



## The religious sources of pro-environmental attitudes

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# The reasons to study the connection

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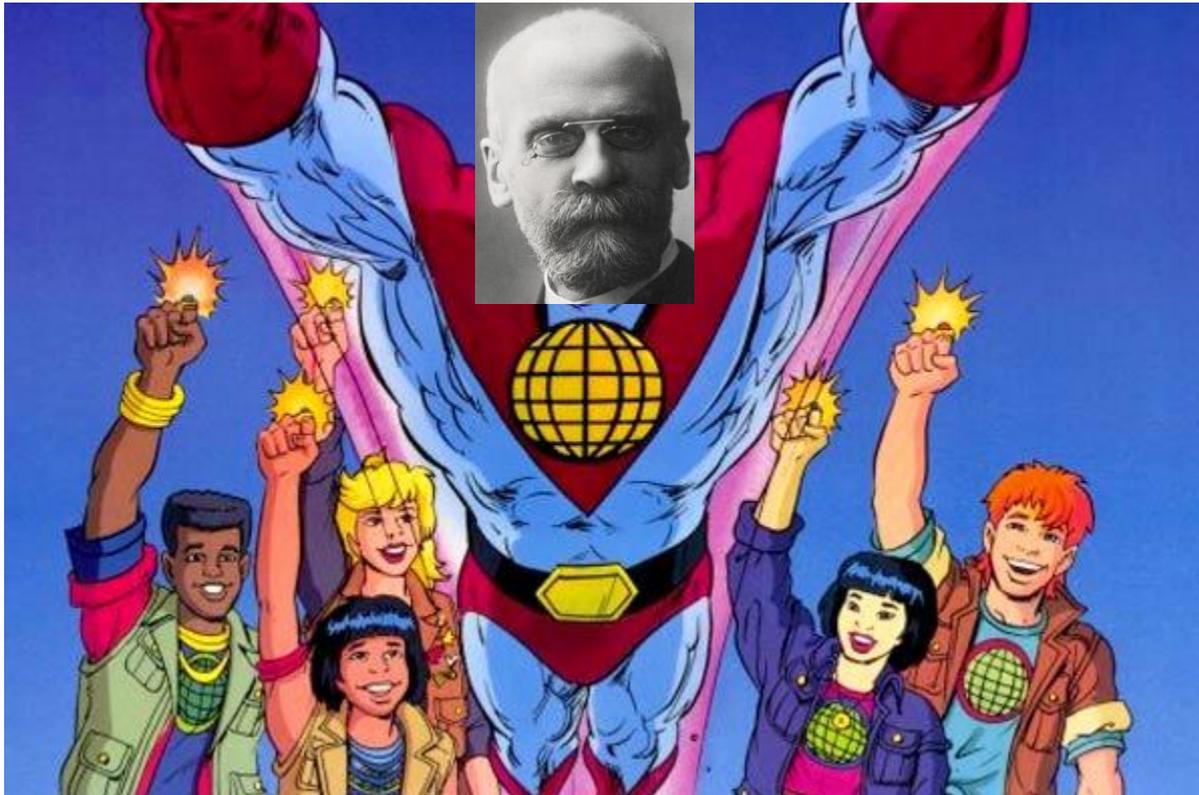
## 1. Theoretical reasons

1. Lynn White hypothesis (1967) – the relations between religion and ecological crisis
2. The results so far are highly inconsistent (Schultz et al., 2000; Smith & Leiserowitz, 2013)
3. There is a lack of research on the relations between the environmental attitudes and non-western religions

## 2. Pragmatical reasons

1. Growing field of research – how to engage people in environment protection activities (Clayton, 2006; APA, 2012)?
  2. Referring to existing but not to environmental values may be the solution (Feinberg, 2013)
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# Religion and ecology – historical relations

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- ▶ Lynn White hypothesis (1967)
  - ▶ The theological foundations of environmentally destructive development in the West.
  - ▶ God blessed them, saying to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and **subdue** it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all the living creatures that move on earth.'
  - ▶ Genesis 1:28





# Problems with theory

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- ▶ Is Lynn White still valid or not?
  - ▶ Original hypothesis refer to historical development of ecological crisis
  - ▶ Religious attitudes towards nature change:
    - ▶ „Christians, in particular, realize that their responsibility within creation and their duty toward nature and the Creator are an essential part of their faith” (John Paul II, 1990)
- ▶ What is the relations between different denominations and ecology?
- ▶ What are is the causal link between religion and ecological attitudes?
  - ▶ SDO & RWA (Milfont et al., 2013)
  - ▶ Political Conservatism (Leiserowitz et al., 2008, 2012)





## Research:

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- ▶ WVS 2008; 51 countries with different religious denomination
- ▶ Analysis:
  - ▶ To test the measurement model of environmental attitudes
  - ▶ To explore the relations between the environmental attitudes and religion (denomination)
- ▶ Scale (4 point):
  - ▶ Would give part of my income for the environment
  - ▶ Increase in taxes if used to prevent environmental pollution
  - ▶ Government should reduce environmental pollution





# Research II

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- ▶ Political attitudes
  - ▶ Political auto-identification
  - ▶ Economical beliefs
- ▶ SDO & RWA proxies
  - ▶ Havin a strong leader
  - ▶ Important in children: obedience
  - ▶ Current society: Egalitarian vs. competitive society





# Religiosity:

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- ▶ The religion is a complicated matter:
  - ▶ Perceived importance of religion and religious practices in everyday life
  - ▶ Different denominations:
    - ▶ Protestants
    - ▶ Anglicans
    - ▶ Buddhists
    - ▶ Evangelical
    - ▶ Hindu
    - ▶ Muslims
    - ▶ Orthodox
    - ▶ Roman Catholics





# Steps of analysis

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- ▶ MGCFA of environmental attitudes
- ▶ MGCFA of subjective religion importance
  
- ▶ MLM regression:
  - ▶ DV: ecological attitudes
  - ▶ IV: religious denominations as dummies – 1st and 2nd level
  - ▶ IV: Interactions: subjective importance x denomination
  - ▶ IV: SDO, political autoidentification, HDI





# Problems & worst case scenario

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- ▶ The religions are not monoliths:
  - ▶ Roman-Christian: Francis from Assisi vs classical teachings
  - ▶ Islam: Malaysia vs Saudi Arabia
- ▶ The model gets complex (number of denominations!)
  - ▶ Problems with interpretation
  
- ▶ Possible solutions:
  1. Limiting the region
  2. Simpler classification of religion (4 classes)
  3. Focusing on different aspect of research (political auto-identification)





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Thank you for  
your attention!

