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Personality, Politics, and Religion

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Religion, Personality, and Politics

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Summary

Individual differences in personality, religiosity, and political dispositions often are explained in conjunction with one another. Though the religious and political may share common themes of meaning making, group identity, and societal organization, personality also influences these orientations. Specifically, the Big 5 traits (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, emotional stability) and authoritarianism demonstrate consistent relationships with religious/political beliefs and behaviors. Personality is often thought of as the first mover to develop with an individual before exposure to the other two domains, leading to a conceptual influence model of: personality -> religiosity -> politics. Using longitudinal studies and genetically-informed samples, however, some scholars suggest that these dispositions influence one another and could develop concurrently within individuals. Examining the measured boundaries and relationships between the three domains suggests these dispositions comprise an individual's personhood, and the varied expression of traits, beliefs, and behaviors are somewhat dependent on culture and context.

Key Words: Religion, Personality, Political behavior, Political psychology, Big 5

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Introduction

Individuals vary in their questions about the nature of the universe and preferences for organizing society, leading scholars to examine how and why people differ in these orientations. Humans are born into families, communities, and societies that include religious/moral frameworks and particular political systems and ideologies. As they age and develop, people may choose to maintain the beliefs and engage in the behaviors of their reference groups or they may select a different path. Though influenced by family, peers, communities, and societies, individual-level dispositions also play a role. Beliefs, values, and traits unite in a way that manifests in a person's response to her environment and how this might diverge from her peers. Beyond the physical and demographic, personality is the psychological composite of personhood – what makes me, me, and you, you.

There are a variety of factors that influence the intersection of religion and politics. As evidenced by the breadth of this encyclopedia, the political and religious are intertwined in politics around the world and within the preferences of individual people. If religion is understood as group membership, then belonging to a religious tradition is similar to and perhaps even a proxy for class, race, ethnicity or gender. This does tell part of the story as Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and non-religious individuals come to their politics through communities and other identities. Another strand of research suggests that religion and politics are more about believing than belonging (discussed elsewhere in this volume) in that individual-level theology influences political issue attitudes and eventual political party alignment. What is sometimes missing from these explanations is the role of individual-level dispositions. People may self-select into religious communities and their politics based upon cognitive needs related to their personalities. Separately, psychologists have studied the relationships between personality and religion, and social scientists more broadly have examined personality and

politics. Increased recognition of the conceptual and measurement convergence of these areas has led to an interest in forming integrated models of behavior.

This chapter will explore the nature of personality and why we would expect this individual-level disposition or set of dispositions to influence the worlds of religion and politics. Psychologists have debated, measured, and meta-analyzed the “consistent traits and dispositions” (Caprara & Vecchione, 2013, p. 25) thought to form the personhood of an individual, and this essay will not advance a position as to whether this includes values and attitudes, if the origins are genetic and/or social, or if there is a reigning schema which best captures dispositions. Excellent reviews of personality and politics (Caprara & Vecchione, 2013; Mondak, 2010) and personality and religion (Saroglou, 2014) have been published in other reference books so this chapter will focus on the intersection of all three domains. Furthermore, religion and politics have been defined and explained throughout the rest of this volume so readers may familiarize themselves with early 21st century debates and developed findings across measurement, faith traditions, cultures, and political phenomena. Instead, this chapter will include a discussion of how thinking about the nature of personality can inform our understanding of individual-level variance in religious and political orientations and how questions of causality help untangle these relationships.

Why Personality?

Compared to peers, why are some people highly religious and others are not? What attracts a person to particular political ideologies? How do our groups and religio-political identities shape our personhood? As the science of personality and psychological processes developed, these dispositions were used to explain why some people are religious, others are oriented to a particular type of politics, and both systems have the potential to converge.

Some scholars suggest religious belief is “natural” and derives from evolutionary and cultural forces (Boyer, 2001), not dissimilar to political orientations (Peterson, 2017). Differences in religious and political orientations, then, may be due to individual dispositions captured by measures of personality.

“Personality is an individual’s unique variation on the general evolutionary design for human nature, expressed as a developing pattern of dispositional traits, characteristic adaptations, and integrative life stories complexly and differentially situated in culture.” (McAdams & Pals, 2006).

We are at once individuals and members of groups (Tajfel, 2010). We possess dispositions that are located in particular spaces and times. The groups into which we are born or select can define or explain us.

From *Totem and Taboo* (1913/2003) to *The Future of an Illusion* (1927/2012), Sigmund Freud began to paint a picture of religion as pathology, of the individual at odds with society, and the personality mechanisms that attempt to reconcile these tensions. Freud argued our instinctual selves (id) have basic desires that are curtailed by knowledge of external expectations (superego), and our ego then must decide how to achieve balance (Pals, 2006). Personal dispositions and desires vary in their match to societal constraints, often represented by religious and political institutions and groups. If one’s personality is at odds with these structures, a person could defect or self-select into another structure (e.g. religious tradition, ideology, political party). For some, there is not a strong enough interest in achieving balance, and they simply disengage from politics and/or religion. Freud’s view was that neuroticism drove religious belief – the desire to fit in, follow the rules, and suppress the id (Pals, 2006).

Unfortunately, Freud did not empirically test his theories and often operated within the bounds of monotheistic religions (Pals, 2006). Nevertheless, this idea that religion can be

explained by individual differences – rather than simply cultural or supernatural influence – preceded decades of research into this intersection between personality and religion. That is, people are not religious only because their families are or because the divine called them to be. There is an element of individual-level motivation at work. Following some of these connections between religion and personality, political scientists like Harold Lasswell and Paul Sniderman (see Sniderman, 1975) began to uncover the importance of individual dispositions in the development of political orientations as the behavioral movement took hold of academia in the mid-to-late-20th century.

The nature of personality can be understood as immutable traits and dispositions or a “dynamic system” of traits and motivations that orient a person to external stimuli (Caprara & Vecchione, 2013, 24). Certainly, context can influence behavior such that individuals may respond differently depending on the situation, but thinking about personality as traits focuses upon “central psychological tendencies” (for a discussion on the development and controversy of trait psychology as it relates to political behavior, see Mondak, 2010). If evolutionary psychology provides the framework for exploring whether there is a human nature, then studying personality can point us to how and why individuals differ. Though personality may exist in a solitary state, it is expressed within cultures, groups, and sometimes in response to other people.

Personality in its social sense begins to edge into broader systems of meaning making and social organizing: the political and the religious. In the Moral Foundations Theory framework (discussed in this volume), personality differences lead to variation in moral decision-making, and this takes place within cultures that may be more group/community-centered versus more individualist (Haidt, 2012). Detailed below, culture, institutions, and group membership may condition the expression and reporting of individual-level traits.

Understanding the association between these constructs necessitates the creation of boundaries between terms. Are beliefs in a higher power, political conservatism, and conscientiousness similar to one another? How are personality, religion, and politics similar and different? Some scholars suggest religiosity could be thought of as a personality trait or a “higher-order factor denoting personal and interpersonal stability” (Saroglou, 2015, p. 803), clearly pushing against Freud’s contention of religion as neurosis. This understanding of religiosity as stability seems to presuppose that individuals are following belief systems that fit within the broader structure of society and culture. Individuals drawn to fringe religions, various sects of accepted religions, or major religions at odds with culture may express different types of personality traits.

When examined in the context of personality models, multiple measures of religiosity appear to be distinct from other traits (Robbins et al., 2010; Mondak, 2010; Saucier & Goldberg, 1998; Friesen & Ksiazkiewicz 2015). That is, religious salience, religious motivation, and religious beliefs may be stable and enduring and related to other types of traits, but religiosity is uncovering something apart from political ideology and personality.

Though personality and religious beliefs can be coherent, persistent, and lead to particular types of responses to contexts, these orientations differ in many ways. “Bonding” with other group members or the divine seems to be a key difference between religiosity and personality (Ashton & Lee, 2014). Introverts do not group together like members of a religious sect would, and other forms of personality are not typically expressed in connection to the supernatural. The tribalism of politics – whether it be political parties or group interests – is more like religion than personality and often feeds off of a charismatic leader. The influence of the cult of personality parallels between politicians and pastors, and the supporting structures of institutional religion

and political systems formalize this influence. Personality is often understood as the medium through which individuals express and validate their religious and political leanings.

Religious and political frameworks necessitate beliefs about the world, human nature, and reality; personality may not encompass perceptions of these external forces (Ashton & Lee, 2014). Yet, the trait of openness to new experience leads individuals to assume new and novel things are good and worthy to seek. And conscientious individuals prefer order, organization, and self-discipline as approaches to life/the world. In this way, personality, religion, and politics may all be sources of motivated social cognition (Jost et al., 2003; Chirumbolo, 2002) – assuming society is -- or preferring society to be -- geared toward one's orientation.

Another distinction of religiosity is its assumed status as an adaptive trait, whereas personality should be endogenous to culture (Ashton & Lee, 2014; McCrae & Costa, 1987). This notion has been recently challenged with scholarship demonstrating that personality traits can be culturally or context-influenced, and religiosity might have some elements of a core disposition. Certainly, the Big 5 or Five-Factor model of personality has been replicated across populations and cultures and seems stable over time, but its predictive power of other social beliefs and behaviors can be mildly to drastically different by culture, group membership, and context. One could similarly argue that individual religiosity (e.g. belief in a higher power) is endogenous, and religion-specific or group behaviors are adaptive (Saroglou, 2014a). Social scientists have recently argued that political dispositions may be endogenous like personality traits, and their specific application culturally-influenced (Hibbing, Smith, and Alford, 2014). This is not to argue that personality, religion, and politics are the same thing – but that they may have similar origins and structures, and correlations may be more related to these dispositional, trait-like structures than simply a chain of personality -> religion -> politics. To explore this notion

further, it may be helpful to concentrate on specific cases of personality's intersection with religio-political orientations.

Big 5

Decades of research and precision of measurement have bolstered the status of the Big 5 trait model as a reliable, substantive predictor of a variety of human behaviors (McCrae and Costa, 1987; Mondak, 2010). Variance in Big 5 traits has a genetic basis, and individuals are consistent in these traits, regardless of race, age, gender, and other demographics, over time and between self-report and peer ratings (McCrae and Costa, 1987, 1992). There are some cultural inconsistencies (Costa & McCrae, 1992), which will be discussed in light of political and religious differences in the Ideology/Theology section (Gerber et al., 2010; Fatke 2017; Saroglou, 2010). The Big 5 traits include (McCrae & Costa, 1987):

- Openness to experience: imagination, novelty, creativity, curiosity, broad interests
- Conscientiousness: Careful, disciplined, responsible, achieving, reliable
- Extraversion: Sociable, talkative, assertive, affectionate, passionate
- Agreeableness: Trusting, sympathetic, cooperative, conflict-avoidant
- Emotional Stability (Neuroticism): Secure, calm, even-tempered, patient

The Big 5 has been used to predict a range of social behaviors and attitudes, especially in the realms of religion and politics. Some of the traits tend to predict activities and behaviors, while others are more related to theological or ideological beliefs.

Participation/Behavior

Openness extends to some forms of political participation as individuals high in this trait seek out new experiences, and extraversion can lead to forms of political activity related to sociality

(Mondak & Halperin 2008; Gerber et al., 2011; Mondak et al., 2010; Mondak, 2010).

Relationships between civic engagement and emotional stability and agreeableness are less clear, and conscientiousness seems to matter most if individuals elevate these activities to duties or obligations (Mondak, 2010; Mondak et al., 2010).

Agreeableness, extraversion, and conscientiousness often relate to various measures of religiosity, such that religious individuals display pro-social behaviors (Saroglou, 2010; Ashton & Lee, 2014) or that those with pro-social personalities are drawn to participate in religious communities. How might personality connect religious and political behaviors?

Using a Christian American sample, Friesen and Djupe (2017) examine religious *and* political activity by personality. The results contribute to the complex dimensions of individual dispositions and group membership in that conscientiousness performed differently for men and women. Highly conscientious American Christian women are more likely than their male peers to attend church and seek guidance from their religion. When getting involved in church small groups, men are more likely than women to channel this activity into development of broader civic skills, and much of this appears to be limited by women's conscientiousness. The higher a woman scores on the conscientiousness trait, the less likely church participation will result in civic skill development. There is no personality effect for men between these domains. Friesen and Djupe (2017) conclude that conscientious women may understand church as their obligation and channel their skills and sociality into the private sphere. This provides evidence to suggest that the structures of personality-religion-politics can be moderated by something like group membership or cultural context. Indeed, a cross-national study revealed that men and women differ in their active ("ritual practice") and affective ("personal piety") religiosity measures and levels of reporting (Sullins, 2006).

Ideology/Theology

In studies of political ideology, openness is related to liberalism or left-of-center politics and conscientiousness to conservatism (Jost et al., 2003; Mondak, 2010; Gerber et al., 2008; Fatke 2017; Carney et al., 2006; Hirsh, Walberg, and Peterson, 2013). Largely based on Western samples with Judeo-Christian cultures, most of the extant findings on ideological/theological Big 5 intersections exist in social issue attitudes. Often labeled “culture war” issues, conservative positions on abortion, LGBTQ rights, and marital/sexual policies and religious fundamentalism often correlate with lower levels of openness (Malka, 2014; Mondak, 2010; Saroglou, 2010). Whether it is thinking of moral traditionalism in family/societal structures or moral judgment of how others live their lives, “moralizing” in the American context is negatively related to openness and positively correlated with conscientiousness (Mondak, 2010).

These results should be interpreted with caution as they do not necessarily extend across groups and contexts. For example, though there is consistent variation in the Big 5 traits within the racial/ethnic groups of whites, African-Americans, and Latinos in the U.S., conscientiousness and openness are related to economic and social attitudes for whites only (Gerber et al., 2010). Some of this is explained by less variance in African-American political issue attitudes, and the differences that do exist in this group are not related to the Big 5. This interaction between personality and ethnicity should push us to think about how many of our political psychology models are built upon understandings from mostly white, Western samples and how power, status quo, and personality interact.

To that end, Fatke (2017) leverages the World Values Survey to examine the Big 5 and a variety of political beliefs across 21 countries. The degree of liberty within the country moderates the connections between personality and social issue attitudes. For example, citizens in countries with high Freedom House Index scores demonstrate associations between openness and extraversion and more liberal social issue attitudes, but this does not hold at lower levels of

liberty. Conversely, country-level wealth does not influence the personality-economic preference association – capitalism and conscientiousness are almost always related. More conscientious individuals tend to support capitalist policies.

Though some have argued, “that similar underlying psychological needs are served by religiosity, cultural conservatism, and economic conservatism,” religiosity is not related to economic attitudes cross-nationally (Malka 2014, p. 233). Malka et al. (2011) suggest that conservative economic attitudes may psychologically connect to religiosity through a general conservative identity, supporting findings regarding “conflicted” conservatives in the American context (Ellis and Stimson, 2011) and the persistent relationship between conscientiousness and capitalism across nations (Fatke, 2017). Similarly, “prosocial values” could lead to liberal positions on economic issues – fitting with a humanitarian view of economic issue preferences (Feldman & Steenbergen, 2001). Further complicating the personality-religion-economic ideology relationship involves measuring traits beyond the Big 5 (for a review on personal money values and politics, see Friesen & Hibbing, 2016).

Orientations

Beyond beliefs and attitudes, the Big 5 traits have been compared against the intrinsic/extrinsic/quest (IEQ) religious orientation structure, a framework first developed to explain religious motivations (Allport & Ross, 1967). Particularly interested in how or why American Christians displayed prejudice, the I/E questionnaire uncovered the ideas that “the extrinsically motivated person uses his religion, whereas the intrinsically motivated person lives his religion” (Allport & Ross, 1967, p. 434). Quest was added later to explain religion serving as a means for individuals to grapple with existential questions (Batson & Ventis, 1982).

An extrinsically motivated person would say they go to church to see friends or pray to gain comfort, whereas the intrinsically-minded individual indicates a desire to learn more about

their religion, connect with God, and pray for guidance (Gorsuch & McPherson, 1989). Allport and Ross (1967), and numerous scholars afterward, discovered that intrinsically motivated individuals seemed to internalize the teachings of Christianity and exhibited less prejudice toward outgroups. Of course, it is also possible those with less prejudice are drawn to thinking about religion intrinsically. Intrinsic and quest orientations also have been tied to concepts like self-esteem and self-righteousness, suggesting a broad-mindedness in concept of self in relation to other people (Falbo and Sheppherd, 1986). This framework has been debated as it seems individuals in increasingly secular cultures no longer need to affiliate with religion for social success (Saroglou, 2011), and understanding of the measure itself may vary outside of the white American Protestant context in which it was first developed (Cohen et al., 2005; Saroglou, 2014a). With these caveats, reviewing the findings may help us think through the separate and intersecting dimensions of personality and religious orientations.

The IEQ orientations demonstrate further evidence that religious dispositions may be something apart from core personality traits like the Big 5 as there are inconsistent or only small effect associations between the two schemas (Robbins et al., 2010; Francis, 2010; Hills, Francis, Argyle & Jackson, 2004; Saroglou, 2002). Population variance in IEQ motivations may be stable enough that the belief system to which it is aimed (whether religious or political) could be immaterial. That is, IEQ orientations may be dispositional and endogenous to culture, much like personality, but yet, a separate trait that is not simply a proxy for the Big 5.

Based on theory that delineates religion from personality (Ashton & Lee, 2014), intrinsic or quest orientations would fulfill the religious orientation related to seeking the divine or conceptions on the nature of the world. Conversely, extrinsic religiosity seems to be less about the divine or belief systems and more about fulfilling the bonding with group members portion of religion. This explanation of extrinsicness, which would suggest a strong association with

extraversion, but this is not the case (Robbins et al., 2010). Then IEQ, when compared to the Big 5, may not uncover latent general traits but is specific to the religious content. But are these orientations constrained to what is particular about religion – the divine -- or does IEQ extend to a political worldview that contains beliefs and group bonding?

Exploring “communism as religion,” McFarland (1998) converted the intrinsic/extrinsic measures from an American Christian framework to the secular culture of the USSR. In the survey battery, he replaced any mention of “my religion” with “my party” and discovered that the intrinsic/extrinsic religious divide and prediction of prejudice manifested in a political system that had ousted religion. Those intrinsically motivated by their political party were less likely to exhibit prejudice than those who belonged to the party for instrumental reasons. This small study can point us to thinking about a personal orientation (intrinsic/extrinsic) that can manifest in different systems – the political or religious. Then it is individual exposure to these systems and uptake of their beliefs and behaviors that may result in the connection to personality. For example, an individual who is intrinsically motivated in his American evangelical Christian faith may possess a view of the Bible as the literal word of God, which may be related to low levels of openness to ideas and opposition to newer issues like LGBTQ rights. An intrinsically motivated person in another faith tradition may uphold her holy book or teachings that emphasize love and acceptance, and this also fits with her higher levels of openness and support of LGBTQ rights. In the causality discussion below, I attempt to untangle whether personality influences self-selection into political and religious beliefs and how it is likely that all three systems work off one another within an individual.

Authoritarianism

More controversial than the Big 5, right-wing authoritarianism (RWA) is another common personality structure tied to both religion and politics. Concurrent with Freud, Allport,

and others' efforts to explain adherence to fascist ideologies and the atrocities committed by humans in the 20th century, scholars developed RWA in association with outgroup prejudice. It has since expanded to encompass general tendencies toward supporting the status quo and close-minded thinking (Adorno et al., 1950; Altemeyer, 1998; Jost et al, 2002; Jost, 2006). RWA identifies a disposition comprised of rigid thinking, resistance to new ideas, and deference to authority and status quo (Altemeyer, 1998; Adorno et al., 1950).

A major criticism of the original and even updated RWA scale is that it conflates political and personality measures, making it difficult to untangle which is psychological and what is political (Jost et al., 2003; Sniderman & Tetlock, 1986; Feldman, 2003). But this challenge has helped to uncover a conservative political orientation that is psychological in nature and may be the foundation of motivated cognition for certain individuals and possibly in different situations (Jost et al., 2003). The “right-wing” portion of Adorno’s original scale has mostly fallen out of favor, but scholars continue to study how authoritarianism reflects “autonomy and social control” (Feldman, 2003, 46) and the interaction between societal threat and individual-level intolerance (Stenner, 2005).

Similarly, authoritarian-mindedness has been used alongside religiosity to predict a range of political preferences, including party identification and attitudes toward outgroups (Mockabee, 2007). The mechanisms underlying these relationships are assumed to be differences in views on authority – those preferring conservative policies and parties also place authority in an external source (e.g. the divine) whereas those on the progressive end tend to elevate “human experience” as the source for their worldview (Mockabee, 2007, 223; Hunter, 1991). This exploration into authoritarianism regarding religion and the culture wars helped uncover another criticism of Adorno’s RWA as pathology. For example, Americans belonging to the Christian right have a high view of authority but did not rank any higher than their peers on the actual authoritarianism

scale (Owen et al., 1991). Much of the authoritarian research focus has used Western, Christian samples. Examination of Buddhists from Eastern and Western backgrounds reveal that priming Buddhist concepts increased decreased prejudice, but only for those low in authoritarianism and high in valuing universality (Clobert, Saroglou, and Hwang 2015). Using a meditation/spiritual prime among American individuals did not alter RWA levels compared to the control group (Hirsh, Walberg, and Peterson, 2013), suggesting authoritarianism may be a robust orientation apart from religious traits or states.

Other scholars have suggested that authoritarianism is a general disposition that informs attitudes in several distinct domains. This intersection of personality/religion/politics has been called the “Traditional Moral Values Triad” (TMVT) and includes authoritarianism (how families should be organized), religiousness (who controls the universe), and conservatism (how societies should be organized) (Bouchard, 2009; Koenig & Bouchard, 2006; Ludeke, Johnson & Bouchard, 2013). Labeled “traditionalism,” these scholars suggest some individuals have adapted to obey authority, whether it is familial, religious, or political. Much like the connections between religion, personality, and political attitudes discussed above, the TMVT focuses upon social issues. By using genetically-informed samples, these scholars suggest more than an associational connection and posit that traditionalism is a latent trait that informs attitudes and orientations in the three domains (Ludeke, Johnson & Bouchard, 2013). Work like this and others (Friesen & Ksiazkiewicz, 2015) challenge notions of causal chains and personality’s level of influence within the individual. There is strong evidence of the correlations between dispositions and religio-political orientations, but uncovering causality is the elusive target underlying much of this scholarship.

Pathways *through* or *to* Personality?

The story of religion, politics, and personality is often a causal one. Does personality influence political behavior? Are there reciprocal effects between political and religious beliefs? Does religious experience impact personality? The question that often eludes is what comes first? Which exerts the most influence on social behavior?

Often studied in dyads, scholars have generally suggested personality -> religion, personality -> politics, and religion -> politics. Personality is often thought of as the first mover that develops in an individual before exposure to the other two. Often religion is encountered before politics so it is possible the development occurs as personality -> religiosity -> politics.

Recently, scholars have begun to test alternate orders. Behavioral genetic research suggests personality (e.g. Big 5) develops concurrently with political ideology (Hatemi & Verhulst, 2015; Verhulst, Eaves & Hatemi, 2012) and that religiosity and ideology share a genetic path (Friesen & Ksiazkiewicz, 2015). Longitudinal studies reveal that political ideology and party identification can influence religious beliefs and behavior (Putnam & Campbell, 2010; Margolis, 2018; Petrikios, 2008). Furthermore, the idea of there being “core” traits that influence downstream “surface” behaviors has been called into question with new evidence suggesting many of both kinds of traits develop together (Kandler, Zimmermann & McAdams, 2014).

Socialization and context, particularly in youth, can lead to reciprocal influence between religion and personality (Ludeke & Carey, 2015; Saroglou, 2014b; Hardy et al., 2011; Huuskes et al., 2013; Wink et al., 2007). Furthermore, religious individuals may answer the Big 5 survey questions based on social desirability, biasing their results as compared to non-religious people (Ludeke & Carey, 2015), and political attitudes can shape how respondents self-report personality traits (Ludeke, Tagar & DeYoung, 2016). These studies generally converge around an understanding that religion, politics, and personality are inter-related in complex and important ways.

In a recent comparison across political contexts, Ksiazkiewicz and Friesen (2016) leveraged twin studies to examine the genetic and environmental effects of Big 5 personality traits and religiosity on culture war, or social issue, attitudes. Religious salience (e.g. the importance of one's religion) had a stronger relationship than openness with social issue attitudes, and much of this relationship was due to genetic effects. The findings were generally replicated across a middle-aged American sample and an early adulthood Australian sample, again questioning the order of causality and even the strength of relationship between personality and politics. Certainly, openness may encourage individuals to leave their faith traditions (Saroglou, 2014b), and this could lead to exposure to broad ideas. Likewise, lower level of openness and higher levels of agreeableness and conscientiousness (Saroglou, 2014b) may lead to persistence in the faith in which one was raised and result in more conservative social preferences. The Ksiazkiewicz and Friesen findings suggest, however, that accounting for religiosity eliminates the relationship between openness and social issue attitudes, and this religious salience trait and its relationship to politics have genetic components. This raises many questions about the development of temperaments and their application to culturally available worldviews. Addressing these inquiries will require expanding beyond western, mostly Christian populations and examining other cultures and religions. Scholars also should take care to recruit collaborators from cultures not their own to ensure ethical and accurate study. Collecting genetically-informed samples is quite expensive and logistically challenging but the cross-cultural survey work utilizing programs like the World Values Survey are a good start in the direction of expanding our theoretical applications (Fatke, 2017; Malka et al., 2011).

Conclusion

This chapter included explorations of the Big 5 and authoritarianism because of their popular application to both religion and politics. There are other aspects of personality that social

scientists have connected to worldviews, including need for cognition, need for closure, risk aversion, social dominance orientation, and dogmatism/tolerance. For example, management of aversion to risk has been negatively linked to political participation and positively related to religiosity. The risk associated with conflict or losing leads cautious individuals to avoid certain political situations or politics altogether (Kam, 2012). Conversely, individuals who are risk averse seek out religious communities for assurance and religious beliefs that alleviate ambiguity and guarantee an afterlife (Miller & Stark, 2002), though these effects are attenuated by gender orientation (Sullins, 2006). In the Western Christian context, women are more religious than men, on nearly every measure, and some of this is due to higher risk aversion (Miller & Stark, 2002; Collett & Lizardo, 2009). Furthermore, risk aversion and conscientiousness are related (Arthur & Graziano, 1996; Hopwood et al., 2007; Martin et al., 2007), which could channel more of women's obligatory activities into church activities that help mitigate feelings of risk and uncertainty versus pushing them into politics, which typically involves the opposite (Friesen & Djupe, 2017).

A wealth of research exists on the intersection of religion and politics, politics and personality, and religion and personality. Increased attention to how the three dispositions interact may help elucidate better explanations of how, why, and when these orientations develop and influence one another. Advances in measurement and theory only go as far as scholars across disciplines are willing to read each other, collaborate, and build upon one another's knowledge. Expanding our studies beyond Western, Christian contexts and engaging in qualitative as well as quantitative work will be equally important in trying to uncover the nature of what it means to be a unique person, with political and religious orientations.

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