapter, we investigated more in detail the five global prototypes which we have identified in our project: the Secular Humanist; the Active Confident Believer; the Noncommitted Traditionalist; the Spiritually Attuned; and the Disengaged Liberal. These global prototypes represent ideal types, each containing diverse variations of characteristic family resemblances that are exemplified across the countries that we included in this study. These represented two ways of being religious which were clearly distinct from each other in many respects. The global prototype 2 Active Confident Believer was clearly anchored in the notion of personal theistic belief, whereas this was not the case for the other religious global prototype Noncommitted Traditionalist where the personal was diminished and the external authority of traditions and national religious identity lay at the core. With reference to Saroglou (2011), bonding was central to the first and some measure of belonging to the latter.

We further demonstrated that the global prototype 4 Spiritually Attuned was distinct in relation to the religious prototypes (GP2 and GP3), and presented a closer proximity to the global prototype 1 Secular Humanist. Spirituality stands out as an independent type that involves universalism, seeking, open-mindedness and uncertainty in addition to the previously identified sense of vertical or horizontal transcendence (Huss, 2014). It is in some ways closer to Batson’s “Quest” orientation than to a classic framing of spirituality, especially considering that Batson’s Quest scale measures primarily complexity, doubt, and tentativeness (Wulff, 1997). In contrast, the global prototype Disengaged Liberal can be described as a prototype based on simultaneity, i.e. a lived everyday life based tendency to combine elements from prototypes of both religious, spiritual and secular character.

In revisiting the classic typologies pertaining to religiosity, our findings indicate that a simplistic religiosity-non-religiosity continuum – whilst pertinent to a limited extent – does not capture the full richness of worldviews on this topic. The four dimensions behaving, believing, belonging and bonding proved to be central for classifying worldviews that pertain to the realm of spirit and religion. Our prototypes seemed to be dependent of a variety of emphases and combinations of these. Our results can be seen as a consequence of the fact that worldviews are complex by nature; they often display inconsistencies with regards to the distilled and idealized theoretical notions we use to comprehend the patterns of variation. Even though our prototypes clearly express different perspectives, we need to comprehend them as a continuum where, for example, being more or less religious intersects with and is dependent of other aspects of worldview typologies. This complexity is further affected by the fact that religiosity is multidimensional.

Our results are of course limited by our method, and in practice by the design of the Faith Q-Sort. Still, based on our results we would like to suggest that our findings also do reflect the relevance of general worldview typologies. The four

dimensions of religion do not necessarily reflect something essential to religion only. When comparing this grounded bottom-up finding to previous worldview classifications, we see that the openness/certainty which we identified corresponds more or less to a number of these proposals. It corresponds to some extent to “attitude to authority sources” as a set of dimensions; Tomkins’ (1964) normativism-humanism axis (Nilsson & Jost, 2017), Inglehart et al.’s (2014) traditional vs. secular/rational dimension; and Sauciers (2000) traditionalism vs. skepticism.

We would also like to raise the question of to what extent we should account for an “attitude to others”. The belonging dimension in religiosity catches relevant differences on a general level with regards, i.e. to how different ways of being religious are affected by social priorities and attitudes. Yet, with reference to Fromm’s (1950) classification of religiosity into humanistic and authoritarian, we can address the relevance of viewing other people as “of us” or “not of us”, i.e. humanist view of people (= universalistic) versus a particularistic view. This applies to several meanings given to belonging and in-group versus out-group attitude, but potentially also to tendencies to embrace pluralism. Further, the division between the religious and the secular in our study as determined by the believing dimension can also be viewed as a more general epistemic question. What sources of authority are used or trusted when acquiring knowledge and meaning? Alongside this epistemic dimension, we can also address the exclusivity of these sources versus the degree of open-mindedness and reflexivity that might reflect how epistemic priorities intersect with social ones.

Our bottom-up approach based on the Faith Q-Sort has affirmed that worldview typologies are multidimensional and emerge as a variation of how several dimensions are combined and emphasized. Even though it seems to be possible to identify significant dimensions at play in different worldviews, our findings seem to disappoint our hopes to answer what the essence of religion is. Already from our global bird’s eye’s view we find two different religious prototypes that differ from each other. The dynamic and taxonomy associated with family resemblance (see Chap. 4 in this volume) might help us comprehend why the typology at play seems to be not only multidimensional but also a complex, liquid and open-ended feature. The FQS also makes evident that at what distance and where we look affect what we see. Any worldview is in reality much more diverse and nuanced than any typology can do justice to.

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Chapter 6

Searching for Uncommon Worldviews: 'Idiosyncratic' and 'Divided' Outlooks in a Global Sample of Young Adults



Janne Kontala, Mika Lassander, and Nurit Novis-Deutsch 

Abstract In this chapter, we explore uncommon worldviews, meaning that we take a closer look at outlier respondents in a larger international sample from 12 countries. These outliers are the ones whose personal outlooks did not match any of the major worldview types found in the national case studies. First, we identify shared patterns amongst these respondents. Second, we place these outlier outlook types on a broader worldview map. Juxtaposing the outlier outlooks with the results from other case studies allows us to identify idiosyncratic worldviews. Certain outlooks would not stand out in analyses of single case studies, but bringing them together in a cross-cultural comparison enables us to see patterns shared by individuals across different national contexts. This also reveals better such worldviews that incorporate those elements, which normally are distributed amongst opposing viewpoints. The emergence of these outlook types can support the development of a nuanced theory of religious subjectivities.

Keywords Young adults · University students · Worldview · Outlier · Uncommon outlooks · Faith Q-Sort · Religion · Spirituality · Q-methodology · Factor analysis · Typology

6.1 Introduction

The model in which prominent world religions and secular ideologies are seen as mutually exclusive is challenged by migration, the transformative effect of modernization, increasing validity of spirituality, New Age spirituality, syncretistic

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religions, charismatic religiosity, fundamentalism, and the individualization of religion (Droogers & Harskamp, 2014; Hedges, 2017). The increasingly complex global map of worldviews is further complicated on the individual level, where studies on the religiosity of youth in the West point to trends of religious decline (Uecker et al., 2007; Arnett, 2004; Voas & Crockett, 2005; Koenig, 2015; Niemelä, 2015), but also to change (Dandelion, 2010; Woodhead, 2010) and individualization (Arnett & Jensen, 2002; Arnett, 2004; Smith & Snell, 2009; Mikkola et al., 2007). The latter poses a challenge on any insistence that an individual has to fit into an existing worldview category which excludes certain other categories.

Even though we cannot automatically assume that findings in the West have validity everywhere else (Arnett, 2015), we can still use the above mentioned observations as clues to investigating outlooks that deviate from the norm. We focus on university students participating in the international research project Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG). The YARG-project contains 12 national studies, each yielding three to eight outlook types, or worldview prototypes (see Chap. 1 in this volume). The present study starts with the observation that many respondents did not stand out as defining respondents in the study that we conducted with the Faith Q-Sort (FQS) originally developed by David Wulff (2019). Their personal outlooks do not jive with the mainstream typology, and we considered these individuals as natural candidates in a study that explores individualized worldviews. That is the task we set to ourselves. By taking minor and hitherto unexplored outlooks seriously, we use the FQS for assessing the subjective outlook-domain. We first analyze a large sample consisting of all non-defining respondents (All Respondents, or All). After that, we investigate two sub-samples. The first one consists of respondents not associated with any initial prototypes (No Association, or NA). The second one consists of respondents associated with multiple prototypes (Confounded Association, or CA). Moreover, we explore respondent interviews in order to shed light on the above mentioned contemporary trends. Chapter 7 in this volume approaches a similar task yet differently, by focusing on unusual sorting patterns of individual worldview statements. In this chapter, the focus is on outlying patterns in whole gestalts.

6.2 Q-methodology and Unknown Territories

Q-methodology is well-suited for charting unknown territories; “making discoveries rather than testing our reasoning” (Stephenson, 1953). In the YARG-project, the particular Q-methodological application, FQS, is designed to assess the worldview domain. The point of departure for the project is to remain agnostic about the outcomes. The approach is exploratory, seeking to discover previously unknown, interpersonally shared worldview types, and to generate theories to account for what is discovered.

The theoretical assumption behind Q-methodology is that only a limited number of shared viewpoints exist on a given subject. (Brown, 1980; Smith et al., 1995; Brouwer, 1999). For the prominent viewpoints to emerge in a Q-study, two conditions have to be met. First, the instrument, in this case the FQS, needs to represent the concourse – all that can be stated about the topic. The material consists of existing opinions and arguments that lay people, organizations and researchers have to say about the topic (van Exel & de Graaf, 2005). Second, the respondents must be chosen strategically, to reflect the variety of prominent viewpoints.

To maximize the variation of viewpoints in the sample of respondents, the interview volunteers in the YARG-project were first clustered based on their scores on the 19 value types in the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ), the revised instrument for assessing basic human values (Schwartz et al., 2012). The clustering was used to assist in the selection of a heterogeneous subsample of interviewees, not as a basis for analysis. An attempt was made to have a sufficient number of clusters to reveal minority dispositions, even if that meant incorporating clusters of only a couple of cases. Individuals were then selected from each cluster, aiming at interpersonal variety based on gender, demographic factors, religious, spiritual or non-religious belongings, degrees of self-reported religiosity, experiences of discrimination, and expressed attitudes on topics such as same-sex marriage, abortion, and euthanasia.

Despite efforts to maximize the variety of viewpoints by maximizing demographic and attitude diversity, participants were not identified by preconceived types of outlooks (e.g. fundamentalists, atheists), since the spectrum and flavors of existing outlooks are precisely what was not known at the outset. Although the sample of respondents represents cultural diversity, we cannot be sure that the major viewpoints are represented in any given local case study. That being said, when all the local case studies are compared with each other, we can assess whether some viewpoints are prominent, in the sense of being closely reproduced in different cultural contexts.

A number of national samples represent an opportunity to explore whether transnationally shared viewpoints exist in cases where an intersubjectively shared viewpoint is not visible in a local case study, due to being overshadowed by the nationally prominent viewpoints. This is exemplified by the studies from Sweden and India. In Sweden, the sample of respondents consisted of 30 individuals, yielding three prototypes. Any prototype would have to be defined by at least two respondents. The Q-sorts from six individuals did not fulfil the criteria for being a defining respondent. In India, the sample consisted of 45 respondents, yielding eight prototypes. Fifteen respondents were not included as defining respondents. In Sweden, one fifth, and in India, one third of the respondents held viewpoints that we might want to explore further. In the national samples the variance not accounted for by the emerging prototypes ranged from 42% to 61%.

The results from our YARG project show that prototypes form clusters based on similar patterns, according to what was described in Chap. 4 of this volume as a

family-resemblance. The major prototypes from different countries find close likenesses in other national contexts and in the five global prototypes extracted from an analysis of the whole sample (see Chap. 3 in this volume). To explore whether or not this would be the case with minor, not yet discovered prototypes, we need to go beyond the national contexts. To do this, we combine many non-defining respondents from various national samples into a larger sample. If hitherto unidentified worldview prototypes exist, this approach may reveal them.

The sample consisted of 176 non-defining respondents from 12 countries: Canada, China, Finland, Ghana, Israel, India, Peru, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Turkey and USA. This is roughly one third of all respondents who participated in the interviews. Forty-five respondents were non-defining in the stricter sense of not being significantly associated with any prototype. This sub-sample is named No Association (NA). The remaining 131 respondents were confounded, meaning that they were associated with multiple prototypes, and hence, could not be classified as defining only one prototype. This sub-sample is named Confounded Association (CA).

6.3 Worldviews of all Non-defining Respondents

We started by conducting an analysis of the combined sample of all non-defining respondents (All Respondents, or All) to get an initial impression about the outlook variation amongst our respondents. We chose a solution that yielded three prototypes, explaining not more than 35% of the study variance. Since more than half of the variance remained unexplained, we will later continue by analyzing separately two sub-samples.

We present the distinguishing features of the three prototypes. We call the first prototype Spiritual Secular Humanist. It expresses a secular humanist worldview, and rejects traditional religiosity rooted in a particular tradition. Faith in a personal divinity, religious texts, and authorities are all dismissed. This goes side by side with openness to experiential spirituality, and to the plurality of religious traditions. Emotionally, this prototype favors statements that indicate stability (see Appendix 1 for all statements).

We call the second prototype Religious Humanist. It differs from the previous one in how it relates to traditional religiosity. Persons associated with this prototype have a close relationship with the divine, invest time in their faith, and appreciate religious texts. Spiritual experiences dominate their emotional landscape. They have a humanist spirit as well, but in contrast to the first prototype, it plays a secondary role. Religiosity is the dominant feature.

The religious beliefs expressed by the third prototype, Vague Traditionalist, are vague or ambiguous. This prototype does not invest in either personal or collective religious practices, but there is an appreciation of traditions and particular beliefs. Experientially, this prototype reports the most negative emotions.

Since David Wulff conducted his first pilot FQS study, a recurring feature has been the three-pronged division into Secular Humanist, Traditional Religious, and Spiritual outlooks. With some local variations, these three tend to occupy central positions in various contexts (Wulff, 2019). This was also evident from the analysis of all respondents that yielded five global prototypes (see Chap. 3 of this volume). The first phase of the study showed that when analyzed as a group, our respondents bear some resemblances to the secular and religious types. Combined, these two prototypes explain 26% of the study variance. The third prototype explains 6%. It does not neatly fit on the secular-religious spectrum, nor does it resemble global prototype 4, Spiritually Attuned. Even though this prototype is small, it being of a less common type hints at the usefulness of further investigation. We next pay closer attention to the two sub-samples at our disposal, beginning with the respondents who in the national case studies were not associated with any of the prototypes of the national case studies.

6.4 Worldviews of Respondents Not Associated with any Initial Prototypes

The first-glance impression of the FQS analysis of the 45 respondents not Associated with any Initial Prototypes (No Association, or NA) is that it is difficult to find a dominant outlook. An eight-factor solution explains 51% of the total variance, the number of defining respondents ranging from two (NA7, NA8) to seven (NA1). The correlations between the factors are relatively negligible, giving the impression of disparate outlooks. This impression is strengthened by the fact that the analysis did not discern any statements sorted in a similar way by all prototypes. In the following, we list the distinguishing worldview statements of each prototype in order to give a general impression about their characteristics.

Prototype 1 with its seven defining respondents is the largest one. It is distinguished by experiential spirituality, feeling spiritually moved and deeply sustained by music, art, or poetry. Positively engaged by or interested in other peoples' religious traditions, persons of this prototype have experienced moments of profound illumination. Rather than living their earthly life in conscious anticipation of a life hereafter, they are committed to following a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment. This prototype does not value or strive to safeguard personal purity. It rejects the ideas of men and women being intended for different roles, certain beliefs being crucial for salvation, and taking comfort in the idea of those not living righteously facing suffering or punishment.

Prototype 2 has six defining respondents. This is a traditionally religious prototype that invests time and resources in religion, appreciates tradition, religious texts and authorities, and has experiences of the divine. These features combine with appreciation of other traditions. Seeing religious faith as a never-ending quest, persons with this outlook become more religious at times of crisis.

Prototype 3 has four defining respondents. Persons of this prototype believe in some way, without considering themselves religious. They value continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors, consider men and women to be meant for different roles, and spend time in private religious or spiritual practices.

The remaining prototypes are smaller, each with two or three defining respondents. *Prototype 4* curiously understands the divine as feminine, life force or energy, yet views the divine empty of significance. Taking no interest in religious or spiritual matters, persons of this prototype nevertheless spend much time reading or talking about their convictions. Emotionally, this prototype is stable. Religion is probably not the source of that stability, as they engage in religious services mainly for extrinsic reasons. As such, it seems that this prototype is more secular than the outlooks endorsing female divinity explicated in Chap. 7 of this book.

Prototype 5 has an impersonal conception of the divine, affirms the idea of reincarnation, and feels confident of attaining salvation. Believing that one should remain loyal to the religion of one's nation, persons of this prototype regard religion as a central means of becoming a better person.

Prototype 6 sees this world as a place of suffering and sorrow. Persons of this prototype live their lives in conscious anticipation of a life hereafter. Valuing their purity, they prefer their sexuality to be guided by a spiritual or religious outlook. These preferences combine with being critical and lacking loyalty towards the religion of their people.

Prototype 7 and individuals associated with it believe in some way, without viewing themselves as religious. Finding it difficult to believe in a benevolent divine being in the face of evil, they affirm the idea of reincarnation and sense a spiritual or higher order of reality in the midst of nature.

Prototype 8 stands for mainly associating with persons of the same outlook. Critical of the religious tradition of their people, persons of this prototype nevertheless feel the importance of maintaining continuity of the religious traditions of their family and ancestors. Divine is seen both in personal terms, and as a life force.

Based on their distinguishing features, the first two prototypes have some resemblance with global prototype 4, Spiritually Attuned and global prototype 3, Noncommitted Traditionalist in our study (see Chap. 3) and the spiritual and traditional religious worldviews found in other studies (e.g. Wulff, 2019). After the first two, the prototypes get both smaller and more idiosyncratic. Prototype 4 holds the divine to be impersonal, feminine, and empty of significance. Prototype 8 is critical of the religious tradition of "their people", yet in favor of maintaining the continuity of the religious traditions of the family and ancestors. These are examples of apparently contradictory features within one outlook. One is tempted to wonder, whether these respondents just didn't pay enough attention during the assessment. We will return to this later by analyzing some respondent interviews.

6.5 Worldviews of Respondents Associated with Multiple Prototypes

A total of 131 respondents in the national case studies were associated with at least two prototypes, and these are called Confounded Association (CA). In our analysis of these, seven factors satisfy the criterion of having at least two defining respondents. Three factors are prominent, combined explaining 34% of the total variance. The remaining four factors explain 17%.

With 34 defining respondents, *prototype 1* is the prominent viewpoint. Its outlook is of a secular humanist type, with an activist orientation. Without considering themselves religious, persons of this prototype believe in some way. Divinity is conceived in impersonal terms, and there is positive engagement and an inclination to embrace elements from various religious and spiritual traditions. Taking delight in paradox and mystery, they do not think that certain specific beliefs are crucial for salvation.

Persons of *prototype 2* are of the traditionally religious type. Being religious or spiritual is central to them. They have dedicated their life to serving the divine, whom they see in intimate and personal terms. They express their religion in private practices, which do not involve a particular diet. They have not moved from one group to another in search of a spiritual or ideological home.

Prototype 3 is similar to prototype 1, but it rejects religion more strongly, is less inspired by the plurality of religious or spiritual traditions, and is not inclined to give time or money to religious organizations or worthy causes. However, persons of this prototype may become more religious in a time of crisis. Feeling adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal, they like to associate with those who share their outlook.

Persons associated with *prototype 4* are consumed by day-to-day responsibilities, leaving little or no time for spiritual matters. Without feeling closest to those who share the same faith or outlook, they participate in religious practices chiefly to meet others' wishes or expectations. Lacking keen awareness of the presence of the divine, they do not view the divine or higher reality as a deep mystery that can be pointed to but never fully understood. They are not committed to following a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment.

Prototype 5 longs for a deeper, more confident faith, and has a pronounced sense of guilt. This is the only prototype in this sample that is open to the idea that ritual or practice is more important than particular beliefs or mystical or spiritual experiences, yet persons of this prototype do not participate in religious practices to meet others' wishes or expectations. For them, the divine is not a sheltering and nurturing parent.

Persons of *prototype 6* express their religion in charitable acts or social action, and consider the meaning of religious texts and teachings to be clear and true. Not seeing regular attendance at places of worship to be essential, they participate in religious activities to form or maintain social relationships. Having experienced moments of profound illumination, they seek to intensify their experience of the

divine or some otherworldly reality. They do not view religion as a central means for becoming a better person, nor do they battle with dark or evil inner impulses.

Individuals associated with *prototype 7* sense a divine or universal luminous element within. Viewing religious faith as a never-ending quest, they think that the world's religious traditions point to a common truth. The meaning of religious texts and teachings is clear and true for them, and not of human authorship. They do not have frequent doubts about long-held religious convictions. Persons of this prototype neither feel contempt for religious institutions, ideas and practices, nor view religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires.

6.6 Summary of the Three Samples

In the combined sample, the three prototypes found resemblances in the further sub-samples. In the No Association (NA) sub-sample, the second prototype resembled the Religious Humanist prototype, and the third prototype resembled the Vague Traditionalist prototype. The remaining prototypes did not resemble any of the prototypes of the combined sample. In the confounded sub-sample, the first prototype resembled the Spiritual Secular Humanist prototype, and the second prototype was similar to the Religious Humanist prototype.

Are the smaller prototypes we found in the analyses of the outlier respondents truly idiosyncratic? Or would they at a closer look be similar to other major prototypes, found in the broader YARG context of national samples? To examine this, we compared the prototypes of this study with YARG prototypes derived from the national case studies¹ by their relative location on a two-dimensional model, using multidimensional scaling. In this model, the more two prototypes resemble each other, the closer their coordinates, whereas increased distance, conversely, points to notable outlook differences.

The prototypes from the combined sample All Respondents are marked with All1–3, the prototypes from the No Association sample are marked with NA1–8, and the prototypes from the Confounded Association sample are marked with CA1–7. The center (coordinate 0,0) is indicative of an imaginary average outlook, whereas the peripheral location indicates a pronounced viewpoint. Table 6.1 lists the distances of each prototype to the three closest neighboring prototypes (mean distance) and to the center based on prototype coordinates on the two-dimensional model.

The distance to the center alone does not tell us whether a prototype is idiosyncratic. Some prominent constellations are located in the opposite ends of one of the

¹Since our target was to identify idiosyncratic views, our backdrop of national case studies was augmented with additional prototypes that were analyzed during the YARG-project. Hence, we have in this study three Israeli samples instead of one: Hebrew, Druze and Muslim respondents were analyzed as separate sub-samples. Moreover, we included the results of a meta-analysis of five second order prototypes, derived from a sample of national prototypes.

Table 6.1 Mean Euclidean distances to the center and to three closest neighboring prototypes

Prototype	Mean distance to three closest neighbors	Distance to center	Prototype	Mean distance to three closest neighbors	Distance to center
NA4	0.53	1.24	CA5	0.16	0.25
NA5	0.38	1.05	NA3	0.15	0.50
NA7	0.27	0.77	All3	0.15	0.52
CA6	0.26	0.65	CA7	0.15	0.45
CA3	0.25	0.82	CA2	0.14	0.72
NA6	0.22	0.64	All1	0.11	0.51
NA8	0.20	0.79	NA1	0.11	0.46
NA2	0.17	0.86	CA4	0.09	0.61
All2	0.16	0.66	CA1	0.06	0.82

dimensions. A prototype located in such a constellation is far from the center, yet close to other members of the constellation.

Nonetheless, the prototypes from the All Respondents (All1–3), and Confounded Association groups (CA1–7) tend to occupy an area closer to the center. The mean distance from the center in the No Association group is 39% and 40% more than in the All and CA groups, respectively. A similar pattern also applies to the distances to the neighboring prototypes.

What can we learn from this? By any criteria, No Association NA4 is the idiosyncratic prototype par excellence in this study. Conversely, Confounded Associations CA1, CA4, No Association NA1 and All Respondents All1 are aligned with prominent outlook constellations. Of these, No Association NA1 resembles a spiritually attuned orientation, and the other three are of a secular humanist type.

How these prototypes are related to the national YARG prototypes is illustrated in Fig. 6.1. NA4 is located in the lower right corner, far away both from the center, and from any other outlook types. To a lesser degree, the same goes for NA5, NA7, CA6 and CA3. Conversely, prototypes CA1, CA4, NA1, and All1 are located within prominent prototype constellations. It would therefore not be motivated to call these prototypes idiosyncratic.

6.7 Examples of Idiosyncratic Viewpoints

Since the starting point was to examine uncommon outlooks, which we have found, we will let four respondents exemplify what an idiosyncratic and minor outlook may mean in real life. Utilizing the interview material, our choice of respondents seeks to illustrate prototypes that occupy distinct outlook addresses. We call the first one Sarah.² She is an actively religious Canadian, and associated with No Association NA6. We call the second one Feng. He is a Chinese man resisting religious involvement, with clear openness towards a spiritual orientation and experience of the

²The names are changed to protect the anonymity of the respondents.

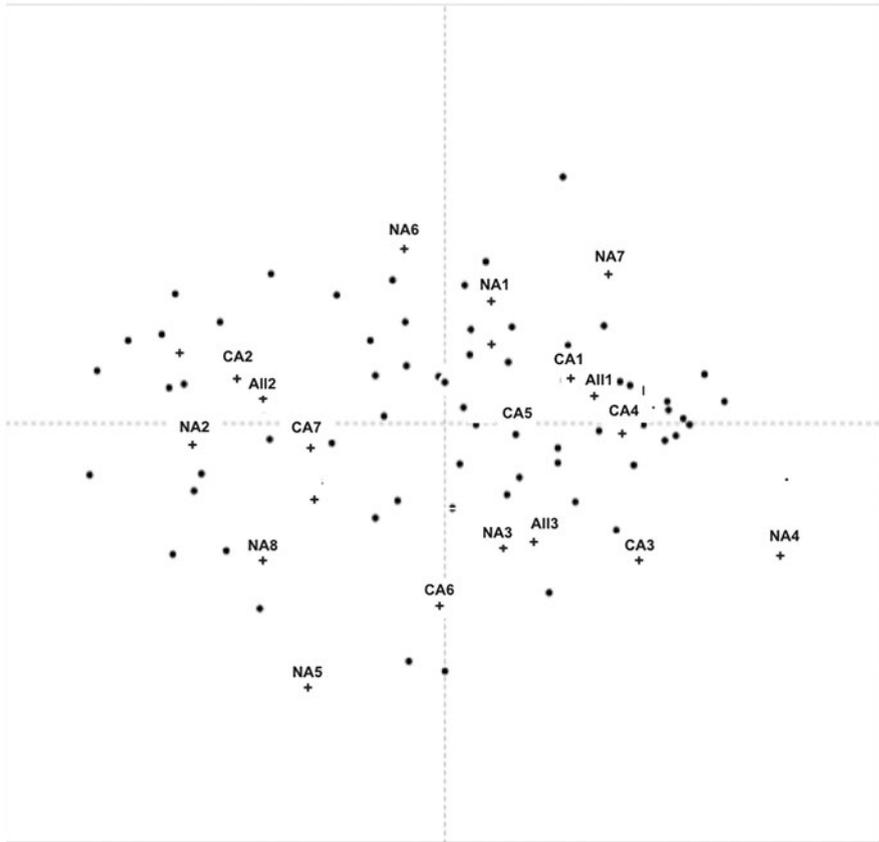


Fig. 6.1 The locations of the prototypes of the present study in relation to other YARG prototypes

world, and is associated with No Association NA5. We call the third one Jens. He is a thoroughly secular Finn, and associated with No Association NA4. We call the fourth individual Mikolaj. He is Polish and secular, with some openness to religious ideas, and associated with No Association NA7.

People like Jens, Mikolaj, Sarah and Feng are dissimilar to one another. However, they share the feature of being in minority, namely by combining in one outlook elements that we normally find distributed in distinct worldviews.

6.7.1 Sarah

Sarah grew up in a religious home in Canada. One of her parents is Protestant, and the other one is Catholic. She has a large family, and in the interview, she describes everyone except one brother as religious or spiritual. She attributes her own Christianity to familial influences, thinking that had her parents been atheists, she

might not be a Christian. A young adult in her early twenties, her personal religiosity is a journey from authority-based religiosity towards personal spirituality, without an institutional framework.

At the time of the interview, she has made up her mind not to go to church at all, mainly due to unpleasant experiences with the clergy. "I don't trust religious authorities like when I was a kid", she says, and elaborates in more detail about a particular experience.

The priest was too [...] friendly. Like, he was too comfortable with me, he rubbed my hand and too much in my space and touched me, I didn't like it [...] it's more like the priest was trying to seduce me and I didn't like it, it's super unpleasant for me.

This experience is not the first one where she felt it difficult to accept the religious establishment she grew up with. She describes the religious stories she heard in her childhood as "too positive, made up, too pretty", and explains: "I already know what it's gonna say, I know like that on the next page there will be a bird smiling, flying and all, like I hated that [...] I wouldn't even finish reading it."

In the interview, she repeatedly juxtaposes private spirituality with religious authorities and institutions.

I have a negative rapport to religion in particular [...] I tell myself, if I can't rationalize something, I have spirituality, but for religion, since I associate it with authorities, with other human beings, I don't trust religion, because only man is fallible. So I trust less what is related to any religious authority, I only trust rationality and spirituality.

Questioning organized religion started in the end of her high school, and negative experiences have intensified her critical stance. In Sarah's opinion, her sister became "brainwashed" by the local priest. Her sister became "too strict toward herself", which finally led to panic attacks.

Even though most of the talk is about her relationship to the religion of her upbringing, at one point she makes a broader distinction between open-minded and one-sided outlooks. She mentions a particular teacher:

He was the only teacher who didn't have preconceived views, like on any religion [...] the other teachers, they had preconceived views even for their own religions, no matter which one [...] It was obvious like: "I'm an atheist and I don't believe in this nor that [...] it's like, fine, you can be an atheist but it should not influence your discourse as a teacher or influence what you teach.

However, Sarah has not lost her faith. She prays every morning for 15 min, saying that it helps her throughout the day:

It's taking the time to stop and take time to sit in a calm spot and pray. It calms me, well I'm already calm, but like, in a better mental state [...] If one day I don't pray, I notice that I lack patience. I don't know why, but I have less patience at work with my co-workers.

Sarah also connects her strong base of values to religion or spirituality. She tells of an incident, when she came home from a grocery shop, and noticed that unpaid items had accidentally ended up in her bag. This led her to experience agony:

It felt like I had stolen, even though I had not. Stealing and lying is the same for me [...]. Amongst my siblings I'm the one who really can't lie [...] God says not to lie. I think that

when I was young it started with that. Now that I'm older, I think that it's more my rapport to spirituality, because I think about the consequences.

When we connect the interview material of Sarah with her FQS sorting patterns, we see that the outlook of Sarah, and others like her, contains elements normally associated with traditional religiosity: praying, reliance on a divine as a nurturing, parental figure, and considering certain beliefs as crucial for salvation. There is an inclination to protect one's personal purity, and to have one's sexuality guided by a religious or spiritual outlook. At the same time, there is rejection of religious authorities, disinterest in being active in a religious community, and lack of loyalty to the religion of the family or nation. There is a separation between private faith and communion with God, and the institutional expressions of religion. Even though there are others like Sarah, outlooks that combine personal beliefs and practices with a religious group-orientation are much more common.

6.7.2 *Feng*

Feng, a young Chinese man at the crossroads in his academic studies, shares with Sarah the complex relationship between the personal and the institutional aspects of religion. At the time of the interview, Feng is waiting for a decision for a scholarship to complete a PhD abroad. He elaborates at length about his relationships with religion.

Feng describes his parents as atheistic. Consequently, he has grown up in an environment where Christian beliefs stand on an equal footing with belief in ghosts, as Feng puts it. For him, family and the traditional Chinese values with the emphasis on honoring one's parents are important. He sees his family as more tangible than religion, yet it seems that this is also a source of conflict for him. During the interview, Feng repeatedly discusses his relationship with organized religion, and with Christianity in particular.

Many of his earlier friends and classmates were exploring Christianity. There was a period when Feng participated in meetings with Bible reading. He did not, however, get baptized. After his encounters with Christianity in college, he read existential philosophy, mentioning Nietzsche a number of times. Ultimately, he does not seem to share the Nietzschean criticism of religious institutions.

To date, Feng has not committed to religion, yet one gets a feeling that he feels drawn to it. He recognizes the value of religious institutions in the lives of the believers. He thinks that religious ideas and gods are not subject to falsification. As a response to a question about personal religiosity, he nevertheless states: "I do not feel religious."

However, he continues to explicate how not all traditions are the same. There is some resistance in his mind towards monotheism, and openness towards Shintoism and Buddhism, "because [I] always feel that all things have spirit." He says these traditions would suit him better, if he were to become religiously committed.

Feng has had, and still has, religious friends, and he says it often ends up that the persons he got acquainted with afterwards turned out to be Christian. He gave Christianity a chance, and resists personal involvement. Besides the potential conflict with his parents' views, Feng feels religious involvement would entail relinquishing his personal independence, something he does not want to do.

Recognizing the value of religion for believers, Feng sees it as a force that enables people to share similar beliefs and practices all over the world. This helps people to come closer to one another. Besides religion's role in social integration, it can also relieve anxiety. It can create a feeling of equality, and guide one's life. In contrast, science, philosophy or art, according to Feng, may only help one to temporarily escape the challenges of secular life, after which one has to face them again.

After having so much positive to say about religion, he again considers his personal non-involvement.

There is some fear, that is, fear of delivering yourself to a god that you do not believe exists. When you personally make this decision, it is equivalent to a complete turning point in life, you are afraid of this turn, you do not know what will happen. It is possible that you think that it is positive, but you do not know.

Feng rejects the ideas of centering one's life on a religious quest, yet he also rejects the ideas of religion being hypocritical, stupid, or religious scriptures being outdated. And while we have seen that Feng does not find himself at home with a monotheistic God, he nevertheless connects the idea of divine to experiences of awe with the mysteries of the universe, knowledge of astronomy, or a large natural landscape: "You may feel that there are sacred things in it."

While for Sarah, religion was expressed in a monotheistic faith, personal practices, and rejection of institutions despite growing up with them, for Feng, religious institutions and particularly Christianity are rejected due to the fear of losing one's personal independence and lack of faith in a personal God. Feng does not engage in spiritual practices, even though he has given a chance to congregational engagement. For him, it seems religion and spirituality are connected with an internal feeling of a spiritual presence and wonder of nature, something he finds better expressed in Eastern religions than in Western monotheism. Whereas for Sarah, religious institutions are a subject of criticism due to personal negative experiences, Feng speaks highly about religious institutions and their value for the believers, despite not feeling ready for personal commitment.

6.7.3 *Jens*

Jens grew up in a small town in Finland. He describes his familial background and childhood environment as safe, economically well-off, and favoring education. In fact, in his closest circles, everyone goes to college, most family acquaintances having an MA, and some a PhD. Lacking personal interest in religion, Jens is not antagonistic either. He mentions a mild religious influence from the side of his family.

Despite describing himself as someone who is “tired with God”, he nevertheless mentions several ways through which religion can contribute positively to others. During a family holiday in Africa, he saw religion playing an important role in peoples’ lives. He mentions how a close friend felt support and help from religion during a time of personal crisis, and adds that he is “totally OK with” religion having such an influence on people.

Not being active in the church, and choosing to disaffiliate from it, he adds: “I don’t see it as something negative, that I disaffiliated. I do visit the church.” He is also active in the Scouts, which he recognizes as an organization with a good purpose and a religious profile. Indeed, he does not say anything negative about religion during the whole interview. Even though most of his associates share a similar outlook, there are also deeply religious individuals in his inner circle.

The discussion about religion illustrates a more general pattern. It is the tendency to approach any topic in a versatile, many-sided way, without strong opinions for one stance and against another. Rather than lacking insights, Jens has many which he considers valuable. For someone else, these might represent opposite ends of the spectrum. Not so for Jens, who likes to take different perspectives on the same topic.

This is illustrated by Jens’s discussion on immigration. Nationalism is not important for him. He has never felt a sense of strong belonging to his own national or ethnic group. Even so, he appreciates many aspects of the national culture, such as loyalty to the welfare society, participation in philanthropic activities, and following the laws. He first associates increased immigration with crimes of passion, pointing to statistics according to which immigrants are more likely to commit such crimes. Yet he sees the situation as complex: It is the immigrant women who are more often the victims of violent crimes. Other social factors play a much greater role than the ethnic background. Having stricter immigration laws would probably not prevent terrorist organizations from infiltrating. Populistic references to immigration in the national politics can be seen as another kind of a weapon. His family has probably benefited from immigration. Then again, Jens changes the perspective by considering his own gender: “It is difficult for me to present my viewpoint since I am, after all, I mean I am not a woman and I will perhaps never, have to confront the problem, in such a horribly direct way.”

Absence of a strongly articulated stance is clearly not due to the lack of information or interest. The topic of immigration exemplifies how Jens likes to take many perspectives, which someone else might view as contradictory. In FQS, an example is viewing the divine both as feminine, life force or energy, and empty of significance. Another example is giving substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization or worthy cause, while at the same time not being an active, contributing member of a religious or a spiritual community. As we saw with Jens, secular outlook elements combine with openness, or at least with the lack of negativity towards religion. Without being religious, he is nevertheless active in Scouts, which he recognizes as an organization with a religious profile.

6.7.4 *Mikolaj*

Like Jens's, Mikolaj's worldview is secular rather than traditionally religious. A Polish man pursuing a PhD in cognitive science, Mikolaj was until his early youth actively involved with the Catholic church, with regular weekly engagement as an altar boy. This involvement faded away as he grew up. The high school lessons in religion offered a comparative perspective to many faiths. The ability to compare different worldviews offered a means of establishing the viewpoint based on its merits, which in Mikolaj's mind is not the case if one tradition has a dominant position.

Growing up without siblings and with a single mother, Mikolaj's most important social group consists of his friends. He even considers family as "imposed upon us". Except for major holidays such as Christmas and Easter, he thinks he would probably not have much contact with his relatives.

Mikolaj describes himself as rational, drawn to logic, science, and objectivity. He would prefer people to be more rational, although he also recognizes that, from an evolutionary point of view, emotions have a purpose. It is not surprising that he thinks science should have priority, if scientific and religious claims conflict: "[R]eligion [...] should go along with the evidence." Rather than seeing religion as source of morality, Mikolaj thinks that atheists are morally superior. They have to reason their way to an ethical standpoint, whereas a religious person would follow a commandment without understanding the reason behind it. Even so, everyone is entitled to one's own worldview, as long as one does not harm others.

Up to this point, Mikolaj's outlook seems grounded in secular humanism. However, he repeatedly recognizes the limits of rational and scientific inquiry. What lies beyond those limits could very well be what religions talk about. "I do not think we will ever be able to apprehend the world as it is. There will always be some boundary which cannot be crossed by our mind or brain. And perhaps behind that boundary lies divinity."

Mikolaj's openness towards the unknown goes for the physical universe, the destiny of humanity in it, and scientific discoveries. The very fabric of the universe seems to prevent us from ever knowing the ultimate nature of things.

Taking into consideration a temporal nature of the universe meaning continuous shrinking and expansion, and our limited means not allowing us to research everything in time before the universe will start to wind up, I do not think that we will ever be able to cross that boundary because of this constant restart of the universe, although we may come close by the end of time. And then we will have to start the whole work anew.

This is neither comforting nor disheartening. He describes it as a time perspective that is beyond himself and the future generations. The same uncertainty goes for the human civilization. After stating that humans as a species have become physically stronger, Mikolaj points out that depression has become more commonplace, and concludes that it is hard to predict humankind's ultimate destiny. "Either we can go back to earlier stages of our civilization and again we will sit and break stones or

evolve in such a way that all these castes will expand or everything will become more or less equal.”

The fate of the universe and humanity are examples of the general principle, where conceiving things in an organized way may reflect human limitations instead of reality. He plays with the idea that perhaps the ultimate truth is chaotic rather than orderly.

In order to function, we try to be organized. But as I said, perhaps it lies beyond our knowledge and perhaps it is related to the fact that we try to think in a certain systematic order, and what is real is disorganized and chaotic.

One gets an impression that Mikolaj appreciates, even relishes the ultimate unknowability of things. And here he also finds a possibility for entities and principles described in religious terms.

Physical laws, chemical laws are something inanimate and are subject to other laws and it works on a different level, but I allow myself to think that there may be some spark which guides it – the theory of evolution does not have to be contradictory to the Church. Nobody says that the force who initiated all those processes could not be God [...] I assume that perhaps there is some kind of entity, but what form it assumes is hardly definable.

In Mikolaj, we see a secular disposition rather different from Jens's. Both refuse to make one-sided statements about certain issues. What those issues are, however, is a different matter. For Jens, multiple perspectives are applied to pragmatic issues: politics, immigration, and the benefits of religion. For Mikolaj, where scientific inquiry ends, there seems to be the realm of possibilities, speculation, and positive uncertainty, that might well accommodate metaphysical beings described by religions.

Jens illustrates how someone with no personal interest in religion refrains from critical comments about religion, and to some extent participates in activities that have a religious connotation. This seems to reflect a more general approach, which goes beyond religion. He likes to consider any topic involving subjective preferences in a versatile way, seeing no internal conflict or problem in doing so. Mikolaj, on the other hand, appreciates logic and science, yet beyond the limits of rational inquiry, he sees a realm of fascinating uncertainty and metaphysical, perhaps even spiritual possibilities. For Sarah, a very different context illustrates a similar complexity and multiplicity of perspectives: religious faith is important to her. She is from a religious family, and holds certain religious claims to be important for salvation. She prays every day. Her expressed values are rooted in a religious discourse. At the same time, she has come to doubt and distance herself from religious authorities and institutions. Feng, on the other hand, is a person who appreciates religious institutions, playing with the idea of becoming committed, but so far not quite doing it. Unlike Sarah, who values private engagement yet dislikes institutions, Feng is the opposite. He appreciates religious institutions, yet avoids personal commitment.

People like Jens, Mikolaj, Sarah and Feng represent an important minority. Dissimilar to one another, the one feature they share is high complexity, exemplified by the combination of features rarely found in one outlook. In a national FQS sample, complex outlooks may be overshadowed by more clear-cut ones. Combining non-defining sorts from many local samples has allowed us to explore the possibility of the existence of such idiosyncratic prototypes.

6.8 Conclusion

In the FQS samples from the 12 countries included in this study, many respondents held viewpoints that did not find correspondence with the nationally prominent prototypes in their respective countries. This allowed us to use a large population of non-defining respondents that might potentially form a resource for identifying new, previously undiscovered viewpoints.

Based on this study, if respondents are non-defining by confounded associations, they seem more likely to yield prototypes that are close reproductions of viewpoints found in other studies. To find unique viewpoints, we found it more fruitful to turn to respondents not associated with any prototypes. The multinational context and the large number of respondents of the YARG-project allowed us to combine many such respondents into combined samples. We found that many of these respondents stood for truly idiosyncratic outlooks. Things could, of course, be taken further. First, we could analyze the viewpoints of the respondents who did not define any prototypes in the present study. Second, finding shared worldview elements to the extent we do, may sometimes overshadow the equally important fact that each individual worldview is unique. The ultimate regard to this would be to analyze Faith Q-sorts as stand-alone viewpoints, since these would still hold value as unique expressions of individual subjectivity. Such an approach is interested in individual rather than in interpersonal subjectivities.

We took a step into this direction by giving a voice to those who were not counted as defining respondents in the previous studies. We found that many of these outlooks were only defined by a few respondents, which still allows us to talk about shared preferences. Minor prototypes may not look like important voices on the global outlook map. However, when many such outlook types are presented together, one cannot escape the impression that we live in a world where major outlooks may well explain half the variance, but the less known other half is anything but uninteresting. By focusing on particular examples of truly uncommon outlooks, we have seen that an outlook that on the surface appears contradictory, may in fact result from deep reflection and from taking one's outlook seriously.

One of the challenges for the study of worldviews today is that binary and exclusive categories, where an individual is either religious or secular, or identifying with one tradition and not another, do not work for everyone. It seems that the global map of worldviews is undergoing a change, and it is important to be attentive to new configurations in studies targeting young people, who represent the future. We suggest that contemporary inquiries into the worldviews take the more idiosyncratic viewpoints seriously. The results can be informative about the limitations of fixed categorizations and schemes consisting of predetermined ideologies. In the present study, we found a number of unusual outlook types. The personal narratives illustrated how apparently contradictory components can in fact involve deep reflection, not a lack of intellectual rigor. This would motivate further studies of outlier individuals, which can be done in several ways: by identifying trans-national minority worldview prototypes or by analyzing those individuals who identify with uncommon positions, as exemplified in Chap. 7 of this volume.

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Chapter 7

Who Relates to the Divine as Feminine? Transnational Consensus and Outliers Among Young Adults



Nurit Novis-Deutsch  and Maria Klingenberg 

Abstract A Q-analysis generally favors large inter-group differences, whereas consensual statements that are shared by most participants tend to receive less attention, as do unusual views, which characterize small groups of participants. In this chapter, we start by exploring consensus statements and offer some thoughts on their meaning. We then consider views that are outside of the individual horizons of most participants. We identified these views through statements towards which most of the samples tended to be indifferent or neutral.

Against the backdrop of these transnational statement preferences, we proceed to discuss irrelevant statements through the lens of “religious outliers”; individuals for whom the statements in question were, in fact, highly relevant and important. We then attempt to characterize these “types” through sets of statements, which were not part of any national prototype, and analyze the subjectivities of those who endorse them, by presenting holistic analyses of their interview narratives. Jointly, these analyses help us assess to what extent we can set aside the idea of national-cultural boundaries in favor of other levels of FQS statement analysis – the transnational and the idiosyncratic.

Keywords Religious outliers · Faith Q-Sort · Religious subjectivity · Transnational religious types · Mystical experiences · Belief in female deity

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P. Nynäs et al. (eds.), *The Diversity Of Worldviews Among Young Adults*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94691-3_7

7.1 Introduction

What can religious outliers, namely individuals who lie outside of the common patterns of religiosity in their countries, tell us about the interactions between the global, the cultural and the personal? Since culturally-shared social foundations result in commonly shared response patterns, the Faith Q-Sort (FQS) is likely to capture the most common orientations towards religiosity in each national context (for more on the FQS, see Chap. 1 in this volume). Might smaller patterns of subjectivity surface transnationally? We argue that such patterns exist and are invisible in the FQS findings, since they are not shared at the national level where prototypes are identified.

This argument is particularly relevant to what Voas calls “spirituality based on personal experience and well-being” (2007, p. 159). In challenging quantitative studies on religion, he notes that studies of spirituality and holism often make claims about the growth or breadth of such phenomena (cf. Heelas, 2007; Heelas & Woodhead, 2005; Roof, 1999), yet few quantitative studies seem to match such claims empirically. Due to the quantitative underpinning of how prototypes are generated, the challenge identified by Voas could be applied to the study *Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG)* as well. The suggestion is that notions of holism and religious/mystical experiences rarely surface in the FQS data because of the method’s preference for prevalent patterns and commonalities at a national case study level. If this is so, FQS might fail to identify important undercurrents in the dataset, such as holism and/or direct experience.

This chapter explores the hypothesis that rare religious outlier types exist in the data and can be identified on a transnational level. To test this hypothesis, we use the entire FQS dataset ($n = 562$) to explore whether statements, which are rarely endorsed by participants, might form the core of unusual ‘types.’ We acknowledge that this ‘top-down’ analysis is a secondary use of the FQS, which was designed to identify ‘bottom-up’ profiles of subjectivity, but we also argue that it offers added value to the primary FQS use, attesting to the tool’s versatility and utility.

In order to distinguish the deductively obtained patterns, which we intend to explore, from the inductively derived “prototypes” of the FQS, we term the former “types.” The analysis is explorative in two ways: based on theoretically driven hypotheses, it begins with conjectures about “types” in the data based on consensus and irrelevant statements. The explorative nature of the analysis is reflected in the fact that we did not test to what extent these “types” present statistically significant distinct FQS patterns, although we do offer descriptive data to indicate that they are different from other FQS patterns.

The expectation to find shared transnational trends in the data, reflecting the existence of human universals (Brown, 1991), finds support in the contemporary world being more of a “global village” than ever before (Lechner & Boli, 2012). During the past two decades, global trends in spirituality and religiosity include emphasis on individuality and personal choice (Hood et al., 2009) and accelerated rates of religious switching (Putnam & Campbell, 2012; Pew Research Report,

2017). There is an emphasis on post-materialist values and spirituality (Norris & Inglehart, 2011), and there are fundamentalist reactions to the pace and direction of change (Eisenstadt, 2002). These trends are expected to show up in most national samples, and indeed many of them do. However, to every trend there are counter-trends, reflected in individuals who seem to go against the current and operate at the outer edge of what is statistically common (Gladwell, 2008). This too is a global phenomenon (James, 1902/1997). We call such individuals ‘religious outliers’ – people whose spiritual antennae, so to speak, are especially finely-tuned. James devoted most of his *Varieties of Religious Experience* to what he called “religious geniuses” (James, 1902/1997, p. 25): “individuals for whom religion exists not as a dull habit, but as an acute fever rather. [...] Creatures of exalted emotional sensibility.”

We did not aim to identify religious geniuses in our data; our sample of 562 individuals is too small for such a venture, and the life experience and maturity associated with religious genius is less likely to be found in a sample of emerging adults. However, our exploration of religious outliers was informed by James’ notion as we searched for individuals characterized by religious creativity or idiosyncrasy or by religious or spiritual sensibilities that consume a major part of their thoughts and behaviors. Such characteristics are likely to make religious outliers different enough from their compatriots to allow them to stand out in some way. In our sample, religious outliers are characterized by patterns of religious subjectivities, which lie outside of what is considered relevant by a majority of the FQS sample.

7.2 Method

We identified outlier statements that were considered irrelevant by most participants against the backdrop of the most strongly endorsed (+3/+4) and highly rejected (−3/−4) statements in the sample. While strong support or rejection of a statement entails an opinion towards it, statements that are ranked −1, 0 and +1 could be characterized as eliciting neutrality or a sense of irrelevance. Using this criterion, we sorted the FQS statements from “high irrelevance” to “low irrelevance” by mean, median, mode and cumulative percentage, then focused on those FQS statements that were ranked −1, 0 or +1 by over 65% of the sample.

For theoretical reasons some irrelevant statements were more intriguing to explore than others. Here are five religious exemplars and outlier-types suggested by previous literature (Hood et al., 2009; Jacobs, 1978; James, 1902/1997; Stark & Glock, 1969), that were not reflected in the national prototypes derived from the FQS:

1. Religious “mystics”: Individuals who have experienced divinity up close and personal and aim towards a state of “Unio-Mystica” (Stark & Glock, 1969).
2. “Sick souls”: Individuals whose religiosity is dominated by a dark undertone of beliefs about the nature of reality and evil, combined with religious guilt, shame, fear or regret (James, 1902/1997).

3. “Eschatological” types: Individuals who live their life in expectancy of the world-to-come, global salvation, the Messiah or Armageddon (Kimball, 2009).
4. Worshippers of a female deity: Individuals who think of God, the divinity, or the spiritual world in feminine terms (Hood et al., 1991).
5. Religious “harmonizers”: Individuals who set great store by harmony, symmetry, and religious aesthetics, perhaps reflecting the accent on such characteristics found in Daoism (Wulff, 2019).

In order to identify any of these five types in the data, we flagged core and secondary statements for each possible type. A core statement is one that we would expect an exemplar of this type to rank highly. A secondary statement is one that we would anticipate an exemplar of this type to rank highly, but to a lesser degree. We then examined whether the core or secondary statements we identified were “defining statements” of any national prototype (i.e. ranked +3/+4 in any of the 62 prototypes which were identified by the national Q-analyses). In those cases where we found that they were indeed part of a national prototype, we excluded them from our analysis, retaining only those sets of statements that were true outliers by virtue of not being defining statements in any national prototypes. This process resulted in the association of certain statements with theoretically derived types.

In a second step, we focused on individuals who, contrary to the general trends, understood one or more of the irrelevant statements as highly resonant with their own viewpoints, asking ourselves whether the way in which they responded to the irrelevant statements reflected them being religious outliers in a broader sense of the term. We created a list of participants who fulfilled the inclusion criteria, noting their national origins, statements ranked +4 or -4 and other details. This list amounted to our quantitative dataset, from which we proceeded to extract meaningful patterns.

In the final step, we collected all transcribed interviews for religious outliers and analyzed them using a version of the Consensual Qualitative Research method (CQR; Hill et al., 2005) to develop a holistic understanding of the narrative structure and emerging themes, later comparing them to identify shared themes and narratives. This analysis reflects our own interpretive lens and is but one possible way of understanding these narratives.

7.3 Transnational Highly Consensual Statements

In the following, we present the most strongly endorsed and highly rejected statements in the full FQS dataset (see Table 7.1).

Among the FQS sample, the most highly endorsed statements (ranked +3/+4) reflect the tendency to support religious and moral choice and an optimistic perspective on humanity. Examples include “Supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality” (FQS100), which was endorsed by 66% of the sample ($M = 2.72$, $SD = 1.52$) and “Believes that one can be deeply moral without being

Table 7.1 The eight most endorsed and most rejected statement as ranked in the YARG study (n = 562), presented on a scale ranging -4 to +4

Most strongly endorsed statements	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mode	Median	Strongly endorsed %
Supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality [FQS100]	2.72	1.519	4	3	65.7%
Believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious [FQS083]	2.58	1.704	4	3	63.6%
Is profoundly touched by the suffering of others [FQS077]	2.00	1.588	3	2	43.1%
Actively works towards making the world a better place to live [FQS057]	1.70	1.548	2	2	32.7%
Believes that human progress is possible on a worldwide scale [FQS095]	1.50	1.626	1	2	29.2%
Sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life [FQS093]	1.47	1.823	1	1	34.2%
Feels spiritually moved and deeply sustained by music, art, or poetry [FQS033]	1.42	1.643	1	1	29.4%
Believes in some way, but does not view him- or herself as religious [FQS028]	1	2.240	4	1	32.4%
Most highly rejected statements	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mode	Median	Highly rejected %
Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation [FQS071]	-1.98	2.014	-4	-3	51.1
Has dedicated his or her life to serving the divine [FQS036]	-1.48	2.007	-2	-2	34.5
Feels contempt for all religious institutions, ideas and practices [FQS025]	-1.29	1.883	-2	-1	30.2
Personally finds the idea of divinity empty of significance or meaning [FQS055]	-1.20	2.075	-2	-1	30.4
Takes no interest in religious or spiritual matters [FQS024]	-1.10	1.997	-1	-1	27.6
Takes comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will face suffering or punishment [FQS099]	-1.09	2.135	-4	-1	31.0
Feels that one should remain loyal to the religion of one's nation. [FQS046]	-1.09	2.017	-2	-1	27.4
Feels adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal [FQS035]	-1.02	1.987	-2	-1	26.7

religious" (FQS83), endorsed by 64% of the sample ($M = 2.58$, $SD = 1.70$). The most highly rejected FQS statements (ranked -3/-4) reflect totalistic tendencies, strong conviction, outgroup exclusion and particularism. Examples include "Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation" (FQS71), which was rejected by 51% of the sample ($M = -1.98$, $SD = 2.00$) and "Takes comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will face suffering or punishment" (FQS99) which was rejected by 31% of the sample. ($M = -1.10$, $SD = 2.10$). Overall, the participants' views seem to be characterized by moderation, inclusion and a focus on individuality, spirituality and humanism.

Statements that were considered irrelevant by most participants did not tap into common subjectivities regarding religion. Only 2-14% of participants had strong feelings towards any of them. These statements had a different ‘flavor’ than the most endorsed or rejected statements. Most of them were about experiences rather than attitudes. Some examples include: “Seeks to intensify his or her experience of the divine or some otherworldly reality,” (FQS49) considered irrelevant by 66% of the sample, “Understands and relates to the divine as feminine” (FQS19), considered irrelevant by 66% and “Views symmetry, harmony, and balance as reflections of ultimate truth” (FQS94), ranked -1, 0 or +1 by 73% of the sample.

This is the backdrop against which religious outliers can be understood and analyzed.

7.4 An Analysis of Two “Types” of Religious Outliers

In this section, we describe two coherent religious outlier types identified in the data: those who experience divinity up close and personal and those who worship divinity as feminine. Limited space precludes the presentation of all the five outlier types which we found, but we hope that these examples will indicate how the other types might be analyzed as well.

7.4.1 *The Experience of Divinity Up Close and Personal*

This type had one core statement: “Has experienced moments of intense divine, mysterious, or supernatural presence” (FQS10) and five secondary statements: “Has a strong sense of a spiritual or higher order of reality in the midst of nature” (FQS11); “Senses a divine or universal luminous element within him- or herself” (FQS44); “Seeks to intensify his or her experience of the divine or some otherworldly reality” (FQS49); “Is often keenly aware of the presence of the divine” (FQS78) and “Has experienced moments of profound illumination” (FQS89). Of these six statements, five were among the ten most irrelevant statements in the entire dataset. All six statements that form this type were positively intercorrelated, with 11 of the 15 intercorrelations exceeding $r = .20$ and reaching $r = .36$.

Before turning to the analysis of the participants who matched the criteria for this type, we checked whether any of these statements appeared as defining statements in the 62 national prototypes. The core statement “Has experienced moments of intense divine, mysterious, or supernatural presence” (FQS10) appeared as a defining statement in two of the 62 national prototypes, but neither included secondary statements. 17 national prototypes included a *negative* (-2 to -4) ranking of the secondary statements among their defining statements. It is safe to conclude that the set of statements analyzed was neither common nor coalesced into a prototype in any of the national samples.

Ten participants fulfilled these criteria: four were from Ghana, two from Finland, two from the U.S., one from Russia and one from Israel (Hebrew).

In addition to sharing the theoretically derived defining items, six of these participants ranked the statement “Believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship” (FQS53) as +4. Three ranked the following statements as +4: “Has dedicated his life to serving the divine” (FQS36) and “Feels confident of attaining eternal salvation” (FQS38). They also shared a strong rejection of anti-religious statements such as “Takes no interest in religious or spiritual matters” (FQS24) rejected by three of them at -4; and with statements expressing emotional instability, such as “Feels adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal” (FQS35) rejected by four of them at -4.

Nine of ten interviews with these religious outliers were translated into English. A narrative analysis of these interviews identified three subtypes within the type “Experiencing divinity up close and personal:”

1. The highly religious. Three individuals were characterized by being deeply religious. Being adept at practicing religion, they expected and indeed experienced the presence of God in their life. One participant is a Born-Again conservative Christian, one is a fundamentalist Biblical Christian and the third belongs to a non-Christian “Godly Church”. YGHBF079 describes his faith thus: “I believe in a supernatural being and I feel that the supernatural being guides me and protects me in everything I do and also, like, through the supernatural being I found out that there is eternal salvation.” YGHFB145P belongs to a hybrid Christian-Muslim-Indigenous African church: this highly spiritual group believes in direct worship with no intermediaries and in the importance of the human journey after death to the spiritual world. He describes the active role that God plays in his life as ranging from protecting him from the detrimental effects of witchcraft (in which he believes), to helping him succeed in exams:

I was writing two papers on that day, and the second paper, I got everything jammed. But sitting down for thirty minutes, talking to Him that he should let me relax and remember all the things that I had learnt, within the fifteen minutes, I started writing.

As an indication of his faith, the third member of this subgroup, YFIKD139T, chose deliberately to devote his FQS +4 column only to cards describing God. He experiences a personal relationship with God and with Jesus and describes a sense of constantly dwelling with God: “I’ve experienced very, sort of moments when like, I feel very strongly the presence of God and have experienced things that I can’t in a way explain through science or in any way with like reason.”

2. Spiritual seekers. This second subtype included two individuals who actively made use of various methods to connect with divinity. These individuals described themselves as being more spiritual than religious. Neither belonged to an institutional congregation, but both had spent considerable time seeking experiences of oneness with the beyond. They had tried to enhance these experiences, and interpreted them with the aid of texts and other media. YUSP014 says:

I think, ultimately, I would want an experience like that to show me that there is either something within me or much bigger than me that I can connect to and understand better. There's something, whether it's me, myself, or something bigger.

3. Emotionally volatile. Four individuals¹ report experiencing emotional instability. They typically experienced possessions or a one-time mystical experience around these moments of mental or personal crisis. Two of these described themselves as religious – Muslim or Born-again Christian – and one practiced esoteric spirituality. YILSK040 has felt that God directs her actions in life, but sometimes she also experiences negative possession:

For example, I feel that – I feel that – the demon tells sometimes “Do that”, do you understand? “Do this” and – like, as if there is someone, something in – I have something inside my head, or I know that there are two things in my head, one tells me this, and the other tells me that.

Across subtypes, several common themes surfaced. Most of the experiences reported as moments of connection with the divine came across as individual, privately experienced and very personal, with no intention of sharing them. Correspondingly, none of the participants described themselves as political, and several noted explicitly that they are a-political.

Most of the experiences followed James' definitive traits for a mystical experience, although few expressed all four: noetic – having a sense of enlightenment or understanding after the experience; ineffable – feeling that they cannot describe in words what they have experienced; transient – experiencing divinity for very brief periods at a time; and passive – a sense of being overtaken, a trance, a loss of control. Two of the participants clearly reflected all four (YRUPV014 and YUSKT014). Others reported some of these features, such as hearing a voice but not experiencing enlightenment, and may be considered a bit “lower” on James' “mystical ladder.”

Across subtypes, participants reported various triggers and “periods of awakening” for their mystical experience. Examples include wandering around monasteries, stumbling across an enlightening book (YFIKD141), taking a course at university, taking LSD (YUSKT014), reading the Bible, losing a parent (YGHBF023), picking berries (YRUPV014) or praying fervently (YILSK040).

However, there were also themes on which this group expressed diversity. One such theme is the temporal dimension of the experiences reported. Some of the participants reported experiencing God (or a spirit) as continually present (e.g. YFIKD141), while others described specific time-bound incidents (e.g. USTP014). Furthermore, the theologies manifested in these spiritual experiences were quite divergent, including a view of God as pantheistic (YFIKD141), supernatural (YGHRG079), immanent, and inter-personal (USTP014). Some experiences were described vaguely and not directly related to a being (YRUPV014). There was even a reflection of a gnostic perspective of evil and good deities competing for power and influence on one of the participants' minds (YILSK040).

¹YGHFB315, YGHBF023, YILSK040 and YRUPV014.

Some individuals came across as experimenters, as their interviews included accounts of trying out drugs (USTP014), switching careers (YFIKD141), changing communities (USTP014) and lifestyles. Others could better be described as questers, for whom seeking appeared to be a goal in life, rather than the path to an end-point.

Following are three vignettes of individuals reflecting each mystical subtype²:

Abigail – Born-Again Religious Abigail is a 22-year-old female from Ghana, highly religious, and the only one in the Ghanaian group who reports a specific mystical experience.

She begins by noting that these days she is very sensitive to the suffering of others (FQS77), but that when she was growing up, she was wealthy and pampered, and therefore selfish and egocentric. Then tragedy struck her family:

A series of events happened at a very peaked place of my life. Just when I went to Senior High School, I lost my mom. My dad lost his job. My brother lost his job. Everything in the house is like, there is nothing. Yes, we had to sell most of the stuff at home.

This shook her to the core. She compares her experiences to the biblical Job's trials and notes that she knows now that her belief is unshakable, due to the difficulties she experienced. Her faith became fervent following a personal experience:

On the day of the funeral [of her mother], 28th February, 20XX. Um, I – that was the day of the funeral actually and hmm, I heard a divine being sent to me. Yes. Being sent to me. Something I have never heard before and that was what comforted me and gave me the comfort and the assurance that everything will be fine.

The mystical experience was enhanced by the ministering of a friend, who was an ardent believer. Until then, Abigail reports that she was “unliked” and did not really have any friends. Her new friend comforted her and showed her the way to Christ: “She encouraged me. Taught me the way and she never did anything outside the will of God. That is when I started seeing things from that perspective.”

Today she describes her belief thus: “It doesn't matter what I do. It's never about me; it's about Him [referring to Christ]”. The change in her life was so profound, that Abigail sees herself as a different person: “My chain of friends has changed. My decisions have changed. My priorities have changed – [I am] more sensitive and calm.” Today, she lets Jesus choose her university courses, hoping this will help her realize her dream: She wishes to create an orphanage in Ghana and an old-age home which will take care of the suffering in ways which today are unavailable in Ghana: “my faith says we should take care of the poor and the needy in the society. Care for the widow. Feed them. Clothe them.”

Amy – A spiritual Seeker Amy is a 21-year-old woman who studies at a Liberal Arts college in the United States. Her father is Jewish and her mother is Christian. She recalls that her mother would take her along when she attended a spiritual center as a child, “all very open-ended and very spiritual – I really enjoyed it.” This left

²Each participant was given a pseudonym to make the narrative flow smoother. “Amy” is YUSP014; “Abigail” is YGHB023; “Boris” is YRUP014.

a positive and lasting impression on her. She attributes her sense of spirituality to that community.

Her more recent experiences in college, however, play the main part in her current spirituality. The first of these is a course she took at college with a rabbi. The class, titled “Science and the Sacred,” brought science and religion into dialogue and “actually showed us that no, it can work, it’s not so black and white, that really enthralled me.” She experienced this as a turning point: “I was just raving about this class.”

Her second defining experience involved taking LSD:

I basically had this strange experience with a really close friend of mine where we had taken LSD and we were just walking around in nature. And we came to this dock that goes pretty far out into the bay, and we walked out to the very end of it. And I don’t know what happened but we both just started hysterically crying and it was super-intense. [...] and it was all really beautiful and emotional and intense.

This experience occupied her thoughts and she wondered whether it reflected a higher reality. Concerned, she brought up the experience in the rabbi’s class and he told her this might be a mystical experience. Amy concluded that indeed the experience had a deeper meaning and decided to continue searching for such moments of enlightenment. Her idea of the divine oscillates between immanent and transcendent. Seeing herself as a spiritual seeker, she tries different paths:

And I can’t say I’m a part of, like, one set community. I’m just kind of like floating around in all of these different ones. And I like that. I don’t like being felt as if I’m tied down to certain people or things. I’d rather get a little taste of it all.

Amy comes across as a religious multiplist, and any specific path such as an institutionalized religion is less meaningful to her. She is also highly sociable, and ultimately, to her, spirituality is about personal connection. “I think it comes down to the relationships I have with people: that’s really important to me.”

Boris – An Emotionally Volatile Mystic A 29-year-old Russian male, Boris is strongly opposed to *any* authority, be it family, school, state, or religion: “I don’t like being part of the system. I think it’s vicious.” He has strong negative feelings about the human race: “A mindless herd.” He describes himself as “strongly egocentric, a narcissist, {SG} a snob, um – an introvert and a misanthrope.” His view of the world is a mixture of the dark and the utopic. On the one hand, he feels that the world is rife with evil forces at work: “it seems to me everyone’s unhappy.” On the other hand, he has dreams of healing humanity:

I imagined how I was going to build a utopia and so on, how I was going to lead everyone to harmony and order. Actually, I really liked this thought and I often find myself daydreaming about this or that. So I built a model of the world, for example, I invented laws for it, well, I do it regularly, I return to it, invent more laws, create moral mindsets and so on and so forth.

His emotional stance is characterized by powerful ups and downs:

I’m a man of extremes in general and I’m full of contradictions, so this polarity surprises me at times. A week, well, maybe a month ago; I realize that a month ago I – could provide

only one association with the word “life” and it was “pain”: life is pain; life is suffering. And now I’m saying that life is the most wonderful thing. [...] Basically, that’s what is so surprising for me now because I feel omnipotent now.

Boris reports having had a very difficult childhood, clashing with parents, family and schools over issues of boundaries and authority: “I think that – the entire system {SG} is made of boundaries, and the education system – well, I just don’t like it. I don’t think it’s right. And I do a lot of useless stuff at the university and I don’t like the control [so I’m dropping out].”

Boris fully rejects organized religion which he sees as a way of enslaving the masses, describing the God of the Old Testament as “an impulsive, willful – {SG} and petulant child, who’s also a schizophrenic and a pervert at the same time.” However, he feels quite differently about spirituality: “I – I’m into esoteric, the occult and other {SG} pseudo-, pseudo-scientific, para-scientific practices {CG}. [...] And I’m genuinely interested in it, uh, and I’ve experienced {SG} – an understanding of a divine presence, enlightenment and so on. And I’m really eager – to dig deeper.” He reports direct mystical experiences:

Once, when I was – I don’t remember how old I was, about fifteen, probably, when I – I don’t remember, I was doing some day-to-day – Oh yes, I was in the country, gathering berries, and I felt as if – I had been struck in the head by a lightning and I realized that all people {LG} lived their lives wrongfully and that {SG} there was no harmony in the world. – I don’t know what were the prerequisites but this awareness came to me unexpectedly and intuitively.

He describes this as a moment of distinct enlightenment: “my inner god gave me the directions I needed and, well, that he – saw that I had made the wrong turn and, roughly speaking, he saved me.” Boris also experiences states of mystical trance and possession when he writes poetry:

Every poem of mine started with me writing down one line which was stuck in my head and then I entered some sort of a trance – um, and – a few dozen lines poured out of me, and I don’t know, I don’t feel as if I made them up; I feel as if – someone’s dictating them to me.

In sum, the narratives and experiences reported by Abigail from Ghana, Amy from the United States and Boris from Russia illustrate three subtypes of experiencing divinity ‘up close and personal’: trauma-related religious rebirth, mystical seeking, and emotionally volatile mysticism. While the spiritual world plays a key role in all their lives, the differences between them are compelling.

7.4.2 *The Experiencers of Divinity as Feminine*

Of the participants, 66% ranked the statement “Understands and relates to the divine as feminine” as irrelevant. Fifty-four of the 62 national prototypes entirely ignored this statement. Of the other eight, only one mildly endorsed this statement (Peru 2, “Religiously and experientially engaged” ranked it +2), while six prototypes rejected it strongly. These “rejecting” prototypes were highly traditional, implying

that relating to the divine as feminine may be experienced as incompatible with an emphasis on tradition and adherence.

Who, then, relates to the divine as feminine? We found nine people who ranked the statement “Understands and relates to the divine as feminine” (FQS19) as a +3 or +4 ($M = 3.67$). Three of these participants were from the U.S, two from Peru, and one each from Ghana, China, Finland and Russia. Other statements that were highly endorsed amongst these individuals included “Supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality” (FQS100; $M = 2.67$), “Considers hypocrisy – not practicing what one preaches – to be common in religious circles” (FQS101; $M = 2.22$), “Is positively engaged by or interested in other peoples’ religious traditions” (FQS81; $M = 2.22$) and “Feels spiritually moved and deeply sustained by music, art, or poetry” (FQS33; $M = 2.11$). The strongest levels of rejection for statements in this group were found for “Takes no interest in religious or spiritual matters” (FQS24; $M = -2.23$); “Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation” (FQS71; $M = -2.22$) and “Feels contempt for all religious institutions, ideas and practices” (FQS25; $M = 2.11$). Collectively, these items suggest that in addition to perceiving the divine as feminine, these individuals pursue an interest in religious and spiritual matters, but not on a political level.

An analysis of the five out of nine interviews that were translated into English further confirmed the notion of the diversity of religious or spiritual ideas associated with understanding the divine as feminine. As the following vignettes indicate, the reasons for supporting this statement vary, and the interpretations and discussions are highly embedded in their cultural contexts. YFIKD141 identified as a Finnish Pagan, YCHJT189 did not associate himself with any religion or worldview, and YGHFB078, YUSTP007 and YUSTP025 identified with varied Christian traditions.

Despite cultural variation, several common characteristics of the individuals who understand and relate to the divine as feminine emerged. The first was the emphasis on authenticity. The disdain for hypocrisy stemmed from these individuals’ explicit desire to be themselves, also in matters of religion and spirituality. For example, YUSTP025, who is active in a Christian fellowship, says that he appreciates this group because “you have kids coming together who know [...] that they’re not perfect. Know that they make mistakes. Know that they just want to make a difference in the world.” His emphasis on how his religious convictions above all should reflect humanity recurs in his descriptions on what he posts on social media: “I don’t want to post religious things because I don’t want people to see me as a religious person. I want people to see how broken I am, kind of.” The interviews with YFIKD141 and YUSTP007 also reflect how their own religious and spiritual trajectories aim at their intent to reflect on what they genuinely are.

The second shared theme was an abiding interest in religious and spiritual matters. Many of the interviews include long accounts of how past reflections and experiences have resulted in the present state described and are characterized by a “theological-mindedness;” a well-thought-out theology. For example, YFIKD141 expands on rather sophisticated panentheistic understandings, in which the earth and the goddess “together appear in various types of divinities. [...] So it is something that exists within all living things”. YUSTP025 notes “I’m trying to work

harder on, like, not getting God like gender pronoun or anything. [...] Because I don't believe that God has a gender.”

Third, there was a positive understanding of the female archetype. YGHFB078, who lost his mother as a teenager, sees women as embodying generosity, caring and love. YUSTP025 describes how he has experienced God as acting through his mother, whom he deeply appreciates. In the case of YUSTP007, who actively promotes female health issues, this feature is expressed in the form of an ideological endorsement of women – similar features characterize YUSTP025, who believes that God is a feminist.

The fourth recurring theme is an existential bent; dealing with existence, its meaning and its vicissitudes. YFIKD141T uses her experience of the divine as a method to “gain experience about how things really are.” YGHFB078 is processing the loss of his two parents and friends and is deeply engaged with the existential question of the meaning of life in light of impending death. “Existential” also implies angst, often connected to loneliness. YGHFB078 who lost his parents, is not the only one who feels alone. YUSTP007 describes feeling like a black sheep. In broader existential terms, YFIKD141T is “going through this type of breaking phase”, and YUSTP025 also describes a phase of “breaking.”

Lastly, sexuality appears to be a shared theme for some of these participants: YFIKD141 comments: “Human sexuality almost is a sacrament of some kind”. YUSTP007 also discusses her own understanding of sexuality as fluid and its importance in her religiosity.

As well as shared themes, there were also some distinguishing ones. The main distinction we identified was between those who conceived of the female deity as mother and those who conceived of her as a sexual-procreator. Some preferred the idea of a maternal (nurturing, loving) goddess archetype, while others leaned more towards the idea of a feminine deity reflecting sexuality, sensuality and procreation. Female participants sometimes combined the two, but the males did not.

Here are vignettes of three participants³ who embraced the notion of the divine as feminine, the first as a nurturing mother, the second as a sexual procreator, and the third combining both motifs:

Emmanuel – In Search of a Nurturing God The interview with 24-year-old Emmanuel from Ghana is characterized by frequent references to his Christian convictions. He believes strongly that “certain beliefs are crucial for salvation” (FQS22: +4). When he expands on why he strongly agrees with other statements, such as “Feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual being” (FQS74: +3) and “Becomes more religious or spiritual at times of crisis or need” (FQS17: +4), his replies begin with the expression “*as a Christian...*”. Another recurring theme throughout the interview is Emmanuel’s disapproval of hypocrisy, which he considers common in religious circles (FQS101: +3): “There are some people [...] They are not Christians per se. They go to church for people to know that they are also

³Each participant was given a pseudonym to make the narrative flow smoother. “Kaisa” is YFIKD141; “Emmanuel” is YGHFB078P; and “Kathleen” is USTP007.

going to church but it doesn't mean that they practice what they learn from the church." For Emmanuel, being a Christian impacts all sectors of his life and decisions.

As a teenager, Emmanuel lost both his mother and his father, as well as friends.

Some of the people you are very close to, they just die and you can't actually know the reason, but death is a part of life. [...] I think it has helped me to rethink about life that, at a point in time, you will die and what are you doing to yourself as at now. Are you doing what is expected of you as a Christian so that after death you gain eternal life or are you just living your life as you wish and then suffer after death? So some of these things have shaped my own thinking about life.

The death of his parents meant that he has had to live life differently from before:

Say, there were some things you could easily say to your parents, you can't say them to the people you are living with now. [...] When [...] your parents were alive you could just um – get anything without much difficulty, but now they are no more and you need to actually work for them. So that will bring about hard work.

The reason Emmanuel endorses the statement "Understands and relates to the divine as feminine" (FQS19: +4) relates to his image of God.

We call him Kwame that is man, masculine, but the relation to him is feminine in the sense that um, when we talk about females or feminine in general, we know them to be um, generous, caring, loving, you can mention all the attributes and I see God to be that kind of a person who is generous, caring, forgiving and all that. [...] Because men, I think, don't really have those kinds of attributes or qualities. So the relation is more or less like that of a feminine. Yeah, that is what I can say.

Kathleen – A Gender Activist Kathleen is a 17-year old who has recently begun her college studies. She comes from a Christian, Roman-Catholic background, but describes how recent years have entailed a move away from central Catholic values relating to gender issues and gender roles, for example regarding reproduction issues and everyone's right to marry. Kathleen describes her parents as "very conservative", and previous discussions on ideological issues have, for the most part, resulted in conflicts. Recently, her values have changed, as her high school constituted an environment where she found other like-minded students.

I just never realized that there were people in the world who felt the same way I did, 'cause I felt like everyone I knew had such a strong faith, but I was like the black sheep who didn't have that, couldn't agree with what was being said in the church. So it was nice for me to get to a situation where I felt like I could really express those questions that I had.

Her high school and college years entailed activism on gender-related issues such as establishing a gender-neutral bathroom on school campus. As part of her academic studies, she has also enrolled in a course on gender. Her parents are not aware of the extent to which her values have changed, because she feels that there is no point explaining to them her "very fluid definition of sexuality", and that they would try to ban her from her current engagements.

While Kathleen is critical of how the Roman-Catholic church handles gender issues, she does attend mass regularly, appreciating it more now that she no longer is forced to attend it, and sharing that this has led to a “religious awakening” for her. In the future, she wishes to be part of “a church that doesn’t seek to change my political views in the way that my own church did while I was growing, ‘cause that’s important for me, I don’t think that those two things should mix. I don’t think my priest needs to have an opinion on legislative matters.” The prevalent focus on gender issues during the interview makes Kathleen’s strong endorsement of FQS019 quite understandable.

Kaisa – Worshipper of the Goddess Kaisa is a 28-year old Finnish woman. Her experiences of a spiritual dimension and the way in which these experiences have formed her outlook on the world constitute central themes in the interview. She says that she grew up in a “very atheist type of family”, but as a teenager, her aunt, who is Orthodox, took her to visit monasteries. Because of Kaisa’s experiences in these monasteries, she “slowly started to experience a longing for religion and holiness.” Since then, she has been engaged in finding literature and internet sites which contain ideas that resonate with her own experiences and outlook. When asked, “What is your own religion?” Kaisa struggles with the answer, finally describing herself as a Finnish pagan: “I tend to believe in the idea of the earth and a goddess, which together appear in various types of divinities. [...] So it is something that exists within all living things”. She describes her religion as “individually centered” rather than collective. References to nature and the environment abound in the interview, as do references to the goddess, which could explain her identification with the statement “Understands and relates to the divine as feminine” (FQS19: +3). For Kaisa, religion is a constantly present dimension of everyday life that is part of human relationships and daily routines. A while ago, she moved from an urban environment to the countryside, and she describes her closeness to nature as an important reason for her move.

Kaisa’s family of origin lives by the idea that “each person has the right to believe in whatever he or she wants, but it is absolutely a private matter”. However, for her husband, who belongs to a conservative movement within the Lutheran church, religion is strongly connected to belonging to a community. Her pagan beliefs have been a source of tension between them, especially when her husband uprooted a tree, which Kaisa worshipped, an act which deeply hurt her. In trying to mend the rift, Kaisa has recently tried to pray together with her husband and attend church with him, but so far has not found this meaningful.

In sum, while Emmanuel from Ghana, Kathleen from the United States and Kaisa from Finland all share a view of deity as feminine, they arrived at this perception from different experiences, and prioritize different aspects – maternal, sexual or both – of the female Goddess.

7.5 Discussion

We began this analysis by identifying highly consensual FQS statements in order to identify possible “outliers” who hold views that most participants experience as irrelevant. Across national boundaries, most young adult respondents in the YARG study share a belief in the importance of choice, a tendency towards religious pluralism, and a positive view of humanity. Correspondingly, most participants dislike extremist or totalistic beliefs that tend to reject otherness and to express certainty. We might think of this as the ‘Zeitgeist’ of contemporary religious subjectivities.

These consensual attitudes were shared, incidentally, by the outlier profiles, which we proceeded to examine more closely. Their uniqueness did not lie in rejecting this ‘Zeitgeist’. Rather, it lay in an added powerful affinity to the domain of religious experience. The list of irrelevant statements suggests that direct experiences of the divine, practices of religious seeking and some interpretations of divinity are unusual in our YARG sample.

At this stage, it would be possible to argue that since these statements are the least relevant in the concourse, perhaps they should be dropped from the FQS altogether. They may just not reflect today’s shared religious subjectivities. If very few people around the world think of the divine as feminine, what is the justification for retaining that statement?

Our study counters this by finding that there are people for whom such statements mean a great deal, although they only surface in a “top-down” transnational search, and do not show up in the more common “bottom-up” national Q-analyses. In light of our findings, we argue that as long as any group of participants feels that certain statements reflect their own religious subjectivity, these statements should be retained and analyzed.

Our analysis of those who reported experiences of divinity “up close and personal” and those who understood divinity as feminine did identify some shared themes for each group. For example, personal experiences of the divine tended to be personal rather than communal, to have a discernable trigger and a period of awakening, and to have a noetic quality. Female deity worshipping entailed a positive view of the feminine archetype and a strong emphasis on personal authenticity. However, the range and diversity of the narratives was even greater than what these respondents had in common. Among those who saw divinity as feminine, the role of religion in their lives varied and the way in which they thought of divinity as female ranged from loving mother to sensual being. Similarly, the solitary mystic who rarely got along well with other people, and the young woman who shared a drug-induced mystical experience with a friend seem quite different, despite the commonality of having a spiritual awakening.

Our analysis of irrelevant statements and outlier “types” raises the question of whether we can set aside the idea of national-cultural boundaries in favor of transnational religious subjectivities. The answer is both “yes” and “no.” It is highly unlikely that the outlier narratives would have surfaced in national prototype analyses. They seem to share more with other seekers, mystics and feminists across the

globe than they do with their compatriots in their national samples. Yet, at the same time, their culture shapes and guides the details of their spiritual paths to such an extent that a dismissal of national (or cultural) distinctions would impoverish our ability to analyze and understand their stories. The role of culture stands out clearly as we juxtapose these narratives. The Finnish pagan who chose to live alone with her partner in the countryside, worshipping a female goddess as a reflection of mother nature, also reflects the powerful Finnish ethos of nature; the American Catholic who rebelled against her conservative upbringing sees God as female and as part of her own gender-fluidity and feminist social activism, two important themes in contemporary North America. The role of culturally bound values and practices in such examples is obvious.

It is also worth noting that these ‘types’ expressed important internal diversity. The “Divinity close and personal” type was best understood when separated into three subtypes: highly religious, spiritual seekers and emotionally volatile. Since each subtype was, by necessity, very small, we suspect that this is not an exhaustive list of subtypes, but that it rather highlights the variety and diversity of religious subjectivities.

Thus, our study on religious outliers ended up reinforcing a third fault-line, following the cultural and global ones: The idiosyncratic one. Each individual whose narrative we analyzed turned out to be a rich and unique microcosm, whose subjectivities reflected more than anything their own complexities of personality, life-experience and values. We attempted to demonstrate this through vignettes, by necessity brief and truncated. The idiosyncratic fault-line provides an important reminder for researchers working with FQS: shared religious attitudes may conceal an immense diversity of religious subjectivities. By way of summary, we encourage future researchers to consider at least three levels of analysis of such data: The global (or transnational), the cultural (or national) and the personal (or idiosyncratic). Only by integrating these three levels can we hope to comprehend the rich and diverse range of religious subjectivities among the young adults in the contemporary world.

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Chapter 8

The Global Variation of Non-religious Worldviews



Janne Kontala, Mika Lassander, Maria Klingenberg , Ariela Keysar ,
and Martin Lagerström

Abstract This chapter explores the worldviews and values from a pooled data of non-religious young adults undergoing higher education from 12 countries. From an initial pool of 559, 75 respondents were chosen based on screening questions on religious identity and belonging. The exploration of worldview prototypes is done through utilizing Faith Q-Sort. The emerging worldview prototypes are interpreted further with the survey data, most importantly the ratings of different types of motivational values. The values survey is based on the Portrait Values Questionnaire. The findings of this study indicate that there are several non-religious outlooks that can accommodate openness towards religion or spirituality. Their only common ground is that they do not consistently reject all aspects of religion. The values of the non-religious respondents were in line with previous studies with self-direction values, but diverged by placing high value on benevolence. Interesting differences between the value profiles of the different non-religious outlook types were discovered, pointing to the relevance of taking into account the outlook variety internal to non-religion.

Keywords University students · Non-religion · Irreligion · Atheism · Secularity · Worldviews · Values · Schwartz · Q-method · Faith Q-Sort · PVQ

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8.1 Introduction

The tendency to approach non-religion as a residual category, after the main world-religion options have been exhausted, is increasingly being replaced by more nuanced investigations into the internal variation of non-religion. Campbell (1971) found in his pioneering sociological study that a pure type of irreligion, where all religions and all their components are rejected, is rare. Furthermore, irreligion is expressed in a range of ways along a social continuum, where individual and private represent one end of the spectrum and the well-organized associations the other. Hunsberger and Altemeyer's (2006) study on organized atheism in the US and Canada found their affiliated atheist respondents to resemble religious fundamentalists in dogmatism, exhibiting a strong "Us versus Them" ethnocentrism, whereas their willingness to proselytize ranged from moderate to low. Some studies have focused on the demographics of non-religion (Keysar & Kosmin, 2007; Keysar & Navarro-Rivera, 2013; Taira, 2014; see Zuckerman, 2010a, b for several chapters on the demographics of non-religion in various contexts), whereas others have investigated the qualitative differentiation within non-religion, resulting in promising yet tentative typologies (Manning, 2010; Schnell & Keenan, 2011; Cotter, 2015; Beyer, 2015; Lee, 2012, 2015; LeDrew, 2016; Kontala, 2016). A recent effort of a nuanced typology is found in a report by the Pew Research Center (Pew Research Center, 2018a). Using cluster analysis, three types of highly religious, two types of somewhat religious and two types of non-religious outlooks are distinguished.

Millennials have been found to side with science and free inquiry (Sherkat, 2014), contrasted with distancing themselves from the religious right (Hout & Fischer, 2002) and rejecting religious authority, including institutions, even though not necessarily religion as a whole (Kosmin & Keysar, 2009). More generally, previous studies have found non-religion to correlate negatively with age (Uecker et al., 2007; Arnett, 2004; Voas & Crockett, 2005; Koenig, 2015; Niemelä, 2015) and positively with education (see Hadaway & Roof, 1988; Feigelman et al., 1992, Keysar & Kosmin, 2007; Keysar, 2017; Phillips, 2009; Bainbridge, 2009; Argyle, 2000 for individual differences; and Braun, 2012; Azarvan, 2013; Keysar & Navarro-Rivera, 2013 for international differences). The respondents in this study are not only young university students; a segment we would expect to score high on secularity based on previous studies. We have chosen to focus on the most non-religious respondents in our sample; those who self-identify as the least religious in the survey.

Previous studies have mostly focused on Western samples. As stated in a recent summary of the academic research on non-religion: "Most of the data summarized in this book pertain to the United States and Western Europe" (Zuckerman et al., 2016, p. 36). The present chapter assesses the variety of non-religion in a global sample of 12 countries, thereby contributing to these investigations by using a cross-cultural sample, and taking the variety within non-religion seriously.

Our sampling criteria direct attention towards those individuals whose self-identification indicate a rejection of religion that transcends religious authority. As

such, we can expect the sample to give relevant insights into the variety of non-religious outlooks held by educated millennials. We expect to find dispositions that signify differentiation from religion in various ways. This can mean rejection of religious practices, belonging, or beliefs, but also openness towards some aspects of religion.

We focus on university students participating in the international research project Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG), who in the survey preceding the interviews opted for a non-religious identification and lack of belonging to a religious group, community, or tradition (see Appendix 3 for the full survey). To explore variations of non-religion in the data, the chapter presents an analysis of these non-religious participants ($n = 75$). For this we use Faith Q-Sort (FQS), a Q-methodological application for assessing the subjective outlook domain, developed by David Wulff (2019) (for more on FQS see Chap. 1 and 3 in this volume). As a second aim, the emerging non-religious prototypes found in the data are analyzed as value profiles. We use the revised version of Portrait Values Questionnaire (Schwartz et al., 2012) to examine whether the various non-religious outlooks are indicative of differences in value priorities (for more on the PVQ, see Chap. 11 in this volume).

Before presenting the results of the FQS analysis, we turn to analysis of non-religious identification in the survey sample¹ ($n = 4964$) to examine how common non-religious identification amongst university students in the respective case studies is. We also examine to which extent non-religious identification is related to gender and financial background.

8.2 Non-religious Identification in the Survey

Response options to the survey question about religious identification, “*Regardless of whether you consider yourself as belonging or close to a particular religious group, community, or tradition, how religious would you say you are?*”, ranged from zero (“not at all religious”), to ten (“very religious”). We begin by presenting the percentage of respondents who have estimated their religiosity as a zero on a zero-to-ten scale, i.e. opted for the most non-religious self-identification. The means of self-assessed religiosity reported for each case study (Table 8.1) suggest great variation between the case studies.² 40% of the Swedish and 28% of the Canadian, but only 1% of the Ghanaian respondents opted for the non-religious response alternative. The mean value for each case study provides an optional way of looking at the distributions between non-religious and religious identifications in the data. The way in which the case studies differ by and large remains the same. Taken

¹Survey includes Japan, which did not participate in the follow-up phase.

²The differences in proportion of non-religious respondents between case studies were analyzed by Pearson chi-square: 300.395 ($P < .001$, $df = 12$). Differences between means of self-assessed religiosity in the respective case studies were tested with ANOVA: 69.599 ($P = .001$, $df = 12$).

Table 8.1 The distribution between non-religious and other respondents per case study; percent; and mean of self-assessed religiosity on a 0–10 scale by case study

Country	Non-religious survey respondents (response = 0)	%	Others, survey respondents	Total	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>
Sweden	40		60	100	2.04	2.56	328
Canada	28		72	100	2.73	2.75	410
Russia	23		77	100	2.79	2.47	343
Finland	20		80	100	3.54	3.23	484
US	18		82	100	3.37	2.77	304
Israel	15		85	100	4.20	2.88	761
China	14		86	100	3.63	2.59	325
Peru	13		87	100	3.95	2.81	321
Japan	10		90	100	4.15	2.61	324
Poland	10		90	100	4.51	2.75	299
Turkey	8		92	100	4.33	2.52	347
India	8		92	100	4.54	2.62	298
Ghana	1		99	100	6.78	2.25	420
Total	16		84	100	3.93	2.93	4964

Table 8.2 Distributions of “not at all religious” (“0”) and other respondents (1–10) per gender in percent and mean of self-assessed religiosity on a 0–10 scale by case study

Gender	Non-religious survey respondents	Others, survey respondents	Total	<i>M</i>	<i>n</i>
Male	18.8	81.2	100	3.76	1974
Female	14.5	85.5	100	4.05	2965
Other	12.0	88.0	100	3.28	25
Total	16.2	83.8	100	3.93	4964

together, the total mean for religious self-identification in the survey data suggests a weak tendency towards non-religious identification.

Are there, then, any notable differences in the gender (for more on gender differences see Chaps. 3 and 9 in this volume) distribution of the non-religious respondents ($n = 803$)? One of the universally recurring findings in previous research is the positive correlation between religiosity and being female, non-religiosity being predominantly a male phenomenon (Furseth, 2010; Mahlamäki, 2012; Zuckerman et al., 2016; Pew Research Center 2016). Table 8.2 suggests that male respondents identify as non-religious to a somewhat higher extent than female respondents, which is confirmed by a chi-square analysis and the analysis of the means for each gender.³

Next, we look into the differences in how they describe their family background compared to other respondents ($n = 4191$). We start with financial background.

³The differences in proportion of non-religious respondents by gender was analyzed by Pearson chi-square: 16.334 ($P < .001$, $df = 1$). Differences of means in religiosity by gender was analyzed through a t-test: $t = -3.420$ ($P = .001$, $df = 4937$). Due to small n , the gender category “other” was omitted from the analysis.

Table 8.3 “In considering your family’s monthly income relative to the average in your country, is it...”. Distributions of non-religious respondents (0) and others (1–10), percent

Family’s monthly income relative to average in the country	Non-religious survey respondents	Others, survey respondents	Total
Much lower than the average	9.8	11.3	11.1
Somewhat lower than the average	13.7	15.8	15.5
About the average	31.0	31.6	31.5
Somewhat higher than the average	30.1	27.1	27.6
Much higher than the average	10.6	6.9	7.5
I don’t know	4.7	7.3	6.9
Total	100 (<i>n</i> = 803)	100 (<i>n</i> = 4161)	100 (<i>n</i> = 4964)

Internationally, countries with high percentages of nonbelievers and those who place less importance on religion tend to be amongst the wealthier ones, despite anomalies such as Vietnam and the US⁴ (Zuckerman, 2007; Pew Research Center, 2015, 2018b). According to a study by Pew (Pew Research Center, 2009), middle class income indicates less importance placed on religion than low income. Our analysis is in line with these findings, suggesting that the non-religious tend to describe their family’s monthly income in a somewhat more positive manner than other respondents⁵ (Table 8.3).

How the non-religious respondents describe the role of religion in their childhood family is markedly different in comparison to the others.⁶ The mean on a 0–10 scale for the non-religious respondents is considerably lower ($M = 2.31$, $SD = 2.61$) than for the other respondents ($M = 5.51$, $SD = 2.73$).⁷ 37% of the non-religious describe their home as “not at all religious” (0), while the corresponding proportion amongst the others is merely 4%. Consequently, there is a strong correlation between religious identification and description of childhood home religiosity.⁸

We proceed by looking at the value profiles of the non-religious respondents, the purpose being to explore whether the values of the non-religious respondents differ from the others. Previous studies have shown that secularity indicates an increased value placed on self-direction, hedonism, stimulation, and achievement, whereas increased religiosity is indicative of conformity, tradition, security, and benevolence (Farias & Lalljee, 2008; Pepper et al., 2010; Roccas, 2005; Schwartz & Huismans, 1995; Saroglou et al., 2004). As shown in Table 8.4, the non-religious respondents

⁴The US is high on national wealth and God-belief, whereas the pattern is reversed for Vietnam.

⁵Differences in descriptions of family income by religious identification was analyzed by Pearson chi-square: 16.980 ($P = .002$, $df = 4$). Those who answered “I don’t know” on family income were excluded.

⁶The question was worded “How religious would you say the family you grew up in was?”.

⁷Differences in the assessment of religiosity in one’s childhood home were tested through a t-test: $t = -30.593$ ($P < .001$; $df = 4962$).

⁸A bivariate Pearson correlation was used to analyze associations between religious identification and descriptions of the religiosity of one’s home: $.611$ ($P < .001$).

($n = 803$) do not radically differ from the others ($n = 4161$). As expected, the non-religious respondents score higher than others in the two self-direction values, and lower in tradition. The results do not conform to previous studies with benevolence that is usually associated with increased religiosity, by being scored high by both groups. Previous studies have not explored varieties of non-religious outlooks in particular. In this study, we may therefore find a lack of association between outlooks and value priorities, but we may also find that particular outlooks are coupled with particular value orientations.

These findings suggest that compared to others, the non-religious respondents are more likely to be males and to have a non-religious family background. Non-religious self-identification is not evenly distributed over the case studies. While a non-religious position is fairly common in Sweden, Canada and Russia, it is quite unusual in Ghana. Non-religious self-identification conforms to expectations regarding high value placed on self-direction and low on tradition, whereas high value on benevolence is not what we would expect to find amongst non-religious respondents.

We conclude this phase by exploring whether the non-religious respondents, who participated in the follow-up phase consisting of FQS and interviews, differ in any significant ways from the larger sample of non-religious participants who responded to the survey. Some case studies are highly represented in the non-religious sample analyzed here, whereas others have no representation at all. While Sweden, Israel,⁹ Canada and Finland make up more than half of the sample of non-religious respondents, none of the Ghanaian FQS participants self-identified as non-religious.¹⁰ When discrepancies between survey respondents ($n = 769$) and non-religious FQS participants ($n = 75$) do occur, they are partly due to the selection criteria for the FQS participants. In the selection of participants, survey data was used to maximize the variation of outlooks in the FQS sample regarding value profiles, gender, demographic factors, religious affiliations or their absence, family religiosity, experiences of discrimination, social cohesion and connectivity, and attitudes with same sex marriage, abortion and euthanasia. The similarities between the samples outweigh the differences. Analyses of differences in gender distribution, descriptions of family income or descriptions of religiosity in one's family between the sample of non-religious FQS participants ($n = 75$) and the non-religious survey respondents ($n = 802$) found no significant differences between the samples, providing further support for the similarity of the two samples.

Next, we turn our attention to the variety of non-religious outlooks found amongst the non-religious respondents who engaged with FQS.

⁹As a supplementary note to the table, it should be noted that non-religiosity is not evenly distributed between the subgroups in the Israeli case study. Whereas Israeli Jews are inclined to self-identify as non-religious to a rather high degree, Israeli Arabs are not.

¹⁰In the Ghanaian group of FQS participants, there were no values below '2' on the 0–10 scale of religious identification. Japan is not included in the table, since Japanese participation was delimited to the survey.

Table 8.4 Pairwise comparisons between religious and non-religious respondents' values using Welch's t-test

Value	Religious (<i>n</i> = 4161)		Non-religious (<i>n</i> = 803)		t-value (df)	<i>P</i>	Effect size	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			<i>d</i>	<i>r</i>
Achievement	0.22	0.71	0.26	0.84	-1.31 (1034.4)	.19	-0.08	-0.04
Benevolence-caring	0.63	0.66	0.77	0.72	-5.33 (1080.4)	< .001*	-0.33	-0.16
Benevolence-dependability	0.64	0.70	0.88	0.69	-8.88 (1143)	< .001*	-0.53	-0.25
Conformity-interpersonal	-0.21	0.98	-0.48	1.10	6.36 (1061)	< .001*	0.39	0.19
Conformity-rules	-0.42	1.00	-0.56	1.14	3.32 (1057.4)	< .001*	0.20	0.10
Face	0.03	0.87	-0.12	1.01	4.07 (1039.5)	< .001*	0.25	0.13
Hedonism	0.26	0.82	0.48	0.84	-6.88 (1112.9)	< .001*	-0.41	-0.20
Humility	-0.26	0.86	-0.33	0.93	1.90 (1087.1)	.06	0.12	0.06
Power-dominance	-1.41	1.11	-1.43	1.14	0.33 (1111.2)	.74	0.02	0.01
Power-resources	-1.16	1.13	-1.23	1.19	1.61 (1097.4)	.11	0.10	0.05
Self-direction-actions	0.55	0.73	0.95	0.74	-13.99 (1123.5)	< .001*	-0.84	-0.39
Self-direction-thoughts	0.49	0.74	0.89	0.78	-13.20 (1096.8)	< .001*	-0.80	-0.37
Security-personal	0.30	0.66	0.24	0.74	2.17 (1066.5)	.03*	0.13	0.07
Security-societal	0.36	0.81	0.35	0.95	0.20 (1039.2)	.84	0.01	0.01
Stimulation	-0.06	0.89	-0.01	0.98	-1.29 (1070.9)	.20	-0.08	-0.04
Tradition	-0.68	1.12	-1.88	1.03	29.81 (1194)	< .001*	1.73	0.65
Universalism-concern	0.54	0.78	0.69	0.94	-4.12 (1022.8)	< .001*	-0.26	-0.13
Universalism-nature	-0.23	1.01	-0.08	1.09	-3.43 (1083.8)	< .001*	-0.21	-0.10
Universalism-tolerance	0.42	0.82	0.63	0.88	-6.34 (1084.5)	< .001*	-0.39	-0.19

Note. Degrees of freedom for t-tests reported in brackets. A positive effect size indicates that religious respondents gave higher importance to a value than non-religious respondents, whereas a negative effect size indicates the opposite

8.3 FQS Analysis

In this section, we turn to the outlook types amongst the non-religious FQS participants. The analysis explores outlook variety regarding attitudes towards religious or spiritual beliefs, practices, traditions, and institutions. Moreover, the instrument enables us to see how other worldview dimensions, such as emotional postures and social orientations interact with the more specifically non-religious/religious/non-spiritual/spiritual dimension.

One of the main goals of YARG is to map ‘religious subjectivities’. As the term ‘religious subjectivities’ goes against respondent self-identification, we use the terms ‘outlook’ and ‘worldview’ when we refer to the subjectivities of our respondents (Kontala, 2016). As an English version of the originally German term *Weltanschauung*, ‘worldview’ has been used for ideologies, individual outlooks, explicit philosophies and implicit structures (Naugle, 2002; Nilsson, 2013; Kontala, 2016). ‘Outlook’ and ‘worldview’ can be understood as ‘parent categories’ that can accommodate religious, non-religious, spiritual, secular and other kinds of subjectivities. The emerging preferences that are shared at an interpersonal level are called worldview prototypes, or just prototypes.

In a previous Q-methodological study on non-religious group-affiliates, Kontala (2016) found three non-religious worldview prototypes characterized by distinct combinations of instantiation along three dimensions: a religion and spiritual rejecting dimension, a social and societal dimension, and an experiential dimension. Other studies (Pasquale, 2010; Schnell & Keenan, 2011; Cotter, 2015; Pew Research Center, 2018b) have pointed to similar differentiations. Tentatively, we expect to find a range of non-religious outlooks. Based on previous studies, a central differentiating feature may be the disposition towards religion and spirituality.

Using PQMethod by Peter Schmolck (2014), we followed the standard YARG procedure for FQS. The analysis yielded five prototypes. The largest prototype was associated with 13 defining respondents, the second largest with six, the third with three, and the remaining two prototypes with two defining respondents. Combined, these five prototypes explain 53% of the total variance.

The first step in the analysis was to assess the common ground for all prototypes. Two consensus statements were disagreed by all prototypes, as they were placed at the negative end of the board: “Observes with great care prescribed religious practices and laws” [FQS067] and “Has sensed the presence or influence of specific spirits, demons or patron saints” [FQS068]. Furthermore, the following two statements were agreeable for all prototypes: “Actively works towards making the world a better place to live” [FQS051] and “Supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality” [FQS100].

Clearly, the common ground is narrow. Individual freedom of choice and actively working for a better world are important, whereas religious practices and laws are not. Neither have any of the prototypes sensed the presence of spirits, demons or patron saints. In a similar study focusing on non-religious group-affiliates, the common ground included nine consensus statements that held internal salience for all

prototypes (Kontala, 2016). It is possible that the reason for the stronger internal salience relates to the sampling strategy, where non-religious affiliation resulted in more homogeneity. In any case, the non-religious FQS respondents can hardly be characterized as a group, and variation between the prototypes is likely to emerge.

Let us conclude this phase by observing a surprising feature. Contrary to what one might assume amongst the non-religious, the statement “Believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship” [FQS053] is not strongly rejected by any prototype. Four prototypes see the statement as neutral or ambivalent, and prototype 2 sees it as most agreeable. This suggests that the prototypes display variation in terms of their beliefs.

We proceed to look at the variety of worldviews associated with a non-religious identification.

8.3.1 *Prototype 1: Activist Humanist*

Awareness cannot be explained, it's a feeling and uh, my feeling and thoughts are as strong as a believer's, but in the opposite way. [...] My faith in the non-existence of God is absolute. (YCASH344)

The individuals who define Prototype 1 are predominantly from Canada (Canada: $n = 5$; Israel: $n = 1$). Out of the six defining individuals, four are female and two are male.

Persons of this prototype report having undergone a change in their worldview. They reject religious authorities, restrictions, practices, and ideas. For them, religious revelation is metaphoric and outdated, religion itself being a product of human fears and desires. They also reject religious ideas that are in conflict with science or rationality. Despite lacking spiritual or mystical experiences, they feel moved by sacred places. Critical of the religion of their own people, and religion's role in the ruling of the nation, they are positively engaged by the religious traditions of others. In general, they feel a sense of peace even in the face of difficulties. Socially, they are touched by the suffering of others and want to work towards making the world a better place. Their outlook includes a desire to change societal structures and values. Supporting individual freedom of choice, they believe in human progress on a worldwide scale.

The Activist Humanists stand out from the other prototypes with two items. More strongly than others, they reject the idea of reincarnation, and the idea of battling with inner impulses experienced as evil. We label this prototype Activist Humanist to distinguish it from another humanist prototype, the Religion Rejecting Humanist (Non-religious 4). These two prototypes are otherwise quite similar, but Non-religious 1 ranks the two items related to secular activism higher than Non-religious 4. As we will see, there is quite some difference between this and the next prototype.

8.3.2 *Prototype 2: Spiritual Pluralist*

I can't deny the existence of God and I can't say that I don't care. [...] I can't say that I'm a religious spiritual person, eh, because I could be and I don't know. That is, I think that I am still in a learning process and, although I have reached a point where I can feel something safe to have certain bases, it doesn't mean that I am stuck there and that I am going to die like this. [...] Many times, when they ask me: "Are you a Christian or do you believe in God?" [...] I share my experience, I don't end up answering "yes" or "no" or "maybe", I simply share what I have lived and there it is. (YPESC030)

The three individuals defining Prototype 2 are from Israel ($n = 1$) and Peru ($n = 2$). All are male.

Persons of this prototype have experienced a profound change in their outlook. They are similar to the previous prototype in this respect, otherwise the prototypes differ, as this prototype places importance on the divine. Their conception of divinity accommodates both personal and impersonal features. They describe their spiritual life in terms of mystical experience rather than in terms of religious doctrine. Meaningful spiritual experiences include moments of profound illumination, sensing a divine or universal luminous element within, and being moved and deeply sustained by music, art, or poetry. They report spending time reading or talking about their convictions, and strive to safeguard their purity.

Persons of this prototype seem to self-identify as spiritual but not religious,¹¹ and have a pluralistic approach to religion. While lacking loyalty to or interest in a particular national or familial religious tradition, there is appreciation of many traditions as pointers to a common truth. These preferences are combined with commitment to following a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment.

Likeminded association and personal self-realization are important for them. Moreover, they feel touched by the suffering of others and actively work towards making the world a better place to live. Due to their openness to spirituality and interest in religion without being limited to one tradition, we call this prototype Spiritual Pluralist.

Based on the prototype descriptions alone, we might not guess that Spiritual Pluralists self-identify as non-religious, and lack religious affiliation. They primarily distance themselves from organized religion that is the national norm, which is the likely explanation behind their survey responses.

This prototype is an outlier in this study, as they differ from all other prototypes by ranking 21 statements either higher or lower than the other prototypes. The previous prototype has only two such statements. The combined message of such distinctions is this: Spiritual Pluralists value meaningful experiences that are expressed with references to spiritual dimensions, they express openness to the divine, and identify themselves as spiritual. They are not committed to one religion, but see value and truth in the plurality of religious traditions.

¹¹ Item sorting does not contradict the non-religious survey identity, but adds a spiritual component to it.

8.3.3 *Prototype 3: Non-committed Conservative*

You are a Muslim, that is how our God created you, and – it does not have to be – that you are in a religious group [...]. Your convictions or everything do not have to be all the time around religion. (YILSK143)

The two individuals who define this prototype are from Israel and Poland: one is male and one is female.

This outlook shares much of the humanistic orientation of the Activist Humanists. The important difference between Non-religious 1 and Non-religious 3 is in how they view societal structures. While Activist Humanists expressed a desire to change societal values and structures, this is not the case with Non-religious 3. Instead, this prototype appreciates institutions and traditions. Valuing the religion of their nation, family and ancestors, persons of this prototype give substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization or worthy cause. Such indicators point to a conservative outlook, further supported by their view that men and women are by nature intended for different roles.

Following dietary practices and having their sexuality guided by a religious or spiritual outlook, persons of this outlook view religion as a central means for becoming a better person. They believe in some way, describe “the ultimate” as a life force or creative energy, and their religious own outlook as vague and shifting. Despite the strands that indicate presence of religion and belief, religion is also described as a remote factor that does not involve investment of time and engagement. The prototype seems to hold an in-between position, approving of traditional gender roles as well as religious traditions and institutions, yet without engagement in a religious community. Reluctant to reject religion, they do not embrace it either. Emotionally, they appreciate the atmosphere of the sacred places, and face the prospect of death with courage and calmness.

Due to valuing traditions and institutions, we call this prototype Non-committed Conservative. It embodies another way to combine non-religiosity with openness towards religion or spirituality.

8.3.4 *Prototype 4: Religion Rejecting Humanist*

I have previously heard it said that [...] if a person is able to find a sense of consolation from faith, then that is something that makes it all worthwhile to retain your faith. But like, in the case of myself, I just do not experience it like that [...] instead, I just choose to think of myself as a separate entity in my own right as a person. I know that this type of a view may come off as a very depressing one to others, but I just feel like that type of consolation is not there for me. (YSEJK002)

The 13 individuals who define this prototype mostly come from Northern Europe: Sweden ($n = 5$), Finland ($n = 3$), Poland ($n = 2$), and Russia ($n = 1$). Participants from Peru ($n = 1$) and China ($n = 1$) are also represented. The prototype is predominantly female ($n = 8$; male: $n = 5$).

Persons of this prototype believe that one can be deeply moral without being religious and support individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and conscience. Seeing personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life and believing that human progress is possible on a worldwide scale, they embrace an outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values. Profoundly touched by the suffering of others, they actively work towards making the world a better place to live. The orientation of this prototype can therefore be characterized as secular humanist.

Their humanism is combined with mainly associating with the likeminded, and consistently rejecting religion. Religious doctrines, practices, institutions, exemplary figures, and theistic beliefs are all rejected.¹² Instead of religion, sustenance is found from music, art or poetry. In terms of outlook and emotional disposition, the prototype is characterized by a sense of guilt, combined with lack of direction, purpose, or goal. Seeing this world as a place of suffering and sorrow, the prototype sees no higher purpose or ultimate destiny for the human species.

While this prototype shares its humanistic traits with the Activist Humanists, it differs by rejecting religion and spirituality more consistently, expressing feelings of guilt, inadequacy, and lacking a clear goal in life. In line with the main feature of this prototype which at the same time distinguishes this prototype from prototype 1, prototype 4 is named Religious Rejecting Humanist.

8.3.5 *Prototype 5: Quasi-Spiritual*

I'm not a religious person, like I don't believe in God, I don't believe in – specific higher power, but I do believe in like [...] karma, so like, if you're, um, a bad person, like you'll get your karma. [...] I don't know if I believe in like an afterlife, I'm not sure. I believe something happens to you when you die but I don't know what [...] there's no proof so that also, is a struggle, but I believe if you're a good person, then good things happen to you [...] that's [...] my spirituality [...], things like that, it's karma and stuff like that. That's what I believe in. (YUSTP036)

Two individuals define Prototype 5. One is male and one is female, and they come from Turkey and USA.

Persons of this prototype share much of the humanist, religion rejecting tendencies of Non-religious 1 and Non-religious 4, but are open to some aspects of belief and faith. Viewing religious faith as a never-ending quest, they seek to intensify their experience of the divine. They claim personal self-realization to be a primary spiritual goal in their lives. They have used methods of attaining altered states of consciousness, and experienced moments of profound illumination. Valuing their purity, they strive to safeguard it. Furthermore, they see a higher purpose for the

¹²FQS055, FQS070, FQS060, FQS087, FQS031, FQS032, FQS071, FQS092, FQS036, FQS046, FQS066, FQS097, FQS074, FQS067, FQS079, FQS099, FQS001, FQS049, FQS041, FQS016, FQS059, FQS038, FQS020, FQS098, FQS015, FQS101, FQS024, FQS018

human species, and primarily express their religion in charitable acts or social action. Persons of this outlook also feel moved by the atmosphere of sacred or venerated places. Hence, there are indications of openness to religious experience and belief. Their response pattern indicates a sense of personal agency, and interest in tangible results.

A distinguishing feature of the societal orientation of this prototype is taking comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will face suffering or punishment. Combined with the lowest score of all prototypes in being touched by the suffering of others, the Quasi-spiritual seem to have a heightened sense of judgement towards others.

The emerging outlook of this prototype could be summarized as follows. It shares the main secular humanistic and religion rejecting tendencies with Non-religious 1 and Non-religious 4. Its general rejection of religion is combined with openness to quasi-spiritual tendencies, where the primary ingredient is personal agency. For this reason, we name this prototype Quasi-spiritual.

8.3.6 Summary of Prototypes

Since the first pilot study of David Wulff, a recurring feature in FQS studies has been the stability of a secular humanist orientation, often coupled with religion rejecting tendencies (Wulff, 2019). In a sample of respondents who describe themselves as non-religious, we might expect to see secular humanism coupled with alienation from religion. Three of the prototypes fit into this pattern. These are the prototypes Non-religious 1 (Activist Humanist), Non-religious 4 (Religion Rejecting Humanist) and Non-religious 5 (Quasi-spiritual). The correlations between these prototypes range between 56% and 73%. In contrast, there is only an 8% correlation between prototypes Non-religious 2 (Spiritual Pluralist) and Non-religious 3 (Non-committed Conservative), and neither of these prototypes correlate more than 30% with any of the remaining three prototypes.

How much do the prototypes explain of the total variance? The two prototypes that have the largest explanatory power are the Religion Rejecting Humanist (19%) and the Activist Humanist (12%). The remaining three prototypes explain 5–9% each, suggesting that these prototypes represent minor dispositions, which is supported by the low numbers of defining respondents in these prototypes. However, taken together, the minor prototypes explain 22% of the variance. While these three prototypes remain distant from each other in terms of content, they are all characterized by response patterns that one might not associate with non-religion. They make up too much of the variance to be dismissed as outliers.

Whereas the Spiritual Pluralists are interested in spirituality as expressed in many traditions, the Non-committed Conservatives value traditions and institutions. The Quasi-spiritual favor practices involving personal agency, with overlaps with the domains of religion and spirituality. Despite mutual differences, these

prototypes inform us that even among non-religious individuals, we may find openness towards religion, spirituality, or both.

The inter-prototype differences have been noted in relation to religion and spirituality, in emotional and experiential life, and in social and societal orientation. We will take a second look at these features after first examining how the prototypes correlate with values.

8.4 Non-religious Outlooks and Values

Since the response pattern of each respondent correlates with each prototype to a varying degree, individual value profiles can be compared to the extent to which the respondent is associated with each of the five prototypes. This allows us to say something about the value preferences of each prototype, and the analysis reveals some surprising features.

The Activist Humanist prototype (Non-religious 1) is characterized by concern for others, activism, and an outlook that supports the changing of societal structures and values. Yet when we investigate this prototype from a value perspective, we find that out of the five prototypes, this one scores lowest on self-direction: action.¹³ Non-religious 1 is also characterized by scoring lower than others on stimulation.¹⁴ The low score of self-direction: action can be contrasted with benevolence: caring, that this prototype scores higher than other prototypes.¹⁵ Almost on the same level, this prototype values conformity: rules¹⁶ – something that the other prototypes score negatively.

The Spiritual Pluralist prototype (Non-religious 2) is characterized by high values of universalism: concern and universalism: tolerance. The scores for these values are higher than for other values, and higher than the other prototypes.¹⁷ Independence: thought is another value important for this prototype. Previous studies suggest that increased secularity corresponds to self-direction, and increased religiosity to conservation. Surprisingly, the most religion and spirituality accommodating prototype of our study values independence: thought more than the religion rejecting ones (Non-religious 1 and Non-religious 4).¹⁸ The Spiritual Pluralists also value benevolence: dependability more than the other prototypes. The three

¹³-0.242 is significant at the 0.01 level.

¹⁴-0.234 is significant at the 0.05 level

¹⁵0.279 is significant at the 0.05 level.

¹⁶0.232 is significant on 0.01 level.

¹⁷0.365 for universalism: concern is significant at the 0.01 level, whereas 0.255 for universalism: tolerance is significant at the 0.05 level.

¹⁸0.246 is significant at the 0.01 level.

values with notably low scores for this prototype are face, security: societal, and power: dominance.¹⁹

The Non-committed Conservative prototype (Non-religious 3) was previously seen to appreciate traditions and institutions. It is therefore not surprising that this prototype differs from all other prototypes by valuing tradition.²⁰ Another significant feature is that universalism: concern has the lowest score for this prototype.²¹

When the Religion Rejecting Humanist prototype (Non-religious 4) is compared with the other prototypes, one value stands out. This prototype has the lowest score on benevolence: caring.²² This is relevant for prototype comparisons. For the Activist Humanists, benevolence: caring is important. For the Religion Rejecting Humanists, the opposite is the case.

The Quasi-spiritual prototype (Non-religious 5) shows signs of personal agency, involving methods to bring about altered states of consciousness. These findings are expressed in the value profile of this prototype, where the highest value is placed on stimulation.²³ This goes hand in hand with the lowest value on tradition.²⁴ The value profiles of all prototypes are presented in Table 8.5.

With the added information about values, we can summarize the five prototypes in Table 8.6, where information derived by the value-investigation is presented with *italics*.

8.5 Conclusion

We started with an initial survey investigation to see what role non-religion plays in the larger survey sample. Non-religious identity is somewhat correlated with being male, and strongly correlated with being raised in a non-religious home. On values, the effect of non-religion is seen on a higher score on self-direction-values, and lower score on tradition. When the survey sample is compared with the more narrow sample of the FQS participants, the similarities outweigh the differences.

We have followed Colin Campbell's (1971) lead about the variation of non-religious experience by examining non-religious worldview prototypes, both by common ground and differentiation. The five prototypes were quite different, suggesting that the common ground for those who define themselves as non-religious is small. While the Activist Humanists (Non-religious 1) and the Religion Rejecting Humanists (Non-religious 4) were consistent in their rejection of religion and

¹⁹Face (−0.338) and security: societal (−0.322) are significant at 0.01 level, whereas power: dominance (−0.251) is significant at 0.01 level.

²⁰0.290 is significant on 0.01 level.

²¹−0.338, significant on 0.01 level.

²²−0.277, significant on 0.05 level.

²³0.240 is significant at 0.05 level.

²⁴−0.359 is significant at 0.01 level.

Table 8.5 Value profiles of the prototypes

Pearson Correlation					
Value	Non-religious 1: Activist Humanist	Non-religious 2: Spiritual Pluralist	Non-religious 3: Non-committed Conservative	Non-religious 4: Religion Rejecting Humanist	Non-religious 5: Quasi-spiritual
Achievement	-.19	.04	.13	-.06	-.03
Benevolence: caring	.28*	.17	-.10	-.28*	.05
Benevolence: dependability	.21	.24*	-.21	-.17	.08
Conformity: interpersonal	.08	.06	-.04	.05	-.10
Conformity: rules	.23*	-.18	-.08	.07	-.12
Face	.08	-.34**	.17	.11	-.01
Hedonism	-.01	-.10	.01	.02	.09
Humility	.05	.12	-.02	-.03	-.02
Power: dominance	-.22	-.25*	.12	.19	-.16
Power: resources	-.19	-.22	.06	.15	-.13
Self-direction: action	-.24*	.10	.07	-.02	.10
Self-direction: thought	-.08	.25*	-.16	.01	.09
Security: personal	-.05	.11	-.03	-.08	.13
Security: societal	.04	-.32**	.06	.10	.17
Stimulation	-.23*	.13	-.08	-.09	.24*
Tradition	-.08	-.16	.29*	-.11	-.36**
Universalism: concern	.18	.37**	-.34**	-.03	.01
Universalism: nature	.03	.20	.04	-.14	.08
Universalism: tolerance	.20	.26*	-.07	.05	.07

Note. * Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed), ** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

spirituality, the Spiritual pluralists (Non-religious 2) and the Non-committed Conservative (Non-religious 3) displayed openness towards religion or spirituality, albeit in different ways. The Quasi-spiritual (Non-religious 5) displayed religion rejecting tendencies as Non-religious 1 and Non-religious 4, yet resembled Non-religious 2 and Non-religious 3 by having openness to some forms of spirituality or religion, in its own characteristic manner.

Table 8.6 Summary of the five non-religious prototypes

	Non-religious 1: Activist Humanist	Non-religious 2: Spiritual Pluralist	Non-religious 3: Non-committed Conservative	Non-religious 4: Religion Rejecting Humanist	Non-religious 5: Quasi-spiritual
Humanism	Belief in human progress and group-based activism <i>Values caring</i>	Activism <i>Values universal concern and tolerance</i> <i>Independent thinking</i>	Religious humanism	Secular humanist orientation	Higher purpose for human species
Religion and spirituality	Rejects strongly reincarnation Mostly reject religion exceptions: moved by sacred places; interest in others' religious traditions	Spiritual but not religious Pluralism Interest in the divine Spiritual experiences Spends time with spiritual matters Safeguards personal purity	Vaguely religious Appreciates religious institutions and <i>traditions</i> Follows some restrictions Does not invest time in religion Abstract concept of divinity	Consistent rejection	Doubts religious convictions Rejects religious institutions, beliefs, and practices Quest-orientation Openness to spirituality if emphasis is on personal agency
Emotions and experiences	Stability and harmony <i>Uninterested in stimulation</i>	Spiritual experiences Sustained by music, art and poetry	Appreciation for sacred places	Pessimism Feelings of guilt and adrift Sustained by music, art and poetry	Goal oriented Stable and content <i>Values stimulation</i>
Social and societal orientation	Likeminded association Moved by suffering Wants to change society <i>Conforms to rules</i> <i>Does not value self-directed action</i>	Self-realization is important Moved by suffering Likeminded association <i>Values self-transcendence, not social security, fame, and power for dominance</i>	Appreciation of institutions and <i>traditions</i> Different roles for men and women <i>Does not value universal concern</i>	Likeminded association Moved by suffering <i>Low on benevolence: caring</i>	Personal agency Judgement towards wrongdoers <i>Rejects tradition</i>

What does the examination of non-religious worldview prototypes and values tell us? Due to the global scope of the sample and the focus on young adults, some useful suggestions for future studies can be made. The results show that for some people, non-religion involves traditional values, or a low score on self-direction. For others, non-religious identity encompasses independence of thought or stimulation,

combined with openness to some features of religion or spirituality. For example, we found that the Spiritual Pluralists (Non-religious 2), who place the highest emphasis on self-direction: thought, display remarkable openness towards religions, but do not see that any one tradition would hold a monopoly for truth, and do not self-identify as religious. Based on previous studies, we might have expected the most religion-rejecting prototype to value self-direction. Instead, we found the most religion accommodating prototype to value self-direction most. We also found the Non-committed Conservative prototype that combines non-religious identity and lack of religious affiliation with appreciation for traditions, including religious ones. The third prototype with some openness towards religion or spirituality is the Quasi-spiritual prototype. This prototype appears to reject religion and spirituality consistently, yet when it comes to personal agency, there is openness to religious or spiritual experiences. Here, the curiosity lies in the fact that stimulation, which previous studies have associated with non-religion, is connected to experiences which, if not overtly religious, can be called quasi-spiritual. These findings suggest the usefulness of considering outlook variation in studies about non-religious value profiles.

Adding the investigation of values to the FQS can also aid the factor interpretation. Benevolence: caring is foremost for the Activist Humanists, and least important for the Religion Rejecting Humanists, a finding that distinguished the social orientation of these two prototypes.

It is important to be attentive to the different ways in which an individual can self-describe as non-religious. Non-religious identity can entail a range of outlooks and value priorities. At the very least, this study points to the usefulness of not treating the non-religious as a homogeneous category. We found that despite a non-religious self-identification, three prototypes expressed openness towards religion or spirituality to varying degrees, and in distinct ways. Spiritual Pluralist, Non-committed Conservative, and Quasi-spiritual are small prototypes, but combined, they inform us that quite a few individuals seem to accommodate religion or spirituality, despite a non-religious identity and lack of religious affiliation. Taira (2014) has suggested that the model of assessing non-religion/religion at least by the three dimensions of behavior, beliefs, and belonging (Keysar & Kosmin, 2007) should be expanded to attitudes and identities. While Taira's suggestion was made in the Finnish context, the present study hints that such expansion would be useful for global samples. In the YARG data, non-religious identification is combined with attitudes ranging from consistent rejection of religion to openness to many of its features.

The openness towards religion and spirituality in the three small prototypes explains 22% of the study variance. This can be compared to Kontala (2016) on non-religious group-affiliates, where the Experientially Spiritual prototype explained 17% of the study variance, and Kontala & Keysar (forthcoming), where 19% of the study variance was explained by minor prototypes with openness towards religion. The three studies used sampling strategies indicating different levels of non-religious commitment. Kontala's study on group-affiliates represents the most active end of the non-religious spectrum. The present study did not focus on

active non-religion, only lack of religious commitment. Kontala and Keysar used a larger sample with religious identity score ranging from ‘0’–‘2’. Based on the three studies, it seems useful to be attentive to “deviant” forms of non-religious outlooks in future studies.

We welcome similar studies, alternatively, larger and random samples to explore this variation to provide a more nuanced understanding about non-religious identities, outlooks, values, and their different combinations.

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Chapter 9

Gendered Views Among Young Adults in a Global Study: Male and Female Worldview Prototypes



Sofia Sjö , Maria Klingenberg , Ben-Willie Kwaku Golo ,
and Clara Marlijn Meijer

Abstract Research focusing on gender and religion underlines the need to explore how religion is gendered and how religion genders. What is also often called for is an approach that allows for and can register complexity while not ignoring possible gender related differences. In this chapter, we begin with a short overview of the survey results that relate to gender and then turn to the worldview prototypes identified with the help of the Faith Q-Sort. Our primary focus is on the prototypes that are clearly gendered, that is to say, dominated by participants identifying as either male or female. We explore what characterizes these prototypes. Using interview material, we delve into questions of gender brought up by persons of these prototypes and illustrate the complex ways in which questions of gender and worldviews interact. The chapter underlines that gender differences and similarities captured in a survey only tell a small part of the story; that gender and religion are situated in contexts that shape the views on and understandings of both; and that gender and religion are complex notions allowing for creative engagements that can confirm, challenge or reimagine ideas concerning both.

Keywords Gender · Difference · Similarity · Complexity · Faith Q-Sort ·
Worldview

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9.1 Introduction

People for whom religious views are alien – very often say so. They say ‘God, God, God’ all the time addressing God in a bit childish way and, on the other hand, emphasizing masculinity – the masculinity of God. It seems to be incorrect and there are philosophical arguments for this. I think there are also feminist [arguments], because there is a feminist approach, at least in Christianity. *Polish man, 25 (YPLSS329)*

Even my lecturers at the university, who whenever they know that I’m in the Karate, like “Wow! Keep on going, like, and the thing is real? Like, are there really Arabs and religious – who play?” [...] The fact that they are wondering about this [...] really entusiasts you to continue, and “Let me prove to you that we are not [...] a community that is closed [...] and the girl [...] until eighteen, nineteen had finished what she should be doing”. *Israeli Muslim woman, 23 (YILSK028P)*

Yes, I want to become a professor. Now everyone says that you need to become something as you grow up, or it is necessary that girls must take up job. But the strength that I get from Guruji, when we say that it is not possible for us or we are not able to do – the kind of encouragement that we get from our Guruji helps us a lot. I mean to say that to move along in life, religion plays a very important role. *Indian woman, 24 (YINMS038P)*

Questions relating to gender and religion were not directly brought up in the interviews conducted for the project Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG) that this chapter builds on (for more on YARG, see Chap. 1 of this volume). Still, themes linking to the topic often surfaced. Through elements of the Faith Q-Sort-method (FQS) – a method used for the first time on a grand scale in this project – via current debates, and through personal experiences, aspects of gender, religion and worldviews were pondered by the participants (for more on FQS see Chaps. 1 and 3 of this volume). As the quotes above illustrate, for some there is a need to challenge stereotypical ideas of what it means to be a religious person, others express a satisfaction with traditional gender roles. Some critique religious views on gender, while others take strength in their religious tradition to find their own way in life, be that way in line with or in contrast to traditional notions of gender.

That religion and gender – in the form of gender roles, norms, hierarchies etc. – surface in the interviews despite not being specifically brought up, is not surprising. We are perhaps not yet completely past the so-called double-blindness (King, 2005) that for long led to researchers in religion ignoring gender and researchers of gender ignoring religion. However, the vast amount of research during the last couple of decades focusing on gender and religion has underlined the need to explore how religion is gendered and how religion genders (for overviews see Castelli & Rodman, 2001; King, 2004).

Processes of religious change has also highlighted the necessity of considering gender. The notion of secularization has been illustrated to include aspects of gender blindness, since secularization is not considered to affect men and women equally or in similar ways (Aune et al., 2008; Woodhead, 2008). The so-called feminization of religion (Palmer, 1997; Woodhead, 2001; Gemzöe & Keinänen, 2016) has also put a focus on gender. Research on gender has underlined the need to

reconsider how we define and study religion (King, 2005; Dubisch, 2016). Focusing on religious institutions and hierarchies presents one aspect of religious life. Looking at the role of religion in everyday life and through aspects of practice and embodiment present another part of it (see e.g. McGuire, 2008).

What can the YARG-project bring to the debate and what possible new insights in relation to gender has the project produced? In this chapter, the focus is on the worldview prototypes identified with the help of the FQS, but to better comprehend our findings, we also present some survey results concerning gender and religion. To help situate our research, we begin with a short research overview.

9.2 Difference and Complexity

To say something certain and general about religion and gender is not possible. Still, a finding argued to be one of the few recurring results of sociological research is that women report more religious beliefs and behaviors than men do. Studies of some Jewish and Muslim groups and populations have given different results (Sullins, 2006), but in most religious settings the world over, women on average come across as more religious than men do. This has inspired many questions, not least why this is the case. Scholars have also wanted to go beyond the question of more or less and explored possible differences between men's religiosity and women's religiosity, not just in amount but in kind. In addition, the need to not just look at gender, but other elements too – that is to say an intersectional approach – has been highlighted.

Regarding the question of why women are more religious than men are, many possible answers have been presented. According to Sullins, four types of answers are notable. First, scholars have pointed to the “different structural location of women than men in a gendered social division of labor” (Sullins, 2006, p. 839). Men are in the work force, where religion plays less of a role, and women traditionally take care of the family, which gives them more time for religion and in addition places them in a sphere culturally related to religion. Second, the role of socialization has been underlined and it is argued that women and men are assigned “different sets of values, roles, and norms for behavior” that are argued to make them more or less open for religiosity (Sullins, 2006, p. 839). These sociological approaches have been questioned (see e.g. Miller & Stark, 2002) and the considered universal gender gap have led scholars to argue that, third, “gender differences in religiousness are associated with gender-linked personality characteristics” and fourth, “that a psychological mechanism, specifically the possession of testosterone, underlies both greater risk taking and lower religiousness on the part of males” (Sullins, 2006, p. 840).

Sullins (2006) is critical of any simple explanation of the gender gap and argues that social factors often help explain a great deal of the difference, but other factors should also be considered as parts of the explanation. Trzebiatowska and Bruce (2012) land quite squarely in a secularization model that links to the change in work relations, a process that would entail that women follow men into work life and into

a secular outlook. This perspective has, however, also been questioned since it ignores the difference in work still done by women and men in both the public and private spheres. Particularly the role of women in care work has been argued to open up for differently gendered perspectives on religion (Woodhead, 2008).

There is thus a need to avoid generalizations regarding both men's and women's religiosity or lack thereof. Still it is worth keeping in mind where the current research points. As highlighted, women tend to report more religious activity and beliefs than men do and men more often than women report being non-religious (see e.g. Furseth, 2010 and Chap. 8 in this volume). In addition, women have been shown to be particularly prominent in forms of alternative spirituality (Heelas & Woodhead, 2005; Utraiainen, 2016). Women's religiosity has often also been argued to be more relational than men's religiosity (Bryant, 2007; Maddrell, 2016). Research has, however, also indicated other differences. Sullins (2006) illustrates how the difference we see between men and women mostly seems to relate to personal piety, not organizational participation. Sullins also reflects on the challenge with operationalizing religion and gendered effects on how surveys are answered. Similar problems are highlighted in studies on spirituality (Bryant, 2007).

The YARG-project specifically focuses on young adults. According to Arnett (2004), the religious and spiritual developmental process that starts during adolescence becomes even more pronounced during the third decade. Barry and Abo-Zena point to the "heightened self and identity exploration during the third decade" which "coupled with other cognitive, physical, and socioemotional developmental advances" makes emerging adults "the ideal age group for the study of religiousness and spirituality" (2014, p. 7). Many studies (e.g. Arnett & Jensen, 2002; Barry & Nelson, 2008) highlight slightly higher levels of religious practice and belief among women during young adulthood and slightly lesser decline during the transition to adulthood, a gender gap that according to Chan, Tsai and Fuligni "may be a precursor to the commonly-observed gender differences in religiosity during adulthood" (2015, p. 1563).

Maselko and Kubzansky (2006) also point out gender differences, but in addition highlight how religiosity/spirituality is important to consider together with other issues. Research on sexual minorities, religion, and well-being also highlights the importance of looking beyond a simple male-female gender divide (Dahl & Galliher, 2010). Many studies thus indicate the need for an intersectional approach. Gender, age, ethnicity, class and context, among other things all play a part. Schnabel (2016) has for example illustrated the role income levels coupled with gender play on religion. In their overview of research on religiosity and spirituality during the transition to adulthood, Barry et al. (2010) argue that when exploring variations in religiosity and spirituality, culture, community and gender are three important factors to consider.

What is called for is thus an approach that allows for and can register complexity while not ignoring possible gender related differences. What is also much needed is a transnational approach of the kind that the YARG-project allows.

9.3 Gender and the YARG-Survey

In analyzing the survey material and aspects of religion and gender, we have explored gender differences in the material and also performed regression analysis to illustrate the explanatory value of gender, or the lack thereof (for more on the survey, see Chap. 1 and Appendix 3).

When means of self-assessed religiosity amongst men and women is analyzed according to case study, the majority of case studies are characterized by no statistically significant gender differences (Table 9.1). This is true both for case studies where the reported degree of religiosity is relatively high, such as in Poland and in India, but also for the case studies where levels of self-assessed religiosity are the lowest (Russia, Canada and Sweden). However, when gender differences do occur, they consistently imply higher religiosity for women than for men. The response patterns for all respondents also imply higher religiosity for women than for men, although the differences are not remarkable.

In order to test the impact of gender on self-reported religiosity in relation to national background, socio-demographic background and religious background while controlling for age, hierarchical regression analysis was conducted. Before the analysis, precautions were conducted to ensure that there were no violations of normality, linearity, homoscedasticity or multicollinearity. In order to assess the explanatory power of national background, socio-demographic background and religious background as separate factors on gender, the analysis was conducted in

Table 9.1 Means for self-assessed religiosity on a 0–10 scale per gender in each case study

Country	n	Males		Females		Total		t-test (df)
		M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	
Ghana	420	6.38	2.51	7.17	1.88	6.78	2.25	−3.67*** (384.32)
India	298	4.56	2.84	4.53	2.47	4.54	2.62	n.s.
Poland	299	4.17	2.60	4.74	2.83	4.51	2.75	n.s.
Turkey	346	4.17	2.65	4.40	2.47	4.33	2.52	n.s.
Japan	324	4.01	2.69	4.38	2.49	4.15	2.61	n.s.
Israel	760	3.79	2.85	4.51	2.87	4.20	2.88	−3.44** (758)
Muslims	199	4.89	2.11	6.06	1.98	5.56	2.11	−4.00*** (810)
Jews	292	2.94	2.89	3.73	3.24	3.40	3.11	−2.16* (290)
Druze	226	4.51	2.81	4.77	2.20	4.66	2.47	n.s.
Peru	317	3.38	2.95	4.37	2.61	3.95	2.81	−3.08** (258.06)
China	325	3.26	2.58	3.92	2.58	3.63	2.59	−2.30* (323)
Finland	481	2.98	3.31	3.82	3.16	3.54	3.23	−2.73** (479)
United States	295	3.15	2.78	3.51	2.71	3.37	2.77	n.s.
Russia	342	2.55	2.38	2.90	2.50	2.79	2.47	n.s.
Canada	410	2.76	2.95	2.71	2.67	2.73	2.75	n.s.
Sweden	322	1.65	2.39	2.20	2.64	2.04	2.56	n.s.
Total	4939	3.76	2.97	4.05	2.90	3.93	2.93	−3.40*** (4160.89)

Note 1. *** $p < .001$; ** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$

four steps. Gender was entered at step 1 along with year of birth. At step 2, national background was entered into the analysis as 12 dummy variables, which made it possible to assess the impact of each case study.¹ As a third step, three background variables that indicate individual access to resources were included. While items on how the family's income is estimated in relation to average and carrying responsibility of children or not constitute measures of individual access to resources, urban background constitutes a more structural factor which nevertheless may have different implications for the religiosity of young men and women. In the final step of the analysis, a measure of religious background was introduced in the form of an assessment on a 1–10 scale of the religiosity of one's home.

Model 1, where gender along with age was entered, explained a modest 0.5% of the variance in personal religiosity. While the introduction of national background (model 2) into the analysis raised the explanatory level of the analysis by almost 15%, the impact of the sociodemographic factors (model 3) only contributed slightly (1%) to the explanatory power of the analysis. Model 4, where the single item on childhood home religiosity was introduced, raised the explanatory power of the analysis drastically (26%). As a result, the final step of the analysis explained 42% of the variation in self-reported religiosity (Table 9.2).

As for the impact of gender on self-reported religiosity, the findings from the regression analysis suggest that being female is positively correlated with personal religiosity. However, model 1 (where only gender and age were regressed on personal religiosity), and model 4 (which includes all independent variables) nevertheless suggest that the impact of gender on personal religiosity is quite modest. The regression coefficients of the fourth model suggest that while the impact of gender is significant, it is not very strong, especially in comparison to childhood home religiosity. It is also interesting to note that the impact of national background in many cases exceeds the impact of gender.

9.4 The FQS

Q-methodology has been used to explore gender perspectives (see e.g. Brownlie, 2006). However, though the method does allow us to say something about the individuals loading on a certain prototype, Q-methodology has seldom explicitly been used to explore gender differences. Since the method aims to capture varieties of perspectives and does not directly aim to answer questions of prevalence, statistical analysis of the results are seldom done or even doable (McKeown & Thomas, 2013; Watts & Stenner, 2012). There are, however, some exceptions to this. Thomas et al. (1993) have in their study analyzed gender and race difference using a posteriori tests in terms of the 2×2 (Race x Sex) ANOVA design in the P-set (McKeown &

¹The Japanese case study in YARG included the survey only, and not the subsequent qualitative steps. Since it would not be possible to explore potential findings in relation to the Japanese case further, Japan was not included as a dummy variable in this analysis.

Table 9.2 Self-reported Religiosity Regressed on Gender, Controlling for Age (Model 1), National background (Model 2), Resource-related Background Variables (Model 3) and Childhood Home Religiosity (Model 4). Unstandardized regression coefficients

Variable	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	4.96	0.38	5.06	0.40	6.04	0.42	2.76	0.36
Gender (1 = Female)	0.28**	0.09	0.51***	0.08	0.51***	0.08	0.48***	0.07
Year of Birth	-0.05**	0.02	-0.05**	0.02	-0.06***	0.02	-0.03*	0.02
Canada			-1.46***	0.21	-1.60***	0.21	-1.67***	0.18
China			-0.65**	0.22	-0.63**	0.22	-0.61**	0.18
Finland			-0.60**	0.21	-0.72***	0.21	-0.60***	0.17
Ghana			2.68***	0.21	2.75***	0.21	0.49**	0.18
India			0.39	0.23	0.20	0.23	-1.02***	0.19
Israel			0.07	0.19	-0.09	0.19	-0.69***	0.16
Peru			-0.28	0.22	-0.27	0.22	-1.42***	0.19
Poland			0.30	0.22	0.27	0.22	-1.07***	0.19
Russia			-1.46***	0.22	-1.37***	0.22	-1.57***	0.18
Sweden			-2.11***	0.23	-2.13***	0.22	-1.24***	0.19
Turkey			0.07	0.22	0.17	0.22	-0.84***	0.18
USA			-0.88***	0.22	-0.91***	0.22	-1.57***	0.18
Caretaker of children					0.73***	0.20	0.45**	0.16
Family's income compared to average					-0.15***	0.03	-0.10***	0.03
Urban background					-0.36***	0.09	-0.13	0.08
Religiosity of family (1-10)							0.57***	0.01
<i>R</i> ²	.01		.15		.16		.42	

Note. *n* = 4716; * *p* < .05; ** *p* < .01; *** *p* < .001

Thomas, 2013, p. 33). However, McKeown and Thomas advice caution when using ANOVA to interpret Q-data “as the nonrandom nature of respondent selection limits the generalization on variable effects” (2013, p. 33). Despite this, the worldview prototypes identified by the YARG-project are interesting to analyze with a focus on gender, but the results are of a tentative nature.

Ideally, when analyzing gender differences, similar sample sizes are available. In some of the studied contexts in YARG, this is the case, but far from all. In line with the experience in many research projects, it has often been a lot more difficult to get men to participate than to get women (see e.g. Sax et al., 2003) and we ended up with a gender imbalance in some contexts that varies caution. The percentages of females and males of the total FQS-sample for all contexts is shown in Fig. 9.1. The FQS-study was conducted in 12 contexts. In Israel, three samples were included: Hebrew, Muslims and Druze. In Fig. 9.1, the results for the three samples are reported.

Regarding gender and the prototypes, a first interesting aspect are the prototypes that are only defined by either individuals identifying as male or as female. There are 14 female prototypes (Canada 4, Canada 5, China 3, India 3, India 7, India 8,

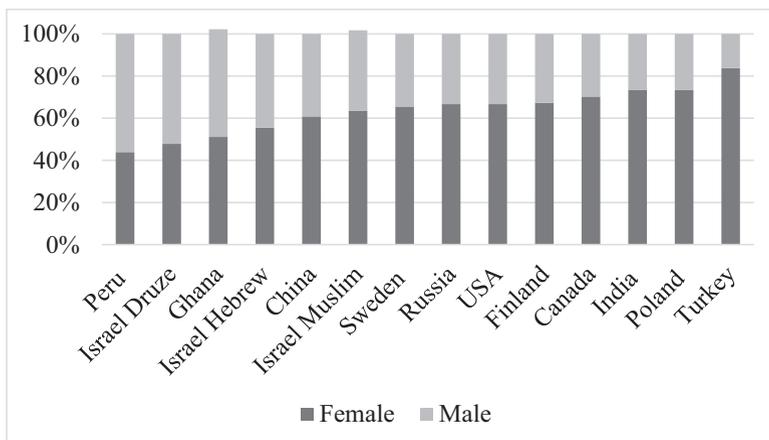


Fig. 9.1 Percentage of female and male FQS-participants for all contexts

Israel Hebrew 3, Israel Muslim 2, Poland 4, Russia 3, Sweden 3, Turkey 1, Turkey 3 and Turkey 5) and three male prototypes (Ghana 2, Poland 3 and Russia 5). The prototypes represented by only one gender are mostly prototypes with only 2–3 defining sorts. Because of this, we checked whether a gender difference would still be noticeable if sorts with a weaker loading were included. When adding all sorts with a loading of 0.4 or more, four of the prototypes (Canada 5, India 8, Turkey 1 and Turkey 3) continued to be represented by only one gender and this representation became stronger. For an additional two (Canada 4 and Poland 4) the gender difference was strengthened, even though the prototypes were no longer represented by sorts representing only one gender. For three prototypes (Poland 3, Russia 3, Turkey 5) adding the sorts down to 0.4 had no effect, but for seven (China 3, Ghana 2, India 3, India 7, Israel Hebrew 3, Russia 5 and Sweden 3) the gender difference was weakened. For two of these seven prototypes (India 3 and India 7), the gender difference was reversed.

Most prototypes include defining sorts by both female and male participants. In many of these, we can also see a gender difference. Figure 9.2 provides an overview of all the prototypes with at least a 10% difference. The percentages indicate how many percentages more of the total female or total male sample the prototypes are made up of. The gender difference is generally not great. Turkey 2 stands out, but in this case, the very limited number of male participants needs to be considered. When including sorts down to 0.4, some changes appear, but overall the most strongly gendered prototypes stay the same. For an analysis of gender, these prototypes are the most interesting, but who represents the most highly defining sorts must also be considered.

For Turkey 2, a prototype that is dominated by men, the three most highly loading sorts are by individuals who identify as female. Here again, the small number of male participants produce an unclear result. For some of the other highly gendered sorts we also find a mixture of genders representing the most highly loading sorts. This is noteworthy, as it indicates the need to look beyond sex and truly consider

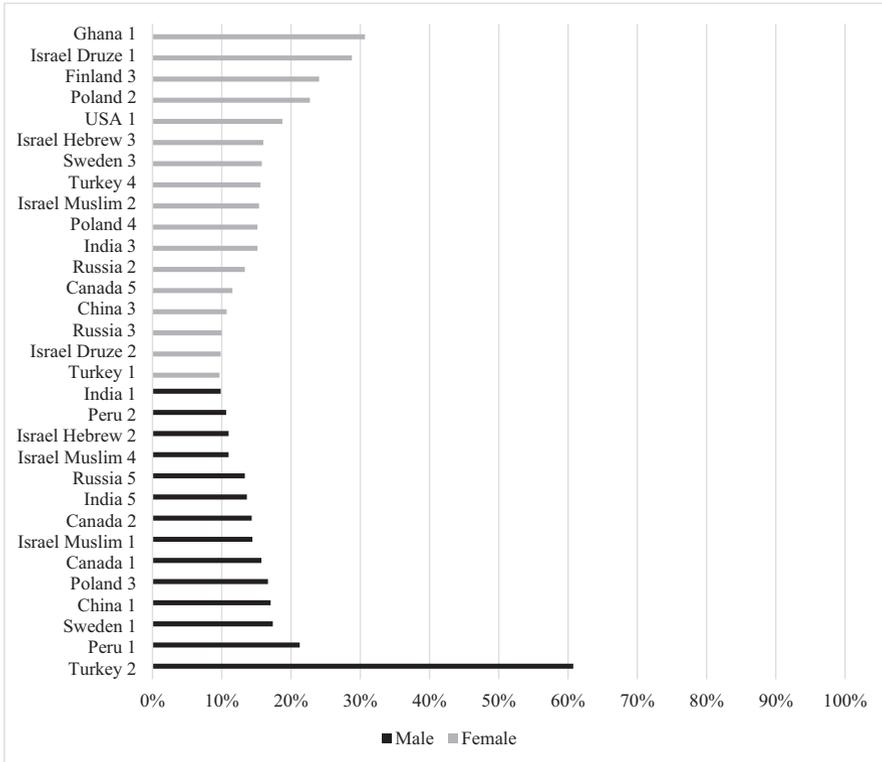


Fig. 9.2 Male and female dominance for all prototypes with a 10% or more gender difference

gender (Thompson, 1991), the many ways in which gender can be performed (Butler, 2004), the role worldviews can play in the performance of gender (King, 2004) and how religion can be a place where gender is sometimes performed in line with and sometimes in contrast to prevalent gender norms (Palmer, 1997).

Next, we provide an overview of the prototypes most clearly dominated by males and then of the prototypes dominated by females based on the prototype descriptions and the FQS-interviews. We especially explore how the individuals representing the highest loadings sorts connect their worldview to aspects of gender.

9.4.1 Male Dominated Prototypes

Based on previous research, we could predict that prototypes expressing a secular or rational worldview would be dominated by men. To a degree, this holds true. Turkey 2 has been labeled Secular Individualistic Rationalist, Peru 1 Non-Religious Progressive Humanist, Sweden 1 Liberal Progressive Humanist, China 1 Non-Religious This-Worldly Activist and Canada 1 Socially Concerned Rationalist.

As already discussed, Turkey 2 includes a much higher percentage of male participants (83% of the total number of males) than females (23% of the total number of females). However, the uneven gender division means that in actual numbers females dominate: for example, prototype 2 includes seven females and only five males. Participants identifying as female also, as mentioned, represent the most highly loading sorts. The prototype thus has a somewhat mixed gender identity, but an identity that in an interesting way relates to some prevalent notions of gender. In general, the persons of this prototype highlight a very rational view, identifying with statements such as “Views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires” (FQS60) and “Rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles” (FQS70). This view has traditionally often been seen as male, but is here expressed by a person identifying as female:

Scientific and rational things have generally been tried out and ascertained. [...] Thus, I can, at least, trust it as being real. I mean, “It exists. Yes, I can depend on this with trust!” I think the feeling of trust is more intense in a scientific reality. Here, I am asked to trust in something I do not know, but, there, there is something positively known, something that most people may know. This seems more logical. (YTRHE320)

Religion is by some individuals explained away as a dated way of viewing the world:

For instance, I think, people – many years ago, people looked at the sun and said “My God! The sun will burn us!” Or it rained, and they said “This is God’s punishment for us!” This is what they said in the past. (YTRHE013)

This stance is not expressed as particularly female or male by the participants. Instead, they are aware of their views being exceptional in the relatively religious society they are a part of. Gender inequality is touched upon by some, and seen as problematic, but this does not come across as a central concern. Though gender thus can be argued to play a part in this prototype, it is only one of many other aspects underlying this worldview.

Peru 1 is a prototype generally made up of activists working to change society and deal with different aspects of inequality. A defining statement for this prototype is “Actively works towards making the world a better place to live” (FQS51). Of all the males in the sample, 43% load significantly on this prototype but only 23% of those identifying as female. Of the five most highly loading sorts, four identify as male and one as other. Of all the 15 sorts that define this prototype only four are by individuals identifying as female. This is thus a clearly gendered prototype and interestingly issues of gender come across in many ways. Amonged the inequalities these activists talk about gender is one area of concern. This is particularly brought up in the discussion of statement FQS54 which they do not agree with.

Thinks that men and women are by nature intended for different roles”, I don’t agree [...] I consider that perhaps the role of religion within all this is based on, perhaps, not imposition, but if recurrence of certain roles in which the woman shows a degree of subordination, in front of it perhaps they should change some things or to appear more open to the – the understanding of new roles that could be adopted in our society. (YPEMV051)

Some individuals also indicate concern with views on masculinity.

Values, not necessarily – more than values I would say ways of thinking, that in society there are things that must be changed. The same I can mention a macho society, a racist society. Although people say no, but yes. If you realize it is very evident racism, machismo, social inequality. That is, if there are things that need to be changed. (YPESC082)

This prototype can thus be considered to express a way of being male that is open to change and equality. It breaks with some traditional notions of male dominance. However, that a prototype focusing on change and social activity is dominated by individuals identifying as male points to ideas of masculinity connected to notions of action and control. Put differently, this can indicate a society where the space to take action and work for change is a space more open to men than to women.

Sweden 1 is a somewhat mixed prototype. Though slightly dominated by males – 70% of all the male participants define this prototype – more than half of the participants identifying as female (53%) also do so. The two highest loading sorts are by individuals identifying as male, but many participants identifying as female also have a high loading. A defining statement for this prototype is “Rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles” (FQS70) and there is a strong disagreement with the statement “Has dedicated his or her life to serving the divine” (FQS36). Looking at the highest loading sorts, some recurring features are noticeable. Though generally identifying as non-religious, many report belonging to the Church of Sweden. Though not as actively engaged in changing society as Peru 1, they still indicate a belief in human progress.

The sample from Sweden includes a fair number of young adults studying to become nurses. Their future profession is sometimes brought up in the discussions and underscores the caring aspect of this prototype.

I mean, I have previously educated myself to become a nurse and pretty much the only thing that I have wanted to work with during the larger part of my life has been to help people out and just generally to work with other people. (YSEJK004)

This is thus also a prototype that breaks with any notions of care and care work being primarily seen as female. Though indicating a slight dominance by males, it is also a prototype that highlights the general secular views by young Swedish adults, independent of gender.

Taken together, the male dominated prototypes expressing a rational, humanist or secular worldview would seem to fit previous theorizing by often being dominated by men, but they do not follow a set model and many aspects need to be considered (for more on non-religious worldviews, see Chap. 8 of this volume). Gender is one of these but so are questions of context, values and social change.

What about the male dominated prototypes expressing some kind of a religious/spiritual worldview? When looking at the labels we find a great deal of variation. Poland 3 is called Uncertain Spiritual Seeker, Israel Muslim 1 Committed Practicing Believer, Canada 2 Spiritual and Experience-Oriented Individualist, India 5 Tradition-Oriented Universalist and Russia 5 Anxious Believer.

This description well describes Poland 3: “I left the harbor and I do not know where I am sailing to. [...] I search for some path” (YPLSS329). The sorts loading on Poland 3 highlight the feeling of being lost and searching. Characteristic of the

two men who define Poland 3 is that they have both undergone a religious change, acquired knowledge about different religious traditions and thought a lot about their own beliefs. They both say that they withhold emotions in their personal lives, but also mention how their emotions are connected to their views and values. This is not surprising, as changes in their religious views are tied to their personal lives:

My farewell to religion took place mostly because of my sexual orientation, but rather – not because of the view of the Church on this, because I didn't know it back then, but rather the influence sexual orientation has on one's perception of the world, that is an overall otherness [...]. Religion was the victim rather than the cause. (YPLSS164T)

Whereas one of the men wants to stay in the Christian tradition, but explores different denominations, the other is keen on acquiring knowledge about different religious traditions and discusses science as a belief system. During the interview, when the topic of faith and family comes up, it becomes clear that the person who wants to continue being a Christian has strong feelings about his faith:

I am tempted to say: believing but not practicing, as it is – as many – as many people say. But no, for me it is just a sort of temporary period – as I said – I left the harbor, I am sailing across the sea – I do not know how to call it. I very clearly feel a need for God as a regulative idea, but on the other hand, as for living faith – opening for grace – oh, it is difficult. (YPLSS329)

It seems that these two men feel that you have to be authentic and serious, which leads them to acquire a lot of knowledge about religious traditions.

Of the six sorts that define Israel Muslim 1, three are male and three are female. The two highest loading sorts and the fourth highest loading sort are male. Israel Muslim 1 is represented by persons with an obvious religious outlook on life. As one of the highly loading individuals puts it: "Religion is something essential in my life" (YILSK264). Persons of this prototype see no problem with a connection between religion and the nation, and their behavior is guided by their beliefs. For the woman with the highest loading sort, this among other things entails not socializing with men and not even being friends with her male cousins on Facebook. With a traditional religious worldview also come fairly traditional goals in life such as a family. In their current lives however, their friends play a very central role.

From a gender perspective, the interviews bring in an interesting theme. Two of the defining male sorts include a discussion of statement FQS19 "Understands and relates to the divine as feminine". They have both placed this statement on -3, but are not strictly against the notion. The idea mostly seems novel to them. As one of them puts it: "The thing is a little difficult, {LG} because one never dealt with it, like, is God a male or a female, okay?" (YILSK027P). This highlights how the FQS can sometimes bring up themes regarding gender and religion that might otherwise not have been expressed.

As Canada 2 and India 5 are both defined by only three sorts each, which in both cases include two male sorts and one female and the female having the highest loading, we leave these out. Instead, we focus on Russia 5. The two men that define Russia 5 both present a liberal outlook. Both discuss and disagree with statement FQS54, "Thinks that men and women are by nature intended for different roles".

They also express a support for gay rights and one of them identify as gay. They are critical of institutional religion and a close tie between church and state and identify with statement FQS93 “Sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life”:

Yes. In fact, what can be more important than self-realization? Naturally, if you’ve been born to this world, you have to realize yourself somehow. That is, you live in some kind of a social environment, surrounded by people, and you have to find your place among them, in their midst, and to show yourself somehow. (YRUPV022)

They also express a strong belief in science and reject those religious ideas that are in conflict with scientific and rational principles, but they both also seem to struggle with fears that they try to control in different ways: one by turning to god and the other by living according to certain principles. This worldview is thus an interesting example of a very success driven perspective on spirituality. The relational aspect often found among women active in alternative spirituality is not completely missing, but it plays a limited role.

9.4.2 *Female Dominated Prototypes*

Based on previous research, we can expect the female dominated prototypes to be either traditionally religious or to express spiritual concerns. Looking at the prototypes with the highest dominance of female participants, this would seem largely to be the case. Ghana 1 is labeled Confident and Devout Believer, Israel Druze 1 Confident Religious Traditionalist, Finland 3 Emotionally Motivated Pluralist, Poland 2 Engaged and Community-Oriented Believer, Israel Hebrew 3 Security Oriented Unengaged Traditionalist and Sweden 3 Experience-Oriented Spiritual Pluralist. However, we also see examples of female dominated prototypes with more of a secular focus such as USA 1 labeled Socially Concerned Activist and Poland 4 Unengaged, Secularly Inclined Sceptic. As with the male dominated prototypes, a closer look at the sorts and interviews highlight cultural differences.

The sample from Ghana reflects a generally religious nature as well as a generically religious landscape and context. The Ghanaian data shows the overall highest sample of religious belonging and religiosity in the YARG data. Ghana 1 is made up of 15 defining individuals identifying as female (63%) and seven as male (32%). The prototype represents individuals with a traditionally theist and conservatively devout outlook expressed via an identification with statements such as “Has dedicated his or her life to serving the divine” (FQS36).

Though gender is not directly touched upon by the participants, some clearly gendered views are evident. One female participant shared how her religiosity influences her sexuality: “The sexuality – “His or her sexuality is strongly guided by a religious or spiritual outlook” (FQS59). Yes! I can say that this is actually – it helps me and most of my fellow Christians” (FGHFB220). Further reflecting on and sharing her views on the relationship between her religiosity and her moral personality and identity, she says:

The scriptures, like, mold me to become a better person. It molds me to become a virtuous woman and to think well in effect to everything, everything! Yeah! Yeah! It really helps morally – it helps me to know how to dress, how to behave, how to even talk to people, how to relate with people, not looking down on people. (YGHFB220)

Similarly, the highest loading individual of the prototype, in response to whether she is what she is today because of her religious values of life, responded:

Yes, I will say that because um, if I have not held fast to these values in life, like this one safeguarding my own purity, I don't think by now I would have been in the school or even completed. I think by now I would have been at home nursing my baby. (FGHBG087)

Identifiable in this prototype are also concerns and emotions traditionally gendered feminine, such as caring for children and the aged, which the participants see as religiously motivated. One participant explained that in addition to being touched by the suffering of others (FQS77), “Um, my faith that says we should take care of the poor and the needy in the society. Care for the widow. Feed them. Clothe them” (FGHFB023). When one considers the social-cultural context of the participants and the fact that certain so-called traditional roles of women, such as taking care of children and aged adults is still seen as the preserve of women, one understands how these expressions and aspirations of the participants are gendered. This stance is further strengthened by the fact that religious institutions and teachings continuously affirm such positions as divine and natural:

And also it will interest you to know that I learnt that cooking is very important which other churches they won't say it, but our bishop, our pastor, my pastor will tell you that as a lady you have to learn how to cook because a way to a man's heart is his tummy. (FGHFB120)

Similar to Ghana 1, Israel Druze 1 represents individuals with a confident religious outlook on life, identifying with statements such as “Seldom if ever doubts his or her deeply held convictions” (FQS57) and “Feels that it is important to maintain continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors” (FQS58). Most of the persons of this prototype come from Druze villages, where even when their parents were not religious, participants usually reported an influence of their extended families' religiosity. The persons of this prototype find being religious central to the identity and personality of Druze women and men. The tendency of particularly females to identify with religion is considered desirable by some of the persons of this prototype. Responding to a question on a Druze religious council program aimed at teaching Druze religion in schools, a female participant says:

There were a couple of them who became religious because of that thing like she went after religion, like, you used to see them and say “{No way} that these become religious during their life” because of intense amounts of the lipstick and the – going out, this teenage, and like that. No! At the end they went for the face cloak, not only became religious but also choose the face cloak. (YILSK057)

A Druze woman wearing a face cloak, which covers all the face except the eyes, is considered the highest degree of becoming religious among Druze women.

While gender was not specifically discussed by the persons of this prototype, the impression is that there are religious and cultural regulations that restrict the lives of women.

I do not know, as I told you, that – for us a girl cannot sleep outside the house so – {it is not possible} to commute from [The interviewee’s village name] on a daily basis. I cannot drive, that is if I want to come in my own car, and there is no one – like, I cannot restrict someone to take me and bring me every day, and I also cannot – from the other side, to come and go by bus every day. (YILSK111)

The above female participant had to go for a religiously-workable and allowable option working with children and women. While it remains important to understand that religion is central to the persons of this prototype and largely tends to define their own gender identity, it is also important for some of the Israel Druze women to define their own identity away from religion. To get an education and a life they are satisfied with, some young Druze women choose a non-religious life, despite holding traditional beliefs.

On the surface and based on previous research, Finland 3 comes across as a non-surprising prototype. This is a prototype with an openness to different religious traditions and perspectives and a tendency to connect with nature. It is also an emotionally driven prototype. Persons of this prototype identify with the statement “I’m profoundly touched by the suffering of others” (FQS77). As one of the highest loading individuals puts it: “I’m really sensitive to other people’s, like, other people’s feelings. And in the sense that other people’s suffering touches me” (YFIKD134).

As can be expected from the link to both an openness to emotions and to religious and spiritual thinking, the prototype is dominated by women. Of the 11 sorts defining this prototype, ten are by individuals identifying as female. However, the highest loading sort is by a person identifying as male, which underlines the problem with preconceived ideas about male or female religiosity/spirituality. At the same time though, the prototype does relate to relational issues often gendered female.

Gender is a topic touched upon by several of the highest loading individuals. In reference to statement FQS54, a cultural basis for gender roles is proclaimed:

Oh right, I don’t know how to explain it further, because in my opinion this is more of a culture-related question, that the different roles come more from there, that ((inside)) what kind of culture we end up in certain roles. (YFIKD129)

The highest loading individual also highlights this perspective and relates it to his upbringing.

I’ve lived my whole life from since I was little in that it hasn’t mattered whether you’re a man or a woman. [...] So no one ever said to us at home, that a woman couldn’t be something, something that men could be. [...] I don’t really separate the sexes from each other, because in a way I believe that both have every right to, like act like however the other would act. (YFIKD128)

Poland 2 is defined by 17 respondents of which 15 have identified as female and two as male. Persons of this prototype emphasize a personal relationship with a divine being (FQS53), whom they perceive as a sheltering and nurturing parent (FQS41). One person describes the divine as “a kind of father for me and – um well, is an important person to me, such as my parents – mother and father” (YPLSS077P). A second aspect is that persons of this prototype describe themselves as regularly engaging in religious practices in private, but they also emphasize that public

religious activities and gatherings are important to them. This is expressed in a relational manner:

These [being an active contributing member of a religious community] are the things that – are important for deepening faith, some communities, which, as family, are close to us and support us in moments of crisis, when we lose our way. (YPLSS077P)

Faith is important for this group; they emphasize longing for a more confident and deeper faith (FQS8) and take distance from those statements which represent religion as a human creation (FQS60) or the divine as empty of significance (FQS55). Their faith comes through in their social activities. One respondent explains the motivation for a religious life helping others as “a willingness to improve myself, become a better person” (YPLSS117P).

What comes forward very strongly in this group of young women is the choice of the respondents to believe and to speak up on their religious views and values, for example being against abortion. Although many of them were brought up religiously, the majority discusses a period where they actively chose to be religious and practice their faith:

And only later um I had to decide about it, take it into my own hands and fight for it [...] Also, well, some – well, you know, I did not like all things and some things were difficult, so [...] priest or seminarians um brought many things to my attention and helped me in what I wanted. (YPLSS117P)

When it comes to gender roles, despite their ongoing studies at university, traditional gender roles are their ambition, though they are not always considered realizable.

USA 1 is again a prototype with a clear female dominance. Out of the 17 that define this prototype, 12 identify as female. The prototype includes two sorts who identify as other and three as male. The four highest loading individuals are female, while the fifth and seventh are other. Persons of this prototype generally do not identify as religious, although they do indicate that they believe in some way. Their upbringing has often been non-religious and they express a critique of a strong relationship between religion and nation (FQS71). Some are open to spiritual experiences and most have an interest in religion, though not generally on a personal faith-related level.

USA 1 is clearly an activist prototype with several individuals working for change. Here gender issues are essential. Many call themselves feminist or support gender equality. They also support sexual minorities and gay rights. The issues some have with religion are also sometimes tied to questions of gender:

Yeah, it's like really important to me, equality between women and men and stuff, and yeah. When I have a problem with a religion that's often like, yeah, saying people is lesser, inherently, that I really have a problem with. (YUSTP015)

Some of the individuals defining USA 1 thus take a stand against traditional religious institutions based on views on gender.

9.5 Conclusion

Relating our findings to previous research, the results are complex. In contrast to previous research, our survey, though highlighting some gender differences and differences that are in line with the notion of a gender gap, do not show a clear gender difference. As our regression analysis illustrates, gender does only explain a modest part of differences in personal religiosity. Instead, the context, in particular, needs to be considered.

However, turning to the FQS, we also notice that numbers do not tell the whole story or that numbers are only a starting point. The worldviews captured with the FQS are sometimes gendered when it comes to the number of female or male individuals behind the defining sorts. Building on previous research, this gendering in numbers allows us to predict something about what the worldviews will entail, but it does not capture everything and says very little about the specific gender questions that are highlighted or brought up by the individuals behind the highest loading sorts.

In line with previous research, male dominated worldviews tend to be secular or rational – though not always and with varying degrees of domination. Depending on context, these worldviews also vary. While a rational perspective and belief in science is fairly common in all of them, aspects of gender surface in different and sometimes surprising ways. The key here is apart from the context also the specific individuals interviewed in the YARG-project; university students and in some contexts, students studying certain subjects. On this point, what the FQS brings to the study of secular or rational worldviews is a greater insight into how worldviews are situated in different contexts, but also in individual lives. These settings can bring in gender in multiple ways, such as through a fight for gender equality by men working for social change or a challenge of traditional gendered ideas of care work by men studying to become nurses.

Also in line with previous research, female dominated worldviews tend to be religious or spiritual in nature – but again, not always and to various degrees. Some of these worldviews clearly illustrate how religious traditions present and offer up gendered roles and life choices. The persons of prototypes indicating a strong connection to religion and tradition generally see traditional gender roles as ideal and something to work towards, although they also sometimes highlight the challenges with ideals of this kind in the present society. For them their position as university students also becomes interesting, as their studies sometimes, depending on context, forces them to postpone or re-define their own religious lives and goals.

From a gender perspective, the spiritual prototypes or prototypes highlighting a religious quest are also interesting. As expected, many of them are dominated by women. The persons of these prototypes indicate an awareness of and a concern with gender norms and a wish to challenge these. The idea of gender as something that is not fixed but performed thus shines through. Common for these prototypes is also a focus on feelings and emotions. This fits well with ideas of religiosity/spirituality gendered female, but again illustrates how worldviews can go against gender

expectations, as the prototypes are not always gendered female or, when gendered female, only include those individuals that identify as female.

To summarize, a focus on gender and the FQS highlights three aspects sometimes ignored or forgotten in a focus on the gender gap; (1) gender differences and similarities captured in a survey only tell a small part of the story; (2) gender and religion are situated in contexts that shape the views on and understandings of both, and (3) gender and religion are complex notions allowing for creative engagements that can confirm, challenge or reimagine ideas concerning both. The nature of Q-methodology means that our findings are not generalizable. Still, our findings highlight the need for a more complex approach to the religion and gender question and challenges future research to take a transnational approach; only when we look beyond certain cultural contexts can we truly begin to see and comprehend both gender differences and similarities.

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Chapter 10

Prosociality in an International Perspective: Civic Engagement and Volunteering



Habibe Erdiş Gökce, Sofia Sjö , Peter Nynäs , and Martin Lagerström

Abstract In many studies of young adults, prosocial attitudes and behaviors are on the agenda. The often reported decline in civic engagement among young adults is generally presented as a concern. Prosocial attitudes and behaviors have been linked to aspects of well-being; high scores on some prosocial attitude indicators are seen as a sign of positive adjustment. Prosocial attitudes and behaviors are also key in discussions of civic engagement, volunteering, and altruism – aspects, in a sense, of the well-being of a society, and they are also of interest in discussions of religion. Commonly, a link between prosociality and religion has been indicated.

In this chapter, we bring together findings from the research project Young Adults and Religion in Global Perspective (YARG) for an overview of prosocial attitudes and behaviors among young adult university students. We focus particularly on civic engagement and volunteering. Based on survey data, we first briefly explore who expresses prosocial attitudes and behaviors and the values connected to prosocial behaviors. This perspective offers only tentative answers. For a more in-depth view, we continue by exploring the data from the Faith Q-Sort. Finally, we zoom in on two examples, Turkey and Sweden, and compare the views on civic engagement and volunteering among young adults in these two contexts.

Keywords Prosociality · Civic engagement · Young adults · Volunteering · Sweden · Turkey

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10.1 Introduction

In many studies of young adults, prosocial attitudes and behaviors are an essential concern. Prosocial attitudes and behaviors have been linked to aspects of well-being; high scores on some prosocial attitude indicators are seen as a sign of positive adjustment (Smart & Sanson, 2005). Prosocial attitudes and behaviors are also key in discussions of civic engagement, volunteering, and altruism. The often reported decline in civic engagement among young adults is generally presented as a concern (Sloam, 2013). The topic is also of interest in discussions of religion, as a link between prosociality and religion has been indicated (e.g. Vermeer & Scheepers, 2012).

In the international project Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG), prosocial attitudes and behaviors were touched upon in all the different forms of material gathered. The mixed-method study was conducted in thirteen different countries and included a survey, the Faith Q-Sort and semi-structured interviews. In the survey, the participants were queried about broad forms of volunteering. The survey also included the Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ) (Schwartz et al., 2012; Schwartz, 2017), which helps to identify the respondents' value profile in relation to prosocial behavior. In the Faith Q-Sort (FQS) (Wulff, 2019), a method for assessing and studying secular and religious worldviews used for the first time on a cross-cultural scale in YARG, statements relating to prosocial behaviors are included. They bring up themes such as the extent to which one gives time or money to religious organizations or worthy causes, and to what extent one primarily expresses one's own religiosity in charitable acts or social action (for more on the FQS see Chaps. 1 and 3 of this volume). Finally, in the semi-structured interviews following the FQS, we have brought up questions about civic engagement, namely in the sense of taking part in groups and organizations, and volunteering.

In this chapter, we bring the different findings together for an overview of prosocial attitudes and behaviors among the participants in our study, focusing particularly on civic engagement and volunteering. First, we briefly explore who expresses prosocial attitudes and behaviors among our participants in the survey, and the values connected to prosocial behaviors. Due to small sample sizes on country level and the dominance of a positive answer to the question used, the survey offers primarily some tentative observations. For a more in-depth view, we continue by exploring the Faith Q-Sort prototypes that express aspects of prosocial behavior. Finally, we compare the views on civic engagement and volunteering among young adults in two different contexts, both chosen because of their similarities and differences: Turkey and Sweden.

10.2 Prosociality in Light of Previous Research

We begin with a brief overview of previous research that relates to this study, focusing particularly on studies of young adults. Different studies define civic engagement differently, which makes comparisons challenging. Generally, the term refers

to involvement in social and political life. This can entail everything from being an active member of a political party to organized volunteer work or, in some cases, just helping others in the community. In research, there is often to be found a normative perspective on civic engagement. Civic engagement is argued to be commendable by promoting democratic aspects (e.g. Banyan, 2016) and researchers are often interested in who engages and why, and how civic engagement can be strengthened (see e.g. Flanagan et al., 1998; Grönlund et al., 2011; Gil-Lacruz et al., 2016). Reasons or motivations for, for example, political activity and volunteering can, however, differ a great deal, though they may both capture aspects of prosocial attitudes.

In their study of young adults in North America, Christian Smith and Patricia Snell (2009) illustrate both a decline in religious engagement among young adults and a more general decline in civic engagement. Young people are “less involved in and committed towards a wide variety of other, non-religious social and institutional connections, associations, and activities” (2009, 92) and “[t]heir relatively lower degrees of religiousness are only one part of a larger package of lower levels of social and institutional concerns and involvements generally” (2009, 94), according to Smith and Snell. Decline in civic engagement is noticeable in European contexts too (Sloam, 2013). However, while researchers illustrate a decline in civic engagement among the young in many settings, they also point to how civic engagement is changing, not least due to new media (Sloam, 2014).

Regarding who engages, research points to a number of factors. Gender has been shown to play some role in civic engagement (e.g. Einolf, 2011), and civic engagement also seems to be connected to education and social class (e.g. Sloam, 2013) and to some demographic factors, such as community connections (e.g. Duke et al., 2009). Flanagan and Levine argue that “colleges have become perhaps the central institution for civic incorporation of younger generations. But no comparable institution exists for young adults who do not attend college” (2010, 159). This thus means that the young adult university students we study in YARG may express more civic engagement than other groups of young people.

Several studies consider volunteering to be a form of prosocial behavior (e.g. Penner, 2002; Marta & Pozzi, 2008). Research has reported mixed evidence of young adults’ engagement in volunteering with both decline (e. g. Caputo, 2009; Smith & Snell, 2009) and stable and increasing rates (Alexander, 2006; Galston, 2007). Research also point to a change in younger generations’ voluntary behavior. Compared to adult volunteering that has been reported as motivated by altruistic values, solidarity with the community and a more lifelong commitment (e.g. Cornelis et al., 2013), young adults demonstrate more informal, temporary and individualistic forms of volunteering (Hustinx & Lammentyn, 2003). Young adults’ participation in voluntary action has been shown to be motivated by, among other things, concern for individual advancement (Hustinx & Lammentyn, 2003), self-realization (Hustinx, 2001), socialization (Hibbert et al., 2003) and career development (Holdsworth & Brewis, 2013). However, much is still unknown about the motivations underlying young adults volunteering behavior across cultures (e.g. Marta & Pozzi, 2008).

Studies have also explored how prosociality relates to values (e.g. Caprara et al., 2011; Juujärvi et al., 2012; Kinnunen et al., 2016), with somewhat different results depending on the studied forms of prosocial behaviors. Exploring three different forms of volunteering – hospice work, missionary activities, and sport volunteers – Śliwak et al. (2018) have illustrated that different values correlate with different forms of volunteering:

Both [success and power] are most highly valued by sports volunteers, and are less important for hospice volunteers. Similarly, hedonism and stimulation are the most preferred values for sports volunteers, but are least valued by hospice volunteers. Tradition is the highest value for mission volunteers [...] and least of all by the sports volunteers. Universalism is a greater value for mission volunteers than for sports volunteers [...] mission volunteers are more self-directing than hospice volunteers. (Śliwak et al., 2018, p. 103)

This highlights that when exploring values and volunteering, the type of volunteering matters. Many studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between religion and different forms of prosocial behavior such as giving to charity, volunteering and helping strangers (Ruiter & DeGraaf, 2006; Putnam & Campbell, 2010; Saroglou et al., 2005). But questions have been raised regarding whether or not religious individuals *actually* behave more prosocially than non-religious individuals (Norenzayan & Shariff, 2008; Preston et al., 2010; Galen, 2012). Compared to empirical survey results, laboratory studies controlling for contextual variables and conditions provide less conclusive results. Religious primes have been shown to increase prosocial behavior (Pichon, et al., 2007; Shariff & Norenzayan, 2007; Tan & Vogel, 2008), but other studies found no significant correlation between religiosity and prosocial actions (Ahmed & Hammarstedt, 2011; Ahmed & Salas, 2011; Shariff & Norenzayan, 2007). Religiosity and religious conditions have also been associated with prosocial behavior towards some targets, but less towards other targets (Pichon & Saroglou, 2009; Ben-Ner et al., 2009).

10.3 Volunteering and Young Adults from an International Perspective

The concept of volunteering has been shown to have different meanings according to the socio-economic and cultural characteristics of a society, and it has been hard to agree upon a universal definition. The “State of the world’s volunteerism report, 2011: universal values for global well-being”, prepared by the United Nations Volunteers Program, deals with the universality of volunteering, its areas of activity, its scope, and its role and contribution to peace and development in the world (Leigh et al., 2011). The United Nations has adopted an “umbrella” approach in describing volunteering with three criteria: (1) volunteerism is *not* an obligation imposed by a contractor; (2) it *is* an activity carried out by someone free of charge and; (3) it is done without expecting any financial contribution (Leigh et al., 2011).

In order to capture the broad meaning that volunteering may have in different sociocultural and religious contexts, an inclusive definition of volunteering was used in the YARG project, namely volunteering as (1) activities which contribute to the work of comparatively large and formal organized agencies in the broad field of social welfare (see e.g. Paine et al., 2010) and (2) activities in small scale and informal organizational settings in such areas as advocacy, culture and sport. The last mentioned is of a special interest, since previous research demonstrated that ‘unorganized’ acts of volunteering are rarely acknowledged (Paine et al., 2010). Furthermore, the project needed to define the phenomena based on common principles which underlie the general understanding of volunteering both within and across countries. This resulted in an understanding of volunteering as an act (1) without pay, (2) performed accordingly to an individual’s free will, and (3) which benefited someone else than the volunteer. In order to cover this definition of volunteering, the following question was used in the survey: *In the past year, have you volunteered to help someone other than your family and close relatives, done something good for other people, or done some charity work?* The respondents were presented with a list of five answer options: Definitely Yes; Probably Yes; Probably No; Definitely No; and I don’t Know.

The YARG survey (appendix 3), which was run in 2016, included 4964 university students from thirteen countries: Canada, China, Finland, Ghana, India, Israel, Japan, Peru, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Turkey and United States of America. Figure 10.1 illustrates the percentages of people volunteering and not volunteering in each country involved in the YARG project. As the figure illustrates, most of our participants report that they have volunteered or that they have probably done so in the last year. The exception that stands out is Japan, but the small samples size means that this exception should not be overinterpreted. The generally high numbers likely reflect the way the question was put, with a focus on both organized and unorganized volunteering. However, the numbers might also highlight that we are dealing with university students. As previous research has shown, a university does often provide possibilities to volunteer and take part in different kinds of civic engagement (e.g. Flanagan & Levine, 2010). The fact that so many of our respondents report that they volunteer, makes it difficult to identify differences between those who volunteer and those who do not, but our survey does allow us to explore some characteristics.

Building on findings from previous research, we have paid interest to variables measuring religiosity, demographic background, family income, and gender. We used a binary logistic regression model to determine which variables increased the odds of participating in prosocial behavior (yes or no) or the broad sense of volunteering queried in the survey.

Religiosity has often been linked to prosocial behaviors such as volunteering (Ruiter & DeGraaf, 2006), but not all measurements of religion reveal similar results. We have therefore included measures of self-assessed religiosity, family religiosity, public religious practice and private religious practice. Self-assessed religiosity was probed with the question “Regardless of whether you consider yourself as belonging or close to a particular religious group, community, or tradition,

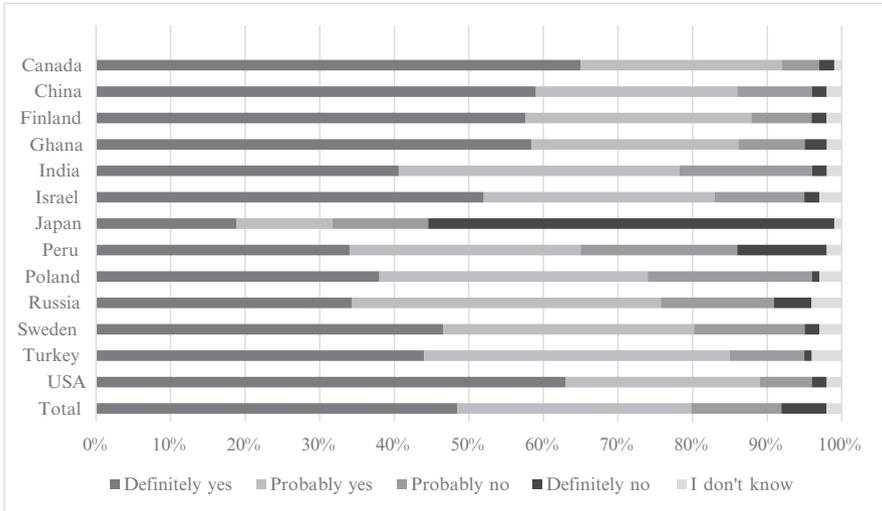


Fig. 10.1 Answers to the question “In the past year, have you volunteered to help someone other than your family and close relatives, done something good for other people, or done some charity work”

how religious would you say you are?” and family religiosity with the question “How religious would you say the family you grew up in was?”, both measured on a scale from 0 to 10. Public and private religious activity were measured with the questions “apart from special occasions such as weddings and funerals, about how often do you take part in religious ceremonies or services these days?” and “apart from when you are at religious ceremonies or services, how often do you engage in private religious or spiritual practices, such as worship, prayer, or meditation?” respectively. Both were measured on a seven-grade ordinal scale ranging from “Never” to “Every day” and were treated as a continuous variable. Higher scores on all four religiosity variables indicated higher perceived religiosity.

Gender has been linked to prosocial behavior (e.g. Einolf, 2011), though not always revealing a clear connection. The gender variable included the alternatives “Male”, “Female” and “Other”, with participants answering “other” being excluded due to a low number of respondents ($n = 25$). The community one grows up in can also shape prosocial engagements (e.g. Duke et al., 2009). In this case, our survey did not give us a great deal of options, but we decided to explore the impact of a rural or city upbringing. This was assessed with the question: “At the age of 15, did you live in a city or in the countryside?” Socioeconomic status is also known to have an impact on civic engagement (e.g. Flanagan & Levine, 2010). In this case, we chose to focus on family income. Family income was measured on a six-grade ordinal scale by comparing the mean income in a country (“In considering your family’s monthly income relative to the average in your country, is it?”), with answers ranging from “Much lower than average” to “Much higher than average”. Family income was approximately normally distributed and was treated as a continuous variable.

Table 10.1 The effect of religiosity and demographic variables on prosocial behavior

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>OR, 95% CI [lower, upper]</i>
Intercept	1.24	0.20	< .001***	
Self-assessed religiosity	−0.04	0.02	.033*	0.96 [0.92, 1.00]
Family religiosity	0.04	0.02	.021*	1.04 [1.01, 1.08]
Public religious practice	0.04	0.04	.321	1.04 [0.97, 1.12]
Private religious practice	0.16	0.03	< .001***	1.17 [1.12, 1.24]
Female	0.25	0.03	.002**	1.28 [1.09, 1.50]
Countryside	−0.00	0.09	.964	1.00 [0.84, 1.18]
Family income	−0.10	0.04	.009**	0.91 [0.85, 0.98]

Note. *B* Log-odds, *SE* Standard error, *OR* Odds ratio, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$, *CI* lower and upper limit for the 95% confidence interval

The questions on public and private religious practice as well as the questions of countryside and family income all included an “I don’t know”-option, participants answering “I don’t know” on any of the measured variables were excluded from all analyses, making the final sample size $n = 4308$.

The overall logistic regression model was significant $\chi^2(7) = 112.31$, $p < .001$, Nagelkerke’s $R^2 = .04$. Table 10.1 displays the effects of individual predictors on prosocial behavior.

The results indicate that being female, reporting more private religious practice and a more religious family background were associated with higher odds of participating in prosocial behavior, when controlling for the other variables in the model. In contrast, self-assessed religiosity and a higher family income were associated with lower odds of participating in prosocial behavior. Having lived in a city or in the countryside at the age of 15 had no association to prosocial behavior. These results could indicate that self-assessed religiosity is not linked to prosocial behavior, but rather to the values one was brought up with. We cannot neglect the low R^2 value in this case that underlines the fact that these data do not allow us to make predictions. Yet, low R^2 values are not necessarily problematic and can still reflect a significant trend within the frame of a study with high-variability data. Hence, we need to underline that there are many other substantial variables that affect prosocial behavior outside the ones used in our model. There is thus a need for upcoming studies to delve deeper into this topic than space allows here.

We have also explored the results of the regression model for each context. However, due to the small sample sizes and the fact that so many have answered yes to the question on volunteering, interpreting the results becomes difficult. Many of the significant effects we see for the whole sample disappear when the individual cases are explored. The small samples also make generalizations regarding the contexts problematic. In most cases though, the effects are similar, as for the whole YARG-sample. Regarding Turkey and Sweden, the results point in the same direction as for the total sample in YARG, with the exception of gender (being female has a slight negative effect, in other words it leads to lower odds of expressing prosocial behavior), but the results are for neither case significant. In the case of Finland, the results for both private religious practice and gender are significant and in line with

the results of the whole sample, but there are also countries that show somewhat different results. In Peru, private religious activity, but particularly public religious activity, is associated with higher odds for prosocial behavior. In India, in turn, being female is negatively associated with prosocial behavior, while in Israel having lived in the countryside is positively associated with prosocial behavior. These varied results highlight the need to explore the contexts further.

Next, we examined if there were differences in the values between the two groups based on Schwartz's (1992, 2017) theory of basic human values. The theory is based on the idea that values are a set of beliefs about what is desirable and what means are appropriate for pursuing the desires and categorizes values based on their motivational goals. According to Schwartz (1992), values are organized along a motivational continuum, and the boundaries between them are blurry, forming a circular value structure (Schwartz, 2017). This structure (see Fig. 10.2) describes the relationship between the motivational goals, or value types. Neighboring types are comprehended as complementary or compatible motivational goals. For example, the conformity and tradition values share the goal of stability. Value types placed at the opposite poles of the circle are seen as incompatible values, such as conformity and self-direction. An important aspect of the theory is that the relative order between the values is stable and represents a value hierarchy.

A refined theory of basic values (Schwartz et al., 2012; Schwartz, 2017) provides a more nuanced categorization of values and a model based on 19 value types in contrast to the initial ten. This does not include new values, but the benevolence value is divided into caring and dependability, security into societal and personal etc. and the new categorization was present already in the definition of the ten

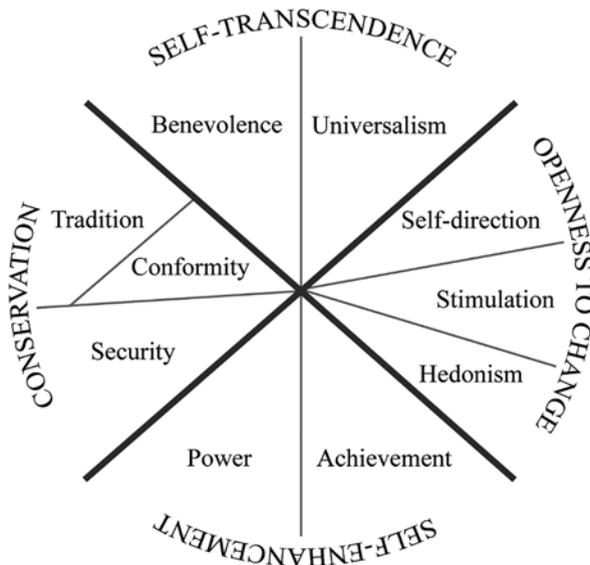


Fig. 10.2 Schwartz, 1992 value structure. See also Lassander (2014) and Lassander and Nynäs (2016)

values. Table 10.2 displays mean scores for each of the 19 values included in the Schwartz PVQ-RR scale. In the sample, scores on all values ranged from -4.60 to 3.68 are included. Positive scores indicate that the group held the particular value to a higher regard than the mean of all 19 values, while negative scores indicate the opposite. Values were tested for significance using Welch's *t*-test, correcting for false discovery rate with Bonferroni correction. Significance tests are based on adjusted *p*-values, $\alpha = .05$.

Examining the value differences with the largest effect sizes, benevolence, power and universalism stand out. Those who participate in prosocial behavior held benevolence and universalism to a higher regard than those who do not participate in such activities. In addition, they held power to a lower regard than those who do not volunteer. These results are partly in line with previous studies of some forms of volunteering (Śliwak et al., 2018). Although broad, the question of volunteering used does seem to highlight a form of volunteering where a general welfare of others is essential. The sample sizes are again too small for anything but a very tentative analysis. The contexts express many similarities, but there are also some variations, indicating the need for further exploration. Regarding Sweden and Turkey, the results are in line with the total sample when it comes to benevolence and power; however, in the case of Turkey, there is no difference between the groups in regards to universalism.

10.4 The FQS-Prototypes and Prosocial Behavior

As part of our study, a smaller sample of participants in the survey was selected to take part in the Faith Q-Sort with a following interview. In accordance with Q-methodology, these participants had to rank all 101 statements of the Faith Q-set according to how well they identified with them. It is of particular relevance here that there are statements in the Faith Q-set that relate specifically to questions of prosocial behavior. They are the following: "Gives substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization or worthy cause" (FQS1); "Expresses his or her religion primarily in charitable acts or social action" (FQS27); "Actively works towards making the world a better place to live" (FQS51); "Embraces an outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values" (FQS56); and "Is profoundly touched by the suffering of others" (FQS77). In this section we explore the relevance of these statements, first by investigating to what extent the statements are central to the prototypes identified in YARG, and then by exploring the types of prototypes which the statements constitute a part of. For an extensive presentation and discussion of these prototypes, we refer to Chaps. 1, 3, 4 and 5 and appendix 2.

Among the statements of interest, two are among the most often identified with among all the FQS-participants. Almost every second participant in the total sample ($N = 562$) from twelve countries (43%) have ranked the statement "Is profoundly touched by the suffering of others" (FQS77) within one of the two highest categories, namely as either +4 or +3. Almost every third participant (33%) has similarly

Table 10.2 Mean scores on PVQ-RR per prosocial group

	Non-prosocial <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	Prosocial <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>p</i>	<i>D</i>		Non-prosocial <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	Prosocial <i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>p</i>	<i>d</i>
Achievement	0.30 (0.78)	0.21 (0.73)	.111	0.12	Self-direction – action	0.67 (0.79)	0.61 (0.74)	1.00	0.08
Benevolence – Caring	0.43 (0.77)	0.70 (0.63)	< .001	–0.38	Self-direction – thought	0.57 (0.83)	0.57 (0.73)	1.00	0.00
Benevolence – Dependability	0.57 (0.74)	0.71 (0.69)	< .001	–0.20	Security – personal	0.38 (0.70)	0.25 (0.67)	< .001	0.19
Conformity – interpersonal	–0.16 (1.06)	–0.30 (0.99)	.023	0.14	Security – societal	0.35 (0.89)	0.37 (0.81)	1.00	–0.02
Conformity – Rules	–0.33 (0.98)	–0.47 (1.04)	.011	0.14	Stimulation	–0.10 (0.94)	–0.05 (0.90)	1.00	–0.05
Face	0.13 (0.93)	–0.02 (0.89)	< .001	0.16	Tradition	–0.92 (1.14)	–0.88 (1.20)	1.00	–0.03
Hedonism	0.38 (0.84)	0.29 (0.82)	.129	0.11	Universalism – Concern	0.36 (0.84)	0.61 (0.79)	< .001	–0.31
Humility	–0.39 (0.87)	–0.26 (0.87)	.001	–0.15	Universalism – Nature	–0.48 (1.04)	–0.14 (1.02)	< .001	–0.33
Power – dominance	–1.18 (1.05)	–1.46 (1.11)	< .001	0.26	Universalism – tradition	0.31 (0.91)	0.49 (0.81)	< .001	–0.21
Power – resources	–0.90 (1.10)	–1.23 (1.13)	< .001	0.30					

Note. *p* p-values adjusted for false discovery rate using Bonferroni correction, *d* Cohen's *d*

ranked the statement “Actively works towards making the world a better place to live” (FQS51) in the same highest categories (for more on this, see Chap. 7 of this volume). The fact that many participants strongly identify with these notions is also evident from how being “profoundly touched by the suffering of others” (FQS77) is defining for 20 of the approximately 60 prototypes we acquired from our study in all countries. Seeing oneself as a person who “actively works towards making the world a better place live” (FQS51) was defining in twelve of these.

Being “profoundly touched by the suffering of others” (FQS77) does not necessarily say that much about prosocial behaviors, while the idea of working “towards making the world a better place” (FQS51) more clearly points in a prosocial direction. Yet, it does not give us much of an idea about what the behavior entails. Also the notion that one “embraces an outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values” (FQS56) is an indicator of prosocial behavior, if one assumes that changing societal structures and values is done for the sake of a common good. Two statements clearly indicate a prosocial approach. These are “Gives substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization or worthy cause” (FQS1), and “Expresses his or her religion primarily in charitable acts or social action” (FQS27). Both of these statements can be understood as primarily referring to a religious outlook, but looking at the prototypes they are included in, we find some variations.

Prototypes that include a prosocial perspective are found in all twelve countries studied, but they are more common in some of the countries, and also differ in kind depending on context. The statement “Actively works towards making the world a better place to live” (FQS51) is a consensus statement in many contexts, and does not distinguish the prototypes from one another. It can also be a defining statement for many prototypes in one context, without being a consensus statement that is embraced by most. Among the prototypes we extracted from the Canadian data, both “Actively works towards making the world a better place to live” and (FQS51) “Is profoundly touched by the suffering of others” (FQS77) are consensus statements. In the case of Ghana, the previous statement (FQS51) is also a consensus statement, though with a somewhat lower grading and the latter statement (FQS77) is graded +4 in three out of four prototypes. There are thus some similarities when it comes to Canada and Ghana. Nevertheless, at closer inspection, the prototypes differ a great deal, for instance in the way that religiosity and belief are at the surface in the Ghanaian prototypes, whereas the Canadian prototypes are defined more by secular and spiritual views.

The fact that these shared ideas acquire somewhat different meanings in different contexts can be exemplified further. In the case of China, the statement “Actively works towards making the world a better place to live” (FQS51) is ranked +4 in three out of six prototypes, but in only one prototype is this statement combined with another prosocial statement, more specifically “Embraces an outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values” (FQS56). The ranking of the statements in the six Chinese prototypes is described in Table 10.3.

The Chinese participants have generally identified positively with being “profoundly touched by the suffering of others” (FQS77) and the aspiration to actively

Table 10.3 Ranking of prosocial statements in the prototypes from China

Faith Q-set statement	Prototypes from China					
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Is profoundly touched by the suffering of others (FQS77)	2	2	1	1	2	2
Actively works towards making the world a better place to live (FQS51)	4	2	3	4	0	4
Embraces an outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values (FQS56)	4	1	1	2	0	0
Expresses his or her religion primarily in charitable acts or social action (FQS27)	0	-2	0	-1	-2	-2

Table 10.4 Ranking of prosocial statements in the prototypes from Israel

Faith Q-set statement	Prototypes from Israel					
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI
Is profoundly touched by the suffering of others (FQS77)	3	3	3	3	4	2
Actively works towards making the world a better place to live (FQS51)	2	3	4	1	0	2
Embraces an outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values (FQS56)	0	4	4	1	2	2
Expresses his or her religion primarily in charitable acts or social action (FQS27)	1	0	-1	3	-1	-2

work for a better world (FQS51) is valued highly by them. Both viewpoints seem to be integral to the prototypes in China. However, the prototypes differ in regards to what extent this can be associated with societal work and activism (FQS56), and in none of them has the association between “charitable acts or social action” and religion (FQS27) been positively ranked. In comparison, the Israeli prototypes follow the same pattern. Table 10.4 demonstrates the ranking of prosocial statements in the prototypes from Israel. Nonetheless, the notion to be committed to working “towards making the world a better place to live” (FQS51) seems to divide people more, and in contrast, there is a greater tendency to embrace the idea to “change societal structures and values” (FQS56). Further, in Israel the association between religion and “charitable acts or social action” (FQS27) is integral to one prototype.

Looking at the more strictly prosocial statements such as “gives substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization or worthy cause” (FQS1) and “expresses his or her religion primarily in charitable acts or social action (FQS27), we do generally find these as parts of religious prototypes. In the case of Ghana, for example, we have prototype 4, Security-Oriented Altruist Believer, in the case of India prototype 6, Privately Religious and Socially Engaged and in the case of Sweden prototype 2 Confident and Committed Believer. There are, however, also exceptions. In Canada, prototype 4 has ranked the statement “Gives substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization or worthy cause” (FQS1) high and has been labeled Socially Engaged Open-Minded Altruist. This prototype expresses a positive interest in other people’s beliefs, embraces personal choice in matters of faith and cannot identify with the idea that religion should have political

influence. Another exception is the Turkish prototype 1, Socially Concerned Universalist. Also this prototype indicates a belief in all religious traditions pointing in the same direction, personal self-realization as a spiritual goal in life and little doubt in deeply held convictions. This seems to reflect the association between universalism and prosociality.

Taken together, the survey and the FQS indicate that prosocial attitudes and behaviors are fairly common among our participants, but we can also see that prosociality is configured differently from one context to another, and between prototypes. To what extent one associates prosociality with societal activism or religion divides people in general. Regarding our case studies, Turkey and Sweden, we find both differences and similarities. In both contexts, the statement “Actively works towards making the world a better place to live” (FQS51) is a consensus statement, ranked relatively high in all prototypes. In Sweden, we also find that the statement “Embraces an outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values” (FQS56) is ranked high, and two out of three Swedish prototypes seem to indicate a prosocial bend, while only one of the five Turkish prototypes does so. Still, in the case of Sweden, the statement that is so common to many prototypes “Is profoundly touched by the suffering of others” (FQS77) is ranked high in only one prototype. As a contrast, the statement that is highly ranked by most prototypes in Turkey is the statement “Expresses his or her religion primarily in charitable acts or social action (FQS27).

To further explore how and why young adults engage in prosocial behavior in the form of civic engagement and volunteering, we turn to the interviews from our two case studies.

10.5 Civic Engagement and Volunteering in Turkey and Sweden

The social structure in Turkey is in a process of rapid development, and the society is facing economic, political, and social challenges. Volunteering is an emerging social concept and not well established. Volunteer rights, for instance, are not defined in the Turkish legal system (Mathou, 2010). The relatively small number of NGOs in Turkey is another relevant issue, since it leads to an absence of channels for volunteering. Financial worries and the misperception of the volunteer’s role in society are also obstacles.

According to the Education Volunteers Foundation of Turkey, only 5% of the urban youth took part in volunteering activities, and this was seen as proof of the problematic image of volunteering in Turkey (TEGV, 2008). Another study shows that 66.9% of Turks have never participated in voluntary work in their lives. However, when voluntary work was done it happened in relation to education (49.2%), environment (26.8%), health (23.2%), and culture (18.4%) (Özel Sektör Gönüllüler Derneği, 2005). More recent studies also indicate low numbers of volunteering. According to the 2018 World Giving Index survey by Charities Aid

Foundation (CAF, 2018), only 9% of the population of Turkey are active in volunteering, 12% make donations to a civil society organization, and 40% help strangers in need. However, recent studies indicate that young people make up a considerable number of those who volunteer. According to a national report, most of the volunteers in Turkey are between the ages of 15 and 24 (TUSEV, 2014) which is reflected in the results from the YARG study.

The overall numbers for volunteering are low in Turkey, but it is necessary to draw attention to the distinction between formal and informal forms of volunteering. The data we can refer to is generally not based on informal forms of volunteering. In Turkey there are no comprehensive reliable statistics covering both formal and informal volunteering activities. This makes it difficult to identify what thematic issues the Turkish citizens are interested in, but the thematic distribution of non-governmental organizations gives some ideas. Sports organizations, religious groups and social service charities have a dominant position in the field, while rights-based organizations and support groups tend to rank relatively low.

When we turn to the case of Sweden, we find several relevant contrasting features. Sweden is known for its many voluntary associations with a comparatively high level of membership and participation. From an international perspective, “membership and activity levels are extraordinarily high” (Vogel et al., 2003, p. 3). However, studies have also pointed to a decline in both membership and activity, in particular among the younger generation and this may be an effect of changing values, but it can also be related to social change and that people enter work and family life later (Vogel et al., 2003). Regarding religiosity, research has found a small correlation between self-identifying as religious and volunteering (Grizzle, 2015; Gil-Lacruz et al., 2016). Regarding other aspects relating to the question of who volunteers, in Sweden, individuals with higher education are more likely to volunteer and take part in associational life, and so are men and married individuals (Vogel et al., 2003; Grizzle, 2015). For young people, attitudes, groups and peer pressure affect the likelihood of an individual to volunteer (Gil-Lacruz et al., 2016).

Because the Swedish welfare system guarantees extensive health care services, volunteering in these areas are unusual in Sweden. A study from 2004 (Sundeen & Raskoff, 2004) shows that the most common area for volunteering is sports (24.5%), followed by culture (10.6%), student associations (8.8%) and religious groups (5.1%). Other forms of volunteering are practiced by less than 5% of the studied group of young people ages 16–24.

What forms of civic engagement do young adults in Turkey and Sweden take part in? According to wave six of the World Values Survey (Inglehart et al., 2014), in Turkey, those 29 years old or younger report the following forms and amounts of active memberships (from highest to lowest): art, music and education 2.3%, political parties 2.2%, sports or recreation 2%, religious organizations 1.4%, environmental organizations 1.3%, self-help or mutual aid group 1.1%, charitable or humanitarian organizations 1%, labor groups 1%, other organizations 0.5%, professional organization 0.4% and consumer organizations 0.2%. For Sweden, the results are somewhat different: sport or recreation 24.4%, other organizations 15.5%, art, music and education 9.8%, labor movement 4.3%, charitable or humanitarian

organizations 3.9%, consumer organizations 3.9%, political parties 2.7%, church or religious organizations 1.8%, professional organizations 1.6% and self-help or mutual aid groups 1% and environmental organizations 0.6%.

Data from the YARG project does not provide us with exact numbers of group membership, but we do see some similar trends such as the ones coming out of WVS. In neither Turkey nor Sweden is religious group membership very important or given a lot of attention by the participants, but this is for different reasons. In the case of Sweden, some participants report belonging to the Church of Sweden, but this often more of traditional or family reasons, than for strictly religious ones. In the case of Turkey, reporting being religious is more common (4.3 on a scale from 0–10, compared to 2.04 for Sweden), but, membership as such is not the essential aspect. Although 37.18% report belonging to a religious group (compared to 16.16% for Sweden), religious group belonging as such does not come across as very essential in the interviews.

Looking at secular group membership, we also see both similarities and differences. In the case of Sweden, the most common groups are sport groups or groups related to sport activities, student groups or unions or groups related to student life and ideologically driven groups that work for the rights of, for example, animals or different minority groups. We come across the same kinds of groups in the Turkish interviews. However, among the Turkish participants, being active in ideologically driven groups sometimes with and sometimes without a connection to religion is much more common. Most common would seem to be activity involving working together with children.

As part of the YARG mixed method design, 37 interviews were conducted in Turkey and 30 interviews in Sweden. These were all recorded, transcribed, and translated into English. The interviews provide some further insights into volunteering in these two cases.

10.5.1 Volunteering for Religious/Spiritual Purposes

In general, volunteering linked to religion is more often discussed by the Turkish participants. Volunteering and social action are frequently described as a way of expressing religiosity or spirituality among the interviewees from Turkey, whereas this is less common in Sweden. The first citation below is from Turkey and points to civic engagement as “a fundamental cornerstone” of being religious, and the second is from Sweden and associates religion with being a servant:

That is to say, religiosity has been taught to me as being related to what you do and how beneficial you can be for the society, rather than how you worship and how you look in the appearance. And at the moment, this is the most fundamental cornerstone of my identity, and my religious faith. (YTRHE338)

Now for example there was a close, or not close but a friend in the congregation whose husband actually passed away. And then we all went and made sure she had food and didn't

need to think about that or her children. So a lot of those things. I don't know if it is thorough but I think it is still, that we, religious and spiritual people, that we serve. That is I think of being a servant then. (YSEJK017)

In the examples above, civic engagement is considered somewhat integral to being religious. In a similar vein, some Swedish participants also indicate that belonging to the Church of Sweden is for them a form of charity work:

It [being a member of the Church of Sweden] gives me the opportunity to influence an organization that still has a lot of power and influence. Plus that it is an organization that helps many people in society. (YSEJK014)

10.5.2 Volunteering as Advocacy Work

For young adults in both Turkey and Sweden, volunteering is also often an important form of advocacy work. It allows them to engage with subjects and issues they find essential, like in the following example from Turkey about working for gender equality:

Hmm, it was like the Association for Supporting Contemporary – to support the education of young girls or to support the working women. Mostly, an organization standing by the women and for the women while defending women's rights. [...] I mean, according to me, the women should reach the same place in a society as the men. There was a card in relevance actually. "Thinks that men and women are by nature intended for different roles." [FQS54] There are different roles but from a social point of view they should not be differentiated. (YTRHE135)

Compared to Turkey, the ideological issues one works for in Sweden, are less focused on the welfare of, for example, children and more on for example animal rights or different minority issues such as the rights of sexual minorities. The wish to change society and make an impact is, however, similar. In the following example, an interviewee explains how activism through an organization has started from individual values and choices.

But I've been a member of The Rights of Animals for a year. And it happened automatically when I chose to leave out animal food and cosmetics and clothes. And then it became natural also to join and support an organization that truly works actively. (YSEJK022)

10.5.3 Volunteering as Learning Activity

Participation in volunteering activities is known to offer individuals the chance to develop their talents, learn about teamwork, learn to organize, develop values and increase self-reliance (Mathou, 2010). This is also reflected in the interviews from both Turkey and from Sweden. Volunteering is generally described as a good learning path, like in the following citation:

The most important point that affects my future, for instance, during that process, I, um, hmm, when I went to the Affection Houses [...] I observe the children growing there, the later processes to come into their lives. I mean, how did it affect my life? For instance, it taught me that I should never abandon something I do half way through. If I am going there, then, I need to go. That person, I cannot create a bond with that person and then, leave. You see, the greatest effect was giving birth to this idea of “the things I do have to have consistency” was through being there. (YTRHE125)

On this point, the young Swedish adults report quite similar experiences, and underline how different forms of volunteering involve different skills. Particularly taking part in student organizations is seen as a good way of learning to engage with different people and learning how organizational life works, as in the following:

The engagement in student activities has maybe been more, yes but how you work with people, people with different, I'm from [name of town] to start with. Just to end up with people from all over Sweden has also led to me understanding more about how people have different backgrounds and come with different things. (YSEJK014)

Some interviewees also specifically report how taking part in some voluntary activities is done with their future professional life in mind, or how it has inspired them to incorporate what they are doing with their career.

I like talking about sexually transmitted diseases, menstruation, gender, sexuality and so on. And since there are no bachelor courses in sexology, I have to study other things and talk about it during my leisure time. So my engagement is entirely to do with what I see myself doing in the future. (YSEJK026)

10.5.4 Health/Well-Being Dimension of Volunteering

According to several respondents, participation in formal volunteering contributes to a number of well-being outcomes, and some report experiencing a sense of belonging by becoming involved in volunteering activities and associations. Diverse mechanisms are proposed by the Turkish respondents to explain the positive well-being effects of their own volunteering activity.

I mean, I think if I lose my spirituality, or if I lose making these, my sensitivity, it seems to me as if I cannot be a human being {LG}. [...] I mean, I sleep in peace that day. I sleep happily. Or, how to explain, I mean, to touch them is a very beautiful feeling. You see, you feel how lucky you are. But, you also feel that you are creating a chance for them, too. (YTRHE125)

In the Swedish interviews too, volunteering is related to well-being. Many talk about the joy of getting to engage with different people, as already indicated in some of the quotes above. There is also clearly a joy to be found in engaging with people who share one's interests and concerns, or becoming emotionally touched. This is well reflected in the two following examples, first one from Sweden, followed by an example from Turkey:

It's such a relief. It's the world's best group. It, we talk about a joint interest and there is just a lot of nice people. Nothing unpleasant. It is such a relief. (YSEJK021)

I mean, I like helping someone. That is how it makes me feel good. You see, you feel that you can touch people there. That is how. For example, last year, as the Red Crescent Club, we used to visit the children who were being treated for leucemia at L Ö S E V. You see, just to give a hug to them, even just to say “We are here” used to make me unbelievably happy. (YTRHE143)

10.5.5 Volunteering as Making Leisure Time Meaningful

Volunteerism among young adults in the studied sample is frequently reported as a leisure time activity. This aspect is not necessarily characterized by being very devoted or engaged. Rather, like in the following example, volunteering in order to make leisure time meaningful is maybe more about occasional activities than regular commitment:

When you become a member of something, you have to keep doing it. See, you have to organize this activity, do this, or do that. This is nonsense, you see. You do it if you want to. If someone approaches me directly like “Oh, well, we have such and such, would you like to help?” I would say “Of course! Willingly!” But, I would not organize it in that way; the same things month after month. I cannot do this. I would not want to. (YTRHE127)

The interviewees also bring up volunteering as an alternative way of making good use of the time left from other priorities, like in the following example where volunteering seems to add value to leisure time:

During the first year I had attended the university, in a very intense, um, with the intention of “I must do stuff, I must make good use of my leisure time, I must do something to be beneficial to humanity”. (YTRHE338)

10.5.6 Reasons for Not Volunteering

Not all of the young adults interviewed for this study engage in civic engagement or volunteering. We cannot of course always find reasons as to why people choose not to do something, but some interviewees shed some light on this. In some cases, like in the following example from Turkey, a lack of engagement follows from lack of time, and that studies require a lot from the interviewees. From the second example that comes from an interview conducted in Sweden, we can learn that also a general lack of motivation is a relevant factor.

I have not had a chance to participate so far. Last year was my period of getting used to things. It was a bit hard for me to get accustomed to things. The studies were a little too hard for me. (YTRHE099)

No, unfortunately I don’t do anything, any ideological work. It demands an effort for me to just make up my mind to do and then look up an activity. And I kind of haven’t done that. (YSEJK023)

The interviews reflect that volunteering also takes different forms depending on the social and cultural context. For instance, religion plays a more important part in Turkey, whereas secular ideologies are more on the surface in Sweden. For both groups though, and in line with previous research (e.g. Hustinx & Lammentyn, 2003; Holdsworth & Brewis, 2013), we see volunteering as mainly being essential from a personal perspective. Taken together, the interviews highlight a number of reasons why people get involved in voluntary work. They also give voice to an obvious wish to help others, and this, at the same time, means something to the volunteers themselves. Whilst one recognizes the good in working for society in general, this is not the sole driving point. Volunteering is a manifestation of what one finds personally meaningful.

10.6 Concluding Comments

The aim of this chapter was to provide a general overview of how prosocial attitudes and behaviors are reflected in the data from the YARG-project. There are several limitations to this study, such as survey samples, and we cannot make definite conclusions or generalizations. Yet, prosociality is manifest in different ways through the mixed method approach, and as a result, this chapter has been able to address the multifaceted character of prosociality, civic engagement and volunteering and make some observations.

On a general level, we can underline that although not all young adults in our study do express prosocial attitudes or engage in prosocial behaviors, many still do. Being touched by the suffering of others, helping someone who you are not close to, and working towards making the world a better place are all essential to many of our participants. Hopefully, one can see this as fundamental to the well-being and resilience of a society.

All our participants are university students, and our observation that prosociality, civic engagement and volunteering often form important parts of their lives is, like many other points we have made, in line with previous research. Education is a relevant background factor. We have also pointed to a link between prosociality in the form of volunteering and general values, such as benevolence and universalism. Being female, being brought up in a religious family, and practicing religion in private were also associated with higher odds of prosocial behavior. In contrast, 'seeing oneself as religious' was associated with lower odds, and so was a higher family income. Those who participate in prosocial behavior held power as a value to a lower regard than those who do not volunteer.

Our results confirm that socioeconomic status, gender, and basic values are all important in general, but the extent to which people associate prosociality with religion or societal activism seems to divide them and seems to distinguish world-views from one another. Yet, it is important to avoid simplifications and, in contrast, approach these issues in a nuanced way. Being religious, secular or spiritual can be configured differently individually, culturally and societally, and such differences

seem to be essential also to the level of prosociality and how it is expressed. Hence, we want to emphasize the complexity at play in prosociality, civic engagement and volunteering and that this requires us to be attentive to contextual differences and how they change. Previous research has highlighted that prosocial behavior is changing. Social media, for one thing, is having a clear impact on how young people express civic engagement and take part in volunteering (Gökce & Sjö, 2020): prosocial views can today easily be expressed via online campaigns and ‘clicking’. As argued in previous research, today’s young adults may be more committed to personal needs and less likely to engage in organizations and groups (e.g. Smith & Snell, 2009), but this does not necessarily entail less prosociality. It might simply be a result of our inability to measure new and different ways to think and engage. Future research will need to look broadly at volunteering, meaning that the ambition has to be to capture complexity and variations, both formal and informal aspects within and outside organizations.

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Chapter 11

Conservative and Liberal Values in Relation to Religiosity



Nurit Novis-Deutsch , Ariela Keysar , Benny Beit-Hallahmi ,
Slawomir Sztajer , Maria Klingenberg , and Thea Piltzecker

Abstract The conservative versus the liberal conflict currently seems to be prevalent in Western societies. This chapter tests the association between conservative and liberal worldviews and basic human values: conservation values (CONS) versus values we term “liberal attitude values” (LA). We explore their association to each other, to religiosity, and to social policy attitudes. We first explore these associations in the full Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG) sample, and then focus on three samples from countries that have recently experienced a liberal-conservative political polarization: Poland, Israel (Jewish sample), and the United States. The contribution of the YARG data is in the ability to present a more nuanced view of this dimension, with an emphasis on its relation to religiosity. Our intention is to unpack the conservative and the liberal worldviews in order to explore the elements that each of them promotes and to identify variance within national contexts, shifting the liberal-conservative dichotomy to a culturally-nuanced spectrum.

Keywords Conservative versus liberal attitudes · Values · Religiosity · Ideology · Social policy attitudes · Young adults · Cross-cultural design

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P. Nynäs et al. (eds.), *The Diversity Of Worldviews Among Young Adults*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94691-3_11

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11.1 Introduction

In contemporary Western countries, the liberal-conservative worldview distinction is so prominent and ubiquitous that it is often referred to as a “culture war” (Flanagan & Lee, 2003; Frimer et al., 2014, p. 1205). Some political scientists argue that much of the political tensions of the world boil down to a struggle between liberal and conservative worldviews, also termed “left” and “right” (Noël & Thérien, 2008).¹ In recent years, this polarization has intensified in the United States and in Europe (Abramowitz & Saunders, 2005; Jost, 2006). This distinction is further reflected in voting patterns, economic policies and foreign policies as well as in attitudes to arms control, environmentalism, gay marriage, abortion and euthanasia (Kriesi et al., 2012).

In trying to uncover the roots of the conservative-liberal divide, two important concepts surface: values and religiosity. Values underlie all ideologies and worldviews (Schwartz, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2010), while religions direct worldviews (Hood et al., 2009). What, then, is the relation between conservative and liberal attitudes, value constructs and religiosity among university students worldwide today?

We begin by describing some of the main theoretical perspectives about the conservative-liberal divide. We then shift to the theory of Basic Human Values (Schwartz, 2007, 2012, 2017) and compare conservatism, liberalism and religiosity to value constructs within that theory. Next, we report the results of an analysis of liberal and conservative attitudes, religiosity and value constructs in the full Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG) sample ($N = 4964$), followed by an analysis of qualitative data for three groups which represent those national contexts where the conservative-liberal divide is salient: Americans ($n = 299$), Polish ($n = 295$), and Jewish Israelis ($n = 328$) (for more on YARG, see Chap. 1 of this volume).

11.2 Juxtaposing the Conservative and Liberal Worldviews

The crucial rift between conservative and liberal worldviews has been analyzed through various disciplinary lenses. In a philosophical nutshell, liberalism is a response to modernity involving first and foremost a commitment to liberty, which is seen as normatively basic, and implies that any restrictions on it must be justified. This view is based on a positive view of humanity, implying that if people are given

¹In some countries, such as the United States and the UK, there is a preference for using “conservative/ liberal” in survey questions while most European countries prefer the left/right distinction. Often the two sets of terms are used interchangeably, with “right” mapping onto “conservative” and “left” mapping onto “liberal” (Caprara et al., 2017). We follow Schwartz (2018) in preferring the terms “conservative/liberal” because of their broader range and because the meaning of left-right in former communist countries differs from its meaning in the West and is at times reversed or ambiguous.

maximal freedom to develop themselves, they will thrive, and so will society. The good life, in this view, is that which is chosen freely by the individual.

Liberalism ranges from a comprehensive philosophical/ideological way of viewing the world to a political stance. In this chapter, we will refer to the former as a “liberal ideology” and to the latter as a “liberal political attitude”, although the two are closely interconnected. While the importance of liberty is liberalism’s core belief, it also includes a range of political visions (Gaus et al., 2018), sometimes at odds with each other. For example, those who adhere to “classical liberalism” focus on the right to autonomy, while “liberal egalitarians” endorse civil and personal liberties and social justice. However, all liberals tend to share an emphasis on freedom, equality, autonomy, choice and tolerance.

Conservatism is another response to modernity, which appeals to experience and authority rather than to human reason alone, putting its faith in family, private property and traditions. It opposes ideologically-driven change, and in that sense, its polar opposite is revolutionism rather than liberalism (Hamilton, 2016). Conservatism can be reactionary or moderate and is not so much a philosophy as a drive to preserve stability and ‘the way things are’ (Oakeshott, 1991). The conservative worldview holds a darker view of human nature, considering people to be selfish and weak, and maintaining that society needs to rely on experience, institutional authority, traditions and rules in order to maintain social order (Kekes, 1997). Reliance on reason, ideology, abstract values and utopian visions are considered to have dangerous consequences. Concrete, specific and time-honored political arrangements are preferred; duties are emphasized over rights (Hamilton, 2016). There are various flavors to political conservatism, ranging from endorsing a hierarchical social order, to supporting a skeptical and responsible democracy, and involving a pragmatic rejection of ideology per-se in the European context, or a coherent ideology as in the case of American libertarianism or neo-conservatism (ibid.) Despite these differences, all conservatives tend to support continuity, tradition and social stability.²

Some researchers claim that conservatism-liberalism is a unidimensional continuum (Jost, 2006), at the heart of which lies the importance of freedom. These researchers point to the fact that this single construct predicts voting patterns in multiple locations (ibid). Others argue that these are two separate dimensions, negatively but not fully correlated, as attested by the fact that some philosophers (e.g. Hegel) have attempted to synthesize them (Hamilton, 2016) and by the finding that bi-dimensional political spaces exist in many countries, often setting apart economic and cultural attitudes (Bornschier, 2010; Feldman & Johnston, 2014). This means that it is possible, although unusual, to be both conservative and liberal (Barnea & Schwartz, 1998). For this paper, we will treat the two constructs as related but separate, rather than assume them to be diametric opposites.

²It is worth noting that when considering conservatism and liberalism as ideologies, some researchers argue that the role of ideology in people’s lives and behaviors is minimal and inconsistent (Converse, 2000). For these researchers the leading question becomes: what directs political choices in specific contexts, issues and times? (Carney et al., 2008).

11.3 Liberalism, Conservatism, Religiosity and Values

The difference between conservative and liberal ideologies could be considered in terms of value priorities. As noted, conservatism connotes stability, tradition, respect for authority and continuity. Liberalism highlights freedom, equality, autonomy, tolerance and choice. Using the theory of Basic Human Values (Schwartz, 2007, 2012, 2017), we find that all types of values may be politically relevant depending on context (Barnea & Schwartz, 1998), but typically, conservative ideologies and right-wing political attitudes (Aspelund et al., 2013) are positively correlated with values of tradition, conformity and security. Studies have also found positive correlations between liberal ideologies, self-direction and universalism values in all countries, except in Eastern Europe (Caprara et al., 2017, 2018).

Studies consistently find that religious people tend to be more conservative politically and support existing social arrangements rather than new ones. In one large-scale study of the extent to which religiosity accounted for ideological orientations (Caprara et al., 2018), religiosity was consistently related to right and conservative ideologies in 15 of 16 countries, across religions. Religion has been found to play a bigger political role in politically or ethnically fractionalized societies, with religiously unaffiliated individuals being more tolerant in politics and social attitudes than religious ones (Van der Brug et al., 2009).

Moving on to religion and values, several studies have found a positive correlation between religiosity and values of tradition and conformity (e.g. Saroglou et al., 2004). However, a large recent study (Caprara et al., 2018) also found that after controlling for basic personal values, the contribution of religiosity on ideology was significant and substantial only in countries where religion has played a prominent role in the public sphere, (e.g. Poland, Israel, United States). To date, Caprara's study is the only one which directly examined the three-way relation between values, religiosity and ideology. Although it is large and robust ($N = 8825$, 16 countries), there are several reasons for testing the value/religiosity/ideology relation with another dataset: (1) Caprara's study used only direct self-reports for religiosity and for conservatism-liberalism. Our study uses both direct and indirect scales for these constructs and measures religious belonging and religious practice as well as self-defined levels of religiosity. (2) Caprara's (2018) study used the older 10-value circle. Our study used the recently updated and globally validated 19-value model (Schwartz, 2012) which is said to have "greater universal heuristic and predictive power." (ibid, p. 664); 3) Caprara's study surveyed the general population. Our study, which targeted young adult university students and included a qualitative component, allows us to consider the role of the university campus climate on the relationships which we are testing.

11.4 Method and Research Questions

Participants were the full YARG study sample ($N = 4964$). All participants were active students at the time of the study.

As an indicator of liberal/conservative social ideology, we constructed a “Social policy attitudes” 7-item measure, eliciting attitudes towards same-sex marriage, adoption, abortion under different circumstances, euthanasia and assisted suicide. The reliability of the scale was good (Cronbach’s alpha = .85).

We used the PVQ-5X to measure participants’ values but aggregated the value scores in a novel manner. The 19 values of the Schwartz Theory of Basic Values are typically construed as two sets of higher-order values: conservation values versus openness to change values and self-enhancement versus self-transcendence values (Schwartz, 2012; see Fig. 11.1). For this study, we devised a new way of grouping some of Schwartz’s values. The values which we propose as reflecting liberal attitudes include two of the *Openness to change* values, namely, self-direction-thought and self-direction-action, and two self-transcendence values – Universalism-concern and Universalism-tolerance. We make this suggestion based on the core values of liberalism – freedom, equality and autonomy – and previous findings of consistent positive correlations between these values and liberal attitudes.

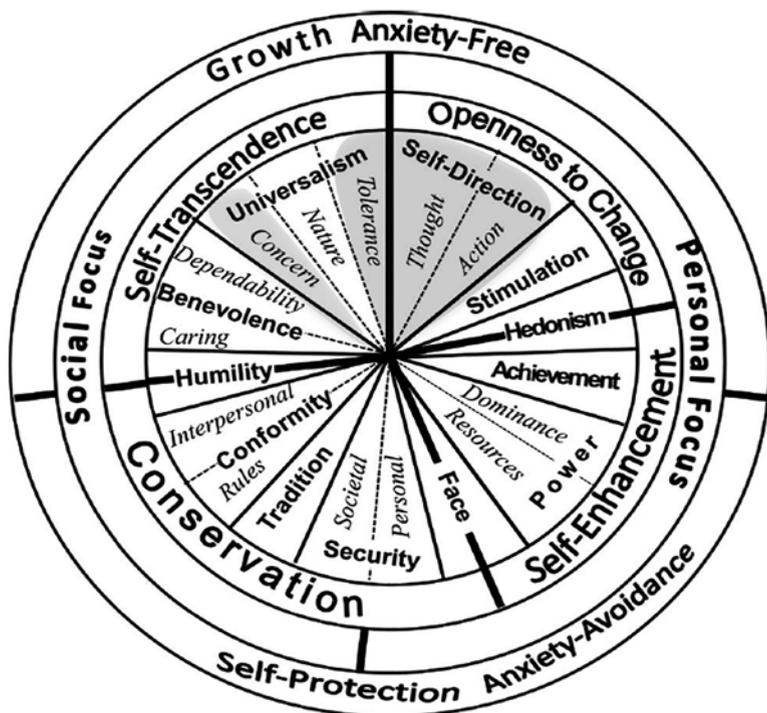


Fig. 11.1 The 19 values in the refined values theory. (Note. Reproduced from Schwartz, 2012, p. 669 with new higher-order LA highlighted)

For each participant, we averaged the z-scores of the tradition, conformity and security values to obtain a “Conservation” score (henceforth: CONS). We averaged the z-scores of self-direction values and of universalism-tolerance and universalism-concern values to obtain a “Liberal attitude” score (henceforth: LA).

We used four measures of religiosity: *Religious belonging* was measured dichotomously by the question: Do you consider yourself as belonging to one or more religious groups, communities, or traditions? (Yes/No). *Personal religiosity* was measured on a 0–10 scale by the question: regardless of whether you consider yourself as belonging or close to a particular religious group, community, or tradition, how religious would you say you are? *Religious practice* was measured by averaging two questions:

- Apart from special occasions such as weddings and funerals, about how often do you take part in religious ceremonies or services these days?
- Apart from when you are at religious ceremonies or services, how often do you engage in private religious or spiritual practices, such as worship, praying, or meditation?

Finally, *religious change* was measured by recording the normalized difference between each participant’s rating of personal religiosity, and their reported level of religiosity of the home in which they grew up.

Our study addressed the following two questions:

- How do social policy attitudes relate to religiosity and to value preference and what is the added explanatory power of each variable in predicting conservative or liberal ideological orientations?
- How do these variables and the relations between them vary as a function of national and cultural context?

For question 2, we also used a subsample of the YARG respondents who completed in-depth interviews about their own religious subjectivities. Analyzing the interview transcripts from Poland, United States and Israel, we asked how conservative and/or liberal worldviews interact with their religious beliefs, practices and belonging.

11.5 Findings

11.5.1 *Religiosity in the YARG Sample by 4 Indices*

35% ($n = 1714$) of all YARG participants considered themselves as belonging to a religious group, community or tradition, and 66% ($n = 3250$) did not consider themselves as belonging to any of these. In terms of personal religiosity, on a scale of 0 (not at all religious) to 10 (very religious), participants averaged 3.93 ($SD = 2.93$). In terms of religious practice (both public and private), on a scale ranging from 1

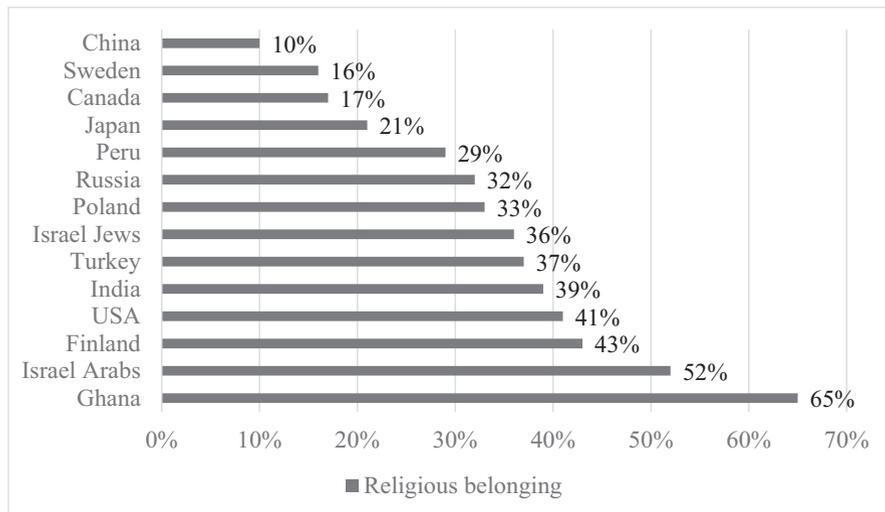


Fig. 11.2 Religious belonging by country/ethnicity

(never practice) to 7 (daily religious practice), participants averaged 3.03 ($SD = 1.76$). When considering the difference between family of origin religiosity and personal current religiosity, the trans-national average was -1.06 ($SD = 2.60$), meaning that on average, these students estimated themselves as being somewhat less religious than their family of origin.

All of these indices vary a great deal depending on country and cultural group. Figure 11.2 lists the percentage of those belonging to religious groups/traditions by country or ethnicity (in the case of Israel), showing a great variation from the most religious in our sample – Ghana (65%) and Israeli Arabs (52%) – to the least religious – Sweden (16%) and China (10%).

Figure 11.3 lists the other 3 religious indices by country or ethnicity. Again, Ghana and Israeli Arabs express the most religiosity while Sweden expresses the least.

11.5.2 Social Policy Attitudes and their Distribution by Country

Overall, on a scale of 1 (low liberal attitudes) to 5 (high liberal attitudes) participants averaged 3.69 ($SD = 1.04$). Figure 11.4 ranks countries/ethnicities by social policy attitudes showing that here too, students from Ghana and Israeli Arabs scored the lowest on liberal ideology in contrast with students from Sweden.

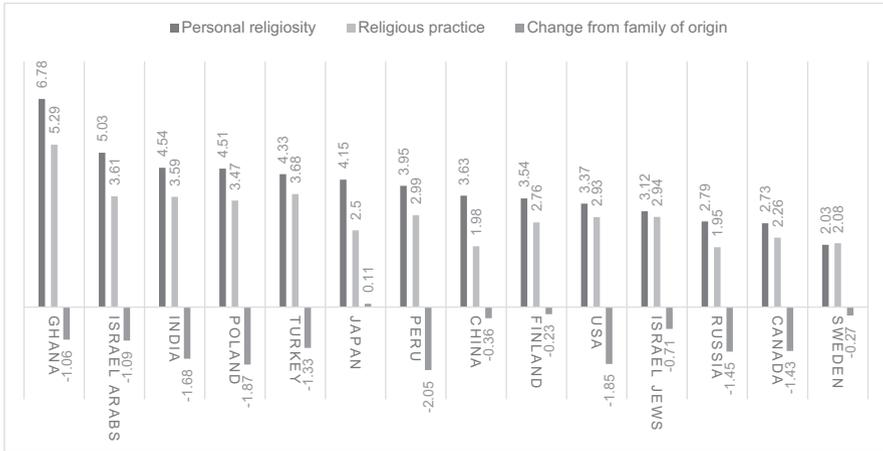


Fig. 11.3 Indices of religiosity and religious change by country/ethnicity

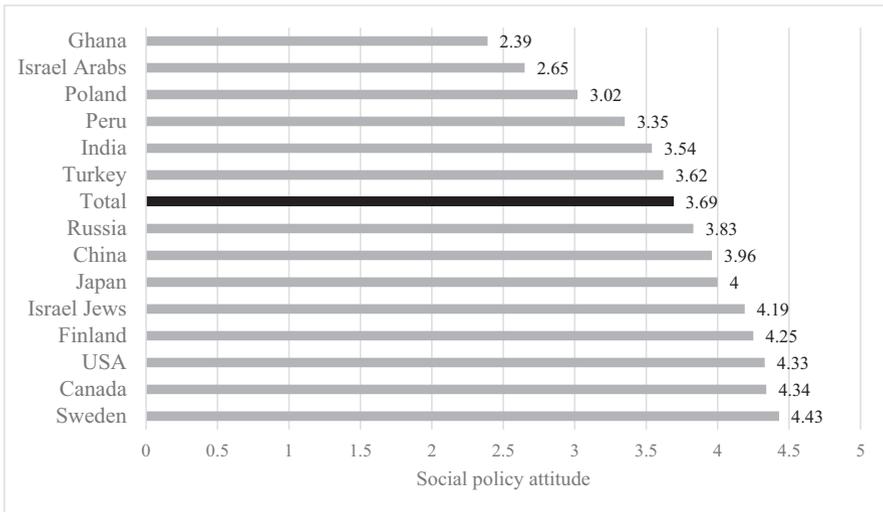


Fig. 11.4 Social policy attitudes by country/ethnicity

11.5.3 Value Patterns Relating to Conservatism and Liberalism and Distribution by Country

While country samples differed by mean level of CONS values, overall, the entire sample did not rank them highly; 11 of the 14 groups ranked them below the mean value ranking. Figure 11.5 presents the average conservation value z-scores by country from highest to lowest.

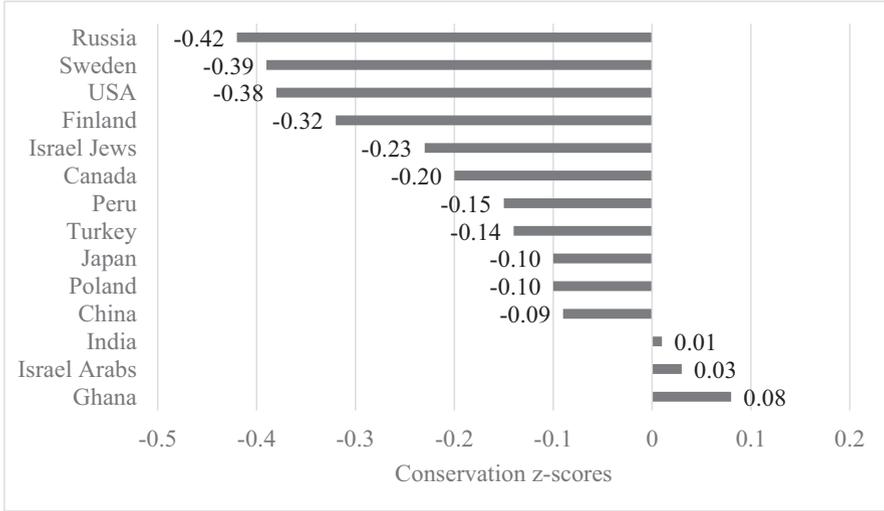


Fig. 11.5 Conservation z-scores – mean by country

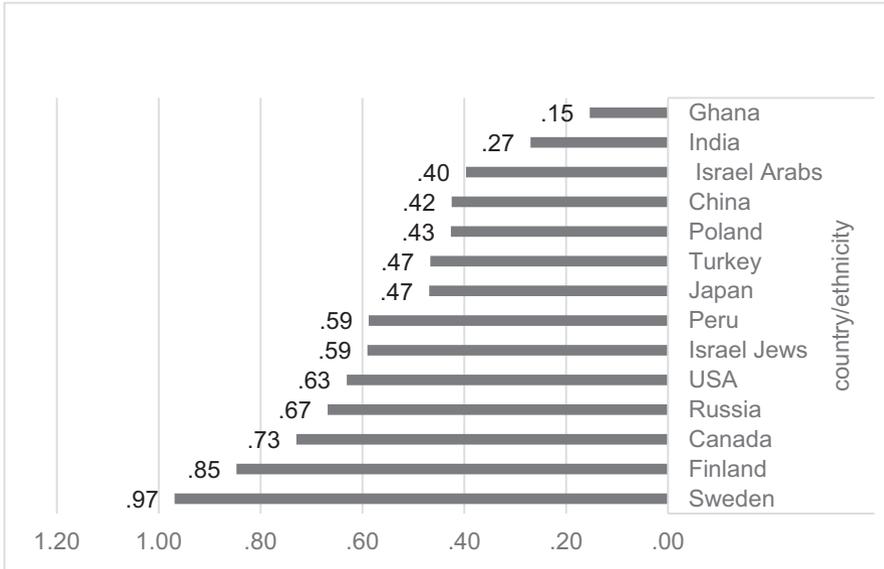


Fig. 11.6 Liberal attitude (LA) z-scores – mean by country

Country samples also differed in the mean ranking of LA values (the average z-scores of Universalism-tolerance, Universalism-concern, Self-direction-thought and Self-direction-action). Figure 11.6 presents the average LA value scores by country from highest to lowest.

11.5.4 The Relation Between CONS Values, LA Values and Social Ideology

Overall, CONS values ($M = -.17$, $SD = .42$) were significantly ($p < .001$) lower than LA values ($M = .55$, $SD = .52$), indicating a general preference among participants for liberalism and openness over conservation values. This might be related to participants' age, as this study examined young adults. Multiple value studies have found a negative correlation between age and openness to change values, and a positive one between age and conservation values (see summary in Milfont et al., 2016). Age, cohort and period effects are easily confounded, however, and it is possible that the preference for liberal values should be attributed to a cohort or period effect, since this study specifically targets the Y-generation (for more on age and cohort effects, see Chap. 2 in this volume), which has been found to place high value on choice and change (Pinzaru et al., 2016). A third possibility is that this effect is a function of education, specifically of the liberal campus climate, reflecting the fact that participants were on-campus when they participated in the study. Some studies have found that education level is a stronger predictor of liberal attitudes than age (Dassonneville, 2016), while others find larger correlations for age and values than for education and values (Schwartz, 2007), so it is difficult to determine the best explanation for this pattern in our data.

LA values negatively correlated with CONS values ($r = -.54$, $p < .001$), indicating that the values underlying liberalism and conservatism differ significantly. However, the data support our argument that the opposite of conservatism is not liberalism but change (in political terms, revolution; Hamilton, 2016). The highest negative correlation with conservation values at $r = -.72$ ($p < .001$) was with Openness to Change values (OTCH, made up of Self-direction, stimulation and hedonism values). This is as expected by Schwartz's model, indicating that while Liberalism and Conservatism are negatively correlated, they are not two polarities of the same construct.

As Table 11.1 indicates, the social policy attitude measure showed a stronger correlation to LA values ($r = .38$, $p < .001$) than to OTCH values ($r = .33$, $p < .001$), although both were significant. There was a significant negative correlation between social ideology and conservation values ($r = -.40$, $p < .001$).

11.5.5 Values and Religiosity Along the Liberal-Conservative Divide

Religiosity was found to relate significantly ($p < .001$) to LA and CONS value patterns. Those belonging to a religious group or tradition endorsed CONS values more ($-.08$ vs. $-.22$), endorsed LA values less (.47 versus .60), and had a lower score on the social policy attitude index (3.2 versus 3.9), all significant at the $p < .001$ level.

Table 11.1 Correlations between groups of values and the social policy measure

Correlations								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. LA Liberal Attitudes values	–							
2. SOC social ideology	.38**	–						
3. OTCH Openness to Change	.53**	.33**	–					
4. CONS Conservation	–.54**	–.40**	–.72**	–				
5. STRA Self-Transcendence	.58**	.21**	–.03*	–.22**	–			
6. SENH Self-Enhancement	–.50**	–.02	.06**	–.19**	–.74**	–		
7. SOCIAL Social Focus	.13**	–.13**	–.52**	.48**	.68**	–.83**	–	
8. PERSONAL Personal Focus	–.13**	.13**	.52**	–.48**	–.68**	.83**	–1.00**	–

Note. **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Personal religiosity correlated positively with CONS values ($r = .36, p < .001$), negatively with LA values ($r = -.26, p < .001$), and negatively with liberal social policy attitudes ($r = -.52, p < .001$). The religiosity of family of origin showed the same patterns and magnitudes of correlation.

Religious practice correlated positively with conservation values ($r = .30, p < .001$), strongly negatively with Liberal Attitude values ($r = -.54, p < .001$), and negatively with the social policy attitude index ($r = -.23, p < .001$).

An interesting picture emerged when we examined religious change. Religious conservation means preserving the family religious tradition and continuing to believe in and practice the religious rituals of one's childhood (Beit-Hallahmi, 2015). Most YARG students hold on to their upbringing, whether religious or non-religious. When dividing the sample into "religious" (anyone who rated their religiosity as higher than 3 on a 0–10 scale) and "non-religious" (those who rated their religiosity as 0–2 on a 0–10 scale), more than half (57%) were raised as religious and continued to be religious, while 19% were raised as non-religious and continued to be non-religious. About one-quarter of the students altered their level of religiosity; most of these 'religious changers' became less religious as young adults (19% of the YARG sample), while 5% became more religious.

Religious changing, one would argue, reflects openness to change more than concern for conservation. However, the direction of religious change matters. In societies that are becoming more secular, switching from non-religious to religious means going against the grain. This is especially the case for university students who become religious, since most universities in the countries surveyed are liberal-secular. The opposite direction, namely switching from religious to non-religious, may express a clash between one's religious upbringing and a conformity to broader societal secular norms. All of this raises the question of CONS and LA values among the group of students who made changes in the direction of higher religiosity.

We found that currently non-religious students are lowest in CONS and highest in LA values. Their upbringing, whether religious or non-religious, does not seem to matter: The non-religious changers (who used to be religious) are almost identical to those who were always non-religious: high in LA, low in CONS. Those who

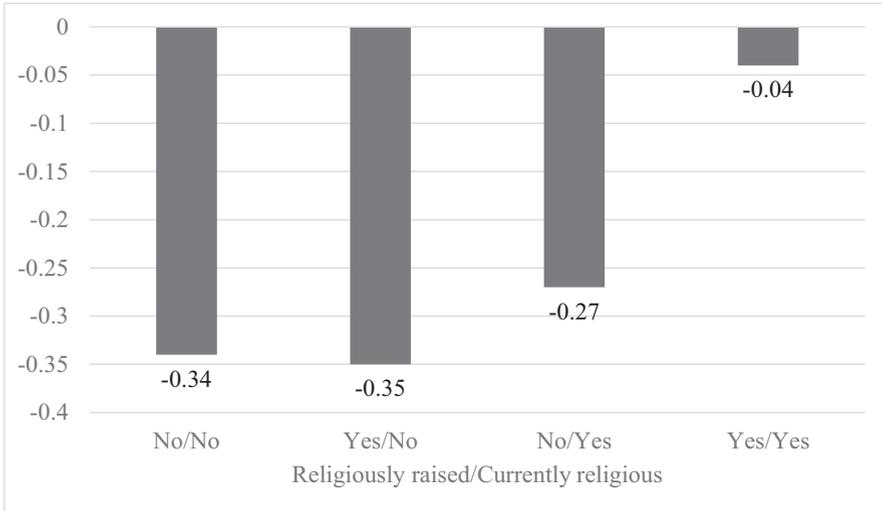


Fig. 11.7 Conservation z-scores (CONS), as a function of respondents being religiously raised (yes/no) and currently religious (yes/no)*
 * No/No born non-religious, currently non-religious, Yes/No born religious, currently non-religious, No/Yes born non-religious, currently religious, Yes/Yes born religious, currently religious

were raised religious and continue to be religious are highest in CONS and lowest in LA values, as would be expected. The most intriguing group, however, is that of students who were not raised religious, but are currently religious. One might expect them to conform to the religious norm of high CONS and low in LA, yet the very fact that they switched – and swam against the tide – could mean that they are low in conservation. Which is it?

We found that those who were not raised religious but are currently religious score fairly low in CONS and fairly high in LA. In other words, they are closer in their value priorities to the non-religious than to the religious (see Figs. 11.7 and 11.8).

11.5.6 Regression Analyses

We conducted a series of linear regression models to evaluate the effects of gender, values and religiosity on the social policy attitude index. In the first step, religiosity (three different measures) is the dependent variable while gender is the independent one. In the second step, liberal values (LA), and Conservation values (CONS), each separately, are the dependent variable with religiosity and gender being the independent ones. In the third step, the Social Policy Attitudes Index is the dependent variable, while all the others are tested as independent variables. Figure 11.9 presents the regression model for LA values and Fig. 11.10 presents the model for the CONS values.

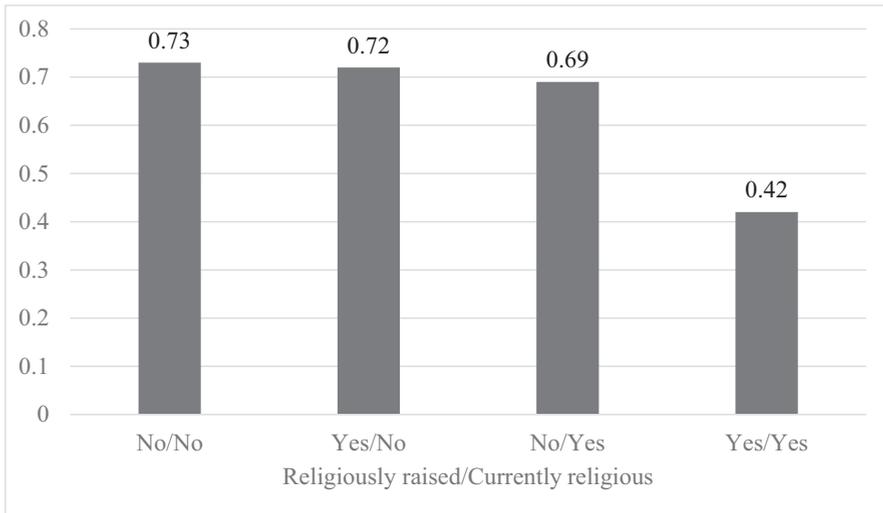
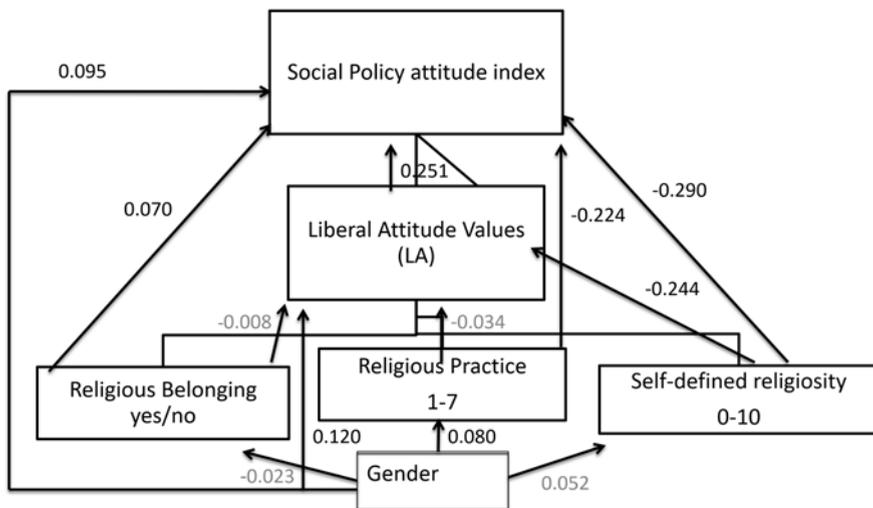


Fig. 11.8 Liberal attitude (LA) z-scores as a function of respondents being religiously raised (yes/no) and currently religious (yes/no)*
 * No/No born non-religious, currently non-religious, Yes/No born religious, currently non-religious, No/Yes born non-religious, currently religious, Yes/Yes born religious, currently religious



Standardized Coefficients are highly significant at 0.001 level; coefficients in gray are not significant

Fig. 11.9 Regression analysis model for overall YARG students – Liberal attitude values

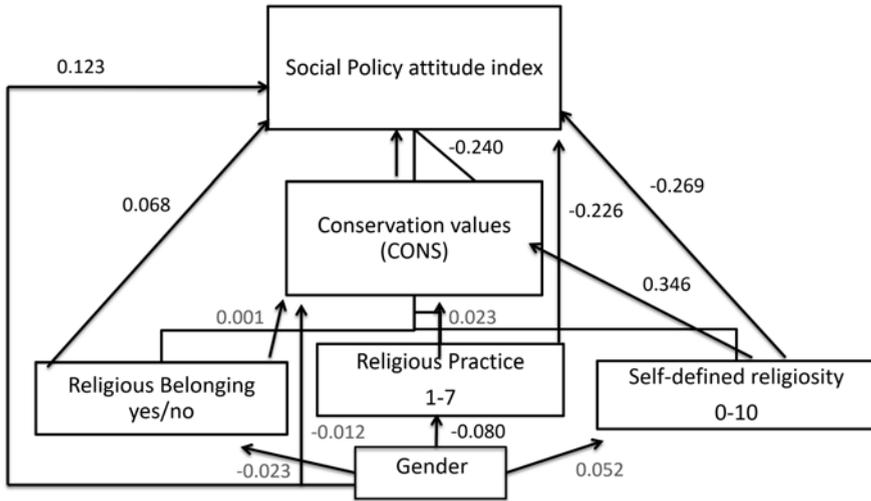


Fig. 11.10 Regression analysis model for overall YARG students – Conservation values

As both models indicate, there is no discernible effect of gender on the paths delineated beyond a low direct effect on social policy attitudes. However, there are both direct and indirect significant effects of religiosity on social policy attitudes. The most powerful effects of religiosity are expressed when it is measured as a personal self-report construct, followed closely by religious practice, and least of all, in terms of religious belonging. This might reflect the fact that religious belonging was defined here extremely broadly. It includes not only those who belong to specific religious communities or houses of worship, but also those who consider themselves as belonging nominally to a religious tradition.

When considering religious self-rating and religious practice, we see the same patterns emerge for both CONS and LA attitudes: Religiosity affects social policy attitudes directly, explaining about 38% of the variance. It also affects social policy attitudes indirectly, via each of the value sets CONS and LA. Self-reported religiosity has a stronger indirect effect than does religious practice. This is true for both CONS and LA models.

In the combined regression model (Fig. 11.11), we focus on religious self-identification. We first controlled for gender, then added religiosity to the model (0–10, centered), followed by both value constructs - CONS and LA (centered). Next, we added the interactions between religiosity and CONS, and between religiosity and LA. Our outcome variable was the social policy attitude scale (centered).

Altogether, this model explained 36% of the variance in the data ($df = 4891$, $p < .001$). Adding each of the 3 steps was highly significant, but effect sizes varied: religiosity explained 28% of the variance, values explained a further 8% and the interaction added another 0.6%. There were direct and indirect effects: religiosity has a strong direct effect on social policy ($\beta = -0.42$, $p < .001$), and it also had

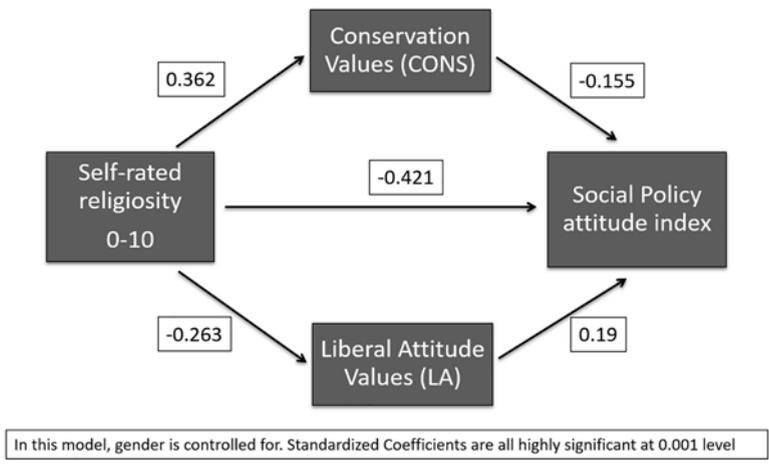


Fig. 11.11 Combined and simplified regression model

powerful direct effects on CONS values ($\beta = 0.36, p < .001$) and on LA values ($\beta = -0.24, p < .001$). However, there was also an indirect effect of religiosity on social policy attitudes via the two value sets ($\beta = -0.64, p < .001$). This means that 15% of the effect of religion on social policy is explained via the mediating effect of CONS and LA values. Both value sets also had a significant direct effect on social policy attitudes (for LA values $\beta = 0.19, p < .001$; for CONS values $\beta = -0.16, p < .001$). Finally, there was a small but significant interaction effect for religiosity by CONS values ($\beta = 0.07, t = -5.58, p < .001$) which means that when people are more religious, conservation values negatively impact their social attitude policy more than they do when people are less religious. The interaction effect of LA values and religiosity on social policy attitudes was not significant.

11.5.7 Case Studies and Qualitative Data

While the overall pattern in the YARG study was the one described above, individual countries exhibited important variations on the theme. In the following section we will analyze patterns in three cultural contexts: Israel (Jewish Israelis), Poland and the United States. These countries have been experiencing some of most active tensions today between liberals and conservatives. The three micro-analyses of case studies are based on interviews and focus on how liberal/conservative attitudes are expressed in the lives and narratives of college students.

(a) Case Study 1: The United States

In the United States, most university students leave home for the first time at age 17 or 18. This physical distancing from their home is indicative of a social distancing

as well. While living away from their families, students are able to form their own views and interact with many different perspectives. Forging peer groups along new lines of thought – political, religious, or otherwise – is an essential part of the American university experience, and one that often puts them into conflict with their home communities in some way.

Most participants who described this transition as dramatic, shifted from a religious family background to an agnostic personal practice. A participant who grew up in the African-American Baptist tradition explained:

It's been a big shift altogether, like, especially coming from the South. Everyone in my high school went to church, even the people who weren't religious went to church. [...] So it's been a very big change from having everyone know at least something about God or in some sense believe in God, going from that to people being, 'God is not real, God is dead.' (YUSTP054).

This participant expressed both relief and discomfort at the chance to forge her own religious practice away from her home congregation. Another participant said:

This campus is very atheist, so I guess that kind of rubbed off on me, no one else was religious, at least anyone that I encountered at the time. So I just was with everyone else. (YUSTP040)

For some religious students, the liberal campus climate is challenging. For others, it expanded their horizons and enabled them to discard traditional values. American students scored high on endorsing choice and change. One student declared: "I'm pro-everything. Pro-whatever you want to be, people of America" (YUSTP042).

College was also a chance for some non-religious participants to explore religiosity:

I was just raised totally non-religious, and that was just never a part of my life, it wasn't something I thought about in relation to myself. [...] But I also have recently felt some sort of, like, stronger connection, and had some experiences that definitely have changed how I'm thinking about religion. And like, I don't call myself religious, but I just – yeah, I guess I just really don't know where I stand right now. And that's definitely changing. (YUSTP015).

In many ways, the American pattern reflects a heightened version of the overall YARG student pattern in relation to religious change: those who became less religious, those who remained non-religious, and those who became more religious all expressed a low-CONS, high-LA value profile. At the same time, the largest subgroup, those who were born religious and remained religious, exhibited high conservatism and low liberal attitudes. The latter represents students who maintained their own religious outlook despite liberal campus climate. To judge from our sample, the liberal-conservative gap is smaller than we might have imagined, as indeed some researchers are claiming (Harari, 2018). Across the board, participants in our survey placed great emphasis on individual choice and showed that the zeitgeist is growing increasingly tolerant of certain social issues, whether conservative or liberal. Freedom of choice is a hallmark of American millennials (Keysar & Piltzecker, 2016). American participants often chose to reject old labels, and expressed a need for new, more freewheeling options:

I would say I'm spiritual. But I wouldn't put that in any kind of – because I'm not Buddhist, I don't think I observe enough about that to consider myself Buddhist. But I definitely absorb some of their practices – I really feel like, a connection with the religion, and I really like it, but I wouldn't say, like, "I'm a practicing Buddhist" – But I feel like I can take pieces – I tend to believe in a multitude of things. So to devote myself to one thing is not conducive. (YUSTP027)

(b) Case study 2: Poland

While the current political polarization in Poland has its historical roots in the first years of transformation from communism to democracy and capitalism, which started in 1989, it was strengthened, politicized and clearly articulated during the parliamentary elections of 2005. The winner party, Law and Justice, called for "solidarity Poland" and opposed it to "liberal Poland". The latter label was assigned to opposition parties including the liberal Civic Platform. The political program of Law and Justice party emphasizes the need for an increased role of the state. The party encourages nationalism, Christian values, anti-liberalism, critical attitudes towards the European Union and anti-immigration movements. Attempts to dismantle democratic institutions were met with fierce reaction of the liberal opposition. The political cleavage reflects a real division in society (Bojarowicz, 2017, p. 11), but the instrumentalization of this division in political debate resulted in a deeper and more profound social cleavage. The polarization of political debate became even more pronounced after the Smolensk plane crash in 2010, in which many of the most prominent politicians and officials were killed.

Religion plays an important role in social and political polarization. The Catholic Church is the largest and most influential religious institution, with nearly 90 % of Poles declaring themselves to be Catholics. The partnership between the Church, or at least some organizations within the Church, and the conservative government is welcomed by ruling party supporters and criticized by some opposition parties and social movements. The role of religion in political debates is visible in public debates that revolve around such issues as abortion, in vitro, same-sex marriages and the pace of religion in the public sphere. However, it cannot be said that the church exclusively defines itself as an institution belonging to the conservative camp because the church itself is divided. To a certain degree, the political and social divide translates into the liberal Catholicism/conservative Catholicism divide. The rhetoric of two Catholic churches co-existing in the Polish religious landscape reflects political polarization in general (Ramet, 2014, p. 43).

The CONS/LA polarization, strengthened and shaped by the main cleavage on the political scene, is also visible among young adult university students. It manifests itself in attitudes toward the Catholic Church, immigration crisis, national tradition, self-realization, and free choice. Students who hold CONS values were or still are actively engaged in religious activities such as being altar servers (YPLSS329), members of church-affiliated religious movements or communities (YPLSS077P; YPLSS009P) or attending a summer camp organized by the church (YPLSS033P). Religiosity itself is a predictor of CONS values, but the effect seems to be much stronger for those participants who are active church-goers.

CONS values are cultivated in a community. Some interviewees point to a tension between a religious community which plays a role in their life and general society or the peer environment which cultivated alternative, usually more liberal, values. Religious communities provide support for those types of values which are not dominant among students. One of the interviewees describes this experience as “having our own world”:

We laughed that we had our own world because people who did not go to the community thought that only – such holy persons, as it were, go there. And why go there at all? Well, because we stayed together - we did not attack other persons and those persons did not [attack] us but – it felt like – it was one world, such security, that – that – someone understands me. (YPLSS009P)

However, this is not a closed world. Even those who hold CONS values are open to alternative values and ready to change their worldviews. Another student, who expresses aversion to new-age spirituality and declares attachment to Christian values, is nevertheless open to change:

I have already come to terms with the fact that probably by the end of my days I will be able to call myself an eclectic combining terribly different traditions. I do not have in mind religious traditions but political ones, or beliefs in general. I think I can reasonably combine conservatism with very – I would say, progressive [beliefs] or rather – beliefs transforming society, that is, with something that has nothing to do with conservatism. (YPLSS329)

A different sort of need for change is emphasized by a non-religious student thus:

My worldview is that – today, everything should just change, evolve so that we could live a better life in this world. It is a well-known fact that this is not the safest and nicest place, so being oriented to change and redefinition of one’s own worldviews may contribute to that we will live a better life in this world. (YPLSS162P)

Freedom of choice is also very important, but it is also problematic. It requires self-consciousness, self-knowledge and the ability to act in a world of many possibilities.

On the one hand, it is great that we can choose – from a range of possibilities. But on the other hand, there is a stress because of too many possibilities – Without any help and self-consciousness, we may choose nothing or, what is worse, make a bad choice. (YPLSS162P)

(c) Case study 3: Israeli Jews

Israel is a country fractured by multiple conflicts, external (the Palestinian-Israeli conflict; the ongoing conflict with most of the Arab nations) and internal (the religious-secular conflicts, ethnic and political conflicts). The protracted nature of the conflicts has led to an increase in right-wing political attitudes, while terrorism threats have led to an increase in valuing security, safety and other conservative values. Religion plays an important role in social and political polarization, with a strong and consistent correlation to socially conservative attitudes and right-wing politics. In contrast, university campuses in Israel are strongholds of liberal values and secularity. What happens to Israeli students in terms of religiosity and liberal/conservative attitudes?

In our interviews, many participants expressed a fatigue of politics, perhaps as a result of the tense fast-paced conflict and perhaps as a result of the legally-debated corruption in the Israeli political system. Although there were some exceptions to this rule, many participants avoided all but basic civic duties:

P: I read anything I can. Anything that isn't politics. I don't like reading about politics.

I: You don't get involved in politics?

P: Sometimes, it depends. When it's election time I get into it, because you need to vote. I try not to, because it is so dirty, I just don't like it. (YISAM004)

In several of the interviewees' narratives, especially males who served in the Israeli Defense Forces in combat positions, there was a sense of disillusionment and despair that change could ever happen. Although the narratives sound quite conservative ("nothing changes"), underlying them is a lost dream of liberalism:

I see Israel becoming more and more tribal, and the tribes can't deal with each other – religious, Arabs, national religious, secular – and it seems like it will be much more difficult to hold a political structure here, national, whatever. And the forces that I don't believe in, they are changing my environment to an environment that I don't want to see. (YISAM092)

Participant YISAM085 expresses a feeling that liberalism cannot be sustained in Israel:

I come from a family which is very liberal and very feminist, um, very people-loving, um and often I feel that the values of my family which I grew up with, and the values of my friends or the values this country is founded on, just clash. (YISAM085)

The connection between religion and state in Israel was noted and strongly rejected by most secular participants:

Once you mix religion with politics, it's toxic, it's not good. [...] I even believe that there is a clash between liberal democratic values, and religion. Because the Bible is about commands, guidelines that we get from God. He doesn't talk to us about our rights. And – we didn't get human and civil rights from God or the Bible. [...] The role of religion is – if there are people who derive a meaning for their life from it, then good for them. They can have it, enjoy, I'm fine with that. But once religion enters politics, it limits the freedoms of other people. And – that is wrong. (YISAM108)

Third World War, um, will take place, um, against the evil forces, which is, from my perspective, religion. It'll be with religious countries. (YIAM085)

Some religious participants saw things differently, supporting the merging of state and religion in Israel and rejecting liberalism:

The Torah will still always be true. It doesn't matter if there are trends, like feminism, doesn't matter, liberalism, whatever. The Torah will always be relevant. (YISAM93)

However, some intellectual liberal-religious participants did make an effort to blend religiosity and open-mindedness:

I'm a religious guy. [...] So there are all kinds of conflicts that I run into a lot, and each time I make a decision, I come from more of a thinking place and less following things blindly. – I think it was in high school when we began actually learning things more- you can't avoid it, academic studies do that to you, like, make you think and criticize. Like, to know, to try

and investigate, ask questions. Why this and why that. So yes, it's from that place. (YISAM103)

11.6 Discussion

Previous studies have shown that religious people tend to be politically conservative, and to support existing social arrangements. The evidence linking religiosity and conservative social attitudes extends across social policy attitudes (issues such as same-sex marriage or abortion) and political attitudes (voting patterns). Typically, the power of religions draws on traditions, authority figures and in-groups, which makes its connection to conservative attitudes clear.

Today, public disagreements have arisen around attitudes towards sources of authority and “outsiders” in general. Do we support their rights to equality? Such questions frame the political debate in many societies and raise the question of whether religion has an important role to play in promoting conservative values and attitudes and in eschewing liberal ones.

The YARG sample concentrates on emerging adults (Arnett, 2007). This developmental phase is marked by exploration in such areas as work, love and ideology. The sample also shares the fact of being college or university students. While these two attributes mean that the study is not representative of the population as a whole, it offers us an in-depth look at the young people who are destined to become the leaders of tomorrow. This sample also allows us to consider the effects of being in an academic, typically highly liberal atmosphere, on students' attitudes as they reflect on this in the interviews.

Our quantitative findings are generally consistent with the research literature. We found via path analyses that religion affects ideology both directly and indirectly. There is a direct relationship between religiosity and positions on issues such as homosexuality and same-sex marriage. In addition, there is also an indirect relationship in which religiosity is related to values, which in turn are related to ideology. Gender was found to have minor effects, and remains mostly insignificant in these social attitudes.

An added insight of our analyses regards the measurement of religiosity. Self-assessment of religiosity was the best indicator of one's actual level of religiosity, performing better than self-reported religious practice and self-reported religious belonging. Apparently, this scale is less ambiguous for young adults across different cultures and is less susceptible to social desirability, such as reporting on participation in religious services.

We also offered a new way of grouping a set of values from Schwartz's Theory of Basic Human Values (Schwartz, 2007, 2012, 2017). We juxtaposed “Conservation” to a new construct which we termed “Liberal attitudes” (LA) which is a combination of self-direction and universalism values, rather than to the commonly used “Openness to Change” construct. We believe that the fact that CONS and LA values are not fully opposite each other on the value-circle explains how it is possible,

although rare, to be liberal in some aspects and conservative in others. CONS and LA are negatively correlated, because some of their underlying values directly contradict each other: self-direction-thought conflicts with tradition-values, since insisting on traditional ideas and beliefs would limit freedom of thought, while self-direction-action conflicts with conformity-rules, since always following rules constrains the freedom to decide what to do. However, the values are not fully opposed, because CONS is strongly related to social considerations of belonging and loyalty, while LA is strongly related to ethical considerations of tolerance and concern for the weak. It is not impossible to feel positively towards both ingroup and outgroups (Brewer & Miller, 2010).

This brings us full circle to the relation between religiosity and conservative/liberal attitudes: Religion achieves its often-positive effects through social cohesion and social support. It creates a real community, not just an imagined one, through rituals, identity definitions, shared experiences and limitations on outgroup interactions. Much effort is put into those behaviors which mark identity boundaries. Acts of exclusion determine the identities of large and small groups, and social categorization is highly effective in creating barriers and outgroup rejection. Religious congregations are cohesive, and provide strong social support to their members, but at the cost of exclusivism and the risk of prejudice against those of other faiths and ethnicities. However, while this is true in the aggregate, it does not account for liberal religions, liberation theology or those religious denominations that support change and humanism, such as Reform and Conservative Judaism (a liberal religious stream despite its historically-derived name), Unitarian Universalism, and Progressive British Islam. This brings us to the nuanced distinctions of the qualitative analysis.

The themes uncovered in the respective case studies took us in different directions. In the US case study, we highlighted the transitions that university students undergo when they leave home and encounter new values in their new settings. The Polish case study discussed how the values encountered in religious communities are understood from the perspective of those engaged in them. The Israeli case study explores values in relation to surrounding political and religious tensions. These different emphases reflect the cultural milieus of these case studies: in the United States, diversity and democratic stability are strong, despite recent upheavals. Personal security is high, and university students enjoy the freedom to choose, deliberate, and experience diversity on campus. All these cultural attributes are apparent in the American participants' narratives, which focus on choice, autonomy and self-expression in relation to religion and to politics. In Poland, the cultural climate is homogeneous: nearly 90% of the population shares a Catholic religious background and the democratic culture is far less stable. In this climate, it is easier to see micro-level differences between conservatism among the actively religious and those who are not. While the link between religious participation and CONS values was less apparent in the quantitative analyses, it still surfaced in the context of a consistently religious country such as Poland.

In Israel, tensions run high; threats to personal security abound and society is deeply fractured, but Israel also has a sound democratic history, with universities in

Israel acting as liberal strongholds. This potent mixture of tensions and values leads to politics-fatigue, disillusionment with liberalism and religious-secular polarization among the students we interviewed. Even so, the religious-conservative versus secular-liberal dichotomy was found to sometimes break down.

Thus, while quantitative macro-level findings presented clear trends of the relation between religiosity and conservatism, the micro-level, culturally contextual findings distinguished some important sub-types among each national group and identified nuances in how these values come into play. Future research on the role of culture in mitigating the interplay between religion, values and ideology will further enhance our understanding of these complex interactions.

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Chapter 12

On the Subjective Well-Being of University Students: Religious Capital and Experiences of Discrimination



Clara Marlijn Meijer, Maria Klingenberg , and Martin Lagerström

Abstract Recent studies suggest that being part of a minority group is associated with increased exposure to stress, but what happens if we also account for the effect of religion? This chapter explores minority stress in relation to expectations that religion as capital would positively affect subjective well-being. It is based on the survey data from the project Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective. Subjective discrimination and public- and private religious activity are explored in relation to subjective well-being and religious capital. Our data covers a variety of national contexts and allows for an interdisciplinary approach to minority stress theory. The findings suggest that multiple causes of discrimination are associated with lower levels of subjective well-being independent of national context. However, religious capital has different impacts on subjective well-being dependent on national context. The chapter concludes with a reflection on these results, on single and multiple causes of discrimination and the relation to religious capital and suggestions for future research.

Keywords Minority stress · Religious capital · Subjective well-being · University students · Religious practice · Subjective discrimination · Depression

12.1 Introduction

In the last 10 years, the relation between religion and health has caught increased scholarly attention. Most studies suggest that being part of a religious community or practicing religion in the form of prayer or reading religious texts have positive

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effects on subjective well-being (see e.g. Koenig et al., 2012). However, only a few studies have examined religious activities and subjective well-being amongst those minorities and groups who have experienced discrimination, and studies that have addressed this issue are for the most part smaller case studies. This chapter aims to bridge that gap by examining the relationship between subjective well-being, religious capital and perceived discrimination amongst almost five thousand university students distributed over thirteen national contexts.

The analysis expands on previous research on religion and health by exploring whether religion functions as a mediating factor for subjective well-being of university students who have experienced discrimination. Drawing on theories regarding minority stress and religious capital, the aim of the chapter is to examine the relation between subjective well-being and experiences of discrimination, and the role of religious capital for this relation.

It is important to note that the case study design, as well as the focus on university students in the Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG) study, on which this chapter builds, set boundaries for the generalizability of the findings (for more on YARG see Chap. 1 of this volume). We suspect that some of the findings reported in this chapter may be subtler in comparison to a study on young adults who do not have access to higher education. However, a study that explores whether religious capital affects the relation between experiences of discrimination and subjective well-being presents an important contribution to the field. Furthermore, the study distinguishes between university students who have no experiences of discrimination, experiences of discrimination for one cause (e.g. gender, race, religion, sexuality), and those who have experiences of discrimination due to multiple causes. Such a distinction also broadens the scope, as previous studies have not distinguished between experiences of discrimination on single or multiple grounds.

12.2 Previous Research

12.2.1 *Religious Engagement as a Source of Religious Capital*

Religious capital has been studied mostly in the context of the United States (see e.g. Smidt, 2003) and the United Kingdom (see e.g. Baker & Skinner, 2006; Baker & Miles-Watson, 2008). The notion of religious capital is based on the theory of social capital. James Coleman, one of the key thinkers on social capital, has defined social capital as being “embodied in relations among persons” (1988, p. 118). In Smidt’s book *Religion as Social Capital*, Smidt does not give a precise definition of religious capital, but describes it as “social capital that is tied to religious life” (2003, p. 211). He builds on the conceptualization of social capital, by including religious life that generates a “particular kind of social capital” (Ibid). Like Coleman (1988), Smidt understands religious social capital as being generated through relations among individuals. His focus is on the production of social capital through

religious means, which in this case comprise Christian religious communities in the United States. Smidt argues that in the context of the United States, religious social capital has five particular qualities which differentiate from other forms of social capital (see Smidt, 2003, p. 217–218). Smidt's argument on the five distinctive qualities are described in positive terms and contrasted to other kinds of social capital, which would be produced through secular sources. However, there is a lack of discussion on the different levels of access to religious capital among members within a congregation. Furthermore, there are no distinctions made between certain religious activities that might provide social capital, such as being part of reading group or maintaining religious practices at home. Finally, Smidt's focus on Christian communities excludes other religious groups that differ in their public and private practices.

Baker and Skinner (2006) have a more precise conceptualization of religious capital by distinguishing between religious and spiritual capital. Religious capital is the "practical contribution to local and national life made by faith groups", whereas spiritual capital "is often embedded locally within faith groups but also expressed in the lives of individuals" (2006, p. 4). Whereas Smidt concentrates on religious communities, Baker and Skinner include how faith expressed through the lives of individuals generates religious capital. Additionally, they include diverse religious communities and emphasize that religious capital cannot be seen as a fixed variable but is "continuously created" (2006, p. 28).

The study presented here aims to contribute to the conceptualization of religious capital with a more diverse approach in two ways. First, religious capital is studied not only in relation to subjective well-being, but also in relation to experiences of discrimination; second, the study explores the role of religious capital independent of religious tradition and national context.

12.2.2 Discrimination on Single and Multiple Grounds and Well-Being

A vast part of the studies that explore the effect of discrimination on well-being is found within minority studies, as reasons for discrimination often relate to a minority position. Studies on minority stress suggest that being part of a minority group is associated with increased exposure to stress (see e.g. Grollman, 2012). Minority stress theory was coined by Meyer (1995), who claims that members of groups who are discriminated against suffer from additional group-specific stressors, which lead to more exposure to stress and, consequently, to "larger health disparities" (Grollman, 2012, p. 200).

Studies on minority stress have suggested that the well-being of an individual who faces discrimination is influenced by whether the discrimination stems from a single cause or from multiple causes. Studies on ethnic minority positions, social capital and subjective well-being (Brondolo et al., 2012; Heim et al., 2011) found that discrimination for a single cause does not always affect subjective well-being.

Their study suggests that minority positions may in fact be a mitigating factor for discrimination. Such findings resonate with social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986/2004) which suggests that threats against a group identity increase group identification and social cohesion (Turner et al., 1984). Individuals who experience multiple forms of discrimination and belong to multiple minority groups may therefore be affected by such experiences in quite different ways. Grollman's (2012) study on minority stress among young adults revealed that individuals with multiple minority positions experienced higher levels of discrimination, leading to lower levels of both subjective well-being and physical health.

Along similar lines, studies on the role of religion as a factor for discrimination in relation to well-being have rarely taken multiple causes of discrimination into account. After the events of September 11 2001, the well-being of Muslims in Western countries who face discrimination have been addressed in numerous studies (see e.g. Abu-Ras & Abu-Bader, 2008; Jasperse et al., 2012; Jackson & Doerschler, 2012; Brown et al., 2015; Kunst et al., 2012; Rippey & Newman, 2006). On the one hand, these studies show how religious engagement and religious practices were associated with higher levels of subjective well-being, thereby supporting the idea that religious practices and communities can be effective coping strategies (Pargament et al., 2000). On the other hand, Friedman and Saroglou's (2010) study on immigrant Muslims in Belgium suggested that stigmatization was associated with increased levels of depression and decreased self-esteem, and in contrast to other studies, religiosity did not function as a mitigating factor for decreased self-esteem and depression. They point out that previous studies that have found positive relations between religion and well-being have primarily studied this relation in majority settings, for example, amongst Christians in the United States or Muslims in Muslim countries.

The increasing number of studies on the relation between religion, coping strategies and well-being among sexual minorities (see e.g. Meanley et al., 2016; Shilo et al., 2016; Kirag, 2016; Jaspal & Cinnirella, 2010) further point to the impact of discrimination on multiple grounds. Sexual minorities often experience discrimination in the religious communities that they are part of and/or face discrimination for being 'religious' in 'secular' LGBT-communities (Taylor & Snowden, 2014). Grollman refers to this as a "double disadvantage", thereby referring to "the double burden" (Collins, 2002) of many "who are disadvantaged on one axis are also disadvantaged on others" (Grollman, 2012, p. 201). Furthermore, in a situation when individuals face discrimination in their own religious communities because of their sexual orientation, and outside their religious communities because of their religious identity, it is far from self-evident that religion and subjective well-being are positively associated (see Meanley et al., 2016).

The studies referred to here have pointed to single or multiple causes of discrimination as an important factor for subjective well-being, which is explored in this study. However, the varying consequences of discrimination found, depending on contextual factors, suggest that consequences of discrimination are difficult to explore in a transnational study. The role of context also suggests that a transnational survey study of discrimination raises questions regarding comparability

across case studies, as the questions are likely to be interpreted in different ways in different settings. This study of subjective discrimination through survey research is therefore limited to some degree, as significant contextual differences remain unaddressed and the underlying interpretations of respondents remain unattainable.

12.2.3 Religious Capital and Subjective Well-Being

The relation between religion and subjective well-being has been thoroughly explored in previous studies, albeit without using the concept of religious capital. For example, studies have investigated the relationship between subjective well-being and spirituality and religiosity (see e.g. Yonker et al., 2012). In general, in studies done on these themes, components that would relate to religious capital would be measuring the identification of one with a religious community, participation in activities within a community, private religious practices and how someone relates decisions to his or her religious identity. These dimensions are frequently found in studies on religion and subjective well-being, and in line with studies on social capital and subjective well-being. Most studies suggest a positive association between religion and subjective well-being (see e.g. Koenig et al., 2012 on religion and health). Not only does religiosity protect against ‘risk behavior’ (drugs, unprotected sex), but it has also been associated with fewer symptoms of depression and anxiety (Smith & Snell, 2009; Yonker et al., 2012).

However, some studies contradict the positive effect of religion on subjective well-being. Exline et al. (2000) found that religious strain among college students is associated with greater depression and suicidality, regardless of religiosity levels or the comfort found in religion. Bryant and Astin (2008) confirm these findings in their study on college students, as they found an association between struggling with faith and lower levels of self-esteem, poorer physical health and greater risks for engaging in addictive behaviors. These findings challenge the positive associations found between religiosity and subjective well-being, and confirm that struggling with one’s own religious identity as a young adult could potentially lead to a decrease in subjective well-being.

Studies with an intersectional approach also point to varying relations between religion and subjective well-being. For instance, when studying the influence of religion, religiosity and spirituality on mental health among Indian young adults, Ganga and Kutty (2012) found differences in subjective well-being depending on the gender and the religious tradition of the participant. Such differences were explained by “behavioral restrictions and opportunities for socialization that religion does or does not provide” (2012, p. 435).

This section has highlighted that religious capital has predominantly been studied in a Western context, which points to the usefulness of studying this concept further in a transnational study such as this one. In addition, the overview demonstrates that while religious capital has been operationalized in various ways in previous studies, engagement in religious communities nevertheless could be regarded as

a criterion for religious capital to be generated. Finally, just as for discrimination, gender reoccurs here as a factor having an impact on subjective well-being. For both of these issues, it seems as if gender is a contributing factor that may both result in increased and decreased well-being depending on how it is combined with other background factors. Previous research therefore suggests that gender must be properly taken into account in the study of how religious capital contributes to the relation between discrimination and subjective well-being.

12.3 Purpose and Research Questions

The aim of this chapter is to explore the relationship between subjective well-being, religious capital and those participants who report belonging to a group that faces discrimination. The main purpose of the chapter is therefore not to explore subjective well-being per se, but rather to understand subjective well-being in light of a number of background factors (subjective single or multiple discrimination, gender, national context). Based on previous research, we are particularly interested in exploring how subjective well-being is interrelated with religious capital and in light of personal experiences of discrimination.

The above-mentioned aim results in the following research questions:

1. How common are experiences of discrimination amongst the participants of Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective?
2. a. Do young adults report different levels of subjective well-being depending on whether they have experienced discrimination or not?
 - b. Does the number of causes reported (single-multiple) influence the role of experiences of discrimination on subjective well-being?
3. What is the role of religious capital for subjective well-being amongst those who have experienced discrimination?
4. Does this role vary depending on other background factors such as gender and national context?

12.4 Measures

12.4.1 Subjective Well-Being

Subjective well-being was measured as a composite measure mapping dimensions of general well-being and happiness, vitality, depression, life orientation and peace of mind. *General well-being and happiness* were measured through three questions,¹

¹“All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays?”, “Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are?” “How satisfied are you with your present standard of living?” (E1-E3).

vitality as a mean of five items,² *depression* as a sum of eight items,³ and *life orientation* as a mean of four items.⁴ The respondent's peace of mind was measured through two questions.⁵

The composite measure of subjective well-being was created through a series of steps. Since responses on the included items were not made on the same scale, all items were initially standardized, and afterwards, a sum value of all items was obtained for each respondent as a measure of personal well-being. In the second step, individual values on well-being were sorted according to a national case study, and the means for each national case study were standardized in order to obtain a global measure for subjective well-being, where the proximity to zero indicates proximity to the mean value of subjective well-being for the total sample. This procedure makes it possible to compare case studies in relation to the global mean for subjective well-being.

For the first analysis, all variables were measured together to represent subjective well-being and separately to look into differences between for example depression and life satisfaction. For the second analysis, all variables were measured together to represent subjective well-being for the total sample and the three separate country cases.

12.4.2 *Discrimination*

Experiences of discrimination were mapped through the following question: "Would you describe yourself as being a member of a group that is discriminated against in the country you live in now? Please, select all that apply". The participant can then tick from multiple boxes, which include: "No, I don't feel discriminated against", "Color or race", "Nationality", "Religion", "Political orientation", "Language", "Ethnic group", "Age", "Gender", "Sexuality", "Disability", "Other, please, describe".

In line with minority stress theory, distinctions are made between young adults who have reported experiences of discrimination depending on whether they have reported single or multiple causes for this discrimination. The selection criteria of

²How much of the time during the past week... You had a lot of energy? You felt tired? (reversed) You were absorbed in what you were doing? You felt bored? (reversed) You felt really rested when you woke up in the morning? (E5.9, E5.11, E5.12, E5.14, E5.15).

³How much of the time during the past week... You felt depressed? (reversed) You felt that everything you did was an effort? (reversed) Your sleep was restless? (reversed) You felt happy? You felt lonely? (reversed) You enjoyed life? You felt sad?" (reversed) (E5.1–8).

⁴"I'm always optimistic about my future." "In general I feel very positive about myself." "At times I feel as if I am a failure." (reversed) "On the whole my life is close to how I would like it to be." (E4).

⁵How much of the time during the past week... You felt anxious? You felt calm and peaceful? (E5.10, E5.13).

participants for the analysis is based on the question on discrimination ($N = 4956$)⁶ (which includes discrimination against color or race, nationality, religion, political orientation, language, ethnic group, age, gender, sexuality, disability). Students who do feel that they belong to a group that is discriminated against are divided between either single discrimination (students who reported discrimination due to one cause, $N = 909$) and multiple discrimination (students who reported discrimination on multiple grounds, $N = 931$).

12.4.3 *Religious Capital*

Religious capital was measured through two questions on religious practice: Public practice was operationalized through the question “Apart from special occasions such as weddings and funerals, about how often do you take part in religious ceremonies or services these days?”. Private religious activity was mapped through the following question “Apart from when you are at religious ceremonies or services, how often do you engage in private religious or spiritual practices, such as worship, prayer or meditation?”. Responses were made on a six-grade ordinal scale, ranging from “Every day” to “Never” as well as the alternative “I don’t know”. Participants who responded “I don’t know” ($N = 142$) were excluded in the final analysis on the three case studies.

12.4.4 *Statistical Tests*

The first research question regarding the commonality of experiences of discrimination is presented in the form of two frequency tables, where experiences of discrimination are reported according to case study (Table 12.1) and gender (Table 12.2). The interaction between experiences of discrimination and national context and gender respectively were explored through multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) and analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests.

The second research question, which concerns whether experiences of single and multiple forms of discrimination are associated with differences in subjective well-being, is explored through a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) analysis.

As the findings pointed to great diversity between the national case studies, the third research question about the interaction between subjective well-being, discrimination and religious capital was studied further in three national case studies. Two case studies represent the national context in which experiences of discrimination were found to be the most and least common, and a third case study was added since it corresponded to the average of experiences of discrimination in the total

⁶Participants who reported discrimination on all grounds are excluded from the analysis, $n = 8$.

Table 12.1 Single and multiple forms of experienced discrimination per individual divided by country

Country	No discrimination	Single cause of discrimination	Multiple causes of discrimination	N
	%			
Poland	88	8	4	299
China	85	13	2	325
Canada	79	11	10	410
Japan	79	12	9	324
Ghana	73	17	10	419
Finland	69	21	10	484
Russia	67	14	18	343
India	59	23	17	296
Peru	59	21	20	319
Sweden	59	21	20	328
USA	44	19	37	304
Israel	40	25	35	761
Turkey	36	24	40	344
Total	63	18	19	4956

Table 12.2 Causes of discrimination (range 0–10) divided by gender

Gender	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	N
	%											
Male	69.6	16.1	6.3	3.7	1.9	1.2	0.7	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.2	1974
Female	58.7	19.9	10.1	5.2	2.6	2.0	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.1	2965
Total	63.0	18.3	8.6	4.6	2.3	1.6	0.7	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.2	4939

sample. For each of these case studies, the interaction between subjective well-being, single and multiple discrimination, and religious capital were studied through a regression analysis. The two measures of religious capital constituted independent variables in the analysis, and furthermore, gender and experiences of discrimination were introduced as dummy variables (both single discrimination and multiple discrimination are compared to the “no discrimination”-group). For all three case studies, two regression analyses using different dependent variables were conducted: the first one uses the global measurement of subjective well-being as the dependent variable, while the other model used the indicators of depression as its dependent variable, thereby analyzing one potential symptom of lack of well-being. In these regression models, a higher score on subjective well-being means higher well-being, while higher scores on depression mean more symptoms of depression.

The fourth research question about the role of gender and national context is explored throughout the analyses conducted in relation to the other research questions.

12.5 Findings

12.5.1 *Experiences of Discrimination Amongst University Students*

For the first statistical analysis, all participants of the survey ($N = 4956$) were divided into three groups: those who responded that they did not feel discriminated against; those who mentioned having been discriminated against for one cause, and those who reported discrimination against for several causes. As demonstrated in Table 12.1, a majority (63%) has replied that they do not feel discriminated against. Those who acknowledge experiences of discrimination are evenly divided between having been discriminated for one single cause and having been discriminated for at least two causes. When responses are broken down into national case studies, response patterns vary significantly. For example, almost nine out of ten Polish respondents report no experiences of discrimination, whilst in Turkey, the corresponding proportion is only 36%. The analysis according to national context indicates that the lower the proportions of no discrimination in a national case study are, the higher are the proportions of respondents that report having experienced multiple causes of discrimination. Experiences of one single cause of discrimination do not follow such patterns, but vary between countries.

While Table 12.1 indicates that subjective discrimination is more common in some national contexts than in others, the table does not provide any easy explanation for this internal variation. Rather, a closer reading of Table 12.1 raises questions about the reasons for this internal variation, and why this question has evoked such different responses in different countries. Experiences of gender discrimination are, for example, not only bound to vary depending on social context, but also, due to different understandings regarding what gender discrimination entails. In this way, high proportions of gender discrimination could both imply the commonality of experiences of sexism and/or high awareness of sexism. These different reports on experiences of gender discrimination are a consequence of reporting subjective discrimination. The proportions reported in Table 12.1 should therefore be interpreted with great caution, as this reasoning suggests that we cannot assume that the question has been answered in similar ways regardless of national context.

While we refrain from going into a deeper analysis regarding the group memberships that experiences of discrimination are associated with at a national level, gender is by far the most common cause of discrimination, albeit a much more common experience amongst female respondents than amongst male respondents. Experiences of discrimination due to religion, language group, political orientation, ethnicity, nationality and color or race are shared by between 5% and 10% of the respondents. Experiences of discrimination due to sexuality, age or disability are less common (around or below 5%). When we divide experiences of discrimination by gender, it seems as well that gender is a contributing factor, as 41.3% of the female respondents experiences single or multiple discrimination compared to 30.4% of the male respondents (see Table 12.2). Respondents who identified as

other ($N = 25$), experienced the highest amount of discrimination, with only three respondents reporting no experiences of discrimination, three reporting single cause discrimination and 19 reporting multiple causes of discrimination.⁷

In light of this data, we therefore proceed to focus on three case studies in the subsequent analysis, due to their varying experiences of discrimination. Poland is selected since the proportions of discrimination reported amongst the respondents are the lowest out of all case studies, and since Turkey is characterized by the opposite, Turkey is also selected as a second study. Finally, Peru is selected as a third case study for further analysis, since the experiences of discrimination amongst the Peruvian respondents lie close to the total average of the respondents. By studying the interaction between religious capital, discrimination and well-being in these three countries, we can come one step closer to understanding whether the relations by these factors that are suggested in previous research hold true regardless of how common experiences of discrimination are. However, before this final step, we conduct a further analysis on subjective well-being and discrimination.

12.5.2 The Role of Discrimination for Subjective Well-Being

In this section, differences in subjective well-being are compared in three categories of participants: those who experienced no discrimination, and those who have experienced single or multiple forms of discrimination respectively. A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted, where the dimensions of subjective well-being were introduced as dependent variables, and discrimination and country respectively as independent variables. Using Pillai's trace, the main effects of discrimination and country respectively were found.⁸

After having established the main effect of discrimination on subjective well-being, eight independent analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests were conducted in order to test whether the different dimensions of subjective well-being that were included in the measure interacted differently with the three discrimination categories. As demonstrated in Table 12.3, these analyses revealed significant differences in subjective well-being depending on experiences of discrimination, regardless of the dimension measured. Participants who reported experiences of discrimination felt overall less satisfied with their life, less happy, more depressed, less energized, more anxious and less peaceful and calm compared to participants who had not experienced discrimination. Furthermore, there were significant differences in subjective well-being between the categories of single or multiple causes of discrimination, except for the measures of satisfaction regarding standard of living and life orientation.

⁷Due to the low number of respondents identifying as other in total number of respondents, they were left out in Table 12.2 to be represented in percentages.

⁸Discrimination: ($V = 0.02$, $F(8, 1807) = 4.40$, $p < .001$); country ($V = 0.47$, $F(96, 14,512) = 9.40$, $p < .001$).

Table 12.3 ANOVA tests of discrimination on subjective well-being

Variable	No discrimination	Single discrimination		Multiple discrimination		$F(2, 4941)$		P
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD		
<i>Life satisfaction</i>	7.13	1.88	6.76	2.11	6.37	2.18	60.58	< .001
<i>Happiness</i>	7.21	1.91	6.83	2.16	6.46	2.18	56.84	< .001
<i>Satisfaction standard of living</i>	7.01	2.13	6.57	2.36	6.31	2.43	42.77	< .001
<i>Depression</i>	11.6	5.60	12.7	5.71	14.2	6.12	78.10	< .001
<i>Vitality</i>	3.14	0.63	3.06	0.66	2.97	0.68	28.82	< .001
<i>Life orientation</i>	3.54	0.80	3.45	0.85	3.36	0.88	20.33	< .001
<i>Anxiety</i>	2.71	1.20	2.82	1.25	3.04	1.22	28.25	< .001
<i>Peace of mind</i>	3.19	1.03	3.09	1.04	2.96	1.02	18.52	< .001

The previous analysis suggests that in the total sample, experiences of discrimination are negatively associated with subjective well-being. While this confirms the negative impact of discrimination on subjective well-being and the increase of impact when there are multiple causes of discrimination, broadly referred to as minority stress theory (Meyer, 1995; Grollman, 2012), this analysis does not include the role of religious capital, which is yet to be introduced into the analysis. Furthermore, bearing in mind the case study differences reported in Table 12.1 and the issues of validity that these findings seem to entail, we now turn to regression analyses where religious capital is included in three selected case studies, characterized by different amounts of reported discrimination.

12.6 The Effect Between Religious Capital and Discrimination on Subjective Well-Being and Depression in Poland, Peru and Turkey

We now continue with the analysis of the relation between discrimination, subjective well-being and religious capital in three of the case studies. As Table 12.1 reflects, the included national case studies in YARG were characterized by varying amounts of experienced discrimination. In order to test the assumptions regarding the relations between discrimination and subjective well-being and the role religious capital has in this equation, these assumptions should hold regardless of how (un-)common experiences of discrimination are in a national context. We therefore

explore these relations in three case studies that were characterized by high, low, and average amounts of subjective discrimination.

12.6.1 Poland

As a next step, we analyze the interaction between subjective well-being, discrimination and religious capital in a country where subjective experiences of discrimination are relatively rare. Out of all case studies, Poland was the country where experiences of discrimination were most uncommon. As previously stated, 88% of Polish respondents report that they do not belong to a group that experiences discrimination; 8% mention being discriminated for one cause, and 4% for multiple causes. Polish women report less experiences of discrimination than Polish men (90% of women who do not belong to a group that experiences discrimination and 85% of men respectively; $N = 299$).

To continue, we turn to the findings from regression analyses that examine the role of public religious practice, private religious practice, gender and experiences of discrimination on subjective well-being. Table 12.4 reports the findings from two analyses: one where subjective well-being constitutes the dependent variable, and one where depression constitutes the dependent variable. The analysis on depression serves as a control analysis in order to ensure that the findings from the analysis regarding subjective well-being correspond with the analysis where symptoms for depression constitute the dependent variable. For this reason, the discussion of the findings focuses on the analysis concerning subjective well-being.

Table 12.4 reflects that public religious practice, private religious practice, gender and experiences of discrimination explain 10% of the variation in subjective well-being in the Polish sample. As this means that approximately 90% of subjective well-being is explained by other variables than those which we have in our models, the explanatory power of this model is quite modest.

Table 12.4 Subjective well-being and depression regressed on religious capital, gender and experiences of discrimination in the Polish case study

Variable	Subjective well-being					Depression				
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI		<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI		<i>p</i>
			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>				<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>	
Intercept	0.44	0.13			< .001	9.035	0.78			< .001
Public religious practice	-0.04	0.05	-0.15	0.06	.42	0.45	0.33	-0.21	1.10	0.18
Private religious practice	-0.01	0.03	-0.07	0.06	.84	0.07	0.21	-0.34	0.47	0.74
Gender (1 = Female)	-0.50	0.11	-0.71	-0.28	< .001	2.62	0.67	1.30	3.94	< .001
Single discrimination	-0.47	0.19	-0.86	-0.09	.02	1.72	1.21	-0.66	4.11	0.16
Multiple discrimination	-0.57	0.28	-1.12	-0.02	.04	2.68	1.74	-0.75	6.11	0.13

Note. *B* unstandardized regression coefficient, *LL/UL* lower and upper limit of the 95% confidence interval. $R^2 = .10$ for subjective well-being and $R^2 = .08$ for depression

Out of the factors measured, experiences of discrimination on multiple grounds have the strongest negative effect on subjective well-being, followed by being male and reporting discrimination on one cause. This means that experiences of discrimination and being male is associated with lower subjective well-being than having no experiences of discrimination and being female, but not to the same extent as experiences of discrimination on multiple grounds do. The measures of religious capital (public and private religious practice) indicate that religiosity appears to have a negative effect on well-being in the Polish case study, but the effect of public and private religious practice is quite small and non-significant.

The analysis that explores the role of religiosity, gender and discrimination for depression corresponds with the findings supported above, but the explanatory power of the regression model is even lower – 8% – than for the model where subjective well-being constitutes the dependent variable, which explained 10% of the variance. The even more modest explanatory power on behalf of the second analysis suggests that the measure of subjective well-being is more robust a construct than depression as a single variable.

12.6.2 *Turkey*

Out of all case studies, the participants from Turkey reported the most experiences of discrimination ($N = 344$), as only a little more than one-third (36%) report no experiences of discrimination, meaning that two-thirds report having experienced either single or multiple forms of discrimination. A closer look reveals that the total distribution reflects the experiences of female Turkish participants to a higher extent than Turkish males, due to the female over-representation in the Turkish case study and their experiences of discrimination. Out of the female respondents, 71% report experiences of discrimination, and most often, on multiple grounds (46%): the corresponding figure for male respondents is 49% (out of which 29% on multiple grounds). Even if the experiences of discrimination amongst male respondents are less common than for women in Turkey, the distribution for male Turkish respondents also places them amongst the most discriminated out of all case studies in YARG.

As we turn to the regression models and how they account for the level of subjective well-being in Turkey (Table 12.5), we notice that the included measures explain merely 5% of subjective well-being, which is low. Out of the included measures, only the experiences of single and multiple discrimination are statistically significant. Both of these measures have a negative effect on subjective well-being, and the effect of having experienced discrimination for one cause is surprisingly stronger than for discrimination on multiple grounds. In Turkey, where experiences of discrimination are relatively common, such experiences are also found to have a negative effect on subjective well-being, but contrary to the theorizing that underlined the model, those who experience discrimination on multiple grounds do not report lower subjective well-being than those who experience discrimination for one cause.

Table 12.5 Subjective well-being and depression regressed on religious capital, gender and experiences of discrimination in the Turkish case study

Variable	Subjective well-being					Depression				
	B	SE	95% CI		p	B	SE	95% CI		p
			LL	UL				LL	UL	
Intercept	-0.54	0.16			.001	14.53	0.93			< .001
Public religious practice	0.06	0.04	-0.02	0.14	.13	-0.16	0.23	-0.61	0.30	.50
Private religious practice	0.04	0.03	-0.03	0.10	.29	0.00	0.19	-0.38	0.38	.99
Gender (1 = Female)	0.07	0.14	-0.20	0.34	.61	0.38	0.77	-1.14	1.91	.62
Single discrimination	-0.36	0.16	-0.68	-0.04	.03	0.38	0.93	-1.45	2.20	.69
Multiple discrimination	-0.31	0.15	-0.60	-0.03	.03	0.31	0.82	-1.31	1.93	.71

Note. B unstandardized regression coefficient, LL/UL lower and upper limit of the 95% confidence interval. R² = .05 for subjective well-being and R² = .005 for depression

It is also worth noting that the model in which depression constitutes the dependent variable has exceptionally poor explanatory power: only 0.5% of the variance in reported symptoms of depression is explained by the variables included in the model. In line with such findings, none of the included variables have a statistically significant ability to explain variations in indications of depression in the material.

12.6.3 Peru

Peru constitutes the third case that we chose to explore further, this time because of the non-exceptional character of the Peruvian case study. Peru is one of the case studies in greatest proximity to the average of experienced discrimination of the total sample. In numbers, this means that 59% report no experiences of discrimination, 21% experiences due to one cause, and 20 report experiences of multiple causes of discrimination (N = 319). Female and male experiences differ, as female Peruvians report more discrimination than males: while one-tenth of males report experiences of discrimination on multiple grounds, the corresponding number for females is 24%. The experiences of discrimination for one cause are quite similar (females: 22%; males 19%). Consequently, seven out of ten Peruvian males report no experiences of discrimination – the corresponding number for females is 54%. Therefore, we include Peru as a case that represents the middle ground as far as experiences of discrimination go, and explore explanatory factors for subjective well-being in Peru.

In the Peruvian case study, we find that many of the included factors in the regression model have a statistically significant effect on subjective well-being. Multiple discrimination and being male are the factors that have the strongest explanatory power, both affecting subjective well-being in a negative direction. Furthermore, public religious practice has a positive but not very strong effect on subjective well-being in Peru. Private religious practice and discrimination due to a single cause were found to have no significant effects on subjective well-being.

Table 12.6 Subjective well-being and depression regressed on religious capital, gender and experiences of discrimination in the Peruvian case study

Variable	Subjective well-being					Depression				
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI		<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	95% CI		<i>p</i>
			<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>				<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>	
Intercept	-0.11	0.10			.29	12.34	0.58			<.001
Public religious practice	0.10	0.04	0.02	0.18	.01	-0.06	0.23	-0.50	0.39	.80
Private religious practice	0.06	0.03	0.00	0.12	.05	-0.28	0.17	-0.61	0.05	.10
Gender (1 = Female)	-0.26	0.11	-0.47	-0.05	.02	2.39	0.62	1.18	3.60	<.001
Single discrimination	-0.13	0.13	-0.39	0.12	.30	0.78	0.74	-0.67	2.23	.29
Multiple discrimination	-0.27	0.14	-0.54	0.00	.05	2.02	0.78	0.48	3.56	.01

Note. *B* unstandardized regression coefficient, *LL/UL* lower and upper limit of the 95% confidence interval. $R^2 = .09$ for subjective well-being and $R^2 = .09$ for depression

While the statistical findings attest to the validity of the measures included in the model, the model's total capacity to account for the variation of subjective well-being is only 9%, which is quite modest.

For the Peruvian case study, the regression model where depression constitutes the dependent variable is equally strong in terms of variance explained, but the way in which single measures (see Table 12.6) contributes to depression varies. Public religious practice has no statistically significant effect on depression: instead, multiple discrimination and being female (rather than male) are both related to a higher propensity to report symptoms of depression. In other words, multiple discrimination lowers subjective well-being and contributes to depression, but whereas being male appears to contribute to lower subjective well-being, being female seems to contribute to reporting more symptoms of depression.

12.7 Conclusion

Throughout this chapter, the relationship between subjective discrimination, subjective well-being and religious capital has been examined. The underlying assumptions behind minority stress theory and religious capital are further explored in light of these results in relation to the research questions in this conclusion.

The results of the first research question, namely how common experiences of discrimination amongst the YARG participants are, demonstrated that globally a majority (63%) did not belong to a group that is discriminated against. However, when national context was included as a variable (see Table 12.1), it shows that subjective discrimination is more common in some national contexts than in others. Despite these differences, because the survey reports subjective discrimination, it is unknown what these differences entail. Therefore, the analysis is limited to the categories of no, single or multiple causes of discrimination, as further interpretations of survey answers are unattainable. The first analysis does demonstrate an increase in multiple causes of discrimination in case of higher levels of single discrimination.

The first part of the second research question (2a); do young adults report different levels of subjective well-being depending on whether they have experienced discrimination or not, is found positive in our analysis. Regardless of the dimensions of subjective well-being that were measured, there were significant differences in subjective well-being related to experiences of discrimination. This finding suggests that experiences of discrimination are negatively associated with subjective well-being.

The second part of the second research question (2b), does the number of causes reported (single-multiple) influence the role of experiences of discrimination on subjective well-being, was found positive as well. We found a significant effect of discrimination on subjective well-being which revealed that those experiencing multiple discrimination had lower levels of subjective well-being than those experiencing single discrimination or no discrimination. Our findings suggest that experiences of discrimination are negatively associated with subjective well-being and that experiences of discrimination on multiple grounds is related to lower levels of subjective well-being globally.

The analysis on the different dimensions of subjective well-being showed that there were significant differences on the impact of subjective well-being between the categories of single or multiple causes of discrimination. In comparison to single cause discrimination, multiple causes resulted in a further decrease of subjective well-being on all components measured, except life orientation and satisfaction regarding standard of living. These results align with minority stress theory; people who are exposed to multiple causes of discrimination because they belong to a group that is discriminated against, face larger health disparities than those who face single cause discrimination or no discrimination.

The third research question; namely what is the role of religious capital for subjective well-being amongst those who have experienced discrimination, was explored through three different case studies that exemplified the lowest (12%), the highest (64%) and the average (41%) cases of respondents who experienced discrimination in the whole of the material: Poland, Turkey and Peru. The role of religious capital for subjective well-being amongst those who have experienced discrimination was different in all three of the case studies. The explanatory power of the included variables (discrimination, religious capital, gender) was in all three of the case studies modest. Only in one out of the three case studies, Peru, was a significant effect found which indicates that public religious practice has a slightly positive effect on subjective well-being.

The final research question, does the role of religious capital for subjective well-being amongst those who have experienced discrimination vary depending on other background factors such as gender and national context, was found positive as well. As the different results in the final analysis on the three separate case studies showed, national context and therefore different religious practices have different effects on subjective well-being. However, gender as a factor did not come across as a convincing factor with independent explanatory power in the regression analysis on the three case studies. These findings show on the one hand how national context is of importance and on the other how other variables than gender and national context should be included to explore the different results per case study.

To conclude, this chapter has illustrated three main things. First of all, for future quantitative studies on subjective well-being in relation to discrimination on a global scale, the variable of subjective well-being is more reliable than other measures such as depression. Secondly, the findings of the analysis have illustrated the complication of understanding the concept of discrimination in a global quantitative study through the same question. All the three cases gave different results through regression models. Even though the first global analysis confirms minority stress theory, when we examined separate case studies in different national contexts, subjective discrimination became complicated to understand and to compare. Finally, theories on subjective well-being are underlined by the idea that while subjective well-being is most likely achieved in different ways depending on cultural context, the outcome (estimated subjective well-being), should be the same regardless of cultural context. Our findings point the other way, which complicates the measurement of subjective well-being, discrimination and religious capital. This complication emphasizes the importance of more qualitative studies on religion, subjective well-being and discrimination in case studies that involve minority groups, which could further enhance the conceptualization of religious capital and give insights into the role of religion on the subjective well-being of young adults who experience discrimination.

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Chapter 13

Minority and Majority Positions: The Religious Subjectivities and Value Profiles Among Muslim Students in Israel and Turkey



Sawsan Kheir, Habibe Erdiş Gökce, Clara Marlijn Meijer, and Ruth Illman 

Abstract Recent research indicates that global changes in life views, religion, and values are taking place. This study explores reflections of these changes on the religious subjectivities and value profiles of young adult Muslim students in Turkey and in Israel. These cases were chosen based on their similar religious backgrounds on the one hand, and the large differences in their cultural and political contexts on the other.

Our findings are based on a mixed-method study, *Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG)*, which includes the Schwartz's value survey (PVQ-RR) and the Faith Q-Sort-method (FQS) developed by Prof. David Wulff. Muslim students in Israel reported higher degrees of self- and family religiosity, and involvement in religious practices in private, as compared to Muslim students in Turkey. Furthermore, the analysis of the FQS yielded five different prototypes for each group, and similarities between certain pairs of prototypes were observed. Our results indicate that despite the shared religious affiliation to Islam, the cultural context of each group contributes largely to differences in religious subjectivities and values between young adult Muslim students in Turkey and in Israel. Such a comparison valuably contributes to understanding the socio-psychological factors that shape the results of the interchange between processes of convergence of cultural values with the persistence of traditional values.

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P. Nynäs et al. (eds.), *The Diversity Of Worldviews Among Young Adults*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94691-3_13

Keywords Israel · Turkey · Muslims · Islam · Young adults · Students · Values · Religious subjectivities

13.1 Introduction

Turkey is an Islamic secular and constitutional Republic, formerly parliamentary, located between Asia and Europe. The dominant form of religion is the Hanafi school of [Sunni Islam](#). There are also some [Sufi](#) Muslims, and the current administration has enacted measures to increase the influence of Islam. Turkey adopted a presidential system with a referendum in 2017, and its culture is a unique mix between Eastern and Western traditions and lifestyles.

In contrast, Muslims in Israel constitute a religious minority. Living as distinct conservative populations within the Jewish society, they are facing two powerful, apparently contradictory forces. While they are exposed to processes of modernization, leading to changes in their traditions, lifestyles and religiosity, at the same time they report being discriminated due to their Palestinian identity and non-acceptance of the Israeli state, which increases their cohesion and intensifies their sense of religious belonging. Hence, despite sharing the same religious identity, the religious subjectivities and value profiles of the Muslims in both Turkey and Israel are not necessarily similar.

This chapter addresses the differences and similarities of the religious subjectivities and values of young adult Muslim students in Turkey and in Israel, focusing on the role of the cultural context in shaping these differences and similarities. Our research questions are: What are the religious and/or secular subjectivities and value profiles of young adult Muslim students in Israel and Turkey? How are the two groups' religious views and value profiles similar and how do they differ?

To answer these questions, parts of a mixed-method study, *Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG)*, that was conducted in two stages, were used (for more on this project see Chap. 1 of this volume). In the first stage, a survey including background questions, in addition to questions about religiosity and religious practices, and the Portrait Values Questionnaire, PVQ-RR, (Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz et al., 2012) was administered (for the survey, see appendix 3). The PVQ questionnaire consists of 57 portrait items with a six-point Likert-scale ranging from "Exactly like me" to "Not at all like me". Results of the PVQ portrait a value profile of the respondents, at the individual as well as at the group level, and enable inter-group comparisons.

Based on these data, a sub-sample of 22 Muslim students in Israel and 37 Muslim students in Turkey were chosen to participate in the second stage of the study and were administered the Faith Q-Sort (FQS; Wulff, 2019). The FQS is a new instrument consisting of 101 cards (appendix 1), developed for a systematic study of religious/spiritual subjectivities. The cards include statements that cover a wide variety of contemporary religiosities and are expected to meet the complexity and diversity of different religious traditions. The participant is asked to sort the cards

according to a scale ranging from those that describe him/her the most (+4) to those that describe him/her the least (−4). The sorting procedure usually ends with a set of questions through which the participant is asked to briefly explain his or her priorities; this is followed by a semi-structured open interview aiming at shedding light on the results of the FQS, and getting a deeper understanding of the background for particular beliefs, practices and values (for more on the FQS see Chaps. 1 and 3 of this volume).

The following sections lay the theoretical background for the study by summarizing the cultural background of Muslims in Israel and in Turkey and by introducing our findings of both groups. Finally, we will conclude by theoretical interpretation of our findings.

13.2 Muslims in Israel and in Turkey

To introduce the ethnographic field, we start with a general overview of the demographic situation of Muslims in Turkey and Israel, pointing to the significant differences in minority/majority position which they currently occupy and the consequent effects on identity apprehensions among the surveyed populations.

13.2.1 *Muslims in Israel: A Conflict-Ridden Minority Position*

The Arab citizens of Israel form 21% of the state's population. Over the years, this relatively large minority group has created different relationships with the state and its institutions. Jews and Arabs in Israel usually live in separate settlements, and the standard of living and level of education of Arab citizens are, on the average, lower than those of the Jewish population (Arar & Keynan, 2015; Rubinstein, 2017). The majority of the Arabs in Israel (84%) is Muslim. Muslims constitute 18% of the Israeli population, with a Sunni majority (CBS, 2017).

The Muslim society generally consists of a collectivistic culture, emphasizing the group needs and values over the individual's, such as family cohesion, harmonious relationships, conformity and interdependence over individual aspiration (Shahla, 2012; Sliman-Dakhlalla, 2013). Religious and traditional values that stress conservatism play a major role in setting the norms and social behavior of the community (Jamal, 2017). Muslims in Israel are in a difficult position due to the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Their ties and roots with their relatives in the diaspora, alongside with perceiving themselves as being deprived of equal rights have led to a process of politicization, which involves opposing the Zionist vision of Israel and the establishment of a strong Palestinian identity (Jamal, 2017; Kheir, 2011; Smooaha, 2017). Hence, despite their Israeli citizenship, they generally do not do military service, which is an important part of the integration of individuals and communities within the Israeli society. This

contributes to their exclusion from the center of the Israeli society discourse (Jamal, 2017; Smooha, 2017). Accordingly, in a previous study of status-based rejection sensitivity, Muslim students reported a high degree of feelings of rejection by the Jewish community, and were low on measures of psychological, social and academic adaptation (Kheir, 2011). Similarly, recent data (Pew Research Survey, 2016) indicate that a high percentage of Muslims in Israel claimed to have negative experiences and to face discrimination due to their ethnic affiliation, compared to other religious minorities.

On the cultural and religious levels, Muslims in Israel are exposed to contradicting forces (Suwaed, 2014). They have absorbed significant secular and western trends from the Israeli culture since the establishment of the state (Jamal, 2017; Shtendal, 1992), yet they are indirectly affected, religiously and culturally, by the Muslim-Arab countries, emphasizing conservative, religious and traditional values (Jamal, 2017). For Muslims in Israel, the results of the conflict between these contradictory forces seem to be related to the political arena, as the attitudes of the Arab public are affected by the government's policy, with heightened religiosity in times of escalation (Gara, 2015; Rubinstein, 2017). Processes of return to religion and increased religiosity among Muslims in Israel are extensive, but their manifestations are not uniform and unequivocal, and obviously conflict with socio-economic processes. With the global technological development, and with the use of digital media, the young adult Muslims today seem to be less observant of religious traditions. Recent data of the Pew research center in Israel (2016) indicate that in comparison to older Muslims (ages 50+), younger Muslims (ages 18–49) are less likely to observe the Ramadan, and to attend the mosque weekly and pray regularly. Furthermore, recent research (Weinstock et al., 2015) revealed that changes in sociodemographic characteristics of the Muslim community and its surrounding areas across time, alongside the use of communication technologies, were positively related to a higher degree of endorsement of individualistic and gender-egalitarian values across three generations. Adolescent girls in the villages endorsed these values more than their mothers, who also endorsed them to a higher degree than the grandmothers.

Thus, it seems that the religious subjectivities and values of young adult Muslims in Israel nowadays are significantly shaped by different processes and forces than those of Muslim majority countries. While they share the conflict between traditionalism and modernization with Muslims worldwide, their position as a religious minority that is part of a major political conflict seems to play an important role in shaping the results of that conflict. In face of the Islamic brotherhood stands the individual's liberty, which may seem incompatible with the religious commandments. Returning to the heritage of Islam contradicts the foreground of modernization, and the young adult Israeli Muslims seem to be looking for interim ways between the poles (Beeri & Soffer, 2004; Jamal, 2017; Lybarger, 2007).

13.2.2 *Muslims in Turkey: Majority Identities*

The Republic of Turkey was established in 1923 as a secular democratic state with a predominantly Muslim population (TÜİK, 2017; Türkiye’ de Dini Hayatlar Araştırması, 2014; Inglehart et al., 2014). The Turkish citizens represent different social identities, including religious, ethnic and linguistic. The religious landscape of Turkey is characterized by a diversity of religious communities. The vast majority of the Muslim citizens of Turkey belong to the Sunni-Hanifi branch of Islam. The most prominent religious minority communities are the Alevis, followed by Greek, Armenian and Assyrian Christian minorities, and Jews.

According to the World Values Survey (Inglehart et al., 2014), the Turkish citizens demonstrate high levels of religiosity on both faith and practice. 98% believe in God, 68% hold God to have an important place in their lives, and 49% pray several times a day. Attendance at religious services is less frequent, alongside low rates of memberships in religious communities and trust to local (0.3%) and national religious authorities (2%), compared to the higher level of trust in the teachings of the religion (30%).

The country has frequently been characterized as traditional and conservative. According to the World Values Survey (2011; $N = 1605$; Inglehart et al., 2014), Turkish citizens demonstrate strong traditional values and survival values. The data showed Turkish citizens to emphasize the place of religion, parent-child ties, and issues of physical security. National studies on childrearing and the socialization of values in children have characterized the *traditional* Turkish rural area family relationships with both material and emotional interdependence (e.g. Kağitçibasi, 1984, 1996, 2005, 2007; Kağitçibasi & Ataca, 2005). Obedience and loyalty to parents have often been reported as desirable traits in children (Kağitçibasi, 1984). The traditional values are also characterized by children placing a significant importance in making their parents proud (Inglehart et al., 2014).

Turkey has been undergoing rapid and remarkable socioeconomic changes with increased urbanization, smaller families with fewer children and a rapid growth in literacy, income and consumption. In line with this development, urban families are oriented towards a different set of socialization goals, such as recognizing autonomy to a higher extent, compared to traditional rural families. The decrease in material interdependency leads parents to place greater importance on their children’s emotional and educational needs, resulting in more independent and self-reliant children (Kağitçibasi & Ataca, 2005). Yet some of the main qualities of the traditional Turkish families are relatively stable: even when material interdependency of family members decreases, as in the upper socioeconomic groups, emotional interdependence and relatedness remain very important (e.g. Imamoglu & Yasak, 1997; Kağitçibasi, 1990; Yağmurlu et al., 2009). This sociocultural development of integrating collectivistic traditional values with individualistic attitudes and values has frequently been referred to as “a culture of relatedness” (Kağitçibasi, 1996), where traditional emotional intimacy and sensitivity to the needs of family members persist in the urban Turkish society.

To sum up, the sociocultural context of Turkey cannot be described as either collectivistic or individualistic. In accordance with studies conducted in Turkey (e.g. Sunar, 2002), one might expect Turkish people to retain a traditionally collectivistic identity, combined with assuming more individualistic achievements and self-enhancement outcomes.

13.3 Demographics and Religiosity Measures

The research sample included 546 Muslim students (Turkey: $N = 346$; Israel: $N = 199$). The Israeli sample consisted of 57% male respondents and 43% female respondents, compared to 31% males and 69% females in the Turkish sample. The age range of the respondents was 18-30 for the Israeli sample, and 18-31 for the Turkish sample. 92% of the Israeli respondents were single, compared to 98% of the Turkish respondents.

Of these samples, 22 from Israel and 37 from Turkey were chosen to the second stage of the study, which included introducing them to the FQS and a semi-structured interview.

The survey contained a bloc on "Social life" including items on religious belonging, self-assessed degrees of personal and family religiosity, and frequency of public and private religious practice. As a measure of self-reported religiosity and family religiosity we relate to the following questions: "Regardless of whether you consider yourself as belonging or close to a particular religious group, community, or tradition, how religious would you say you are?", and "How religious would you say the family you grew up in was?" Answers were given on a ten-point Likert scale, ranging from "0- Not at all religious" to "10-Very religious". For assessing public and private religious practices, we relate to the following questions: "Apart from special occasions such as weddings and funerals, about how often do you take part in religious ceremonies or services these days?", and "Apart from when you are at religious ceremonies or services, how often do you engage in private religious or spiritual practices, such as worship, prayer, or meditation?" The questions were answered on a seven-point frequency scale ("Every day," "More than once a week," "Once a week," "At least once a month," "Only on special days or celebrations," "Less often," "Never," with the addition of the option "I don't know").

Among the 13 samples of the YARG research project, the Israeli Muslim students were ranked second in terms of self-reported religiosity, while the young adult Turkish Muslim students were ranked sixth. The survey data revealed that the Israeli and Turkish students differ significantly in their self-reported religiosity [$t(473.47) = 6.13, p < .05$] and family religiosity [$t(460.66) = 3.91, p < .05$], with Israeli respondents scoring higher in both variables. Furthermore, the groups differed significantly in the gap between self and family religiosity [$t(544) = 2.41, p < .05$], and involvement in religious practices in private [$t(416.99) = 5.21, p < .05$]. The gap was larger for the Turkish sample, and the involvement in private religious practices was higher for the Israeli sample. No significant differences were found in

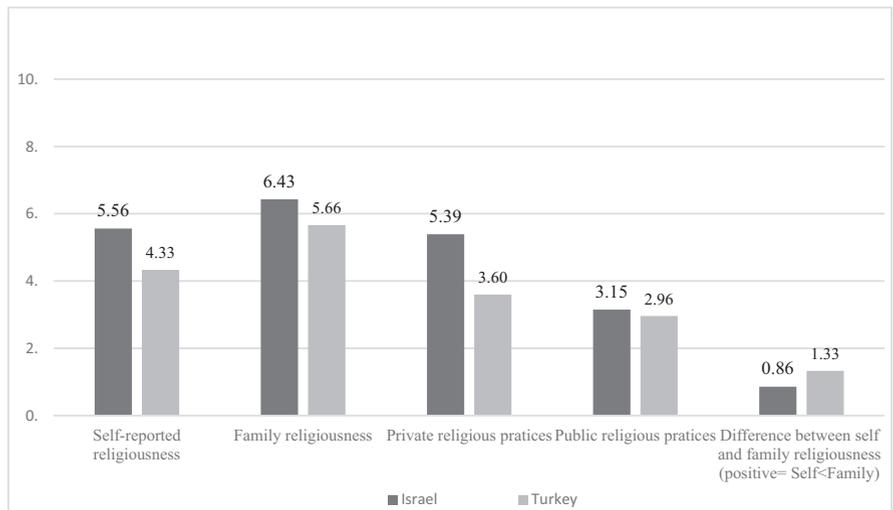


Fig. 13.1 Mean scores of religious measures for Israel and Turkey

involvement in religious practices in public [$t(518.49) = 1.43, p > .05$]. Figure 13.1 reflects the mean scores of both groups in these measures.

13.4 FQS Prototypes of Young Adult Muslim Students in Israel and in Turkey

The FQS was analyzed using the KenQ Method. From arrays of statements sorted by the respondents, the software discerns shared patterns in the sorts known as prototypes. Analysis of the FQS sorts of the young adult Muslim students in Israel and Turkey yielded five prototypes in each group. We will briefly discuss the main characteristics of each prototype followed by a comparison between the prototypes of both groups.

13.4.1 Prototypes in the Israeli Material

Five prototypes were identified among the Israeli students. The FQS data indicated that the Israeli respondents seem to hold a neutral stance regarding religious practices, neither stressing religious practices in private (FQS23) nor participating in religious practices to meet others' wishes or expectations (FQS7). This position towards religious practices is general, as they are not overly interested in engagement with other peoples' religious traditions (FQS81). However, neutrality towards

religious practices need not imply a careless position towards religion. They have not moved from one group to another in search of a spiritual or ideological home (FQS72) and are not fearful of turning to the divine (FQS39). This might be one reason why they do not feel adrift, without direction or goal (FQS35).

13.4.1.1 Committed Practicing Believer

Of all prototypes, this one is characterized by the highest sense of religiosity, as reflected in a strong belief in scriptural inerrancy (FQS15) and adherence to religious traditions (FQS31), alongside a strong belief in a benevolent divine (FQS85). This is illustrated by one respondent (YILSK264) in this way: “the faith is the most important thing in life, and I personally, I believe in the existence of the Gods, that is Allah among us, that -- for me I should not think that there is no such a thing. Everything is written, or this is a real thing for me -- I should not be skeptical about it, according to my way of thinking”.

Persons of this prototype strongly affirm the statement “Being religious or spiritual is central to whom he or she is” (FQS16). Compared to the other prototypes, they place more importance on religious practices as they, for example, give up worldly pleasures for religious or spiritual reasons (FQS98). Importantly and uniquely, they take a clear distance from relating to the divine as feminine (FQS19), strongly believe that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation (FQS71), and is the only one that does not support individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality (FQS100).

13.4.1.2 Institutionally Unattached Universalist

Persons of this prototype express a strong belief in a personal God, as they perceive the divine as a sheltering parent (FQS41). However, their relationship to the divine is not based on temporary needs of protection, as they do not pray chiefly for solace (FQS62). Organized religion does not seem to play a role in their lives, as they reject the idea of being an active, contributing member of a religious or spiritual community (FQS97). At the same time, they also allocate their time or money to religious institutions or worthy causes (FQS1).

The Institutionally Unattached Universalists support freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality (FQS100) and believe that one can be deeply moral without being religious (FQS83), as this respondent (YILSK278) explains: “not always religion is what builds the person. The values, and principles, and morals—the education is more important”. Uniquely, their sexual behavior is not guided by religion (FQS59), and they express a certain level of anxiety when thinking about death (FQS80).

13.4.1.3 Religiously Uninterested But Culturally Committed

Persons of this prototype are characterized by a low sense of traditional religiosity. Feeling distant from God or the divine (FQS45), they are consumed by day-to-day responsibilities, leaving little or no time for spiritual matters (FQS43). However, they seem to maintain some of the religious traditions of their culture, as they do not approve the use of methods for attaining altered states of consciousness¹ (FQS50), which are generally forbidden according to Islam, and they highly value their own purity and strive to safeguard it (FQS48). They are unique in seeing the primary spiritual goal in life to be self-realization (FQS93).

They do not face life's difficulties with a sense of peace (FQS75) and are not confident of attaining eternal salvation (FQS38). These anxieties might be due to their lack of religious belief, or due to their lack of faith in the afterlife, as this respondent explains:

it is that faith, like, does not necessarily have to be faith in religious beliefs only, like, it might be faith and—in other values which are not religious—like, I live life because—because of life, not because I want like, that [life hereafter]. (YILSK018)

13.4.1.4 Experientially Inclined Believer

Persons of this prototype believe in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship (FQS53). However, their beliefs are not reflected in daily religious practices, as they become more religious or spiritual at times of crisis or need (FQS17) and express their own religiosity primarily in charitable acts (FQS27). They also long for a deeper and more confident faith (FQS8) and seek to intensify their relationship with God (FQS49).

of course I seek a higher level of religion, but the environment that we are in does not always allow that—that we follow these rules, or not rules, the commandments—I have that faith inside me, and I have this closeness to our God. (YILSK041)

Uniquely, the Experientially Inclined Believer feels threatened by evil forces in the world (FQS61). Yet, their perception of the divine as a compassionate entity to whom they can turn to at any time (FQS39) seems to protect them against such a feeling.

¹In Arabic the statement was translated as follows: “Has used methods (such as using hallucinating substances or Sufi dancing) for attaining altered states of consciousness.” Using hallucinating substances is forbidden according to Islam. However, there is a controversy regarding the religious correctness of Sufi dancing. In this study, we adopt the stance of the research interviewees who related to that topic, claiming that it is forbidden according to the local religious authorities.

13.4.1.5 Scripture and Institution-Oriented Traditionalist

Persons of this prototype feel that it is important to maintain continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors (FQS58) and to be loyal to the religion of one's nation (FQS46). One respondent explains that the importance of such a maintenance lies in maintaining religion itself:

I believe that there always should be the religious rituals that should be inside the household itself, [...] they should tell in detail the little children about it, explain to them about the holiday's prayer, what do they do in this holiday, why is the holiday named like that, for the continuity of this life. Because I believe that if at some point these relations between the grandfathers and the grandsons and the siblings themselves gets cut, so maybe religions might get lost at some point. (YILSK161)

For persons of this prototype, religion is a central means for becoming a better and more moral person (FQS3), and they live their earthly lives in conscious anticipation of a life hereafter (FQS52). They neither consider religious scriptures to be outdated (FQS32) nor of human authorship (FQS18), and they think that the world's traditions point to a common truth (FQS4). Furthermore, they do not feel contempt for all religious institutions, ideas and practices (FQS25) and strongly disagree with the notion that hypocrisy is common in religious circles (FQS101). They are also foreign to understanding and relating to the divine as feminine (FQS19).

13.4.2 Prototypes in the Turkish Material

Five different prototypes were identified among the Turkish respondents. In general, the Turkish students strive to safeguard their own purity (FQS48). It is characteristic to them not to think that morality necessarily needs to be based on religious principles (FQS83). Instead, they value equality and freedom of choice regarding religion and religiosity (FQS100). The openness regarding subjective religiosity is further shown in their negative attitudes towards the idea of ruling the country based on religion (FQS71). From that point of view, it is possible to suggest that despite outlook differences, secularism is common in our Turkish sample.

13.4.2.1 Socially Concerned Universalist

The Socially Concerned Universalists do not center their lives on a religious or spiritual quest (FQS64). They believe that one can live a moral life without being religious (FQS83). This might be one reason why they express their religion primarily in charitable acts or social action (FQS27) and do not participate in religious practices to meet others' wishes or expectations (FQS7). They definitely do not feel adrift or without direction or purpose in life (FQS35). Moreover, they believe that the world's religious traditions point to a common truth (FQS4), as demonstrated by this respondent (YTRHE304): "I think that all of them point to the oneness of God".

This might be one reason why they do not feel closest to those who share the same faith or outlook (FQS47).

Persons of this prototype deeply believe that self-realization is a primary spiritual goal in life (FQS93) and seldom if ever doubt their own convictions (FQS57). Uniquely, the experience of battling with inner impulses that are experienced as dark or evil is foreign to them (FQS63).

13.4.2.2 Secular Individualistic Rationalist

The distinctive characteristic of the Secular Individualistic Rationalist is that persons of this prototype reject religious ideas conflicting with rational principles (FQS70) as elaborated by a respondent (YTRHE306): "I reject, I generally reject anything that is contrary to the science and rational principles". They strongly view religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires (FQS60). Hence, it is not surprising that persons of this prototype do not live their lives according to religious practices and laws (FQS67).

Like for the Socially Concerned Universalist, self-realization is the most important spiritual goal in life (FQS93). However, persons of this prototype feel uniquely detached from God or the divine (FQS45) and do not believe in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship (FQS53). Instead, divinity is seen as a life source or creative energy (FQS9). Interestingly, it is nevertheless the only prototype slightly agreeing with having a thorough knowledge of religious scriptures and texts (FQS42).

13.4.2.3 Confident and Open-Minded Individualist

Like persons representing the previous prototypes, the Confident and Open-Minded Individualists believe in self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life (FQS93). They believe in some way but do not consider themselves to be religious (FQS28) and clearly reject the idea of remaining loyal to the religion of their nation (FQS46). Persons of this prototype are the only ones who slightly agree with the idea of moving away from their group to another in search for a spiritual or ideological home (FQS72). In the words of a respondent (YTRHE101P): "I cannot remain as part of that religion just because my nation is that way [...] I choose a religion in which I find peace." This spiritual search is also reflected in spending time in reading and talking about their views (FQS6). Uniquely, it is very important for them to follow a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment (FQS86).

The Confident and Open-Minded Individualist feel confident in turning to the divine (FQS39), whom they do not picture outside the traditional religious framework of a supernatural being (FQS9). This might explain why they do not feel threatened by evil forces in the world (FQS61). They are also the only ones who did not reject the idea of experiencing moments of intense divine, mysterious, or supernatural presence (FQS10).

13.4.2.4 Confident Believer

Confident Believers are unique in their interest in traditional religion. Their religious outlook is clear and not vague (FQS84), and they do not doubt their long-held religious convictions (FQS2). For them, religion is not the illusory creation of human fears and desires (FQS60), and they are strongly interested in religious matters (FQS24). They are unique in following certain dietary practices to express their convictions (FQS40), and in agreeing slightly with the idea of willingly giving up worldly pleasures for religious reasons (FQS98).

They also strongly believe in God or the divine, whom they perceive as a sheltering parent (FQS41), and with whom one can have a personal relationship (FQS53). This promotes feelings of being protected by a supernatural being (FQS74), as described by respondent YTRHE124: “I believe in the existence of a creator that protects and takes care of me. Someone who is always there for me”. For that reason, it is understandable that persons of this prototype turn to the divine and their religion in times of distress (FQS17).

This prototype’s traditional religious views are also apparent in their strong disagreement with the perception of God as feminine (FQS19). They are also the only ones to mainly associate with people of the same religious tradition (FQS76), and they do not feel reluctant to reveal their religious experiences and convictions to others (FQS82).

13.4.2.5 Anxious Uncertain Individualist

Similar to the Confident and Open-Minded Individualists, the Anxious Uncertain Individualists believe in some way, without regarding themselves as religious (FQS28), and they do not center their lives on a religious or spiritual quest (FQS64). Uniquely, they regret the personal loss of religious faith or a sense of divine presence (FQS26) and strongly long for a deeper faith (FQS8). As expressed by one respondent (YTRHE140): “I have a belief, yes. But I think that this belief is incomplete”. This incomplete faith might partially explain why they fear death (FQS80) and feel a sense of guilt and personal inadequacy (FQS69).

Even though they have not dedicated their lives to serving the divine (FQS36), they feel protected and guided by a spiritual being (FQS74). Stressing individual self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life (FQS93), they uniquely also emphasize personal agency regarding sexual behavior, that for persons of this prototype is not guided by a religious or spiritual outlook (FQS59).

13.5 Comparison Between the Israeli and Turkish Prototypes

To sum up the presentation of the Israeli and Turkish prototypes, some interesting tendencies and issues can be highlighted. Overall, both the FQS results and the survey data indicate that the Israeli respondents seem to hold a higher sense of religiosity, compared to the Turkish respondents. Yet, respondents from both groups do not seem to allocate high importance to involvement in religious practices per se, such as prayers, and they do not regard religion as a means for maintaining or forming social relationships (FQS21). The FQS data further reveals a lack of religious social involvement. This lack was stronger among the Turkish sample, reflected in the consensus in disagreeing with the statement “Is an active, contributing member of a religious or a spiritual community.” (FQS97). This can be compared to the Israeli sample, where only one prototype (Institutionally Unattached Universalist) was in disagreement. Moreover, while none of the Israeli prototypes showed interest in searching for a spiritual home other than Islam (FQS72), nor strongly viewed religion as an illusory creation of human fears (FQS60), these ideas were agreed upon by certain Turkish prototypes.

Young adults of both groups of our sample show adherence to the statement “Values personal purity and strives to safeguard it” (FQS48). For the Muslims in Israel this might be interpreted from a religious perspective. Even though some of them are less observant religiously, they still keep elementary religious commandments, such as keeping bodily and spiritual purity. However, at least for some young adult Turkish Muslims, keeping bodily purity does not necessarily stem from religious reasons, but maybe out of personal hygiene, as they do not believe in religion (for instance, the Secular Individualistic Rationalist). Additionally, young adult Muslims in both samples report working actively towards making the world a better place to live (FQS51). However, the Turkish sample tends to agree more with this statement, alongside higher prevalence of agreement on statements that adhere to freedom of choice in religious matters (FQS100). This can be contrasted to a consensus among Muslim students in Israel in keeping the traditions of family and ancestors (FQS58).

When looking more specifically into the prototypes of both samples, similarities between certain pairs of prototypes can be observed. The Israeli Institutionally Unattached Universalist has high resemblance with the Turkish Socially Concerned Universalists: both support freedom of choice in religious matters (FQS100), do not participate in religious practices (FQS7; FQS97), and do not feel closest to those who share their outlook (FQS47). The Israeli Religiously Uninterested but Culturally Committed and the Turkish Secular Individualistic Rationalists both feel distant from the divine (FQS45), and highly reject the idea of dedicating their lives to the divine (FQS36). For them, morality is not necessarily related to religion (FQS83), and religion is not perceived as a central means for becoming a better person (FQS3). Personal self-realization is a primary goal in life for persons of both prototypes (FQS93). The Turkish Confident Believers had high similarity with the Israeli

Committed Practicing Believers. Both are strong believers in the idea of divinity (FQS55) and in religious scriptures (FQS2), and are not consumed by day-to-day responsibilities, leaving little or no time for spiritual matters (FQS43). Uniquely, in comparison with the other prototypes, they express their religious convictions by following certain dietary practices (FQS40), and willingly give up worldly or bodily pleasures for religious or spiritual reasons (FQS98).

However, the Turkish Confident Believers have in some respects even higher similarity with the Israeli Experientially Inclined Believers, as both become more religious in times of need (FQS17), believe in a divine being with whom they can have a personal relationship (FQS53), believe in religious texts (FQS32), do not view religion as a creation of human fears (FQS60), and do not have a vague and shifting religious outlook (FQS84).

However, it is important to note that regardless of the high similarity between the groups, differences in the degree of adherence to certain statements still exist and each prototype of the above-mentioned pairs has its own unique characteristics. While the Israeli Committed Practicing Believers believe that religion should play a central role in the ruling of the nation (FQS71), the Confident Believers reject the idea. Furthermore, unlike the Turkish Socially Concerned Universalists, who express their religion primarily in charitable acts or social action (FQS27), the Israeli Institutionally Unattached Universalists do not engage themselves in these acts, despite giving money or time to a religious organization or a worthy cause (FQS1). Finally, the Turkish Confident and Open-Minded Individualist and Anxious Uncertain Individualist, and the Israeli Scripture and Institution-oriented Traditionalist are unique prototypes in each group with no similarities with the other prototypes in the other group.

13.5.1 Values

Using PVQ-RR (Schwartz et al., 2012), we tested the difference between the young adult Muslim students in Israel and in Turkey in the four larger value categories. The data revealed the following differences: the Israeli sample differed significantly from the Turkish one in conservation [$t(528) = 2.69, p < .05$] and self-transcendence [$t(436.08) = -2.62, p < .05$]. Muslim students in Israel ($M = -0.05, SD = 0.35$) seem to adhere to conservation more than Muslim students in Turkey ($M = -0.14, SD = 0.35$), and less than them to self-transcendence ($M = 0.16, SD = 0.30$ compared to $M = 0.24, SD = 0.34$, respectively). No significant differences were found between the groups in openness to change [$t(528) = 1.27, p > .05$], nor self-enhancement [$t(528) = 0.60, p > .05$].

To test the correlation between the different prototypes of each group and the higher-order value types, we used the correlations between the higher-order value type scores and the individual's correlation with the prototypes as co-ordinates for a two-dimensional plot. The results are presented in Fig. 13.2.

As Fig. 13.2 shows, both the Israeli Committed Practicing Believer, Scripture and Institution-Oriented Traditionalist, and the Turkish Confident and Open-Minded Individualist emphasize conservation and self-transcendence over openness to change and self-enhancement. However, this tendency is more prominent for the former prototypes compared to the latter. Characterized by a deep sense of religious belief, our findings regarding the Israeli Committed Practicing Believer, and the Scripture and Institution-Oriented Traditionalist are in accordance to Schwartz's and Huisman's' (1995) previous findings indicating that religiosity correlates positively with values related to conservation and self-transcendence. In contrast, these findings are somewhat confusing regarding the Turkish Confident and Open-Minded Individualist; a prototype that does not reject the idea of moving from one religion to another in search for a spiritual home. However, it is important to note that persons of this prototype tend to believe in some way even though they do not view themselves as religious, and they have a strong sense of the existence of a divine being. i.e., the fact that they are not loyal to their religion, does not imply a lack of theistic beliefs.

The Turkish Confident Believer and the Israeli Experientially Inclined Believer both value conservation more than openness to change, and both emphasize self-enhancement over self-transcendence. Although both have a strong sense of belief in God, they seem to be occupied by daily personal matters and enhancing themselves, which leaves little or no time for religious practices, except at times of crisis

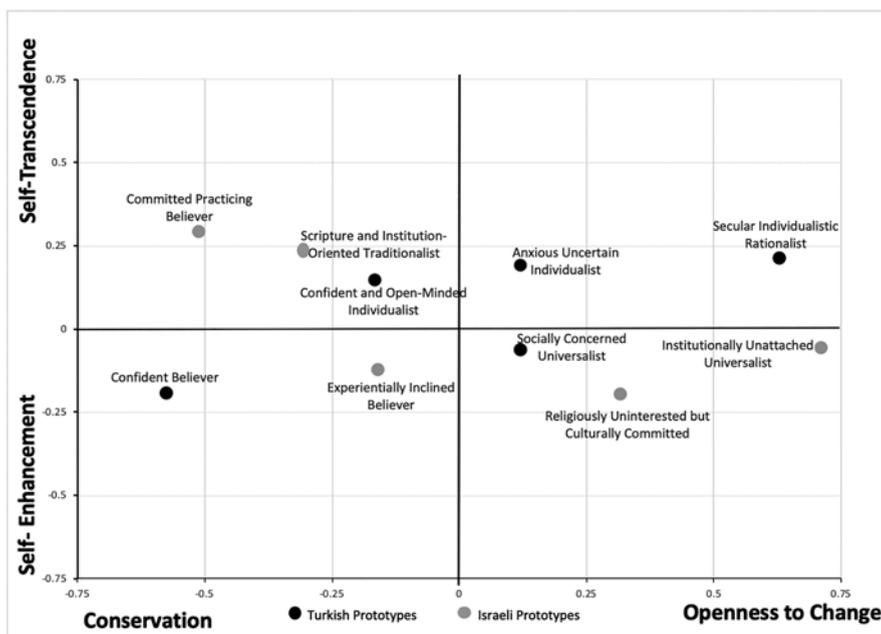


Fig. 13.2 Correlations of the Turkish and Israeli Muslim prototypes with the Schwartz higher-order categories

or need. Notably, regardless of the similarity between both prototypes, the Turkish Confident Believer is also similar to the Israeli Committed Practicing Believer. As mentioned earlier, both display a high sense of belief in religious texts that is not prominent among the Experientially Inclined Believers. Yet, the fact that the Committed Practicing Believer and the Confident Believer are different in their adherence to self-transcendence and self-enhancement reflects the importance of accounting for cultural differences when referring to the correlations between religiosity and values, as well as the fact that the latter prototype is more “self-oriented” in terms of personal choices, since persons belonging to this prototype perceive self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life.

None of the Israeli prototypes values openness to change over conservation alongside self-transcendence over self-enhancement. The combination of adhering to self-transcendence and openness to change is unique for the Turkish Anxious Uncertain Individualist and the Secular Individualistic Rationalist. Both prototypes share the personal perception that self-realization is a primary goal in life, and support freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality. However, the Secular Individualistic Rationalist seems to adhere to Openness to Change values more than the Anxious Uncertain Individualist. This is reflected in adhering to statements that reflect distance from God and from religion compared to the Anxious Uncertain Individualist who regrets to some extent the loss of religious faith, and longs for a deeper and more confident faith. The high self-transcendence of both prototypes is apparently not related to religiosity, as neither prototype has a strong sense of religious belief.

The Turkish Socially Concerned Universalist, the Israeli Institutionally Unattached Universalist and Religiously Uninterested but Culturally Committed Believer all seem to value openness to change over conservation and self-enhancement over self-transcendence. However, despite the high similarity between the Turkish Socially Concerned Universalist and the Israeli Institutionally Unattached Universalist, the latter demonstrates higher distance from religiosity, and more openness to religions and practices other than Islam, adhering more to openness to change values. The Religiously Uninterested but Culturally Committed prototype adheres to self-enhancement values more than both former prototypes. This is not surprising, considering the personal characteristics of those belonging to this prototype, as reflected in the interview data – they strongly support freedom of choice and seek to enhance themselves in the pursuit of their goals, and feel distant from religion and the divine. Though this prototype has much in common with the Turkish Secular Individualistic Rationalist, the latter seems to value self-transcendence to a larger extent.

Looking generally at Fig. 13.2, the openness to change-conservation dimension seems to be related to religiosity positively: the more religious prototypes in their beliefs and practices adhere more to conservation as opposed to openness to change, and vice versa. In contrast, for the Israeli sample, the self-transcendence/self-enhancement dimension seems to be related to a higher extent to general world-views about life, which are not necessarily religious and for some they even contradict common religious perceptions. Yet, for the Turkish sample, this

dimension seems to be related negatively to religiosity, so that the more religious prototypes in their beliefs and practices adhere more to self-enhancement as opposed to self-transcendence, and vice versa.

Overall, the data emphasizes that the linkages between religiosities and values are not unidimensional, and that the cultural context plays an important role in shaping these linkages. Furthermore, the fact that two prototypes are similar in their religious views and practices does not necessarily mean that their values will be similar, and this emphasizes the importance of differentiating between religion and values.

13.6 Conclusions

Major changes are taking place in the life views, religion and values of young adults globally (e.g. Woodhead & Catto, 2013). While most research on this topic relates to Western contexts, we explored the religiosities and values of young adult Muslim students in Middle Eastern countries: Turkey and Israel. Specifically, we compared the religious subjectivities and value profiles, and their correlations, among young adult Muslim students in both groups. This comparison is highly unique and valuable also by heightening the importance of the cultural context in shaping these religiosities and values.

Basing on the results of a survey including the Portrait Values Questionnaire, the Faith Q-Sort, and semi-structured interviews, our data revealed major differences between these groups. Specifically, young adult Muslim students in Israel describe themselves and their families as more religious than Muslim students in Turkey, and accordingly they are also more involved in religious practices in private. Furthermore, they report a smaller gap between self and family religiosity, compared to the Turkish students, which might be considered as an indicator of the cultural differences between the groups, as the Turkish culture upholds a mix of traditional conservative values alongside individualistic values, and leans towards urbanization that adheres to westernization, while the Muslim community in Israel still seems to adhere to conservative values to a higher extent, despite the modernization process that is taking place among the Arab society in Israel generally. Recent data further indicates that the discrimination against the Muslim minority in Israel, especially in the division of resources, seems to strengthen the power of the religious institutions, as they supply alternative social and psychological resources important for the survival of the community (e.g. Jamal, 2017). Notably, for both groups, the level of involvement in religious practices in public was low, and no significant differences were found between the groups. One possible explanation for this might relate to the fact that our samples consisted of young adult students, who have little or no time to participate in such public practices, and thus, when possible, become involved in religious practices in private.

Five different prototypes emerged from the analysis of the FQS's of each group, which differed in their worldviews, levels of religiosity and characteristics, degree

of belief in God and ways of relating to the divine being, involvement in religious practices and the ways for expressing religiosity and personal beliefs. Despite the uniqueness of each of the prototypes in their relevant groups, similarities between pairs including one prototype from each could be noted. These similarities lead to the conclusion that regardless of its different expressions in different cultures, religiosity can take similar forms cross-culturally. It might be valuable for future research to look in more detail for these similarities among other cultures as well, perhaps standing on their nature and identifying different categories among them.

Correlating the different prototypes of each group with Schwartz's larger value categories (conservation vs. openness to change, self-transcendence vs. self-enhancement dimensions), revealed interesting findings. In correspondence with previous studies (e.g. Schwartz & Huisman, 1995), prototypes that adhered to religiosity, among both groups, adhered also to conservation more than openness to change values. However, contrary to previous studies, for the Israeli prototypes, the self-transcendence/self-enhancement dimension seemed to be related to general worldviews about life, which are not necessarily religious. Furthermore, among the Turkish prototypes, higher religiosity related more to self-enhancement, rather than to self-transcendence. These findings are valuable as it seems that the religious subjectivities of the young adult Muslim students in both samples do not relate to values as we might expect. Since the sample sizes are small, generalizations are not possible. However, since we are using FQS that allows distinctions within religiosity, and since these distinctions become visible in value profiles, the current chapter gives a powerful suggestion for future research on values to relate to a much more nuanced understanding of religiosity within a specific cultural context.

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Chapter 14

The Role of Religion in Society and Public Life: Perspectives Among Young Adults in Post-Communist Russia and Poland



Polina Vrublevszkaya, Marcus Moberg , and Sławomir Sztajer 

Abstract Following the collapse of the Communist system in the early 1990s, past decades have witnessed the re-institution of the Russian Orthodox Church in Russia and the Polish Catholic Church in Poland. As a crucial part of these developments, both churches have significantly increased their presence throughout several areas of public life and established ever-closer relations to their respective states and political establishments. This paper applies Jose Casanova's conception of public religion to frame how these tendencies are perceived and experienced by the present young adult generation in Poland and Russia. The analysis of the Russian and Polish young adults' views on the present-day role of religion in the wider society and public life reveal several concerns about the current church-state relations in both countries. Without necessarily taking a negative stance towards religion or religious traditions as such, respondents mostly expressed their views on the public role of religion in society through three interrelated main discourses: a discourse of differentiation, a discourse of diversity and plurality, and a discourse of tradition and modernity. In general, narratives are built upon the prevalent discursive formations on individual rights and freedoms as the natural and taken-for-granted states of affairs in modern democratic societies.

Keywords Public religion · Post-Communist societies · Religion and state · Russian Orthodox Church · Polish Catholic Church

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P. Nynäs et al. (eds.), *The Diversity Of Worldviews Among Young Adults*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94691-3_14

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14.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on Russian and Polish young adults' views on the present-day role of religion in wider society and public life. In contrast to all other countries included in the Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG) project, the present-day religious landscapes of Russia and Poland need to be understood in relation to their respective Communist anti-religious pasts and historical experience of "state forced secularization" (e.g. Müller & Neundorf, 2012). Following the collapse of the Communist system in the early 1990s, past decades have witnessed the re-institution of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) in Russia and the Polish Catholic Church (PCC) in Poland. As a crucial part of these developments, both churches have significantly increased their presence throughout several areas of public life and established ever closer relations to their respective states and political establishments. This state of affairs, as we learn from previous studies, mass media and empirical data of the current research, has served to provoke widespread resentment among significant segments of the Russian and Polish populations, including the majority of all Russian and Polish young adults interviewed.

This issue is explored in relation to respondents' views on Faith Q-Sort statement 71 "Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation" that was part of the Faith Q-Sort (FQS) instrument developed and applied in the Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective research project (for more on YARG and the FQS see Chap. 1 of this volume). The analysis of the chapter is based on both FQS and interview data from Russia and Poland. "Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation" was a frequently discussed statement across all national samples included in the YARG project. Overall, this statement provoked strong negative reactions among the majority of all respondents, typically rated at -3 or -4 on the FQS record sheet. The only exception was provided by the Israeli Muslim sample. The statement under study emerged as a defining one for many FQS prototypes and as a distinguishing one for 10 out of a total of all 56 FQS prototypes. "Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation" does, however, appear in a range of different constellations vis-à-vis other FQS statements on related topics and questions. This chapter explores the position that this particular statement occupies in relation to other FQS statements pertaining to the role of religion in social and public life at various individual, group, and broader societal levels in the Russian and Polish samples. This is followed by the identification and analysis of three main recurring discourses through which Russian and Polish respondents most commonly express their views on the statement about the role of religion and other related issues.

The chapter is structured as follows. The first section provides a discussion on the notion of 'public religion' and a general account of the present-day public visibility and presence of religion in Russia and Poland. This is followed by a discussion on how the statement "Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation" is situated in relation to other FQS statements on similar topics and questions among the Russian and Polish prototypes. The third and final main

section of the chapter then moves to analyze the main discourses through which Russian and Polish interviewees expressed their views on relations between church and state and the public role of religion in society. The chapter closes with a discussion of the results and some brief concluding remarks.

14.2 The Rise of Public Religion in Post-Communist Russia and Poland

Since the early 1990s, the global ‘resurgence’ of religion has developed into a major topic of inquiry and debate throughout many sub-fields in the study of religion, and indeed beyond. Although it remains a contentious issue, the (perceived) global resurgence of religion is commonly dated back to the late 1970s and early 1980s; a period in time that witnessed both the rise of the Religious Right in the United States and the Islamic Revolution in Iran (Fox, 2013, p. 24). The years following the fall of the Iron Curtain in the early 1990s saw the restoration and re-appearance of national churches on the public arena throughout many countries of the former Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc. In more recent times still, the increasing politicization of religion (especially as it relates to Islam) has served to further strengthen the sense that religion is re-entering the public arena on a worldwide scale.

The publication of José Casanova’s *Public Religions in the Modern World* in 1994, along with its elaboration on the subsequently widely employed and debated notion of ‘public religion’, provided a landmark contribution to the burgeoning scholarship on the visibility and presence of religion in the public sphere. Casanova develops his notion of ‘public religion’ as part of a broader critique of conventional and received versions of secularization theory. At the core of his argument lies his emphasis on what he identifies as a principal modern structural trend “towards the separation of the state from religions, leaving civil society as a public sphere in which religions can freely intervene” (Beckford, 2010, p. 124). Indeed, as he contends: “only public religions at the level of civil society are consistent with modern universalistic principles and with modern differentiated structures” (Casanova, 1994, p. 219). As Beckford (2010, p. 123) puts it, Casanova’s de-privatization thesis therefore posits a ‘re-politicization’ of the private sphere and a ‘re-normativization’ of the economic and political spheres. While this view clearly builds on the Habermasian liberal-political theoretical ideal of a social vitality-, pluralism- and democracy-supporting ‘civil society’ that occupies an independent ‘middle-ground’ between the private sphere and that of the state and economy (Beckford, 2010, p. 125; Beyer, 2006, p. 12), in this scheme, ‘public religions’ are therefore to be understood as ‘intermediate institutions’ and ‘free agents’ in civil society that are located somewhere ‘in-between’ the private sphere and that of the state and economy. The assumption then becomes that “only those religions that cease to be “state-oriented” and become “society-oriented” institutions are capable of entering or re-entering the public sphere of civil society” (Beckford, 2010, p. 125).

The notion of ‘public religion’ has served to inspire countless explorations of the present-day public visibility of religion and religious actors across various national, social, cultural, and religious contexts, including post-Communist societies such as Russia and Poland. While the notion of public religion can certainly be of help in framing the present-day public visibility of religion in these two countries and how this is viewed and experienced by the present young adult generation, any such exploration also needs to unfold on the basis of an adequate understanding of the nature of the *state-church relations* currently in play on these respective national scenes. As pointed out by Fox (2013, p. 88), in cases where the legitimacy of states or particular governments themselves become varyingly tied to their continuing support for a particular religion or religious institution, they also tend to actively support and bolster the agency of that particular religious institution and the individual religious actors that are associated with it. Current state-church relations in Russia and Poland both provide apt examples of this, although they do so in notably different respects.

The ultimate collapse of the Communist state apparatus in the early 1990s gave rise to new hopes about the emergence of a Western-styled liberal-democratic robust civil society in both Russia and Poland (e.g. Beckford, 2010, p. 125). Rather than becoming decisively ‘society-oriented’ and taking on roles as central arbiters of civil society, however, the ROC and PCC instead became increasingly ‘state-oriented’ (e.g. Titarenko, 2008, p. 251). The establishment of ever closer relations between state and church (especially in Russia) have seriously reduced the prospect of any such developments and also served to generate increasingly widespread resentment towards church interference in the field of politics and public life among the wider population in both countries. Indeed, as will be illustrated in more detail below, such sentiments also clearly surface in the accounts of Russian and Polish young adults interviewed by the YARG scholars, and especially as expressed with reference to the statement “Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation”.

Part of the explanation for current state-church relations in both countries undoubtedly also has to do with their respective experiences of their Communist anti-religious past. As research on religion both during and after the fall of the Iron Curtain has been able to show, the long-term effects of Communist ‘state-forced secularization’ appears to have remained most enduring in the countries of the former Soviet Union, but less so in countries such as Poland, where the overall figures of religiosity have remained high (Müller & Neundorf, 2012, pp. 564–563). It is equally important to note that, while both the ROC and PCC were severely curtailed and marginalized during Communist times, their respective pathways to re-institution have been notably different.

Starting almost immediately after the conclusive establishment of the Soviet Communist regime in Russia in the early 1920s, the active dismantling of Orthodox institutional structures continued at an accelerating pace up until the Second World War. In the decades following the war, state persecution of religion was gradually relaxed, as the ideology of ‘scientific atheism’ had become firmly established and religion was no longer considered a serious threat to Communist ideology (e.g.

Stepanova, 2013). Since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, the religious landscape of Russia has experienced rapid and dramatic changes. The early 1990s witnessed an explosion in conversions to Orthodox Christianity, followed by a sharp increase in the numbers of people who self-identify as Orthodox Christian that continued up until the 2010s (Levada Center, 2011). Apart from turning to the traditionally dominant ROC, increasing numbers of people now also discovered religious alternatives and either formed or joined new religious movements (Shterin, 2001). The ROC, however, has retained its dominant position. Currently approx. 71% of Russian citizens self-identify as Russian Orthodox Christians (Pew Research Center, 2017).

When it comes to the visibility of religion in the public sphere, the first three decades of post-Soviet Russia have been characterized by four principal developments – all of which relate to the re-establishment of the ROC and its re-emergence as a central social institutional actor. As a first notable development, since the early 2000s, the ROC has significantly increased its investments and engagements in different areas of social work and social services provision (Oreshina et al., 2018). A second notable development can be seen in the growing visibility of the ROC in public spaces. Beginning already in the early 1990s, there has been widespread restoration of church buildings and the establishment of new parishes. A third development relates to the increasing presence of the ROC in the field of education, as past decades have witnessed the proliferation of parochial (Sunday) schools, Orthodox Christian gymnasiums and seminaries (Nikitskaya, 2008; Willems, 2007; Metlik, 2010), as well as the introduction of religious education in public schools in 2012. In what constitutes a fourth and particularly significant development, the ROC has established ever closer relations with the Russian state apparatus and gradually cemented its position as a central source of social morality and national identity (Bruce, 2003, p. 53). Given this state of affairs, the growing social position and influence of the ROC is most adequately understood as a result of its ever-closer relationship with the core political establishment (e.g. Zabaev et al., 2018).

As for Poland, communist persecution of the PCC began after the Second World War through the country's incorporation into the Eastern Bloc. Following the war, the convention with the Holy See (concordat) was terminated, and the church's landed properties were nationalized. Catholic publications and publishing houses were closed down and many bishops and priests were arrested. The clash between Catholicism and Communism did not, however, result in a general decline in religious commitment. Instead, Catholic affiliation persisted, became increasingly associated with oppositional political activity and the Solidarity Movement, and gradually took on the characteristics of a civil religion in Poland (Mucha & Zaba, 1992, p. 57; Byrnes, 2002, p. 28). An adequate appreciation of the role of the PCC during the Communist era is therefore the key to an understanding of its role and position in contemporary Polish society and culture.

Today Poland remains a highly religiously homogeneous country. Close to 90 percent of Poles belong to the PCC, which continues to exercise considerable influence over national public and political life. The strong correlation between religiosity and nationalism in present-day Poland (McManus-Czubińska & Miller, 2008, pp. 131–132) can partly be explained by the fact that the PCC has traditionally been

perceived as a cornerstone of national independence and democratic opposition. The rapid structural changes that followed in the wake of the collapse of the Communist system in 1989 did not, therefore, result in any dramatic changes in the Polish religious landscape. There are many possible explanations for the relative stability in religious attitudes in post-Communist Poland. Borowik (2010) singles out the following: the historical role of Catholicism in buttressing and maintaining national Polish identity; the civic role of religion and its political instrumentalization during the transformation period; the general decline in social security caused by rapid social and structural changes; the enduring efficacy of traditional mechanisms of religious socialization; and the possibility that more significant changes in the religiosity of Poles are still not discernible on the surface, although such changes might have occurred on the individual level. It seems plausible to argue that each of these five hypothetical explanations have played some role in the stabilization of religious attitudes among the Polish population during the past thirty years.

The PCC has steadily increased its presence throughout several areas of public life. It actively engages in the political arena, frequently cooperating with conservative political parties on legislative issues such as restrictions on abortion and the barring of sex education in schools. The presence of the PCC in public space has also become decidedly more visible in post-Communist times. The display of religious symbols in public schools and offices, the participation of priests in official state ceremonies, and the blessing of public buildings all constitute examples of this. The public visibility and presence of the PCC does, however, enjoy wide acceptance among the Polish population (e.g. CBOS, 2015).

As illustrated by the above discussion, post-Communist times have witnessed the re-emergence and re-institution of national churches as central social and political actors in both Russia and Poland. But, as the above discussion also shows, their respective pathways towards this end have been notably different. To simplify, whereas the ROC's rise to prominence can generally be viewed in terms of a top-down process involving the active support of the Russian state, the re-institution of the PCC can instead generally be understood in terms of a bottom-up process, stemming from its wide support among the Polish population at large, previous association with oppositional politics, and through functioning as a central symbol of Polish national identity. In both countries, however, the increasing presence of the Churches in the political arena has developed into an increasingly contentious issue.

14.3 The Position of the Statement “Believes That Religion Should Play the Central Role in the Ruling of the Nation” in the Russian and Polish Samples

In this section, we move to analyze our Russian and Polish respondents' views about the statement “Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation”. Since their articulation of their personal views need to be viewed in

relation to the broader discursive contexts in which they appear, our discussion will unfold on a supra-individual level, highlighting how individual respondents varyingly tap into prevalent discursive formations on the role of religion in modern societies and how they relate them to their own experiences of their respective social, cultural, and religious contexts.'

As a first dimension, we show the position of this particular statement vis-à-vis other statements on related topics and issues in the Russian and Polish prototypes that were created out of Faith Q-Sorts as generalized sets of views represented by particular cases in each country sample. As a second dimension, we explore the main ways in which this statement is discussed in the narratives of Russian and Polish interviewees.

The chosen statement was discussed in 29 of the Russian and 24 of the Polish interviews (i.e. in a majority out of all 45 interviews conducted in each location). It constitutes a defining statement for all of the five Russian prototypes and for two out of four Polish prototypes (Prototype 1 Critical and Rational Individualist and Prototype 4 Unengaged, Secularly Inclined Sceptic). Assuming that each prototype represents a certain type of a 'mindset', they have been compared on the basis of how this statement is respectively positioned vis-à-vis the following FQS-statements that also pertain to views and attitudes towards the role of religion in society at various individual, group, and public levels:

- 7 Participates in religious practices chiefly to meet others' wishes or expectations.
- 20 Relies on religious authorities for understanding and direction.
- 25 Feels contempt for all religious institutions, ideas and practices.
- 31 Is critical of the religious tradition of his or her people.
- 46 Feels that one should remain loyal to the religion of one's nation.
- 58 Feels that it is important to maintain continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors.

These statements emerged as either distinguishing or defining for at least one of the seven prototypes included in the analysis. FQS-statement 7 "Participates in religious practices chiefly to meet others' wishes or expectations" stands out as distinguishing for both Polish prototypes included in the analysis as well as for two of the Russian prototypes (Prototype 4 Critical and Unengaged Religious Conformist and Prototype 5 Anxious Believer). Shared agreement with this statement may reflect an experience of a tension between a personal lack of belief or enthusiasm in the face of perceived broader social approval of religion and religious activity.

The prototypes included in the analysis display notable differences when it comes to FQS-statement 25 "Feels contempt for all religious institutions, ideas and practices". While the more 'critically minded' prototypes are characterized by strong agreement and identification with this statement, more 'open-minded' prototypes are instead characterized by the opposite view. While all prototypes are united in their rejection of the notion that religion should play a central role in the ruling of the nation, this does not necessarily involve a critical or dismissive stance towards religious institutions and religious practice as such.

FQS-statement 58 "Feels that it is important to maintain continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors" is distinguishing for two of the Russian

and one of the Polish prototypes included in the analysis. Here, too, notable differences can be found across these three prototypes. For example, while Russian Prototype 4 Critical and Unengaged Religious Conformist agrees with the statement, Russian Prototype 1 Progressive Secular Rationalist and Polish Prototype 1 Critical and Rational Individualist do not. Furthermore, FQS-statement 31 “Is critical of the religious tradition of his or her people” is defining for both Polish Prototype 1 and Russian Prototype 5 Anxious Believer, but in opposite ways. While the former agrees, the latter does not. Hence, while all of these prototypes are unified by their rejection of the statement “Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation”, they display considerable variations when it comes to their respective attitudes towards inherited and received religious traditions.

Some of the above-listed statements are defining for only one of the prototypes included in the analysis. For example, only Polish Prototype 1 Critical and Rational Individualist expresses clear distance towards FQS-statement 46 “Feels that one should remain loyal to the religion of one’s nation”, and only Russian Prototype 1 disagrees with FQS-statement 20 “Relies on religious authorities for understanding and direction”.

This general FQS-dimension analysis reveals how shared disagreement with the notion that religion should play a central role in the ruling of the nation emerges as part of several different ‘mindsets’ as well as in different types of constellations vis-à-vis other statements pertaining to the role of religion in society.

14.4 Discourses on the Public Role of Religion in the Russian and Polish Interviews

To engage in discursive practice always entails a positioning of one’s own subject in relation to particular discursive formations, i.e. sets or clusters of discourses that govern certain broader domains of thought such as, for example, politics, economics, or religion (Fairclough, 1992, p. 43). Discursive formations serve to construct particular areas of social reality, such as ‘religiosity’ or state-church relations, in particular ways, thereby also serving to position subjects in relation to such social realities in particular ways. In the following analysis of individual respondents’ views on the role of religion in the governing of the nation, particular attention is therefore paid to the different ways in which respondents position themselves in relation to broader discursive formations on the topic.

The analysis unfolded in three stages. First, each interview from both samples was analyzed separately. This was followed by an identification and classification of the main discourses that emerged in relation to the statement under consideration in both samples. On the basis of this classification, three closely interrelated main discourses on the role of religion in society were identified as emerging particularly clearly throughout both samples: a discourse of *differentiation*, a discourse of *plurality and diversity*, and a discourse of *tradition and modernity*. The appearance of

these discourses in the interviews does not, however, directly correlate with certain prototypes. While some respondents only briefly mentioned the statement about the role of religion in society in passing, others elaborated on their views in much greater length and detail. In some cases, respondents expressed their views through an idiom that largely echoes widespread secularist platitudes about the role of religion in society and public life, while altogether refraining from providing anything by means of further explanation about how their views on the statement relate to their own personal outlooks. This is, arguably, at least partly explained by the ways in which the separation of church and state has developed into a central liberal democratic value and ‘default position’ that figures prominently in mainstream mass media and institutional sites such as universities. Each discourse identified nonetheless centers on certain sets of values and ideals relating to the role of religion in society, and especially the area of politics.

14.4.1 Discourse of Differentiation

A first main discourse that clearly emerges from both the Russian and Polish interviews centers on the need to maintain a strong separation between religion and state in terms of their respective main functions and fields of influence. This discourse also renders religion a private matter and highlights the dangers that religious involvement in politics poses to democracy and individual freedoms. In the perspectives of the respondents, the function of religion is to cater to people’s ‘spiritual’ needs, while the role of the state is to secure people’s ‘material’ needs. As one Russian respondent said:

Number 71 [FQS71] implies that religion should play the main role in the governing of the state. Well, it’s simply foolish, it is. It is because state doesn’t serve the same purposes as religion. Religion is an institution that serves the purpose of spiritual self-actualization of people’s consciousness, of one’s personality. State, in its turn, realizes people’s needs in material values, in protection, their needs in work and, among other things, their needs to participate in some religious events. (YRUPV03)

In a similar vein, a Polish respondent stated:

In my opinion these [religion and state] should be completely separated, the Church should take care of spiritual matters and—the people who rule the country should rather take care of—aiming to improve the operation of some institutions, to enhance the umm living standards of the inhabitants. And this shouldn’t be in any way dependent on the Church issues and, spiritual resolutions. (YPLSS128)

These respondents both articulate the view that religion should focus on ‘spiritual matters’, whereas the state should focus on improving the functionality of social institutions and strive to improve the standard of living. As seen from these two quotes, the respective and ‘completely separate’ functions of religion and state are articulated in largely identical terms. However, in some cases the idea of functional differentiation is supplemented with an argument on the strongly ‘personal’, and

indeed ‘intimate’, character of religious belief. In this view, religion is located outside the purview of any public, political, or other broader social agenda. As one Russian respondent recounted:

‘Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation’. Under no circumstances. Well, I’m kind of in favor of a secular state, where religion is separated. [...] It is rooted in my conviction that religion is a very intimate matter and some view it as their connection to God or something else; it’s very personal, and you can’t play it, you can’t use it to rule the state. That is, as a tool of authority. (YRUPV08)

Religious interference in politics is frequently expressed through an idiom of control of consciousness and the imposition of certain values. In this view, state appeals to religious arguments or authorities stand in direct conflict with its mandate to uphold individual rights and freedoms. Locating religion in the domain of ‘private life’ presupposes that certain beliefs neither can nor should be imposed on individuals. Another Russian respondent puts it somewhat more starkly:

It’s, well, probably—let’s say—absolutely clear that religion is, so to say—a state of mind, a certain unreality, whereas the state we live in is reality and, well, we understand that reality and unreality, they can’t be interconnected. Uh, and first—if religion interferes in state affairs, first, it acts in its own interests, with the purpose of strengthening its position and its influence in the country. Well, I think, I think that, um—let’s say, these are structures which, can’t even coexist, and if they do, it leads to a certain degree of absurdity. (YRUPV33)

In what represents a continuation of the views articulated by the previously quoted respondents, the views expressed here connect to a discourse on the respective different functions of religion and state by making a further phenomenological distinction between the ‘unreality’ (or ‘transcendence-focus’) of religion as opposed to the ‘reality’ (or ‘immanence-focus’) of the state. The conjunction of these two domains is perceived as constituting an ‘absurdity’. From this standpoint, as soon as religion is granted political power, it is deemed to use it to strengthen its societal position and influence. This respondent thus clearly articulates strong suspicion towards the prime motivations of religious institutions in the public domain. Based on their personal experiences of the growing public role and influence of religion in Russia, such suspicion was also articulated by several other Russian respondents. Many Russian respondents are not only united by their disagreement with the chosen statement and joint emphasis on a clear separation between church and state, but also by their largely shared personal experiences of recent developments in church-state relations in Russia. Indeed, the manifestations of these relations are described in quite striking terms, as in religion now being ‘everywhere’. Similar to the Russian respondents quoted above, several Polish respondents also tap into a discourse of the proper behavior of a constitutionally secular state. One Polish respondent expressed unequivocal views on the subject:

‘Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation’. I extremely disagree with that. I think that—the nation and religion should be completely separate institutions. Religion should have no influence, I mean—um no real influence on power, developing the structure of social order. It should not have [influence] in the same way as the state. Religion should be voluntary; if one wants, he can join it, cultivate it, of course, but there should be no religious element in ruling the nation because it is—in my opinion, it has

negative effects and creates divisions and problems—um I would like to—um avoid such a situation and I think it is worth avoiding. (YPLSS327)

The ‘extreme’ disagreement with the statement expressed by the respondent stems from a conviction that religious interference in state politics would cause problems and conflicts both within and between societies. Overall, the discourse of differentiation taps in to broader prevalent discursive formations on the necessity for modern democratic states to remain secular and religiously neutral. It emphasizes the potential dangers that the extension of religious values and beliefs to the political sphere would pose for cherished individual freedoms. This discourse simultaneously highlights that religion should remain a private and voluntary matter. Hence, religious incursions into politics and the establishment of closer ties between state and religion are viewed with great concern.

14.4.2 Discourse of Plurality and Diversity

A second main discourse that emerges from the Russian and Polish interviews centers on the fact of diversity and plurality as a natural condition of modern society and emphasizes the peaceful co-existence of different religions, religious/spiritual and non-religious outlooks or persuasions alike. Although it retains close connections to the previously discussed discourse of differentiation and the idea of religion as a private matter, it also adds particular emphasis on the ways in which state preference or support for a certain religion almost by necessity leads to discrimination, exclusion, and hostility towards minority persuasions. As expressed by one Russian respondent:

I think that if a religion rules the nation, it will mean, first of all, that adherents of other religions will be oppressed and non-believers will be oppressed above others. Consequently, I’m against this [...] I don’t think there’s any point in a religious intervention in state affairs; to each his own. (YRUPV15)

In this account, the affordance of political power to a particular religion or religious institution is directly linked to the oppression of alternative persuasions, be they religious or otherwise. Such views were also echoed by several other respondents. Another Russian respondent said:

We have a great deal of religions, even within our country, so if we suggest that religion rules the state, it would mean doing so at someone’s expense. It’s not a good strategy. (YRUPV18)

Religious political power is directly associated with the repression of individual freedoms and the curtailing of religious diversity. Indeed, as argued by this respondent, if one religion is allowed a central role in the governing of the nation, this will necessarily happen at the ‘expense’ of the liberties of those who hold other views. A Polish respondent recounted:

In my opinion religion and generally the church as an institution because it is also criticized by me now. They should not influence each other because, for instance, there is no obligation to be a Catholic in Poland. There are also other national and ethnic minorities here. And if this religion played a key role, well, then those nations would be aggrieved or just the atheists or even people who quest [...] Religion should be and the most important holidays should be commonly celebrated, but without exaggeration. So certainly it should not play a key role. (YPLSS23)

In a way that closely resembles the accounts of the Russian respondents quoted above, this one also links the political elevation of one religion or religious institution to the marginalization of ‘national and ethnic minorities’. In some accounts, the concept of ‘democracy’ also comes into play:

I think the division between the state and religion is the fundamental element of a democratic society [...] And without this division we have a religious state, which is not the best option: no religion. Even if I was, let’s generally assume, a Christian living in a Christian state, I don’t think I would be happy knowing that other people may not necessarily be Christians. What about them? (YPLSS149)

For this respondent, the question of whether even citizens belonging to the dominant religion of society would necessarily want the persuasions of others to be limited or curtailed is explicitly linked to democratic ideals.

Generally, the discourse on plurality and diversity underlines the need for states to support and uphold equal religious liberties for all citizens. While the discourse of differentiation is more focused on religion (as a private matter), the discourse of diversity and plurality is instead based on the idea that a secular state should not intervene in religious matters and views religion as part of the individual lifeworld. Failure to do so, according to this discourse, leads to the oppression and marginalization of minority persuasions, which would, again, stand at odds with the liberal values espoused by the majority of respondents in both countries.

14.4.3 Discourse of Tradition and Modernity

A final third main discourse that emerges from the interviews centers on the notion that traditional religious dogmas and mores have lost their relevance for modern societies. In this view, religious traditions and beliefs are ill-suited to function as a source of moral order in increasingly pluralistic modern societies. This discourse primarily emerged in the accounts of the Russian respondents. For example:

‘Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation’, is it called theocracy? [...] Because there were countries like that, and there might be a few now. Well, again, I think it corresponds with the fact that religion can intimidate [...] So I think that if we look at religion from the philosophical perspective, there should be some religious ideas, well, in the national ideology. Because it could be beneficial, because religion has some very good statements, essentially—well, but I don’t think that religion as an institution can do any good. Especially in the modern world and even in modern Russia. (YRUPV42)

While this respondent clearly rejects the notion that religion should play a part in the governing of the nation, she nevertheless maintains that religion can provide valuable ‘philosophical’ and ideational elements that can serve to underpin ‘national ideology’. As an institution, however, religion is viewed as being incapable of contributing to modern Russian society, and indeed modern society in general. Another Russian respondent related the issue to broader secular values:

I don’t think that religion, some kinds of traditions are, first of all, meant to be permanent, and second, meant to determine gender relations and the ruling of the state, let alone some other social institutions. Because, first of all, these are very different things, these are completely different spheres of influence for me. And I don’t really know, but I think the state must still be secular and a citizen must align his or her behavior in it not according to some kinds of religious dogmas, but according to some kinds of moral values, which he or she has in his mind, probably. (YRUPV10)

In the opinion of this respondent, it would be a mistake to regard religious beliefs and traditions as possessing some kind of ‘eternal’ quality. Hence, as they become outdated, ‘religious dogmas’ should not retain the power to influence behaviors and morals indefinitely, but rather be substituted with ‘moral values’. Another Russian respondent clearly articulates the view that nations should be governed on the basis of rationality and reason:

No, it’s the brains that should play the central role in the ruling of a nation. [...] because religion—is kind of indiscriminating. But you can’t do this when you rule a nation. (YRUPV24)

She also seems to suggest the practical impossibility of religion or religious institutions playing any type of part in any such activities. Some very similar thoughts are also expressed by this Polish respondent:

I do not think that ‘that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation’, because people should not be guided by it. They should be sometimes guided by reason; faith is not enough. Ruling the question as to whether religion should play—it should not. Not all people think the same as I do, and then you know what—trouble. (YPLSS106)

In this account, if ‘reason’ is allowed to be eclipsed by religiously motivated arguments in the sphere of politics and governing, this risk is seen as leading to disagreements or ‘trouble’. Another perspective on the irrelevance of religion in the modern world was also suggested:

I don’t believe that ‘religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation’. I fundamentally disagree with it. That’s exactly what I was talking about earlier, we’re so um strongly individualized now that religion is completely losing its importance as an element that holds people together, and because it is a system that has rather fundamentalist views, it would strongly restrain the possibility of human development and self-creation. So you can’t give it the privilege of ruling. (YPLSS47)

In this account, religion is described as ‘completely losing’ its capacity to function as a unifying force for people in increasingly diverse modern societies. This respondent also taps into discourses of diversity and pluralism by directly associating religion with ‘fundamentalist’ views that serve to curtail ‘human development’ and individual freedom and self-determination. An appreciation of the secular state and

increasing social plurality and diversity is also expressed in relation to general socioeconomic development:

Well, I am an economist by profession, and I think the world has now reached, well, many countries, in any case, have reached the level of development when people of different ideas and beliefs are assembled together in the country, and if there is the one religion in such a country, it won't bring any good or be effective. Some people will be oppressed, and therefore it seems to me that states, especially multi-religious, should be secular. (YRUPV36)

In this account, holding up to a particular religion is seen as causing obstacles for state efficiency and societal progress. A Polish respondent expressed some similar views:

There are people who do not believe and those who believe should understand them. And if we close ourselves in a sort of a bubble in which religion is most important, well, then those people will not be able to understand the other ones and will take a negative attitude towards them. So, I do not say that there can be no religion. There can be religion, it does not disturb me. However, it should not be most important because we live in times where it exists, but, unlike in the past, we know there are other things, so, somehow, we should be open—to what happens. (YPLSS63)

Thus, state preference for any one religion is associated with conservatism and ignorance. The discourse on tradition and modernity expressed by these respondents appears to generally reflect what Casanova (2013, p. 31) has referred to in terms of an understanding of secularity as 'stadial consciousness'. This is to say that people who live in what they regard as modern societies tend to understand and experience secularity as a modern 'default position' and as 'the meaningful result of a quasi-natural process of development' (Casanova, 2013, p. 32). In this view, religion largely represents a residue of the past that modern societies and individuals would need to, or should already have, 'overcome'. The prevalence of this discourse among the Russian respondents most likely follows from their negative personal experiences of the present-day public visibility of the ROC. In contrast to the gradual modernization of the Catholic Church following the Second Vatican Council, the ROC has maintained its pre-revolution standards and thus remained decidedly more conservative in both its general outlook and communication with the wider Russian population. This has served to strengthen a view of the ROC as an archaic and backward-striving institution, especially among younger generations.

14.5 Discussion and Concluding Remarks

As illustrated by the analysis of this chapter, the notion that religion should play a central part in the ruling of the nation sparked lively discussion and was commented on in the majority of all Russian (29) and Polish (24) interviews. In the vast majority of cases, the Russian and Polish young adults interviewed expressed strong disagreement with the statement. The analysis of the position of the FQS-statement 71 vis-à-vis other statements on similar topics and questions in the Russian and Polish prototypes did, however, reveal that disagreement with it was not necessarily

indicative of a negative stance towards religion or religious traditions as such. Among both Russian and Polish respondents, the statement “Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation” provoked strongly negative reactions for largely the same reasons. The analysis revealed that respondents mostly expressed their views on the public role of religion in society through three interrelated main discourses: a discourse on differentiation, a discourse on diversity and plurality, and a discourse on tradition and modernity. Each discourse also strongly connects to wider prevalent discursive formations on individual rights and freedoms as the natural and taken-for-granted states of affairs in modern democratic societies. When discussed in direct relation to the state, the notion of a national or civil religion is rejected by respondents in favor of a complete disentanglement of nation, citizenship, and religion and the firm location of religion to the private sphere. It is also worth noting that Russian and Polish respondents do not recognize religious institutions as contributors to civil society, but rather as tools for strengthening state authority. Indeed, the notion of a civil society is almost altogether absent from their accounts. The majority of respondents held the view that the interference of religion in politics will almost by necessity lead to the imposition of certain beliefs and values, the curtailment of minority persuasions, and a general infringement of individual democratic liberties and freedoms. The Russian and Polish churches’ interferences into politics and ever closer links to their respective states were therefore viewed with suspicion and often great concern.

All respondents included in the analysis referred to religion in the singular. The interviews are also characterized by the near total absence of any mentions of other religious actors except for the ‘church’, which in all cases refers either to the ROC or PCC. ‘Religion’, therefore, is equated with either one of these dominant churches. This would appear to suggest that Russian and Polish respondents have limited experiences of the visibility of any other types of religions or religious actors in the public spheres of their respective countries. The absence of mentions of other levels or aspects of church organization such as ‘parish’, ‘diocese’, etc., would also appear to suggest that respondents tend to perceive the churches in terms of monoliths that they lack any deeper personal relationship to.

It is, however, well worth asking why particularly Russian but also Polish respondents stand out with regard to their rejection of the statement in question. They all belong to the post-Communist generation and thus lack any personal experiences of an anti-religious Communist past. Russian respondents’ strong rejection of the idea that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation is at least partly explained by the strong secular character of higher education in Russia and the fact that the ROC has aligned itself with a political establishment that finds weak support among younger generations. The Polish respondents’ rejection of the considered statement is perhaps best explained by the PCC’s continued association with and support for conservative values, and a ruling political party whose policies remain unpopular among the young.

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Chapter 15

Beyond the Secular, the Religious and the Spiritual: Appreciating the Complexity of Contemporary Worldviews



Peter Nynäs , Ariela Keysar , Marat Shterin , and Sofia Sjö 

Abstract The chapter brings together the main insights from the Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG) study, as presented in the current volume. It starts by discussing the sample used in the study and in the chapters of the volume; after this, the findings about worldviews are explored, and the chapter concludes with some observations pertaining to methodology. Throughout the chapter, the focus is on the need to challenge the often taken for granted categories and perspectives that are projected onto the world in the Study of Religions, and it is suggested that there are important methodological implications involved in meeting this challenge.

Keywords Cross-cultural · Cross-societal · Mixed-method · Study of religions

15.1 Introduction

The Young Adults and Religion in a Global Perspective (YARG) study explored the diversity of worldviews among contemporary young adults in 12 countries, and this volume has brought together some of the main findings. One of the important

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P. Nynäs et al. (eds.), *The Diversity Of Worldviews Among Young Adults*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-94691-3_15

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contributions of the volume is the heterogeneity among those nations, which it documents. Young adults from across the world took part in the study: North America, with the U.S. and Canada; South America, with Peru; Africa, with Ghana; Asia, with India, China, Israel, Japan and Turkey; Western Europe, with Finland and Sweden; and Eastern Europe, with Poland and Russia. The young adults identify with many of the major religions: Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Jews, Muslims, and the growing no religion segment. This volume displays the wealth of topics and cultures, which the YARG study covered and the unique research design it employed. The volume tells many stories, all worth reading carefully, since they all have relevance for and challenge how we comprehend worldviews today. Bringing together a study with this multinational and cross-cultural scope is not easy. While providing answers and observations, the chapters in this edited compilation also pose questions and ponderings for future research.

What are thus our main insights, how has our project been able to contribute to the theoretical reflections brought up in the introduction to this volume and underpinning the study as a whole, and where do we go from here? In the following, we would like to provide some tentative observations with regard to these questions. What have we learnt about our participants, about what they have in common, and about what separates them? What does our study bring to a discussion of religious, spiritual and secular identities and worldviews? Methodologically, how have we been able to navigate between, on the one hand, universal or global patterns, and on the other, individual and contextual variations? We start by discussing our sample, after which we turn to findings about worldviews, and we end by some observations pertaining to methodology. Throughout this brief chapter defined by the aim to address some central insights from the YARG study, we focus on the need to challenge the often taken for granted categories and perspectives that we project onto the world in the Study of Religions, and suggest that there are important methodological implications involved in meeting this challenge.

15.2 Young Adults, a Heterogeneous Group

Who were the young adults that took part in our study? The focus on college and university students that we pursued in the YARG study means that the study is not representative of all young people. Nonetheless, it does allow us to explore this population in depth. Our participants were aged 16–30 at the time of the survey, and all of them attended either college or university. As indicated in Chap. 2 of this volume, being a university student can still entail different things depending on context. In some settings it means being in your late teens or early twenties, with few caring responsibilities. These are the young adults to which the concept ‘emerging adults’ can best be applied (Arnett, 2000, 2004; Barry & Abo-Zena, 2014). They are no longer adolescents, but also not grown-ups. However, in some contexts explored in this study, university studies come later in life and are combined with responsibilities for others and more consequential life decisions. Being a student might for

these individuals, too, entail being in a state of transition and dealing with many uncertainties, but it is less of a self-focused time.

Turning to university students for a study is relatively easy; they are usually just outside our doors as academic scholars, but there are other factors too that make university students a useful object for research. Focusing on university students rather than the general population eliminates sources of variability such as age and education level, which makes it easier to isolate nationhood as the variable of interest in determining similarities and differences between subjects. In many of the countries in the study, the fact that our participants are university students placed them among the elite. However, even though being able to study on a university level can be an indication of privilege, this is far from being always the case for our participants. Still, for future research, stepping out of the university setting will be called for, despite the further complexities which this of course entails. Looking more into the internationalization and possible standardization of higher education can also be useful for future research, to highlight for example recurring ideas that young people are taught today, independent of setting. However, the setting cannot be ignored.

A starting point of YARG was that we saw university students as representatives of the so-called ‘millennials’ or ‘digital natives’ who have grown up with expanding global horizons, consumer culture and digital media and therefore also are harbingers of societal, cultural and religious change (Beyer, 2019; Keysar & DellaPergola, 2019; Palfrey & Gasser, 2008; Possamai, 2009). A cursory look at the survey data also suggests that apart from being university students, the young adults in our sample only really have one thing that seems to describe almost all of them: they are avid Internet users. Are we then able to at least call them all digital natives? This is a tricky but crucial question. The concept indicates that digital media has a profound impact on many aspects of a person’s life, but our findings do not necessarily provide enough material for a conclusive answer. Rather, previous research (Gunkel, 2014) and other material coming out of YARG suggest that among our sample, too, media use is complex, with both active users, outspoken sceptics and critical media consumers (see Moberg & Sjö, 2020).

As pointed out multiple times in the chapters in this volume, context and life circumstances matter. There is a “contextual historical and ideological template that continues to inform” how what we think of as religion emerges in our studies, and this should be taken seriously (Bender et al., 2013b, p. 287). This is not only in relation to the university experience, but to other aspects as well, such as religious, political and cultural settings that unfold throughout the analyses in this volume. The narratives expressed by students in the interviews illuminate, for instance, the challenge young adults around the world face in a university setting, which for many of them is more secular than the homes in which they were raised. The university setting often exposes students to liberal attitudes. In the United States, many young adults on campus are on their own for the first time. One student recalled, “This campus is very atheist [...] no one else was religious [...]. So I just was with everyone else” (YUSTP040). Nonetheless, other university experiences, as well as other contexts and stories overall, are marked by other forms of encounters. There

is thus a need today for recognition of diversity within the research of young people and their secular, religious and spiritual worldviews (Shipley & Arweck, 2019). In line with previous research, we suggest that many factors contribute to how one's position as religious or non-religious is experienced during university (Hill, 2011).

Many concepts through which we approach a group such as university students or young adults provide meaningful lenses to the object of study. Still, as illustrated above, university students are far from homogenous populations. From applying a cross-cultural design based on including national and cultural variations, we can see that many concepts and categories have limited application in light of the heterogeneity we encounter in our research. Our study shows that we always need to be critically aware of whom we study and why, and of the assumptions we risk bringing into our research.

15.3 Who 'Believes' in What?

The shared preoccupation of social scientists – anthropologists, psychologists, sociologists – involved in the Study of Religions can be expressed as a rather simple question: who believes in what and with what consequences for the individual, social institutions and society at large? However, beneath this verbal simplicity lies bottomless complexity associated with each component in this question. How can we conceptualize 'believing' and, ultimately, would it be adequately expressed by the term 'religion' that is central to our study area? (e.g. Bender et al., 2013b). How can we identify empirically the 'Who' and the 'What'? And how can we proceed from the personal level of analysis to that of society to infer the consequences of 'believing' and 'religion' in all their varieties, including non-religious worldviews?

Many contributors to this volume point out that YARG's findings confirm key conclusions from the previous research on religion among young people, including 'generation Y'. This includes, for example, the trend towards the lack of engagement with religious institutions, divergence from family and community traditions and preference for self-defining as 'secular' or 'spiritual' rather than 'religious' (see Roof, 1999; Collins-Mayo & Dandelion, 2010; Vincett & Collins-Mayo, 2010). This is evident both when we look in the direction of recurring patterns of worldviews and when we investigate basic value profiles (Schwartz, 1992, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012). Understanding the determinants of young adults' attitudes and behaviors helps us to foresee shifts observed in the overall population. A generational secularization process is evident across cultures in the YARG study. Globally the rise of the Nones is led by the so-called millennial generation, many of whom were raised and socialized by parents who identify with a religious group (Kosmin & Keysar, 2006; Pew, 2018). Our finding also confirms that we need to account for spirituality as a separate cultural category that challenges the dichotomy between being either secular or religious (Huss, 2014). Older generations, especially in North America and Europe, are replaced by younger generations who are less active religiously, and therefore we can expect decreasing participation during the coming

decades (Sherkat, 2014). Respondents in this study evaluate their own religiosity as being lower than the religiosity of their childhood homes (with one exception: Japan). The largest gaps are found in a variety of dissimilar countries: India, the United States, Poland and Peru. This does not necessarily equal a straightforward secularization. Rather, this volume identifies the relevance of being attentive to a continued differentiation of the (non-)religious landscape.

In the YARG study, we have addressed important patterns, resemblances and connections among our participants and these indicate that we need to account for a more diverse reality than what a mere religious, secular and spiritual taxonomy allows for. Both in regards to the variations and recurring themes, this study has a lot to tell. We identified five distinct worldviews among the young adults; our use of the Faith Q-Sort (FQS) allowed us to extract shared patterns of views, practices and attitudes called prototypes. These global prototypes we called: (1) The Secular Humanist; (2) the Active Confident Believer; (3) the Noncommitted Traditionalist, (4) the Spiritually Attuned, and (5) the Disengaged Liberal (see Chap. 3). It is important to notice that our findings include two distinct ways of being ‘religious’, whereas the spiritual worldview is not essentially religious and instead shares a lot with the Nones. The Disengaged Liberal is also significant on a general level. To some extent, persons of this prototype present an outlook that is situational and elusive, and detaches itself from our efforts to categorize and essentialize worldviews. Once again, we come across the fact that a secular or non-religious worldview is very salient in our results, both when we take a bird's-eye view and when we look at each country separately. There is rightly a growing interest in the rise of the Nones, i.e. those who profess no religion. According to Pew Research Center's global prediction, in 2040 there will be around 1.2 billion people who do not affiliate with a religion (Pew, 2015). As a group grows numerically so does its diversity, not only demographically but also in beliefs and practices. Some YARG respondents who define themselves as non-religious are active humanists; others are spiritual pluralists; some even display openness to religion or spirituality (see Chap. 8).

This volume reveals a need to account for variety and diversity in the Study of Religions, and this is specifically evident from our cross-cultural investigation. Our use of the FQS proved to be very essential in this regard and especially its quality as a method “designed to maximize the expression of qualitative variation and to record it in numerical form” (Stenner et al., 2008, p. 218). A closer analysis shows that behind the general trends and patterns presented as the global prototypes hides a great deal of contextual variation. The five global prototypes highlight prevalent perspectives around which the local prototypes congregate. We found between three and eight prototypes in each country (see Chap. 4; appendix 2). The local prototypes thus express similarities, but also variances that cannot be ignored. This cross-cultural variation is well captured as a family resemblance in line with Wittgenstein's thinking (Wittgenstein, 1998; see also Andersen, 2000). Worldviews are thus seen as a matter of a series of overlapping shared features, where none of them is common to all of the members in a group; the taxonomies are dynamic, subject to change and open and members of a family do not necessarily need to have much in common when compared separately.

15.4 Dynamic Patterns

Earlier we mentioned the relevance of differentiation. Our findings point to a need for more elaboration on how the categories of secular, religious and spiritual are comprehended and what they entail. This need is further indicated by our observations pertaining to the multidimensional and complex configurations of worldviews, such as in Chap. 5 on religious typology. Our five distinct worldview prototypes relate to basic human values, life orientation and satisfaction, liberal social values, demographics, and culture/country. As discussed in Chap. 9 and also indicated in Chaps. 3 and 8, the prototypes brought out by the FQS-analyses are in line with previous research when it comes to gender. Religious or spiritual prototypes are more often represented by female participants and non-religious ones by male participants. Yet, our survey data does not directly confirm this. Similarly, Chap. 12 contributes to challenging simplified conclusions. While multiple forms of discrimination generally lead to lower degrees of well-being, the chapter shows that contextual variations are obvious and the need for further studies is clear. The relevance of the national context is also highlighted in the study of contemporary religion among young adults in Russia and Poland, with the resurgence of the Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) and the Polish Catholic Church (PCC) after the collapse of the Communist system. One of the statements of the Faith Q-Sort instrument is especially relevant: “Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation,” which generally evoked strong negative responses among the participants, including those from Russia and Poland, where these dominant religious institutions have become tools for strengthening state authority. In the personal interviews, respondents referred to “the church” in the singular, viewing with suspicion its interference in politics.

These Russian and Polish young adults, similar to others of their generation, tend to disregard the authority of religious institutions. On the one hand, this exemplifies the similar tendency that is implied also by our investigation of value profiles, namely the preference for e.g. openness to change relying on self-direction over conservation and relying on tradition. On the other hand, the same example also makes evident that the individual level is significant. Participants’ personal understandings and reflections, including their agency as interpreting subjects, make a difference. Our data has revealed a variety of subjective refractions of various general trends and patterns among university students, as well as a range of personal worldviews that can be seen as idiosyncratic amidst the general patterns. Our cross-cultural and cross-societal sample allows gaining insight into why and how these ‘idiosyncratic’ types are shaped. Thus, comparing the data on Muslim students in Turkey and Israel points to the significance of the majority versus minority status in shaping young peoples’ religious (dis)engagements and worldviews. Moreover, our findings on these ‘uncommon’, ‘divided’ and ‘idiosyncratic’ outlooks (see Chap. 6 of this volume) are significant inasmuch as it is precisely the movements, groups and individuals motivated by ‘deviant’ beliefs that often cause conspicuous public concerns and trigger political action.

Chapter 7 also brings this home well by presenting the particular views (based on the Faith Q-Sort statements) most often and least often found to be descriptive by our participants. A majority of our participants support individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality, and believe that one can be deeply moral without being religious. Many also argue that they are profoundly touched by the suffering of others and actively work towards making the world a better place to live. They also do not identify with the idea that religion should play a central part in the ruling of the nation. However, as discussed in Chap. 14, this statement can be a part of different discourses, as we assume many other statements also can. The findings of Chap. 10 on civic engagement underline that helping others is common for our participants. The chapter also indicates that if civic engagement is an essential aspect of a healthy society, the society our participants are building, or want to build, should do well enough. At the same time though, we can also see variations when it comes to volunteering and what one gets out of helping others. Our participants have also helped us to explore differences and similarities between majority and minority positions, as done in Chap. 13, highlighting again the need to take context into account when trying to comprehend aspects of contemporary religiosity or non-religiosity.

A combination of a cross-cultural bird's-eye view, local investigations, and efforts to zoom in on the individual has been central to our way of approaching worldviews of a secular, religious and spiritual nature. We can point to meaningful family resemblances of a more universal or global nature of relevance for exploring typologies in future research. But already from this perspective we have had to stress the need to go beyond simplistic notions of religious, spiritual and secular. There is, to start with, an evident need to account for variations and diversifications across both cultures and analytical levels. Our participants are not divided up along any strict cultural, religious or contextual lines, nor could we point to any other aspect and claim that that presents a self-evident single factor for future research. Rather, the multidimensional and contextual nature of secular, religious and spiritual worldviews renders them dynamic, situational, inconsistent, and ambiguous, especially in how they are expressed and lived. This is worthy of acknowledgement when the goal is to understand individual subjectivities today and how they are constituted with regards to secular, religious and spiritual worldviews.

Based on this, we claim that one needs to take seriously the question of the adequacy of the term religion and how the field of study is accordingly named (see Droogers & van Harskamp, 2014). Using terms similar to the study of religion, religious studies, comparative religion etc. can today mean a misrepresentation of what we need to account for and also what is currently emerging within the field of study. On the one hand, the current terminology can be claimed to make spiritual and secular worldviews invisible or deemed irrelevant as objects of study. However, on the other, it can also be claimed to other religion, defining religion to require explanation or investigations in order to be made intelligible. Nevertheless, the important observation we would like to make is that there is a need for a broadening that explicitly recognizes current diversity with regards to (non-)religious worldviews in a global perspective. Religious or not, all people have some kind of

worldview that is essential to them in various ways (Holm, 1996). Our conclusion is that the term worldview stands out as the best candidate in this respect whereas the methodological and theoretical multidisciplinary character that has been developed within the studies of religions over the last century provides an invaluable asset. This has not yet been developed in the narrower area of worldview studies and needs to provide the basis also for future development.

15.5 A Mobile Methodology

Young adults, as well as many other groups of people, often grapple with terms and contexts to explain their religious identity, or the lack of it. One can listen to people talk, and realize their confusion, as they use phrases such as, “I don’t know,” and “I’m not sure.” Indeed, survey results document seemingly contradictory patterns, i.e. people who profess no religion, yet believe in a higher power, or regular attendance at religious services among non-believers (Kosmin & Keysar, 2009; Chaves, 2011). The current discussion on religious change also has implications for how we comprehend and study corresponding identities (Nynäs, 2017; Gareau et al., 2019). What is the best research design to capture the religious, spiritual, and non-religious worldviews and behaviors of young people worldwide today? This question has been central to the YARG project, and is at the core of how we designed the methodological approach.

We designed a mixed-method approach, assembling both quantitative and qualitative data, and we employed an innovative tool, the FQS, providing young people a varied and to some extent new vocabulary to work with, as they were reflecting on their religious and spiritual beliefs, attitudes, emotions, experiences and practices. The broadness of the FQS and what is covered by the statements proved to be important in order to capture a diversity of ways or configurations of being religious, spiritual and secular. This novel research tool in combination with a survey of almost 5000 participants and in-depth interviews with about 500 of them has enriched our knowledge of what (non)religiosity entails for educated young adults around the world at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Many chapters in this volume bear witness to the fact that we cannot today limit our approaches to ways of believing and thinking.

The novelty in our research was first and foremost defined by the implementation of the FQS, but also how this was designed in itself in terms of the set of items. The combination of FQS with other methods was also fundamental to our methodology. Our mixed-method approach based on the survey, the Faith Q-Sort and the interviews, proved to be essential to our findings. The use of the FQS in combination with survey and interview material has allowed the researchers within YARG to provide important new insights that both complement and challenge each other. In his *Social Theory and Religion* (2003), Beckford suggests that engaging with the broader developments in social sciences will help us understand how social trends shape religion (‘thinking about religion’), while focusing on religion would reveal

not so obvious or nascent social trends ('thinking with religion'). The methodology that underpins this volume's analyses enables unique insights into the 'Who' and 'What', thus enriching both our 'thinking with religion' and 'thinking about religion'. It has provided a multidimensional snapshot of subjectivities of believing among university students across a range of societies at a particular juncture of global history.

With the help of our mixed-method approach, the authors of the chapters in this volume could resist the temptation of over-simplification. Instead, they could look deeply into attitudes and behaviors and highlight details by utilizing complex data elements in different contexts. For example, it would be simple to observe that being female is associated with higher personal religiosity. But the regression analysis of the survey findings presented in Chap. 9 showed that the impact of national background in many cases exceeds the impact of gender in the level of self-reported religiosity. Interviews further substantiate the results of a regression analysis: context and culture matter. In Ghana, a respondent said, "Our pastor, my pastor will tell you that as a lady you have to learn how to cook because a way to a man's heart is his tummy" (FGHFB120). In Finland, in contrast, a respondent said, "I've lived my whole life from since I was little in that it hasn't mattered whether you are a man or a woman [...] So no one ever said to us at home, that a woman couldn't be something, something that men could be" (YFIKD128).

The Faith Q-Sort that originally was designed by Wulff (2019) and developed within the YARG project (see Chap. 1 of this volume; Nynäs et al., 2021) meant a decisive methodological contribution for assessing religious, spiritual and non-religious worldviews in a diverse and ever-changing world. The chapters in this volume exemplify that data from an FQS study can be used for a range of investigations. While the FQS does not provide any simple answers, it nevertheless challenges us to look closer at our perspectives and dig deeper than many previous methods have. Regarding methodology, it is specifically important to underline the emergent self-categorization feature of the FQS. It renders the FQS a reliable and valid tool for our need to de-center taken-for-granted categories and perspectives (see Bender et al., 2013a). It allowed us to zoom in on different levels, moving from a bird's-eye view and systematic analysis of global patterns to in-depth explorations of ambiguous and inconsistent individual outlooks. The findings using the FQS in combination with survey and interview material also clearly aid us in moving past the universality vs. particularism debate, questioning at the core the "world religion paradigm".

Both in education and politics worldwide, the world religions paradigm seems to remain dominant. Yet it fails to represent the variations of religious expressions within any given tradition and tends to remodel what is outside according to liberal Western Protestant Christian values (Owen, 2011). Our findings confirm the relevance of questioning the dominance of this paradigm. In particular we underline the necessity to account just as much for other categories, such as the secular and the spiritual, including the diversity that at a closer look constitute all of these categories. The world religions paradigm might provide one relevant lens to understanding societies, cultures, and individuals both in a contemporary and a historical

perspective, but it cannot anymore remain the only one. This broadening of perspectives is of course already happening in the study of religions, but it needs to gain more recognition and space in the future, both academically and societally.

Summing up the main insights with regards to method, we underline the possibilities provided by both the FQS and a mixed method design in researching religious, spiritual and secular worldviews. Q-methodology meant a novel tool for researching worldviews empirically and differently from what is the case in representative surveys and hermeneutically informed qualitative approaches. Its unique methodological design provided a more valid representation of the fluid phenomenon we call worldview by allowing the researcher to move in-between the individual, the national and the global levels in a systematic way, retaining the nuances alongside generating categories. Similarly, there is also an added value when a mixed-method design has the capacity to register the intersections that emerge from the multidimensional and complex configurations that constitute religious, spiritual and secular worldviews. An intersectional approach understood in these terms especially strengthens our methodological ability to remain attentive to the diversity, complexity or ambiguity involved and the elusiveness that may follow.

It can here be helpful to refer to the emic-etic distinction even though this is a debated issue. There is an opacity to the debate that has further been amplified through the entanglements that has been created over time, such as the insider-outsider distinction in the study of religions. In this respect we found Mostowlansky's and Rota's (2016) attempt to dissolve the dichotomy posed between emic and etic analyses meaningful. In contrast to a dichotomy they claim that both emic and etic analyses are in fact "products" of researchers; they are based on second-order observations, "that is, the observation of observations" that include "both the first-order observer and the object of first-order observation" (Mostowlansky & Rota, 2016, p. 328). Based on this they emphasize an iterative approach through which conceptualizations require a broad empirical, methodological and epistemological approach dependent on an ongoing process. The FQS and a mixed method design has in this project enabled this to some extent.

In general, we believe that there is a need for future methodological developments in this direction; we need to emphasize "movement and connections, circulation and change" as Bender et al. (2013b, p. 290) put it. This taps into what Urry (2010) discusses in terms of a mobile sociology, and we align with his observation that "new rules of sociological method are necessitated by the apparently declining powers of national societies since it is they that have historically provided the intellectual and organizational context for sociology" (Urry, 2010, p. 348). The current cultural and societal transformation requires a methodology that generates "creative marginality" in the periphery of normative disciplines, concepts and perspectives (Urry, 2010). As Urry (2010, p. 363) writes, a "creative marginality results from complex, overlapping and disjunctive processes [...] which can occur across disciplinary and/or geographical and/or social borders". How to systematically develop this agenda is important to future research.

15.6 Finally

Mostly secular, mostly liberal and mostly helpful would seem to summarize the characteristics of our participants on one level, but it does not stop there. Altogether our study also reveals something else, namely how the notion of ‘mostly’ in the case of secular, religious and spiritual worldviews hides a central element of variation that requires differentiation in terms of concepts, perspectives and methods applied. A range of aspects and dimensions are central to comprehending the evasive patterns and family resemblances that constitute religious, spiritual and secular worldviews. We cannot generalize from the international sample of university students to the wider population. Nonetheless, our findings are revealing and generalizable conceptually and methodologically. They point out the significance of global trends in shaping worldviews and their both religious and spiritual dimensions. For example, all different socio-cultural contexts in these studies were marked by the defining influence of social media and peer groups, as opposed to the political or communal authority in forming personal worldviews and engagements with religious, spiritual and secular positions. Friends and family remain important. Thus, our findings also reveal the importance of local socio-cultural contexts in refracting these global trends as well as lived everyday experiences even on an individual level. Altogether, this as a whole enriches our ‘thinking with religion’ – and non-religion as well – as it reveals erstwhile overlooked configurations of worldviews and engagements with religion, non-religion and spirituality, which can be consequential for future theorizing on religion and society.

A central point that the whole Young Adults and Religion in Global Perspective study brings forth is the need to be brave and dare to challenge preset notions, categories and typologies. Not every study can have a global perspective. However, studies focusing on a specific context too can aim to dig deeper or broaden the horizon by incorporating and developing new methods and allowing for a multi-method approach that can offer general views, but also contribute to a significant diversification. We need to acknowledge the complexity present in a changing world, but also find ways of comprehending this and the divisions, similarities, and simultaneities that it incorporates. This goes beyond reiterating the common calls for interdisciplinary research, and involves seeking unsettling perspectives and locating oneself on the edge of dominant tendencies and perspectives (Bender et al., 2013b).

YARG researchers have a recommendation to their colleagues to replicate the three-level study: “By way of summary, we encourage future researchers to consider at least three levels of analysis of such data: The global (or transnational), the cultural (or national) and the personal (or idiosyncratic). Only by integrating these three levels can we hope to comprehend the rich and diverse range of religious subjectivities among the young adults in the contemporary world” (Chap. 7, page 155). This is an intriguing challenge to future researchers. To conduct, to manage and to complete an international study that captures the global, the national, and the personal means many things: assembling research teams from places that do not

resemble each other; administering questionnaires in multiple languages; translating in a way that respects cultural nuances; and scarce time and research resources. However, the abundance of knowledge generated by the YARG project provides good evidence of the prolific contributions of a three-level study.

The current global and cross-cultural challenge involves taking other and alternative voices seriously (see Spickard, 2017). How research is organized constitutes an essential methodological aspect of knowledge production in cross-cultural research (Långstedt & Nynäs, 2021). Breaking dominance and making space for diversity in a research project is not only about giving others the possibility to speak and engage, it is also about destabilizing power relations. How can we make people trust that their perspective or voice is relevant and that it matters? How can we define a research process that better ensures that dominant perspectives do not colonize the space, and that material and symbolic resources are distributed evenly? Being brave entails breaking boundaries, also social boundaries with regards to how research is institutionalized in so many different ways. This volume and the YARG project were rooted in the idea that good research is a community effort. YARG has aimed at bringing together researchers with varying expertise and disciplinary affiliations from thirteen countries around the globe. Thinking and talking together are essential to this, but also co-writing texts as a means to both fusion and broadening horizons. The principle of co-authorship driving the project has resulted in perspectives and analyses that no individual scholar would have been able to accomplish. Future research needs to go this way. Only when we engage with each other, challenge each other and support each other can truly innovative research come about.

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Appendix 1: The YARG Faith Q-set (Version b)

The YARG Faith Q-set (version b) was developed from the original FQS designed by prof. David Wulff. This was published 2019 in his article “Prototypes of faith: Findings with the Faith Q-Sort” in *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, volume 58 (issue 3). The Faith Q-set version b (FQS-b) is a revised version developed by the YARG project (Chap. 1 in this volume).

The FQS-b cannot be used for any commercial purposes without the permission of the main editor of this volume prof. Peter Nynäs. This also concerns all potential translations of the FQS-b. The English language version of the FQS-b was translated with double and back translation process into Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Finnish, French, Hebrew, Polish, Russian, Spanish, Swedish, and Turkish. For access to these versions the main editor prof. Peter Nynäs.

The FQS-b Set in English

1. Gives substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization or worthy cause.
2. Has frequent doubts about long-held religious convictions.
3. Views religion as a central means for becoming a better and more moral person.
4. Thinks that the world's religious traditions point to a common truth.
5. Feels guilty for not living up to his or her ideals.
6. Spends much time reading or talking about his or her convictions.
7. Participates in religious practices chiefly to meet others' wishes or expectations.
8. Longs for a deeper, more confident faith.
9. Thinks about the ultimate as a life force or creative energy rather than a supernatural being.
10. Has experienced moments of intense divine, mysterious, or supernatural presence.
11. Has a strong sense of a spiritual or higher order of reality in the midst of nature.

12. Participates in religious activities chiefly on special occasions.
13. Views religious faith as a never-ending quest.
14. Is moved by the atmosphere of sacred or venerated places.
15. Considers the meaning of religious texts and teachings to be clear and true.
16. Being religious or spiritual is central to whom he or she is.
17. Becomes more religious or spiritual at times of crisis or need.
18. Considers religious scriptures to be of human authorship—inspired, perhaps, but not infallible.
19. Understands and relates to the divine as feminine.
20. Relies on religious authorities for understanding and direction.
21. Takes part in religious activities to form or maintain social relationships.
22. Thinks that certain specific beliefs are crucial for salvation.
23. Engages regularly in religious or spiritual practices in private.
24. Takes no interest in religious or spiritual matters.
25. Feels contempt for all religious institutions, ideas and practices.
26. Regrets the personal loss of religious faith or a sense of divine presence.
27. Expresses his or her religion primarily in charitable acts or social action.
28. Believes in some way, but does not view him or herself as religious.
29. Is inclined to embrace elements from various religious and spiritual traditions.
30. Considers regular attendance at places of worship to be an essential expression of faith.
31. Is critical of the religious tradition of his or her people.
32. Considers all religious scriptures to be outdated or misguided.
33. Feels spiritually moved and deeply sustained by music, art, or poetry.
34. Sees this world as a place of suffering and sorrow.
35. Feels adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal.
36. Has dedicated his or her life to serving the divine.
37. Has experienced a profound change in religious or spiritual understanding or commitment.
38. Feels confident of attaining eternal salvation.
39. Feels uncomfortable or fearful in turning to the divine.
40. Expresses his or her convictions by following certain dietary practices.
41. Thinks of the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent.
42. Has a thorough knowledge of religious scriptures or texts.
43. Is consumed by day-to-day responsibilities, leaving little or no time for spiritual matters.
44. Senses a divine or universal luminous element within him- or herself.
45. Feels distant from God or the divine.
46. Feels that one should remain loyal to the religion of one's nation.
47. Feels closest to those who share the same faith or outlook.
48. Values his or her own purity and strives to safeguard it.
49. Seeks to intensify his or her experience of the divine or some otherworldly reality.
50. Has used methods of attaining altered states of consciousness.
51. Actively works towards making the world a better place to live.

52. Lives his or her earthly life in conscious anticipation of a life hereafter.
53. Believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship.
54. Thinks that men and women are by nature intended for different roles.
55. Personally finds the idea of divinity empty of significance or meaning.
56. Embraces an outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values.
57. Seldom if ever doubts his or her deeply held convictions.
58. Feels that it is important to maintain continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors.
59. His or her sexuality is strongly guided by a religious or spiritual outlook.
60. Views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires.
61. Feels threatened by evil forces at work in the world.
62. Prays chiefly for solace and personal protection.
63. Battles with inner impulses that are experienced as dark or even evil.
64. Centers his or her life on a religious or spiritual quest.
65. Furnishes his or her living space with objects for religious or spiritual use or inspiration
66. Deeply identifies with some holy figure, either human or divine.
67. Observes with great care prescribed religious practices and laws.
68. Has sensed the presence or influence of specific spirits, demons or patron saints.
69. Feels a sense of guilt and personal inadequacy.
70. Rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles.
71. Believes that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation.
72. Has moved from one group to another in search of a spiritual or ideological home.
73. Thinks that ritual or practice is more important than particular beliefs or mystical or spiritual experiences.
74. Feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual being.
75. Feels a sense of peace even in the face of life's difficulties.
76. Mainly associates with persons of the same religious tradition or outlook.
77. Is profoundly touched by the suffering of others.
78. Is often keenly aware of the presence of the divine.
79. Views all events in this world within a religious or spiritual framework.
80. Faces the prospect of death with courage and calmness.
81. Is positively engaged by or interested in other peoples' religious traditions.
82. Is reluctant to reveal his or her core convictions to others.
83. Believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious.
84. Has a vague and shifting religious outlook.
85. Finds it difficult to believe in a benevolent divine being in the face of evil.
86. Is committed to following a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment.
87. Views religious content as metaphoric, rather than literally true.
88. Views the divine or a higher reality as a deep mystery that can be pointed to but never fully understood.
89. Has experienced moments of profound illumination.

90. Affirms the idea of reincarnation, the cycle of birth and rebirth.
91. Takes delight in paradox and mystery.
92. Takes for granted that particular religious claims are true.
93. Sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life.
94. Views symmetry, harmony, and balance as reflections of ultimate truth.
95. Believes that human progress is possible on a worldwide scale.
96. Can see no higher purpose or ultimate destiny for the human species.
97. Is an active, contributing member of a religious or a spiritual community.
98. Willingly gives up worldly or bodily pleasures for religious or spiritual reasons.
99. Takes comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will face suffering or punishment.
100. Supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality.
101. Considers hypocrisy—not practicing what one preaches—to be common in religious circles.

Appendix 2: The YARG prototypes

Results from a Cross-Cultural Q-methodological study of religiosity: short national descriptions of Faith Q-set prototypes

Peter Nynäs, Janne Kontala, Mika Lassander, and Sofia Sjö

This appendix includes a summary of our results from implementing the FQS in Canada, China, Ghana, Finland, India, Israel, Peru, Poland, Russia, Sweden, Turkey and the United States. It presents *x*, so called prototypes. The prototypes have been derived from data collected in respective country and the data has been analyzed accordingly, i.e. each national data set was analyzed separately. For each country our analyses resulted in between three and eight prototypes. Already this is a sign of the variety and diversity reflected through our results.

The analyses consisted of two parts: it started with a statistical analyses of all country specific FQS-sortings. The results were then interpreted and summarized in short prototype descriptions. For the final statistical analyses we have used the online software Ken-Q Analysis (Banasick, 2019). This builds on an analysis of intercorrelations among Q-Sorts, which are then factor-analyzed with (in our case) the Principal Components Analysis method. The outcome of the analysis are tables with factor loadings, item factor scores, and distinguishing statements for each of the factors (prototypes).

The results from the computer-generated Q analysis output can be presented and analyzed in different ways. For this summary a team of researchers extracted and labeled the prototypes. Input from co-investigators from each country was incorporated in the analysis. The research process is further described in Chap. 1 in this volume, the results are presented and discussed with more nuance in especially Chaps. 2, 3, and 4 and many chapters in the volume elaborate on the FQS results in different ways.

We need to draw your attention to some specific features that should guide your reading and use of these prototypes. For a single case study the analysis results in a relatively small number of prototypes and these can also be presented in different ways based on the information obtained from the Q analysis output, the interest and aims of the researchers and additional data available. A prototype description can therefore be rather lengthy and rich in character and take the form of a narrative or commentary style interpretation. Our purpose in this summary is different. The aim

is to present a short and comprehensible overview of the results. We have primarily relied on the highest and lowest ranked statements for each prototype description.

As a consequence of presenting close to 70 prototypes and trying to avoid simplifications we have also chosen not to attach great importance to the labelling part. Already from a superficial reading of the prototypes it becomes clear that our results cover a great variety of traditionalist, secularists and spiritually attuned prototypes. For a single case study, short and precise labels are enough to distinguish the prototypes. In the present study, we have opted for longer labels to capture distinctions within the whole sample. These labels highlight the primary features of the different prototypes.

Canada

Canada 1

Canada 1 expresses a distance to religion on a social and personal level. One views religion as an illusory human creation, is critical of the religious tradition of one's people and against religion playing a central role in the ruling of the nation. In general one feels distant from the divine and does not take interest in religious or spiritual quests. Also, one feels foreign to experiences of both profound illumination and battling with dark inner impulses, and one does not affirm the idea of reincarnation. Religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles are rejected. One thinks that one can be deeply moral without being religious and supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality. One embraces an outlook that seeks to change societal structures and one does not think that men and women are intended for different roles.

Canada 1 could be called a "Socially Concerned Rationalist".

Canada 2

For Canada 2, religiosity or spirituality is central on a personal and experiential level. One takes an interest in religious and spiritual matters, does not feel distant from God or the divine, and is foreign to feeling contempt for religious institutions, ideas and practices. One engages in religious or spiritual practices in private and one is familiar with experiences of an intense mysterious or supernatural presence. One has a strong sense of a spiritual or higher order of reality in nature and is also moved by the atmosphere of sacred or venerated places. One does not rely on religious authorities, nor think that ritual or practice are more important than beliefs or experiences. One is touched by the suffering of others and supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality.

Canada 2 could be called a "Spiritual and Experience-Oriented Individualist".

Canada 3

Canada 3 expresses an orientation that is based on societal development and empathy. One believes that human progress is possible on a worldwide scale, supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious. Relying on religious authorities feels foreign and one has not experienced moments of divine, mysterious, or supernatural presence - nor sensed the presence of influence of spirits, demons or patron saints. One takes an interest in religious or spiritual matters and one has also experienced a profound change in religious or spiritual understanding or commitment. One is foreign to the idea of regretting the personal loss of religious faith or a sense of divine presence. Rather, one is committed to following a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment, and views symmetry, harmony, and balance as reflections of an ultimate truth.

Canada 3 could be called an “Harmony-Oriented Universalist”.

Canada 4

Canada 4 is primarily engaged in people’s well-being. Being touched by the suffering of others, one expresses one’s own religion in charitable acts and gives substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization or worthy cause. One finds it difficult to believe in a benevolent divine being in the face of evil and one does not feel a sense of peace in the face of life’s difficulties. Taking comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will suffer is a very foreign idea. So are claims about remaining loyal to the religion of one’s nation and beliefs that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation. One does not consider the meaning of religious texts to be clear and true. Rather, one supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality, takes interest in other peoples’ religious traditions and spends much time reading and talking about one’s own convictions.

Canada 4 could be called a “Socially Engaged Open-Minded Altruist”.

Canada 5

Canada 5 is characterized by a distance to dogmatism and a utilitarian approach to religion. One does not find specific beliefs to be crucial for salvation, views religious content as metaphoric, rather than literally true and the divine or a higher reality as a deep mystery. One rejects the idea that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation and believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious. Dedicating one’s life to serving the divine is foreign to who one is, nor does one feel adrift, without direction or goal. One has not used methods of

attaining altered states of consciousness, nor experienced moments of intense divine, mysterious, or supernatural presence. However, one reports becoming more religious or spiritual in times of need and praying chiefly for solace and personal protection.

Canada 5 could be called a “Security-Oriented Unattached Traditionalist”.

China

China 1

China 1 expresses secular humanism in activism. One believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious, supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and rejects religious ideas that conflict with science. It is central to one’s own life to work towards making the world a better place and to seek to change societal structures and values. One does not view oneself as religious and relying on religious authorities for direction is foreign to who one is. One takes a distance to thinking of the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent, to having experiences of divine illumination, to dedicating one’s life to serving the divine and to sensing a divine or universal luminous element within oneself. However, despite feeling distant from the divine, one affirms the idea of believing in some way.

China 1 could be called a “Non-Religious This-Worldly Activist”.

China 2

China 2 expresses a personal interest in spiritual and religious matters. One feels a sense of guilt and personal inadequacy and spends much time reading or talking about one’s convictions. One takes an interest in spiritual and religious matters, does not find the idea of divinity meaningless, and is foreign to viewing religion as the illusory creation of fears and desires. One feels spiritually moved and sustained by music, art, or poetry but one does not think that ritual or practice is more important than beliefs or experiences. One believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious, and supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality. Consequently one takes a distance to ideas about religion playing a central role in the ruling of the nation and expectation of remaining loyal to the religion of one’s nation. Also ideas that men and women are by nature intended for different roles are seen as a contrast to one’s life-view.

China 2 could be called an “Open-Minded and Spiritually Engaged”.

China 3

China 3 expresses a deep religious commitment. One longs for a deeper, more confident faith, is not reluctant in revealing one's core convictions and does not feel uncomfortable in turning to the divine. One takes for granted that particular religious claims are true and does not find religious scriptures to be outdated. The idea to participate in religious practices chiefly to meet others' wishes is foreign. Rather one considers regular attendance at places of worship to be essential and engages regularly in religious or spiritual practices in private. One believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship and views religion as a central means for becoming a more moral person. However, one also supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and one feels foreign to taking comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will suffer.

China 3 could be called a "Committed and Communally Engaged Believer".

China 4

For China 4, spiritual experiences are essential. One has a sense of a spiritual or higher order of reality in nature and has experienced moments of intense divine, mysterious, or supernatural presence. One is moved by the atmosphere of sacred places, spiritually moved and sustained by music, art, or poetry. Feeling contempt against religious institutions, ideas and practices is alien to whom one is and one also finds it foreign to reduce religion to a creation of human fears and desires. Still, one has not dedicated one's life to serving the divine nor used methods of attaining altered states of consciousness. One does not take comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will suffer. One believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious and works towards making the world a better place.

China 4 could be called an "Experience-Oriented and Spiritually Inclined Traditionalist".

China 5

China 5 presents a shifting outlook. One is not an active member of a religious or a spiritual community and one has not dedicated one's life to serving the divine. One participates in religious practices chiefly to meet others' wishes and becomes more religious or spiritual in times of crisis or need. Ideas about being aware of the presence of the divine, feeling threatened by evil forces and remaining loyal to the religion of one's nation are all foreign to who one is. Still, one believes in some way and regrets the loss of religious faith or a sense of divine presence. One takes delight in paradox and mystery and thinks that the world's religious traditions point to a common truth. One believes that one can be moral without being religious and supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality.

China 5 could be called a "Disengaged Relativist".

China 6

China 6 takes a distance to religion, focusing instead on self-realization. One feels foreign to relying on religious authorities, to the idea of willingly giving up worldly or bodily pleasures for religious or spiritual reasons and the notion that one should remain loyal to the religion of one's nation. Others' wishes or expectations would not cause one to participate in religious practices and one does not have a thorough knowledge of religious scriptures. In contrast, personal self-realization is seen as a primary spiritual goal in life and one works towards making the world a better place to live. One has a strong sense of a spiritual or higher order of reality in nature, is committed to following a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment and views symmetry, harmony, and balance as reflections of ultimate truth.

China 6 could be called a "Self-Realization and Experience Focused Humanist".

Finland

Finland 1

Finland 1 presents a rational life-view. One rejects religious ideas that conflict with science, does not see a higher purpose for the human species, views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires, and one does not view events in this world within a religious or spiritual framework. Consequently, one has not dedicated one's life to serving the divine and one rejects notions about particular religious claims being true. Also claims that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation and that men and women are by nature intended for different roles are foreign. One takes distance to experiences of a presence of the divine and feelings of being personally protected by a spiritual being. One believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious and supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality.

Finland 1 could be called a "Confident Rationalist".

Finland 2

Being religious is central to Finland 2. One is an active member of a religious or a spiritual community and engages in religious or spiritual practices in private. One feels foreign to the claim that the idea of divinity would be empty of significance. One believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship, and views the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent who protects and guides. The meaning of religious texts is considered to be clear, true, and not outdated, and certain beliefs are held to be crucial for salvation. One is not fearful in turning to the divine and one feels confident in attaining salvation. Still, one does not take comfort

in the thought that those who do not live righteously will suffer. One disagrees with the idea of reincarnation, but supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality.

Finland 2 could be called an “Active and Confident Believer”.

Finland 3

Finland 3 feels concern for others and is open for a higher reality. One is touched by the suffering of others and works towards making the world a better place. One supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious. One considers religious scriptures to be of human authorship, does not observe prescribed religious practices and takes distance to the idea of dedicating one’s life to serving the divine. Yet, one has a shifting religious outlook and thinks that the world’s religious traditions point to a common truth. Personally, one views the divine as a deep mystery and senses a higher order of reality in nature. One takes distance to the idea of taking comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will suffer. One is also foreign to thinking that religion should be central to the ruling of the nation, and that one should remain loyal to the religion of one’s nation.

Finland 3 could be called an “Emotionally Motivated Pluralist”.

Ghana

Ghana 1

Religion is essential for Ghana 1. One feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual being. One does not feel distant from the divine nor fearful in turning to the divine. Religious and spiritual matters are found to be interesting and the idea of divinity significant. One feels foreign to ideas of understanding and relating to the divine as feminine, religious scriptures being outdated and religious content being metaphoric, rather than literally true. One has dedicated one’s life to serving the divine, is an active member of a religious or spiritual community and considers regular attendance at places of worship essential. One feels confident of attaining salvation and centers one’s life on a religious or spiritual quest.

Ghana 1 could be called a “Confident and Devout Believer”.

Ghana 2

Ghana 2 is interested in religious or spiritual matters. One feels foreign to viewing the idea of divinity as empty of significance and to considering all religious scriptures to be outdated or misguided. One thinks that the world’s religious traditions

point to a common truth, and one cannot feel that it is important to maintain continuity of the family's religious traditions. One does not identify with some holy figure nor long for a deeper, more confident faith. Instead one takes delight in paradox and mystery and faces the prospects of death with courage and calmness. One believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious and believes that human progress is possible on a worldwide scale. To be touched by the suffering of others is central to whom one is. One rejects the idea that men and women are intended for different roles.

Ghana 2 could be called a "Socially Concerned Universalist".

Ghana 3

Ghana 3 appears neither very religious nor secular, but somewhat traditional. One is consumed by day-to-day responsibilities, leaving little or no time for spiritual matters. Still, one feels spiritually moved and sustained by music, art, or poetry, and is touched by the suffering of others. One does not rely on religious authorities nor considers regular attendance at places of worship to be essential. However, one is not critical of the religious tradition of one's people and has not moved from one group to another. The use of methods of attaining altered states of consciousness is foreign to one's life. One thinks that ritual or practice is more important than particular beliefs or experiences and that men and women are by nature intended for different roles. One also values one's purity and strives to safeguard it.

Ghana 3 could be called a "Tradition-oriented Non-Religious".

Ghana 4

Ghana 4 expresses social concern and a need for security in the realm of religion. One is touched by the suffering of others, expresses one's religion primarily in charitable acts or social action and believes in human progress on a worldwide scale. One supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and does not think that one should remain loyal to the religion of one's nation. One has not used methods of attaining altered states of consciousness, one is foreign to the idea of expressing one's conviction by following certain dietary practices and to the notion of mainly associating with persons of the same religious outlook. Still, one does not feel distant from God or the divine. One battles with inner dark impulses and prays chiefly for solace and personal protection.

Ghana 4 could be called a "Security-Oriented Altruist Believer".

India

India 1

Rejecting religion, India 1 is positive towards both personal and worldwide human progress. One views religion as an illusory human creation and feels foreign to ideas about being aware or sensing the presence of the divine, spirits, demons or patron saints. One is critical of the religious tradition of one's people and one does not believe that religion should influence the ruling of the nation. Consequently, one cannot see the point with dedicating one's life to serving the divine or identifying with some holy figure. One's sexuality is not guided by a religious or spiritual outlook and one does not think that men and women are intended for different roles. One supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious. One sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life and believes that human progress is possible on a worldwide scale.

India 1 could be called a "Progressive Secular Humanist".

India 2

India 2 is comfortable with one's own religion but does not actively practice it. One views events in this world within a religious or spiritual framework, considers the meaning of religious texts and teachings to be clear and true and thinks that certain beliefs are crucial for salvation. However, being religious or spiritual is not central to who one is nor does one express one's convictions by following certain dietary practices. One is moved by the atmosphere of sacred or venerated places and thinks about the ultimate as a life force or creative energy. One has not experienced moments of intense divine, mysterious or supernatural presence, but one does not have frequent doubts about long-held religious convictions, nor does one consider hypocrisy to be common in religious circles. One does not see the world as a place of suffering, but one is touched by the suffering of others.

India 2 could be called a "Non-active Believer".

India 3

India 3 is socially engaged and turns to religion for security. One embraces an outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values, believes that human progress is possible on a worldwide scale and thinks that there is a higher purpose or ultimate destiny for the human species. One cannot identify with claims that one should remain loyal to the religion of one's nation or that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation. One also does not think that men and women are intended for different roles. One prays chiefly for solace and personal protection

and feels protected and guided by a spiritual being. One has not moved from one group to another in search of a spiritual or ideological home, but one is inclined to embrace elements from various religious and spiritual traditions.

India 3 could be called a “Progressive Security-Motivated Pluralist”.

India 4

India 4 combines an emotionally and scripturally founded religiosity. One attaches great importance to religious scriptures and teachings, considering their meaning to be clear and true, not outdated or misguided. One does not reject religious ideas that conflict with scientific principles and cannot relate to the divine as feminine. One does not become more religious or spiritual at times of need, or pray chiefly for personal protection, nor does one live one’s life in anticipation of a life hereafter. Rather, one is an active member of a religious or spiritual organization and expresses one’s religion primarily through charitable acts. The world is seen as a place of suffering, but one feels foreign to claiming that one feels distant from God or the divine. One is moved by the atmosphere of sacred or venerated places and one feels spiritually moved and sustained by music, art, or poetry.

India 4 could be called an “Emotionally and Scripturally Directed Adherent”.

India 5

The life-view of India 5 embodies ambiguities. While holding that the world’s religious traditions point to a common truth and supporting individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality one thinks that one should remain loyal to the religion of one’s nation. One claims that one feels foreign to relating to the divine as feminine. Viewing religion as an illusory human creation is an idea one cannot identify with and one is not critical of the religious tradition of one’s people. Still, one rejects religious ideas that conflict with science. Rather, one claims to believe in some way without viewing oneself as religious. One does sometimes doubt one’s deeply held convictions yet does not see oneself as having a vague and shifting religious outlook. One believes that there is a higher purpose or ultimate destiny for the human species.

India 5 could be called a “Tradition-Oriented Universalist”.

India 6

India 6 gives religion a social importance but is mostly privately engaged. One participates in religious activities chiefly on special occasions, takes part in religious activities to form or maintain social relationships and expresses one’s religion primarily in charitable acts or social action. Still, one does not participate in religious

practices chiefly to meet others' wishes or expectations and does not feel contempt for all religious institutions, ideas and practices. One cannot identify with feelings of being uncomfortable in turning to the divine or of being distant from God or the divine. One does not find belief in a benevolent divine being difficult in the face of evil. Rather, one spends much time reading or talking about one's convictions and engages regularly in religious or spiritual practices in private. One feels foreign to the idea of the divine as feminine, but thinks of the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent.

India 6 could be called a "Privately Religious and Socially Engaged".

India 7

India 7 is religious only on special occasions, and where a need for security takes precedence. One takes no interest in religious or spiritual matters and one does not view religion as a central means for becoming a better and more moral person, nor does one take part in religious activities to form or maintain social relationships. One does not view events in this world within a religious or spiritual framework and has not dedicated one's life to serving the divine. One feels foreign to claiming that one believes in some way, while not viewing oneself as religious. However, one does regret the personal loss of religious faith or a sense of divine presence and one does become more religious or spiritual in times of crisis or need. One prays chiefly for solace and personal protection and also values one's own purity and strives to safeguard it. One is also inclined to embrace elements from various traditions.

India 7 could be called a "Religiously Disconnected and Security Inclined".

India 8

India 8 is grounded in religion but modestly engaged. One supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality, believes in the possibility of human progress and thinks that one can be deeply moral without being religious. One participates in religious activities chiefly on special occasions, becomes more religious or spiritual at times of need and engages regularly in religious or spiritual practice in private. One is not reluctant to reveal one's core convictions, but does not spend much time reading or talking about them. One does not have a sense of peace in the face of life's difficulties nor face the prospect of death with courage and calmness. However, one is confident in one's outlook and not uncomfortable or fearful in turning to the divine. One affirms the idea of reincarnation and follows a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment.

India 8 could be called a "Tradition Oriented and Confidently Religious".

Israel Main

Israel Main 1

Israel Main 1 expresses faith in a personal divinity. One holds that it is important to maintain continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors. The idea of reincarnation, the cycle of birth and rebirth, is at the center of ones' outlook and one faces the prospect of death with courage and calmness. One does not feel adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal and seldom if ever doubts one's deeply held convictions. Yet, one believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious. One does not feel uncomfortable in turning to the divine, nor claim that divinity is empty of significance or meaning. God or the divine is not felt to be distant and this world is viewed in a positive light and not as a place of suffering and sorrow. Rather, one feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual being, and values one's own purity and strives to safeguard it.

Israel Main 1 could be called a "Confident Tradition-Oriented Theist".

Israel Main 2

Israel Main 2 expresses a clear distance to religion. One rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles and views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires. One considers hypocrisy to be common in religious circles and one does not rely on religious authorities for understanding and direction. Religious scriptures are considered to be of human authorship. One takes a distance to ideas about experiences of the divine and one does not observe religious practices and laws. One rejects the idea that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation. One has not dedicated one's life to serving the divine. In stead, one believes in being moral without being religious and supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality, and embraces an outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values.

Israel Main 2 could be called a "Socially Concerned Secularist".

Israel Main 3

Israel Main 3 expresses a confident and engaged faith. One is comfortable in turning to the divine. Being religious or spiritual is central to whom one is and one engages regularly in religious or spiritual practices in private. One's engagement is also expressed in the ambition to actively seek to change societal structures and values and to work towards making the world a better place to live in. Ideas such as viewing religion as an illusory creation, seeing divinity as empty of significance or

meaning, or holding scriptures to be outdated or misguided, are all foreign to who one is. Rather, one relies on religious authorities for understanding and direction and has a thorough knowledge of religious scriptures or texts.

Israel Main 3 could be called a “Socially Engaged Believer”.

Israel Main 4

Israel Main 4 expresses a confident religious outlook. One considers the meaning of religious texts and teachings to be clear and true and takes a distance to thinking of religious scriptures as outdated or misguided or as of human authorship. One does not have a critical attitude towards the religious tradition of one’s people and one is foreign to the idea of understanding the divine as feminine. One does not doubt one’s convictions, and takes comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will face suffering or punishment. Faith is experienced as a never-ending quest and one longs for a deeper, more confident faith, anticipating a life hereafter. Religion is seen as a central means for becoming a better and more moral person and one values one’s purity and strives to safeguard it. One is moved by the atmosphere of sacred or venerated places and one’s religiosity is expressed primarily in charitable acts or social action.

Israel Main 4 could be called a “Tradition-Oriented Confident Believer”.

Israel Main 5

Israel Main 5 expresses a distance to religion. One views the divine or a higher reality as a deep mystery that can be pointed to but never fully understood. One believes in some way, but doubts about long-held religious convictions are frequent and one does not consider oneself to be religious. Ideas about attaining eternal salvation, sensing the presence or influence of specific spirits, demons or patron saints or dedicating oneself to serving the divine, all feel foreign. At the same time, one does not find the idea of divinity empty of significance, nor thinks of all religious scriptures as outdated. In stead, one believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship. One participates in religious activities only on special occasions and prays when there is a need for solace or protection. One is critical of the religious tradition of one’s people. One is profoundly touched by the suffering of others and supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality.

Israel Main 5 could be called a “Unengaged, spiritually ambiguous”.

Israel Main 6

Israel Main 6 expresses a spiritual outlook. One is inclined to embrace elements from various religious and spiritual traditions and being spiritual or religious is central to whom one is. A spiritual quest and a spiritual path in harmony with the environment are at the center of one's life. One has used methods of attaining altered states of consciousness and experienced moments of profound illumination, but one is familiar with experiences of doubting deeply held convictions. One feels foreign to maintaining continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors, as well as to observing religious practices and laws. In stead of being consumed by day-to-day responsibilities, one has time for spiritual matters and reading or talking about one's convictions.

Israel Main 6 could be called an "Experience-Oriented Spiritual Universalist".

Israel Druze

Israel Druze 1

Israel Druze 1 is characterized by a religious conviction and an interest in religious and spiritual matters. Being religious or spiritual is central to whom one is and one seldom doubts one's deeply held convictions. One is moved by the atmosphere of sacred or venerated places, affirms the idea of reincarnation and values one's purity. One does not regard divinity devoid of significance nor express contempt for all religious institutions, ideas and practices. Similarly, one does not find religious scriptures outdated nor religion as an illusory human creation. In contrast, one feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual being. One observes with great care prescribed religious practices, feels that it is important to maintain continuity of the religious traditions of family and feels closest to those who share the same outlook.

Israel Druze 1 could be called a "Confident Religious Traditionalist".

Israel Druze 2

Israel Druze 2 expresses somewhat vague but liberal religious views. One supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious. One takes a distance to dedicating one's life to serving the divine and giving religion the central role in the ruling of the nation. However, one does not feel contempt for all religious institutions, ideas and practices. In stead, one feels that one should remain loyal to the religion of one's nation. One feels foreign to viewing the divine as feminine and to using methods of attaining altered states of consciousness. One believes in some way, but does not view oneself as religious and sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life.

Israel Druze 2 could be called a "Non-committed Adherent".

Israel Druze 3

Israel Druze 3 expresses beliefs and a social concern with some ambivalence. One takes distance to the idea of divinity being empty of significance and viewing religion as an illusory human creation. One affirms the idea of reincarnation and values one's own purity and strives to safeguard it. One discards the use of methods of attaining altered states of consciousness. One does not feel threatened by evil forces nor guilt or personal inadequacy. However, one feels guilty for not living up to one's ideals. One believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious, is touched by the suffering of others and embraces an outlook that actively seeks to change societal structures and values.

Israel Druze 3 could be called a "Socially Concerned Conformist".

Israel Hebrew

Israel Hebrew 1

Israel Hebrew 1 embraces a life-view that rejects religion. One supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality, believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious and is touched by the suffering of others. One rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles and views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires. One does not rely on religious authorities and rejects the idea that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation. Ideas about dedicating one's life to serving the divine and observing religious practices and laws are also alien. One feels distant from God or the divine and does not feel personally protected or guided by a spiritual being. One has not sensed the presence of spirits, demons or patron saints.

Israel Hebrew 1 could be called a "Socially Concerned Rationalist".

Israel Hebrew 2

Israel Hebrew 2 has a solid religious identity. Being religious or spiritual is central to whom one is. One does not find it difficult to believe in a benevolent divine being in the face of evil and one engages regularly in religious or spiritual practices in private. One does not feel uncomfortable in turning to the divine, find the idea of divinity empty of significance nor view religion as an illusory human creation. One works towards making the world a better place to live in and embraces an outlook that seeks to change societal structures and values. One supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality, but views religion as a central means for becoming a more moral person. One has thorough knowledge of religious scriptures and does not regard them as outdated or misguided.

Israel Hebrew 2 could be called a "Socially Engaged Confident Practitioner".

Israel Hebrew 3

Israel Hebrew 3 is a non-practicing believer-of-sorts. One believes in some way, but does not view oneself as religious. One has not sensed the presence of spirits, demons or patron saints, does not give substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization nor engages regularly in private religious or spiritual practices. Ideas about dedicating one's life to serving the divine or moving from one group to another feel foreign. One prays chiefly for solace and personal protection. One thinks that men and women are intended for different roles. One is touched by the suffering of others, supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious.

Israel Hebrew 3 could be called a "Security Oriented Unengaged Traditionalist".

Israel Hebrew 4

Experience and harmony are essential for Israel Hebrew 4. One works actively towards making the world a better place to live in and embraces an outlook that seeks to change societal structures and values. One sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal and is inclined to embrace elements from various religious and spiritual traditions. One does not take for granted that particular religious claims are true, and does not have one's sexuality guided by a religious outlook. One rejects the ideas of remaining loyal to the religion of one's nation and religion playing a central role in the ruling of the nation. One has experienced moments of illumination and used methods of attaining altered states of consciousness. One does not accept that ritual or practice would be more important than beliefs or experiences. One views symmetry, harmony, and balance as reflections of ultimate truth and follows a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment.

Israel Hebrew 4 could be called an "Experience-Oriented Spiritual Seeker".

Israel Muslim

Israel Muslim 1

Israel Muslim 1 is committed to one's beliefs. Being religious or spiritual is central to whom one is and one does not doubt one's convictions. One takes distance to ideas of divinity being empty of significance and to understanding and relating to the divine as feminine. One finds the meaning of religious texts and teachings to be clear and does not consider religious scriptures to be outdated nor of human authorship. Religious faith is viewed as a never-ending quest and one longs for a deeper, more confident faith. One willingly gives up worldly or bodily pleasures for religious or spiritual reasons and views religion as a central means for becoming a better and more moral person.

Israel Muslim 1 could be called a "Committed Practicing Believer".

Israel Muslim 2

Israel Muslim 2 expresses a personal experience of the divine. One thinks of the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent and one feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual being, but one also views the divine or a higher reality as a deep mystery. One is foreign to seeing religion as an illusory human creation and to finding the idea of divinity empty of significance. One does not feel distant from God, but one cannot see oneself as facing the prospect of death with calmness. One gives substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization or worthy cause. Still, one is not an active member of a religious or spiritual community, nor does one feel closest to those who share the same faith. One thinks that one can be deeply moral without being religious, and one does not let religion guide one's own sexual behavior.

Israel Muslim 2 could be called an "Institutionally Unattached Universalist".

Israel Muslim 3

Israel Muslim 3 expresses an outlook that is largely indifferent to religion. One is not religious, but believes in some way and one values one's own purity. One feels distant from God and has not dedicated one's life to serving the divine. Consumed by day-to-day responsibilities, one has little time for spiritual matters. One has not experienced a profound change in religious or spiritual understanding, does not spend much time reading or talking about one's convictions and has not used methods for attaining altered states of consciousness. One neither relies on religious authorities, nor regards certain specific beliefs crucial for salvation. Moreover, one does not feel confident in attaining salvation. One does not feel closest to those who share the same outlook and one thinks that one can be deeply moral without being religious.

Israel Muslim 3 could be called a "Religiously Uninterested but Culturally Committed".

Israel Muslim 4

Israel Muslim 4 is a believer with the emphasis on religious experiences. One believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship and one has experienced moments of profound illumination and would like to intensify one's experience of the divine or some otherworldly reality. Still, one cannot identify with using methods of attaining altered states of consciousness. One does not find it difficult to believe in a benevolent divine being in the face of evil, nor is one fearful in turning to the divine. One becomes more religious or spiritual in times of

need. One is foreign to feeling a sense of guilt and personal inadequacy and one feels a sense of peace even in the face of life's difficulties. One also does not see this world as a place of suffering.

Israel Muslim 4 could be called an "Experientially Inclined Believer".

Israel Muslim 5

Israel Muslim 5 values religious institutions and traditions. One feels that it is important to maintain continuity of the religious traditions of family and ancestors and to be loyal to the religion of one's nation. One views religion as a central means for becoming a better and more moral person and thinks that the world's traditions point to a common truth. One is foreign to feeling contempt for all religious institutions, ideas and practices and considering hypocrisy to be common in religious circles. One is also foreign to understanding and relating to the divine as feminine and as a person. One does not support the notion that all religious scriptures are outdated nor does one consider religious scriptures to be of human authorship. One lives one's earthly life in conscious anticipation of a life hereafter.

Israel Muslim 5 could be called a "Scripture- and institution-oriented traditionalist".

Peru

Peru 1

Rejecting religion, Peru 1 embraces an outlook that seeks to change society. One supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious. One rejects religious ideas that conflict with science. Religious scriptures are considered to be of human authorship. They are not found to be clear and true, and religious content is seen as metaphorical. One thinks that hypocrisy is common in religious circles and being religious or spiritual is not central to whom one is. One also distances oneself from ideas about centering one's life on a religious or spiritual quest, and religion playing the central role in the ruling of the nation. One does not think that men and women are intended for different roles nor does one's sexuality as guided by a religious outlook. First and foremost, one works towards making the world a better place and embraces an outlook that seeks to change societal structures and values.

Peru 1 could be called a "Non-Religious Progressive Humanist".

Peru 2

Peru 2 puts importance on personal religious engagement and experience. One deeply identifies with a holy figure, and observes with care prescribed religious practices. One does not participate in religious practices to meet others' wishes. One is interested in religious and spiritual matters and does not reject religious ideas that conflict with science. Also, one does not feel uncomfortable to turning to the divine, and is often keenly aware of divine presence. One does not feel adrift nor have a vague outlook. Neither does one feel guilty for not living up to one's ideals. In contrast, one feels a sense of peace in the face of life's difficulties and faces the prospect of death with courage. One supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality. One does not take comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will suffer, rather one is touched by the suffering of others.

Peru 2 could be called a "Religiously and experientially engaged".

Peru 3

The religiosity of Peru 3 is characterised by doubts. One believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship and does not feel distant from the divine. Instead, one feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual being and prays chiefly for personal protection. Still, one has frequent doubts about long-held convictions and longs for a deeper, more confident faith. One sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal but one has not used methods of attaining altered states of consciousness. One also takes distance to ideas about giving more importance to ritual or practice than to particular beliefs or experiences. One affirms that one can be deeply moral without being religious, supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and does not think that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation. Neither would one take any comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will suffer.

Peru 3 could be called an "Insecure Individual Believer".

Poland

Poland 1

Poland 1 expresses a rational outlook and a critical view on religion. One sees religion as an illusory human creation and one does not view events in this world within a religious or spiritual framework. One is critical of the religious tradition of one's people, rejecting religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles. One is foreign to ideas about religion playing the central role in the ruling of the nation and lacks experiences of divine presence feelings of being protected by a spiritual being. Consequently, one is not dedicated to serving the divine. In contrast,

one views personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life, supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious.

Poland 1 could be called a “Critical and Rational Individualist”.

Poland 2

Poland 2 is involved in religion on both a personal and social level. One believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship and sees the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent who protects and guides. One takes a distance to seeing religion as an illusory creation or divinity as empty of significance. Neither can one feel contempt for religious institutions, ideas and practices. One is foreign to the idea of reincarnation. One is profoundly touched by the suffering of others and longs for a deeper, more confident faith. One engages in religious or spiritual practices in private, considers regular attendance at places of worship to be essential and is an active member of a religious or a spiritual community. One is foreign to the idea of taking comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will face suffering or punishment.

Poland 2 could be called an “Engaged and Community-Oriented Believer”.

Poland 3

Poland 3 expresses a vague outlook, but is pursuing a spiritual path. One longs for a deeper, more confident faith, regrets the personal loss of faith and feels adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal. One is interested in religious or spiritual matters, centers one’s life on a religious or spiritual quest, spends much time reading or talking about one’s convictions and is inclined to embracing elements from different traditions. One has a thorough knowledge of religious texts, but does not observe prescribed religious practices and laws and one lacks confidence in attaining salvation. One is touched by the suffering of others, but does not give substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization or worthy cause. Neither does one express one’s religion in charitable acts or social action. One considers hypocrisy to be common in religious circles and is foreign to participating in religious practices to meet others’ wishes.

Poland 3 could be called an “Uncertain Spiritual Seeker”.

Poland 4

Poland 4 has a limited and shifting interest in religion. One is not religious, but believes in some way. One is consumed by day-to-day responsibilities, with little or no time for spiritual matters, but one becomes more religious or spiritual at times of

need. One does not see regular attendance at places of worship as important, nor does one identify with a holy figure. One is not an active member of any religious or spiritual community and participates in religious activities chiefly on special occasions. One does not allow religion to guide one's sexuality. In contrast, one thinks that one can be deeply moral without being religious. One takes distance to ideas about religion playing the central role in the ruling of the nation. Rather, one supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and one is touched by the suffering of others.

Poland 4 could be called an "Unengaged, secularly inclined sceptic".

Russia

Russia 1

Russia 1 expresses a non-religious life-view. One views religion as an illusory human creation and the idea to dedicate one's life to serving the divine feels foreign. Instead, one feels adrift without direction, purpose or a goal and has a sense of guilt and personal inadequacy. However, one does not long for a deeper and more confident faith. One does not rely on religious authorities and rejects the notion that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation. Neither does one feel that it is important to maintain continuity of the religious traditions of family. One cannot see any higher purpose for the human species. One also does not sense a divine element within oneself. In stead, one embraces an outlook that seeks to change societal structures and values and supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality.

Russia 1 could be called a "Progressive Secular Rationalist".

Russia 2

Russia 2 sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life. One does not feel contempt for all religious institutions, ideas and practices nor is one critical of the religious tradition of one's people. Neither does one find the idea of divinity empty of significance. One believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious and supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality. One is touched by the suffering of others and does not take comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will suffer, nor does one view this world as a place of suffering. One feels spiritually moved and deeply sustained by music, art or poetry.

Russia 2 could be called an "Individual Pluralist".

Russia 3

Russia 3 expresses a spiritually open secular view. One does not center one's life on a religious or spiritual quest, but sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life. One believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious. One views religion as the illusory creation of human fears and desires and does not take for granted that particular religious claims are true. Still, one believes in some way. Without viewing oneself as religious, one is committed to following a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment. One does not observe prescribed religious practices and laws nor find regular attendance at places of worship to be an essential expression of faith. Consequently, one takes a distance to the idea that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation.

Russia 3 could be called an "Environmentally Concerned and Spiritually Inclined Non-Religious".

Russia 4

Russia 4 expresses a personal and ambiguous distance to religion. One does not see events in this world within a religious or spiritual framework, nor the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent. One feels contempt for religious institutions, ideas and practices, and does not give substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization or worthy cause. Rather, one feels adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal. One claims to believe in some way without considering oneself religious. Even though one is critical to ideas that religion should play a central role in the ruling of the nation, one feels it is important to maintain continuity of the religious traditions of family. One does not hold practice to be more important than beliefs or experiences. Hence, religious practices are chiefly attended to meet others' wishes. One believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious and one also supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality.

Russia 4 could be called a "Critical and Unengaged Religious Conformist".

Russia 5

Russia 5 expresses insecurity as part of one's religious beliefs. One thinks that certain specific beliefs are crucial for salvation and feels confident of attaining salvation even though one cannot see oneself as facing the prospect of death with courage and calmness. One feels foreign to being critical of the religious tradition of one's people, yet one does not think religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation. One claims that one rather believes in some way, than views oneself as religious and rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific and rational principles. Dedicating one's life to serving the divine feels foreign and one does not give

substantial amounts of time or money to some religious organization. Rather, one sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life and supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality.

Russia 5 could be called an “Anxious Believer”.

Sweden

Sweden 1

Sweden 1 expresses a rationalistic and secular worldview. One supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality, thinks that one can be deeply moral without being religious, and rejects religious ideas that conflict with science. One can see no ultimate destiny for the human species, but one believes that human progress is possible. Religion is viewed as an illusory human creation and should not be central to the ruling of the nation. One has not dedicated one’s life to serving the divine, does not observe religious practices and one’s life is not centered on a religious or spiritual quest. One is also foreign to the notion of living one’s earthly life in conscious anticipation of a life hereafter. One finds the idea of divinity empty of significance and is not an active member of a religious or spiritual community. One takes no comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will suffer. Instead, one is touched by the suffering of others.

Sweden 1 could be called a “Liberal Progressive Humanist”.

Sweden 2

Sweden 2 expresses a devoted and active religiosity. One believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship. One can see a higher purpose for the human species, one thinks that certain beliefs are crucial for salvation and feels confident of attaining salvation. However, one does not support the idea of reincarnation. One is interested in religious or spiritual matters and one feels neither adrift nor has a vague outlook. One spends much time reading or talking about one’s convictions, but one does not take comfort in thinking that those who do not live righteously will suffer. One is an active, contributing member of a religious or a spiritual community, considers regular attendance at places of worship to be essential and feels closest to those who share the same outlook. However, one does not feel that one should remain loyal to the religion of one’s nation.

Sweden 2 could be called a “Confident and Committed Believer”.

Sweden 3

Sweden 3 is an eclectic and spiritually inclined individualist. One feels protected and guided by a spiritual being, is committed to a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment and has a strong sense of a spiritual or higher order of reality in nature. One is inclined to embrace elements from various traditions, does not believe that certain beliefs are crucial for salvation and affirms the idea of reincarnation. Ideas about the importance to maintain continuity of the religious traditions of family or to remain loyal to the religion of one's nation are felt to be foreign. One cannot identify with claims that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation nor with ideas about participating in religious practices chiefly to meet others' wishes. One supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality.

Sweden 3 could be called an "Experience-Oriented Spiritual Pluralist".

Turkey

Turkey 1

Turkey 1 presents an open and socially concerned life-view. One does not center one's life on a religious or spiritual quest. One thinks that the world's religious traditions point to a common truth. The idea to participate in religious practices chiefly to meet others' wishes and expectations feels foreign and one does not feel closest to those who share the same outlook. The idea that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation is alien to one's outlook. One feels confident in one's views; one does not feel adrift nor battle with dark inner impulses. One is profoundly touched by the suffering of others and expresses one's religion primarily in charitable acts or social action. One supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and thinks that one can be deeply moral without being religious.

Turkey 1 could be called a "Socially Concerned Universalist".

Turkey 2

Turkey 2 presents a rational and liberal perspective. One rejects religious ideas that conflict with scientific principles and views religion as an illusory human creation. One has not dedicated one's life to serving the divine and one does not live one's life in anticipation of a life hereafter. One does not observe prescribed religious practices and one does not think that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation. One feels foreign to seeing religion as a central means for becoming a more moral person. Rather, one supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and believes that one can be deeply moral without being

religious. One sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life and one thinks about the ultimate as a life force or creative energy rather than a supernatural being.

Turkey 2 could be called a “Secular Individualistic Rationalist”.

Turkey 3

Turkey 3 is a self-assured believer-of-sorts. One does not view oneself as religious, but believes in some way. One sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life and follows a spiritual path that is in harmony with the environment. To value one’s own purity is held to be important. One does not have thorough knowledge of religious texts, yet one spends much time reading or talking about one’s convictions. One is not uncomfortable in turning to the divine and one does not feel threatened by evil forces. One supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality. One neither feels that one should remain loyal to the religion of one’s nation nor believes that religion should play the central role in ruling of the nation. One also believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious.

Turkey 3 could be called a “Confident and Open-Minded Individualist”.

Turkey 4

Turkey 4 expresses a solid personal religiosity. One thinks of the divine as a sheltering and nurturing parent, who protects and guides. One takes an interest in religious matters and becomes more religious or spiritual at times of need, but one does find one’s religiosity to be vague or shifting. Religion is not regarded the illusory creation of human fears and desires nor is the idea of divinity empty of significance. One feels alien to claiming that one feels distant to the divine or uncomfortable and fearful in turning to the divine. One rejects both the idea of reincarnation and the idea of the divine as feminine. One expresses one’s religiosity primarily in charitable acts or social action. One believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious and one does not think that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation.

Turkey 4 could be called a “Confident Believer”.

Turkey 5

Turkey 5 expresses an insecure and somewhat undecided outlook. One believes in some way, but does not view oneself as religious. One does not identify with some holy figure, yet one feels protected and guided by a spiritual being. The idea of divinity is not empty of significance. One sees personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life, but one does not center one’s life on a religious or spiritual

quest. However, one does long for a deeper, more confident faith. One does not face the prospect of death with courage and feels a sense of guilt and personal inadequacy. One's sexuality is not guided by a religious or spiritual outlook and one feels foreign to the notion of willingly giving up worldly or bodily pleasures for religious or spiritual reasons. One supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality, affirming that one can be deeply moral without being religious.

Turkey 5 could be called an "Anxious Uncertain Individualist".

USA

USA 1

USA 1 has a secular outlook on life and wants to change the world. One embraces an outlook that seeks to change societal structures and values, works towards making the world a better place and rejects the notion that men and women would be intended for different roles. One also rejects the idea that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation, and that one should remain loyal to the religion of one's nation. It feels alien to one's outlook to view religion as a central means for becoming a more moral person. Instead, one believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious and one supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality. One believes in some way, but does not view oneself as religious and one's sexuality is not guided by a religious or spiritual outlook. One feels foreign to the notion of relying on religious authorities for understanding but one does feel spiritually moved and sustained by music, art, or poetry.

USA 1 could be called a "Socially Concerned Activist".

USA 2

USA 2 expresses a solid religious engagement. Being religious or spiritual is central to who one is and one takes an interest in religious and spiritual matters. One centers one's life on a religious or spiritual quest, feels personally protected and guided by a spiritual being and one believes in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship. Within one's outlook it feels alien to consider religious scriptures to be outdated or misguided. One does not feel distant from God or the divine, instead one is often aware of the presence of the divine and not uncomfortable in turning to the divine. One does not find the idea of divinity empty of significance and one also supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality. One does not have frequent doubts about long-held religious convictions nor feel adrift without direction, purpose or a goal.

USA 2 could be called an "Experience-Oriented Theist".

USA 3

USA 3 expresses an undecided and anxious religiosity. One sees the divine or a higher reality as a deep mystery and personal self-realization as a primary spiritual goal in life. However, one associates with people from different religious traditions and has not centered one's life on a religious or spiritual quest. Rather, one feels adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal and guilty for not living up to one's ideals. One also often seems to doubt one's convictions and one does not face the prospect of death with courage and calmness. One believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious and is foreign to the notion that regular attendance at places of worship would be an essential expression of faith. One also does not think that one should remain loyal to the religion of one's nation, nor does one see one's own sexuality as guided by a religious or spiritual outlook.

USA 3 could be called a "Guilt-Ridden Drifter"

USA 4

USA 4 is confident in a self-assured universalist life-view. One views religious faith as a never-ending quest and sees symmetry, harmony, and balance as reflections of ultimate truth. Experiences of a profound change in religious or spiritual understanding are foreign to oneself, nor does one feel adrift, without direction, purpose, or goal. One does not see this world as a place of suffering nor feel threatened by evil forces. Neither does one feel guilty for not living up to one's ideals nor a sense of personal inadequacy. Instead, one feels a sense of peace even in the face of life's difficulties. One believes that one can be deeply moral without being religious, supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and one does not think that religion should play the central role in the ruling of the nation.

USA 4 could be called an "Harmony-Oriented Confident Universalist".

USA 5

USA 5 does not actively subscribe to religious ideas or practices. One relies on the possibility of human worldwide progress, is foreign to the idea of feeling oneself threatened by evil forces, but one also views oneself as having a vague religious outlook. There is a history of change in religious or spiritual understanding and one is not an active member of a religious or a spiritual community nor practices in other ways. Rather, one is reluctant to reveal one's core convictions and feels closest to those who share the same outlook. One feels foreign to claiming that one is protected by a spiritual being, to identifying with some holy figure and to believing in a divine being with whom one can have a personal relationship. Instead, one believes

that one can be deeply moral without being religious, supports individual freedom of choice in matters of faith and morality and does not feel that one should remain loyal to the religion of one's nation. One is touched by the suffering of others, but one does not express one's religion in charitable acts.

USA 5 could be called a "Socially Concerned Non-Religious".

Appendix 3: The YARG Survey

Please note that the part of the survey which asks “How much like you is this person?” is the Portrait Value Questionnaire (PVQ57) designed by Shalom Schwartz (Schwartz et al., 2012; Schwartz, 2017). It was used as part of the YARG Survey (see Chap.1) and reprinted here with Shalom Schwartz’ permission. The PVQ57 scale is available for commercial use only under license. Please contact the author of the scale ‘Shalom Schwartz’ for details. Those who wish to use the PVQ57 for research purposes should contact the author of the scale in order to receive instructions for coding and analysis, relevant literature, and authorized translations.

Schwartz, S. H., Cieuch, J., Vecchione, M., Davidov, E., Fischer, R., Beierlein, C., Ramos, A., Verkasalo, M., Lonnqvist, J.-E., Demirutku, K., Dirilen-Gumus, O., & Konty, M. (2012). Refining the theory of basic individual values. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *103*(4), 663–688.

Schwartz, S. H. (2017). The refined theory of basic values. In S. Roccas & L. Sagiv (Eds.), *Values and behavior: Taking a cross-cultural perspective* (pp. 51–72). Springer.

Young adults and religion in a global perspective (YARG)

Welcome to the YARG survey and thank you for participating!

Our purpose with this research project is to gather more knowledge about worldviews and values among young people globally today. Several thousand people worldwide will take part in this study. Individual results will not be shared with anyone outside the research group. The results will be published in academic articles and books. All participants will remain totally anonymous.

We think that you will enjoy answering the questions in this survey. They might challenge you to think and they provide an opportunity to reflect on things you might perhaps not talk about every day. The results of this study will enhance our understanding of young adults today, but also of the culture you are part of. After you have answered the questions there is an option to volunteer for participating in an interview. Those who participate in the interview will be given a gift as a compensation for their time and effort.

More information about the project can be found on our website at: abo.fi/yarg. If you have any questions that have not been answered, or comments or complaints about your treatment in this study, please contact the principal investigator:

Prof. **PETER NYNÄS**
Åbo Akademi University, Fabriksgatan 2, FIN-20500 ÅBO,
FINLAND
peter.nynas@abo.fi
+358 (0)40 587 3187

Please, turn the page ->

By filling in and returning the survey form, starting on the following page, you consent to participate in the survey and agree with the following statements:

1. I have been informed about the research project “Young adults and religion in a global perspective”. I understand that the survey may be both interesting and thought provoking and that the results of this survey may be used in any way thought best for this study and published in academic reports, journals and books.
2. I understand and confirm that my participation in this survey is voluntary and that I may choose not to participate at any point without prejudice or penalty.
3. I understand that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. My anonymity will be fully protected in relation to all parts of the research project. Researchers will not identify me by name in any reports or publications or by using information obtained from this survey.
4. Teachers, administrators or anyone else on my campus, at my college or my university will not be informed about my participation or if I choose not to participate. They will not have access to any information or answers I have provided here. This precaution will prevent my individual comments from having any negative repercussions on me whatsoever.

Please, start the survey on the following page →

YARG 2016 Survey, English, male

Young adults and religion in a global perspective

The interviewer fills these	
Date:	
Location:	
Interviewer:	
Ref. number:	

The purpose of this research project is to gather more knowledge about worldviews and values among young people around the world today. Please, answer the following questions as accurately as you can, to the best of your knowledge. Remember that your answers will remain completely anonymous.

Professor **Peter Nynäs**
Project Leader, YARG
Åbo Akademi University, Finland

A. Your current life situation

A1. How would you characterise your current civil state?

- Single
- Married or in registered partnership
- Cohabitant or common-law marriage
- Widow/widower
- Divorced
- Separated

A2. Do you have children (either own or adopted) or close relatives you are responsible for?

- Yes
- No

A3. At the age of 15, did you live in a city or in the countryside?

- In a city
- In the countryside
- I don't know

A4. Would you describe yourself as being a member of a group that is discriminated against in the country you live in now? Please, select all that apply.

- No, I don't feel discriminated against
- Colour or race
- Nationality
- Religion
- Political orientation
- Language
- Ethnic group
- Age
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Disability
- Other, please, describe: _____

A5. In considering your family's monthly income relative to the average in your country, is it?

- Much lower than the average
- Somewhat lower than the average
- About the average
- Somewhat higher than the average
- Much higher than the average
- I don't know

A6. Are you studying full-time?

- Yes
- No

A7. Are you currently employed?

- Yes
- No

A8. Are you receiving a scholarship for your current studies?

- Yes
- No

A9. Where do you currently live?

- In a shared, student accommodation, or a sub-let room
- With parents or other relatives
- In a privately rented apartment
- In an apartment owned by your parents, other relatives, or yourself

YARG 2016 Survey, English, male

B12. Apart from special occasions such as weddings and funerals, about how often do you take part in religious ceremonies or services these days?

- Every day
- More than once a week
- Once a week
- At least once a month
- Only on special days or celebrations
- Less often
- Never
- I don't know

B13. Apart from when you are at religious ceremonies or services, how often do you engage in private religious or spiritual practices, such as worship, prayer, or meditation?

- Every day
- More than once a week
- Once a week
- At least once a month
- Only on special days or celebrations
- Less often
- Never
- I don't know

C. Your sources for news and information

C1. In the past month, how frequently did you use the following media?

	Every day	Almost daily	Every week	Occasionally	Never
Newspapers/magazines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Radio	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Television	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The Internet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

C2. If you ever use the Internet, for which of the following activities do you use it?

	Every day	Almost daily	Every week	Occasionally	Never
Communication	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Developing social networks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Finding information	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Entertainment	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Buying things or services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Selling things or services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Uploading self-created content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Health or wellbeing related services	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Religious or spiritual services and issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Political issues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

C3. From where do you get information about news or current affairs? Please, select all that apply.

- Newspapers/magazines
- Radio
- Television
- Social media
- Online news sources
- Friends or other people
- Other sources, which: _____

C4. Which of the following do you rely on for guidance as you live your life and make decisions? Please, select all that apply.

- Family
- Trusted friends
- God or 'higher power'
- Past masters, saints, or teachers of my tradition
- Deceased loved ones
- Own intuition or feelings
- Own reason and judgement
- The teachings of my religion
- The religious or spiritual group to which I belong
- Local religious leaders
- National religious leaders
- The leader or leaders of my religious tradition
- Social media
- Science
- Great literature and art, past and present
- School or university teachers
- Government authorities
- Political party or politicians
- None
- Some other, which: _____

D. Your views and convictions

D1. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	Strongly disagree		Strongly agree		
	1	2	3	4	5
Same-sex marriage should be treated the same as marriage between a man and a woman.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Same-sex couples should have the same rights for adoption as heterosexual couples.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If a woman became pregnant as a result of rape she should be able to obtain a legal abortion.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When a woman's own health is seriously endangered by a pregnancy she should be able to obtain a legal abortion.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A pregnant woman should be able to obtain a legal abortion if the woman wants it for any reason.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

D2. Consider a situation where a person is living in severe pain because of a disease that cannot be cured and the person wants to die.

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
Doctors should be allowed to end the patient's life if the patient requests it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Doctors should be allowed to assist the patient to commit suicide if the patient requests it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

E. Your wellbeing and happiness

E1. All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Extremely dissatisfied	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Extremely satisfied

E2. Taking all things together, how happy would you say you are?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Extremely unhappy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Extremely happy

E3. How satisfied are you with your present standard of living?

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Extremely dissatisfied	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Extremely satisfied

E4. How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

	Strongly disagree			Strongly agree	
	1	2	3	4	5
I'm always optimistic about my future.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In general I feel very positive about myself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
At times I feel as if I am a failure.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
On the whole my life is close to how I would like it to be.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

YARG 2016 Survey, English, male

E5. How much of the time during the past week ...	Not at all			All the time	
	1	2	3	4	5
You felt depressed?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You felt that everything you did was an effort?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Your sleep was restless?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You were happy?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You felt lonely?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You enjoyed life?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You felt sad?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You could not get going?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You had a lot of energy?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You felt anxious?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You felt tired?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You were absorbed in what you were doing?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You felt calm and peaceful?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You felt bored?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You felt really rested when you woke up in the morning?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

F. Your personal details

F1. In which country were you born? _____

F2. What citizenship do you hold? _____

F3. When were you born?

Month: _____

Year: _____

F4. What is your gender?

- Male
 Female
 Other

Thank you for completing this survey!

Our research project will benefit from your answers and enhance our understanding of young adults today, your views and values.

The interviewer fills these	
Date:	_____
Location:	_____
Interviewer:	_____
Ref. number:	_____

Would you also like to volunteer for a face-to-face interview?

This would provide an opportunity to shed more light on and discuss how you think and feel about issues similar to those that were brought up in this survey. Participation in the interview is also fully anonymous. The interview includes a part where you sort cards with statements according to how well they match you, followed by a discussion about this. It takes approximately 1.5 hours and you will be given a gift as a compensation for your time and effort.

We only invite a small number of all the participants to the interview. If you would like to be among those selected, please, give us your contact information. These will be used only for the purpose of inviting you to the interview and they will be separated from the survey responses you have just given.

Your contact details:

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

E-mail: _____

Appendix 4: YARG Interview Themes

This model is based on the following detailed YARG interview instructions. It cannot be comprehended unless you read that document carefully! It exemplifies how to summarize the interview focus.

Fixed questions:

- What is your general impression of the sorting?
- Is there something that the cards did not cover when you look at your own or your friends' life experience?
- Taking a look at the items that you placed on the +3 and +4 end of the scale, could you elaborate on some of them more in detail? Why are they important to you? And what do they mean to you?
- Taking a look at the items that you placed on the -3 and -4 end of the scale, could you elaborate on some of them more in detail? Why do you mark a decisive distance to these views? What do they mean to you?

**Theme 1 – Main Focus Religion/Spirituality**

- The meanings that they give to the 'religion' and 'spirituality'.
- Their views about how these relate to one another and to nonreligious, secular outlooks on life.
- The place/role of these in their everyday personal life.

**Theme 2 - Main Focus Personal History and Self- Understanding**

- Their own understanding of themselves.
- Their views on their own personal history.
- Their thoughts on how they have developed as a person over time.

**Theme 3 – Main Focus Broader Context and Belonging**

- Their thoughts about the broader socio-economic and socio-cultural context they grew up in and currently are living in.
- Their sense of belonging and embeddedness in and sense of connection/belonging to different types of communities.

Structure and Main Focus of the Interview

The interview is the third and final stage of the material gathering-process in YARG. The interview is conducted with all interviewees who do the FQS sorting. The interview follows immediately after the sorting and the transition from the sorting to the interview should occur as smoothly as possible.

The main purpose of the interview is to complement the data that has been obtained through the survey and the FQS. It will generate complementary knowledge about interviewees' thoughts on a limited set of THEMES and TOPICS. *Together these shed light on how the life- views of the participants have developed over time and what their attitudes and values have been influenced and formed by.* In contrast to the pre-formulated statements of the survey and FQS, the interview will allow interviewees to express their own thoughts freely and with their own words. They should also be encouraged to do so and to share personal stories that they feel are of importance in relation to their current view on life.

For purposes of wider comparability across all interviews, each individual interview follows a **pre-defined general structure** that is organized around three main **THEMES** of interest:

1. Interviewees' experience of the FQS and thoughts about and own personal engagement with religion/spirituality or similar positions of a secular character.
2. Interviewees' personal history, self-understanding and current life situation.
3. Interviewees' thoughts about the broader social and cultural contexts and communities that they are embedded and involved in.

Although the interview constitutes a separate stage in the data gathering process, the transition from the FQS to the interview is made through picking up on the set of fixed questions that are always asked in immediate connection to the interviewees' FQS-sorting (see **FQS Instructions** for further details). These initial fixed questions provide valuable openings to more general questions about interviewees' thoughts about and personal involvement with religion/spirituality. These questions, in turn, comprise **THEME 1**, from which the interview moves into questions that focus on the other two main themes.

In relation to each theme, the interview also focuses on four **TOPICS** that interviewers need to remain sensitive to:

1. Changing modes of **socialization** in the lives of the interviewees.
2. Interviewees' thoughts on/involvement in/engagement with **social movements**.
3. Interviewees' use of and engagement with **media** and in **social media environments**.
4. Interviewees' relationships to a **consumerist ethos** and their sensibilities with regard to consumption and consumer choice.

TOPIC Explanations

In the following we provide brief explanations of all four TOPICS to be covered in relation to each main THEME of the interview. References and suggestions for further reading are also included. These explanations direct particular focus on how each TOPIC is mainly approached and understood within the YARG-project as a whole. It is important to note that these four TOPICS tie into each other in various ways.

Socialization

Socialization refers to the process through which an individual learns about and internalizes the attitudes, values and behaviors considered appropriate in particular social contexts (Zerilli, 2007). As theories of socialization focus on individual learning and adaption, they have constituted a natural starting-point in sociological attempts to understand how views and values are transferred from one generation to the next (Furseth & Repstad, 2006). As for religious socialization, sociological research has traditionally directed particular attention to the role that the family and different forms of religious communities play as socialization agents.

During the last couple of decades, theories of socialization have become increasingly challenged and criticized for the ways in which they tend to assign the (young) individual a role as a largely passive recipient in the socialization process. The notion that views and values are somehow transferred from one generation to the next in simple and straightforward ways

– as some socialization theories would imply – has also been brought into question (Wrong, 1961). Current research of religious socialization therefore tends to foreground the individual's active and interpreting role in the socialization process, without neglecting the unequal power balance that this learning process entails. For example, as Beckford (2010: xxiii) comments: “young people can exercise a high degree of critical autonomy in making their own decisions about what to believe and how to translate their beliefs into action”.

Even though the central role of parents in the socialization process is still supported, contemporary debates on socialization also highlight the increasingly central role played by other socialization agents, such as peers (Klingenberg, 2014), media, and popular culture (Moberg & Sjö, 2015). More recent studies have also suggested that media has developed into one of the principal arenas where young people most frequently encounter religion (Lövheim, 2012).

Building on previous research, the YARG-project aims to explore whether there has occurred a notable shift from primary to secondary modes of socialization among young people today. On the one hand, this entails focusing on interviewees' primary socialization – where they grew up, the role of religion in their family life and/or amongst the people important to them. On the other hand, it also entails focusing on secondary socialization agents in the lives of interviewees – i.e. their

engagement with different types of both religious and non-religious groups and communities such as social movements or other possible communities or organizations whose values they adhere to. Particular attention is also directed at the mediated environments and networks (e.g. social media platforms) in and through which such engagements occur.

In the actual interviews, we are likely to encounter young adults whose courses of life are characterized by different degrees of family attachment, media use, and contact with or involvement in social movements. We are also likely to encounter different understandings of how values and religious subjectivities have been formed as well as of the role that issues of individual autonomy and authority have played in this process. Rather than try to directly fit the stories of interviewees into a theoretical frame of socialization, the primary focus of our attention should instead be on the ways in which interviewees tell their own stories.

Types of issues and topics in relation to socialization that might surface in the interviews include:

- How the current religious/spiritual sensibilities of interviewees relate to their upbringing and earlier life, whether these sensibilities have changed over time and, if so, why and how.
- Interviewees' thoughts about their own relationship to the community that they grew up in.
- Whether or not interviewees still feel part of/connected to/a member of the community they grew up in or used to be involved with in the past.
- Whether the religious sensibilities of interviewees have been influenced by factors other than the family or local community, such as friends and communities and networks encountered through social media.

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Social Movements

Social movements are typically characterized by a struggle to change values in society, to influence public opinion, and to provide ideas, identities and ideals for society. As such, social movements work as agents of cultural and societal change (Castells 227; Jamison & Eyerman, 1991: 4; Rochon, 1998: 179). Castells underlines that social movements have their roots in the human longing for justice and that they should thus be understood against the backdrop of previous experiences of humiliation, exploitation or misrepresentation. Further, Walgrave and Verhulst (2006) have emphasized the emotional aspect of movements and suggested that forms of victimhood and similar discourses have developed into powerful mobilizers, thus affording emotions and experiences more political significance. Social movements, therefore, do not start with a program or a political strategy but, rather, with collectively focused and stoked emotional engagement.

On a more general level, social movements are often rooted in a disconnection their supporters experience between the reality they share in and the ideal world they would like to live in.

Social movements are thus characterized by a marked tendency to work for increased public awareness and recognition of a need for change and more or less concentrated efforts to mobilize people to identify with the cause in question. Engagements with issues such as human rights, animal rights, LGBT-rights or ecology all constitute well-known examples of this. By contrast, it is also relevant to note the more recent rise of voices and activities rooted in right-wing nationalist views when considering social movements.

Social movements are usually held to constitute a distinct social category from those of social institutions and organizations, such as the legal system, the educational establishment, non-profit organizations etc. Although social movements might evolve around particular organizations, be strongly supported by certain organizations, or give birth to new organizations, they are best understood as informal networks of social actors who share a collective identity that stems from conflictual relationships with clearly defined opponents and who engage in various forms of collective action (Della Porta & Diani, 2006: 20). In contrast to organizations, social movements are characterized by process and change, high heterogeneity and internal diversity, a low degree of institutionalization, and a lack of clearly defined boundaries and decision-making structures (Koopmans, 1993: 637). Castells puts great emphasis on informal networks as important resources for social movements. Such networks furnish the space and instruments necessary for mobilization, organization, coordination, and deliberation. Internet-based and wireless informal networks of communication enable movements to survive, grow, and operate in a cohesive manner even if they lack a clearly defined leadership (Castells, 2012: 9–10). The specific nature of social movements implies that the criteria for membership or participation tend to be unstable and dependent upon mutual recognition between the actors involved (Della Porta & Diani, 2006: 21). Social movements are thus characterized by varying degrees of identification, engagement, and influence rather than well-defined forms of membership.

The focus on social movements in this research project is important because of their growing influence on the values and broader social engagements of many individuals today. Social movements might, for example, affect young people's values and views, how they relate to religion and spirituality, and even come to form a central part of the religiosity or spirituality of some people.

In focusing on the topic of social movements we should be attentive to the kinds of values and narratives that can be associated with the themes above, such as thoughts and ideas about the need for societal change, issues of inequality, human hardship etc. In addition, we need to explore how the interviewees have formed their views on such issues, on the basis of what kinds of values, and on the basis of what kinds of experiences. It is also relevant to explore how an interviewee informs him/herself further about such issues, and to what extent such issues manifest themselves in different forms of activities that interviewees may be involved in. Types of engagement might range from that of the activist who spends a lot of time and resources on different activities and efforts to mobilize or influence other people to that of the more anonymous supporter for whom engagement is more about either more actively or passively expressing solidarity with a given issue through, for example, social media. Finally, it is also of import to explore how these different aspects and degrees of engagement in social movements overlaps, contrasts with, or affects the religiosity or spirituality of individual interviewees.

Types of issues and topics in relation to social movements that might surface in the interviews include:

- An identification with views or values that question the current social situation.
- An emphasis on inequality, victimhood, or misrepresentation on behalf of particular groups in society.
- Support for or engagement with efforts to bring about social change at large or within particular communities.
- An effort to affect public opinion and/or to influence peoples' ideas and ideals regarding society.

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Media

The media-environments of modern societies have developed and diversified at an accelerating pace on a worldwide scale since the 1950s. During past decades, the integration of media as a routine part of everyday life has been further intensified by the development and proliferation of the internet, new digital technologies, new media platforms, and mobile devices. As part of these developments, the sheer numbers of daily media and digital media technology users have increased exponentially worldwide (e.g. Hodkinson, 2011).

Generally, “media” can be understood in both a narrower and broader sense. When understood in a narrower sense in terms of “*the media*”, the term is principally used to denote different types of specific media institutions (e.g. specific media corporations, networks, newspapers, etc.). When media is understood in a broader sense, they are viewed in terms of social and cultural institutions more broadly, in terms of communication technologies, infrastructures, media industry, and commercial enterprise. “Media” in a broader sense thus denotes the *totality* of media outlets, institutions, infrastructures, and technologies on a global level. Media is thus best thought of as the principal, both technological and interactional, *environment* within which, and in relation to which, everyday social and cultural life increasingly unfolds.

The consequences for religion and religious life are manifold. At a general level, the proliferation and increasing democratization of the internet in particular offers people previously unforeseen opportunities to come across, search out, and engage with virtually any existing religious, spiritual, secular, or other teaching, idea, or practice. While the internet thus serves to challenge and circumvent traditional forms of religious authority, hierarchy, and community structures (Campbell, 2012) it, conversely, also provides religious communities of all kinds with new opportunities to swiftly communicate their aspirations and concerns to an unlimited, global audience. Lastly, it also needs to be noted that the spread of the internet has played a crucial role in bringing religion in general to the forefront of the public debate on a global level.

Younger generations in particular are now increasingly socialized into broader social and cultural contexts marked by a rapidly evolving and constantly changing global media- environment. It is of particular import to recognize that the generation focused on in the YARG- project is one that has been born into a world where the internet, and to an increasing extent social media, and mobile digital devices, largely constitute taken-for-granted, integral, and indeed almost omnipresent parts of everyday life.

Types of issues and topics in relation to media that might surface in the interviews include:

- The types of media that interviewees talk about using and engaging with on a daily basis.
- The degree to which interviewees engage with different types of online interactive social media.

- Interviewees' primary sources of information about issues that relate to their values, religious/spiritual views, or other social and cultural issues.
- The extended mediated and/or social media-based networks of interviewees and the role that these might play in their formation of values, worldviews, and religiosities.

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Consumer Culture

The rise of capitalism and consumerism has been central to many of the major social and cultural changes and transformations that have occurred in modern times, including accelerating globalization, industrialization, and technological development. Since the early 1980s, the spread of neoliberal ideologies and policies have given rise to a new global political economy that has radically altered the socio-economic makeup of contemporary societies on a worldwide scale. Economics and global capitalism has to a large extent dislodged politics as a structuring and embedding force (Gauthier, 2015: 71) as the various meanings attached to the concept of the “market” have increasingly shifted towards denoting a mode of social organization and mechanism of governance (Slater & Tonkiss, 2001). As part of these developments, consumerism has emerged as the dominant cultural ethos of late-modernity.

This development has also coincided with major transformations in the religious field on a global level.

A consumer culture can be thought of as the culture of a market society – i.e. a society in which the idea of an independently existing, value neutral force called the “market” is dominant and generally accepted, so that social and cultural life and our very ways of thinking about social and cultural life become impossible to detach completely from this idea (Gauthier et al., 2013). In such an environment, consumer culture-thinking proliferates within all areas of social and cultural life, opening up for the possibility of everything becoming “commodified”, that is, made available for purchase and consumption under market conditions. A consumer culture foregrounds symbolic value, personal choice, the experiential, and the emotional. The

value of consumer products and commodities increasingly lie not in their actual utility value, but rather in their symbolic value as markers of personal identity and lifestyle choices. Consumer culture thus fosters a certain sensibility and disposition towards the world and one's place in it, whereby commodities – be they clothes, smartphones, or religious teachings – increasingly become viewed and engaged with as resources in a broader, more encompassing scheme of individual self-realization.

When it comes to the impact of these developments on religion, the question is not so much whether certain religious teachings or practices have become commodified or whether religions or religious communities in themselves have been radically changed or altered as a consequence of the spread of consumer culture. The central question is rather whether people have come to engage with religion, and have become increasingly socialized and predisposed into engaging with religion, in a way that is generally in accordance with consumer culture behavior and the interpretive habits and dispositions it encourages and instills. The central question, then, is whether people describe their religious engagements through a frame or language of consumption, i.e. whether people talk about their religious engagements in terms of personal choice and/or as a resource of identity-formation and self-realization?

Types of issues and topics in relation to consumer culture that might surface in the interviews include:

- If interviewees talk about their religious and other engagements in terms of something they do for the purposes of realizing themselves as persons.
- If interviewees talk about choosing or changing their religious or other engagements on the basis of how they fit their current life situation or other interests.
- Whether interviewees talk about their religious or other social engagements in terms of something that they choose from a variety of different options.
- If interviewees turn to very different sources for inspiration or knowledge.
- If interviewees discuss changes in their own religious/spiritual practices as being related to their personal needs and preferences.

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The Interrelation Between THEMES and TOPICS

The interview should focus on how the TOPICS outlined above intersect with interviewees' thoughts and lived experiences in relation to each general THEME. Interviewers should thus be keenly attentive to the four TOPICS in relation to each main THEME of the interview.

Although THEMES and TOPICS are of equal importance, in practice, interviewers should introduce each main THEME through asking two or three general THEME-questions.

Interviewees' answers to these questions should be used as **entry-points** to TOPIC-questions, which should ideally take the form of **follow-up** questions to the main THEME-questions.

Interviewers should thus strive to ask follow-up TOPIC-questions at appropriate moments during the interview and strive – as far as possible – to cover every TOPIC in relation to each main THEME.

NOTE It is likely that transitions from THEME to TOPIC-questions will occur more or less smoothly in each interview. Thus, if an interviewee him/herself answers a THEME-question in a way that indicates or connects to any of the four TOPICS outlined above, interviewers should proceed by asking a relevant TOPIC follow-up question. If the answers of an interviewee do not, however, clearly indicate any of the four TOPICS, then the interviewer should strive to ask TOPIC-questions separately. The most important thing to keep in mind is that all TOPIC follow-up questions should – as far as possible – be asked on the basis of what the interviewee has actually already said him/herself. Examples of THEME and possible TOPIC follow-up questions are provided in relation to the explanation of each THEME below. **Overlap** between the ways in which TOPIC-issues may surface between THEMES is to be expected. However, unnecessary repetition should be avoided due to time constraints.

Practical Considerations

Although the interview follows a pre-defined general structure, interviewers should, as far as possible, strive to make the whole situation resemble a normal conversation. Interviewers should strive to conduct the interview in a manner that is as relaxed as possible. It is important that interviewees are encouraged to freely share their own experiences, views and life stories. This means that they should be given space and that the interviewer should take a neutral position and show genuine interest. Giving attention to interviewees might sometimes also take the form of interviewers remaining silent and waiting for the interviewees to talk.

Interviewers should keep in mind that the relationship between interviewer and interviewee is never an equal one. The interviewer will always steer the interaction in fundamental ways, encouraging talk on certain topics while simultaneously discouraging talk on others. It is also useful for interviewers to keep in mind that

interviewees may never have expressed their thoughts, views, or personal engagement about the THEMES and TOPICS of the interview in a similar situation before. The interviewer needs to be aware of how these factors may influence the answers, and the types of answers, provided by interviewees, e.g. that interviewees might be unsure about how to answer a question on a certain topic. The interviewer thus needs to maintain a sensitive balance between openness for interviewees and a firm focus on the main THEMES and TOPICS of the interview.

NOTE The examples of THEME and TOPIC questions provided below in relation to each THEME are to be understood as guiding rather than fixed. THEME and TOPIC follow-up questions do not, therefore, need to be asked in the exact same way as they are articulated in the examples provided in the following pages. Nor does every THEME and TOPIC follow-up example question need to be asked in every single interview.

Practical Guide: Interview THEMES and TOPICS

The following should be read as a general guide and overview as to how each THEME and TOPIC of the interview might be covered. Each interviewer will, however, need to create their own corresponding model in their own respective language according to what suits them best. In doing this, we **strongly recommend** that interviewers create their own check-lists to aid them in striving to cover every main THEME and TOPIC of the interview. In practice, you can start by copying all questions and translating them into your own language, using words and expressions that are most natural in your respective context.

THEME 1: Religion/Spirituality

Main Focus:

- The various meanings that the interviewee attaches to the categories of ‘religion’ and ‘spirituality’.
- The interviewee’s views about how these categories relate to one another and to non-religious, secular outlooks on life.
- The place/role of religion/spirituality in the everyday personal life of the interviewee.

The FQS-sorting ends with a set of **fixed** questions that are asked in direct relation to each individual interviewee’s prior sorting of the FQS, focusing on their general impression of the sorting and their reasons for placing certain statements at either extreme ends of the scale (+4 and -4). We **strongly recommend** that interviewers strive to make notes on interviewees’ answers to these fixed questions.

After these fixed questions have been asked, the FQS sorting is effectively over. At this point, interviewers should propose a short break. See **FQS-instructions** for further details. The interview follows after the break. The short break gives the interviewer an opportunity to reflect further on what the interviewee has just said about the statements they had felt most positively and negatively about. Interviewees' answers to the fixed questions thus provide valuable **entry-points** to the actual interview. Should the interviewee not wish to have a break, interviewers should move directly to the interview.

Example *THEME 1: Religion/Spirituality Questions and Follow-Up Questions*

THEME (FQS-sorting fixed questions italicized):

- *What is your general impression of the sorting?*
- *Is there something that the cards did not cover when you look at your own or your friends' life experience?*
- *Taking a look at the items that you placed on the +3 and +4 end of the scale, could you elaborate on some of them in more detail? Why are they important to you? And what do they mean to you?*
- *Taking a look at the items that you placed on the -3 and -4 end of the scale, could you elaborate on some of them in more detail? Why do you mark a decisive distance to these views? What do they mean to you?*
- **Continue:** Before the break when we talked about some of the cards/statements that you felt were most descriptive of you, you said X about card X. How does this relate to...[tie into suitable topic questions]

TOPIC:

- Where and how did you learn about [the type of religion/spirituality and/or religious/spiritual community mentioned by the interviewee, if any]? (TOPIC: socialization, media)
- Have your thoughts on these issues changed over time? (TOPIC: socialization)
- Do you think it is very important to decide for yourself how you think about these issues? (TOPIC: consumption, socialization)
- In which situations/where do you come into contact with/practice X [the type of religion/spirituality mentioned by the interviewee, if any]? (TOPIC: socialization, media)
- Do your views [as already expressed by the interviewee] relate to your involvement in X [if the interviewee mentions a social movement or other type of community, network etc.]? (TOPIC: social movements)

THEME 2: Personal History and Self-Understanding

Main Focus:

- The interviewee's own understanding of him/herself.
- The interviewee's views on his/her own personal history.
- The interviewee's thoughts on how he/she has developed as a person over time.

Example *THEME 2: Personal History and Self-Understanding Questions and Follow- Up Questions*

THEME:

- How do you think you have become the person you are today, with the views you now hold?
- Have your views on issues important to you changed over time?
- Do you attempt to change in some way, or would you like to be a different person in some respect in the future?
- What do you think determines, limits, or enables how your future develops?
- What are the specific things you hope for or fear when thinking about the future?

TOPIC (NOTE: the socialization TOPIC is already largely embedded in the THEME questions):

- Are there any specific events, experiences, people or other things that have played an important role in making you the person you are today and the things you hold important? (TOPIC: socialization, social movements, media)
- How do you think your interest in/involvement in X [if the interviewee mentions being involved in a social movement, or having similar values] has affected the way you think about your life, yourself, or your future? (TOPIC: social movements)
- In which situations do you feel that you are most able to/have most freedom to express yourself/realize yourself as a person? (TOPIC: media, socialization, consumption)
- What determines, limits, or enables you to be free in making important decisions/expressing/realizing yourself as a person? (TOPIC: socialization, consumption, media)

THEME 3: Broader Socio-Economic and Socio-Cultural Context and Sense of Belonging to a Community or other Collective (e.g. local, national, religious, cultural, other)

Main Focus:

- The interviewee's thoughts about the broader socio-economic and socio-cultural context that he/she has grown up in and currently finds him/herself living in.
- The interviewee's sense of belonging and embeddedness in social and cultural contexts and sense of connection/belonging to different types of communities.

Example *THEME 3: Broader Socio-economic and Socio-cultural Context and Sense of Belonging to a Community or other Collective Questions and Follow-Up Questions*

THEME:

- How would you describe the family and the larger community you grew up in? What was it like?
- How did the community you grew up in affect you, and what relevance does it have for you today?
- Have you moved from one place to another during your life, or have there been any other bigger similar changes in your life? How have these affected your life?
- What are the most important communities/ contexts for you today?
- Are there cultural or social activities that play a decisive role for you and your views on life?
- Are there things in society that motivate your engagement with communities that are important to you, you feel at home in, and/or support?

TOPIC:

- How did you find out about/come into contact with X [any given community mentioned by the interviewee]? (TOPIC: media, socialization, social movements)
- Why did you decide to get involved in X [any given community/activity/ practice mentioned by the interviewee]? (TOPIC: socialization, consumption, media, social movements)
- What forms does your involvement in/ with X take [any given community mentioned by the interviewee]? (TOPIC: media, social movements, consumption)