

# **A FRAMEWORK FOR A EURASIAN RELIGION-BASED SOCIAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN IN OPPOSITION TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

*Vernon Murray, PhD*

*Sherry Dingman, PhD*

Marist College, Poughkeepsie, NY, USA

*Julia Porter, MS (student)*

University of South Florida, Tampa, USA

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## **Abstract**

In theory, religion-based anti-human trafficking appeals may dissuade traffickers from engaging in certain offensive behaviors, and victims from engaging in certain risky behaviors. This discussion correlates religion, religiosity and human trafficking data to identify the potential for religion-based anti-trafficking social marketing campaigns in Eurasia. Based on a sample of sixty Eurasian nations, it indicates which religions (e.g. religious leaders) would be more or less likely to participate in anti-trafficking prosecution, protection, prevention and partnership interventions.

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**Keywords:** Religion, Human trafficking

## **Introduction**

Human trafficking involves using force, fraud and coercion to exploit vulnerable populations for commercial benefit (UNODC 2008 p. 13). It encompasses prostitution, labor, debt bondage, organ trafficking, and sometimes the crossing of international borders (Pennington, Ball, Hampton and Soulakova 2009). Thus, it often involves gritty work that presumably requires a certain degree of callousness on the trafficker's part.

The traffickers who engage in force, fraud and coercion presumably hold some mix of religious beliefs and values from childhood, etc. (Hood, Hill and Spilka 2009 p. 4). However, those social cognitions do not appear to influence traffickers' behavior as much as they might. In contrast, if those values can be incorporated into anti-trafficking marketing campaigns, then perhaps they can attenuate some aspects of trafficking. This would potentially improve quality of life (Samli 2010 p. 1) for victims worldwide (U.S. TIP Report 2014).

Religion is a complex concept and is practiced differently across groups and regions (e.g. Pew 2012). For instance American conservative and liberal Christians differ on certain issues (Dorrien 2001 p. 2). Thus, social marketers should consider using religious segmentation in their efforts to oppose trafficking, as Christians, Muslims, Hindus, etc. will probably respond differently to such appeals.

Accordingly, this discussion identifies a European and Asian religion-based segment for which anti-trafficking social marketing strategies may be developed. We use correlation analysis to determine which religions (including Buddhism, Christianity, Folk, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Other) are more or less associated with human trafficking. However, the data does not indicate whether the focal religions' followers are traffickers, victims, or both. We investigate those correlations with specific trafficking-related areas including gold, diamonds, fish, rubber and child soldiers. Furthermore, we indicate which religions are more or less associated with three key anti-trafficking interventions: prosecution, protection and prevention (U.S. TIP Report 2014). We also identify opportunities for religions to form anti-trafficking alliances. Finally, we indicate the relative devoutness of each religion to identify the most promising segments for religion-based anti-trafficking appeals.

We approached this analysis in the spirit of Cukier and Maier-Schoenberger (2013), who advised academic researchers to “*shed our preference for... pristine data and instead accept messiness: ... [wherein] ...a bit of inaccuracy can be tolerated, because the benefits... outweigh the costs of ... very exact data.*” Cukier et al. (2013) also state that “*...we will need to give up our quest to discover the cause of things, in return for accepting correlations.*”

Thus, we offer a religion-focused analysis upon which anti-trafficking theory and social marketing intervention may be applied. The “messy” part of our analysis is that we offer strategy recommendations based on assumptions of causality, even though correlation data does not identify causal relationships. For instance, we assume that a positive correlation between Folk Religion and Fishing-related trafficking means that the religion influences the amount of trafficking, rather than trafficking leading people to join the religion. We take this approach because social marketers rarely have the resources to prove causality. Thus, they must make assumptions.

Accordingly, in this discussion we assume that religion is the cause or independent variable, and trafficking (e.g. gold or diamond-related) and national interventions (i.e. prosecution, protection and prevention) are the effects or dependent variables. Our social marketing interventions are offered in the spirit of Colin Powell's (1995 p. 393) advice to take action before one

has all the facts when in competitive situations. To delay until one has all the facts, he warns, typically worsens the outcome.

We also recognize that trafficking is related to poverty. For instance a UN report (2008) explained that, “Extreme poverty can also drive people to traffic their own family members...,” and there is anecdotal evidence that connects trafficking with poverty (U.S. TIP Report 2007). However, our analysis does not address poverty for two reasons. First, interventions would essentially require the unlikely end of Eurasian poverty. Second, religions do not appear to be closely associated with poverty. Globally, we found that the correlations between the percent of each religion by country and the percent below poverty ranged from -.15 (wealthier) for Buddhists to .13 (poorer) for Christians. Therefore we abandoned poverty as an explanatory variable in human trafficking’s connection with religion in Eurasia.

## **Review of the Literature**

### **Human trafficking**

While clear definitions of human trafficking have posed a problem in scholarly research (Weitzer, 2014), it is generally regarded as sex or labor exploitation of a vulnerable population via force, fraud or coercion (U.S. TIP Report 2007). There is a plethora of anecdotes about people being tricked into brothels, factories etc. (Bales and Soodalter 2009, p. 83; Baker, Gentry and Rittenburg 2005; Ringold 2005), having their blood (Carney 2011 p. 153) or kidneys (Carney 2011 p. 61) stolen, their hair shaved and sold by unscrupulous religious leaders (Carney 2011 p. 221) and more.

### **Religion and Trafficking**

Some discussions have addressed religious people intervening to oppose human trafficking (Zimmerman 2011), and others have addressed instances wherein members of one religion traffic those of another (Christian Century 2014). However, there has been little or no discussion about traffickers’ religions, how closely they adhere to their religions’ tenets, or how to use traffickers’ religious orientations to influence them.

Murray, Dingman, Kochanowski, Porter and Otte (2011) analyzed secondary data from the Gallup World Poll on religion of 2009 and the U.S. State Department’s TIP report from 2009. They found that nations low in religiosity consistently scored high in opposing human trafficking, but their more religious counterparts inconsistently scored high. Their finding was counterintuitive, as anecdotal evidence would suggest that highly religious people would be kinder, and therefore, nations with many religious people would more consistently oppose trafficking.

Cho, Dreher and Neumayer (2011) created the 3P Anti-trafficking Policy Index in the areas of *prosecution* of traffickers, *protection* of potential

victims, and *prevention* of victimization and used it to study governments. They found that governments perform best at prosecution, second best at prevention and third best at protection. They also found that political corruption tends to reduce a nation's compliance with international anti-trafficking standards. Subsequently, in applying the 3P index to religion, Potrafke (2013) found that "governments in countries with Christian majorities implement stricter anti-trafficking polices than countries with Muslim majorities."

Accordingly, we build on Murray et al's. (2011) and Potrafke's (2013) efforts to understand how religion and human trafficking are connected. We go beyond Murray et al. (2011) in that we address specific religions. We also go beyond Potrafke (2013) in that we address all major religions instead of only Christianity and Islam. Our effort was to discover which religions engage in more or less trafficking (whether as victims or traffickers) in Eurasia. Such information could form the basis for a religion-based social marketing campaign to influence traffickers' behavior. Accordingly, the next sections describe social marketing and the methodology we used to connect religion with trafficking.

### **Social Marketing Intervention**

Kotler, Roberto and Lee (2002 p. 5) define social marketing as the "use of marketing principles and techniques to influence a target audience to voluntarily accept, reject, modify, or abandon a behavior for the benefit of individuals, groups, or society as a whole." Accordingly, it identifies and defines markets, segments them into homogenous groups, targets segments with specific messages, addresses competing ideas, etc.

Social marketing, therefore, may be used to oppose human trafficking. Recent examples include activists' support for California's Transparency in Supply Chains Act of 2010 (California 2010), Invisible Children's "Kony 2012" campaign against child soldier trafficking (Dorrell 2012) and many others.

### **Methodology**

#### **Religion by Country**

The basic methodology of this study was correlation analysis of secondary data. The sources of religion percentages by Eurasian country were the Pew Forum's Global Religious Landscape (2012), the CIA's World Factbook (2012), and the U.S. State Department's International Religious Freedom Report for 2012. The religions addressed in this study are: Buddhism, Christianity, Folk, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism and Other.

The Asian sample in this study consisted of eighteen nations (n = 18) and the European sample consisted of forty two (n = 42) nations. The Asian

nations in this sample include: Bangladesh, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam. The sixteen Western European nations include: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Finally, the twenty-six Eastern European nations in this study include: Albania, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

### **Religiosity by Nation**

The information source for religiosity by Eurasian nation was the Gallup World poll of 2009. Their phone survey of 150 countries (n = 1,000 per country) asked, “*Is religion an important part of your daily life?*” Their results indicate the percentage of respondents who answered that question affirmatively.

### **Overall Human Trafficking:**

We define overall human trafficking as a composite that subsumes labor, prostitution, organs, etc. We use the term “overall” to distinguish it from such sub-categories as fishing-related trafficking, gold mine-related trafficking, etc. The problem with correlating overall human trafficking with religious variables or other types, however, is that there are no reliable sources of overall human trafficking counts (Weitzer 2014). It is unknown whether the number of victims is in the thousands or millions (Weitzer 2014).

In theory, a dichotomous scale indicating whether or not a nation has an overall trafficking problem could be used to indicate a correlation. However, because overall trafficking is a ubiquitous problem, such an approach would prove useless. It would entail essentially zero variance and therefore a zero correlation. Accordingly, we circumvented the problem of unreliable overall trafficking counts by using Cho et al’s. (2009) 3P Anti-trafficking Policy Index as a proxy. Thus, we assume that a nation’s 3P score is strongly and positively correlated with its amount of trafficking. Therefore, the corollary is that strong anti-trafficking policies (i.e. a high 3P score) indicate a relatively low amount of trafficking. Our task was to get a sense of the general directions and magnitudes in which religion counts move with trafficking.

Cho et al’s. (2009) 3P scale operates as follows. Each nation is scored from 1 to 5 for three intervention variables: prosecution, protection and

prevention. Five (5) means that the nation has enacted strong anti-trafficking policies and is making a very good effort to oppose trafficking. Thus, a nation that receives a top score for each of the 3P's earns a total score of 15.

To simplify interpretation of the 3P's as a proxy for overall trafficking, we reversed the 3P scores (i.e. Let 1 = 5, 2 = 4, etc.) prior to running the correlations. This way, positive correlations between religion and overall trafficking or gold-related etc. would be interpreted the same way.

As a test of the 3P scores accuracy we rescaled the TIP scale as follows: Tier 1 = 1, Tier 2 = 2, Tier 2W (Watchlist) = 3, and Tier 3 = 4. Then we reversed the 3P scores and used Spearman's Rho to correlate each nation's 3P score with its 2012 TIP score. The result was a coefficient of .62, which is relatively high. Thus, there is evidence that the 3P scores appear to measure essentially the same variable as do the TIP scores.

### **Categories of Human Trafficking**

Human trafficking's sub-categories were measured by performing a content analysis of the 2014 TIP Report Country Narratives. Those that specifically mentioned *gold, diamonds, rubber, fishing* or *child soldier* trafficking as a problem were scored with a 1 ("Yes") or 0 ("No"). Thus, we assumed that no biases in the narratives resulted in the inconsistent use of trafficking category wording. Then, consistent with Warner (2013 p. 325), we ran Pearson Correlations between these dichotomous variables and the remaining ratio-scaled variables. Pearson is the recommended estimate of the point-biserial correlation (Warner 2013 p. 325).

### **Categories of Intervention**

Cho et al. (2012) measured nation-specific trafficking intervention successes in prosecution, protection and prevention. As stated previously, those scores range from 1 to 5, where 5 indicates effective anti-trafficking policies. We did not reverse scores for these individual p's as we were not using them as proxies for trafficking. Thus, a positive correlation between national percentages of Christians and national prosecution scores, for instance, may indicate that Christians generally favor the prosecution of traffickers. Cho et al. (2012) did not address partnerships as the 4<sup>th</sup> "p" (U.S. TIP Report 2014) to oppose trafficking. However, we present it as correlations between religions. Religions whose percentages of the population are positively correlated would appear to be amicable, or at least not adversarial.

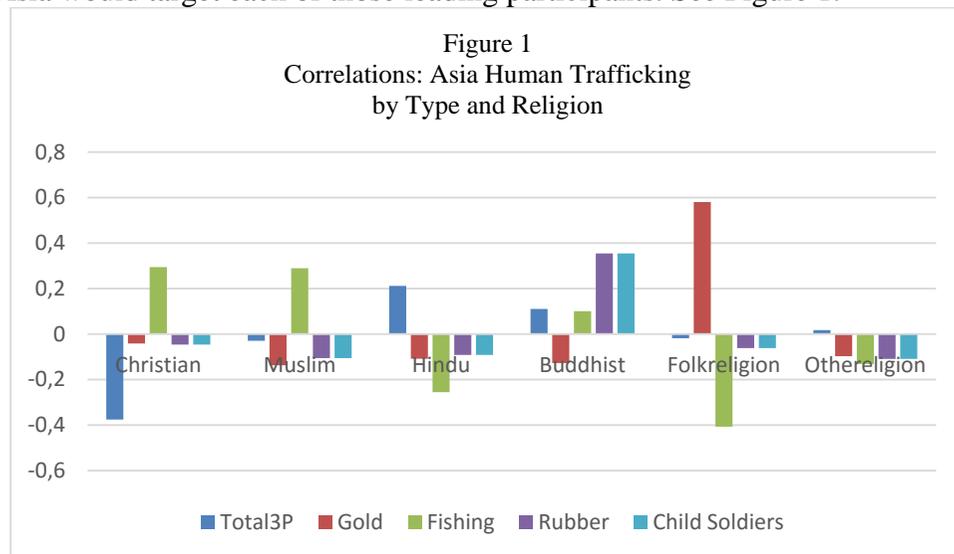
## Results

The purpose of this discussion is to offer Eurasian social marketing anti-trafficking recommendations. We results present: 1) the connections between human trafficking and religion, 2) the connections between the 3P interventions and religion, 3) the connections between religion and religiosity, 4) opportunities for inter-faith anti-trafficking alliances, and 5) religion-based social marketing strategy recommendations.

## Asia

### Asian Trafficking by Religion

Christianity and trafficking are strongly negatively correlated in Asia. Islamic percentages in Asia are essentially uncorrelated with overall human trafficking. Christians and Muslims are the leaders in Fishing-related trafficking in Asia, and there is relatively low representation by Buddhists. Hindus lead in overall trafficking in Asia, followed by Buddhists. Rubber and child soldiers are largely the domain of Buddhists in Asia, while gold is most associated with Folk religions. Thus, a social marketing invention in Asia would target each of those leading participants. See Figure 1.

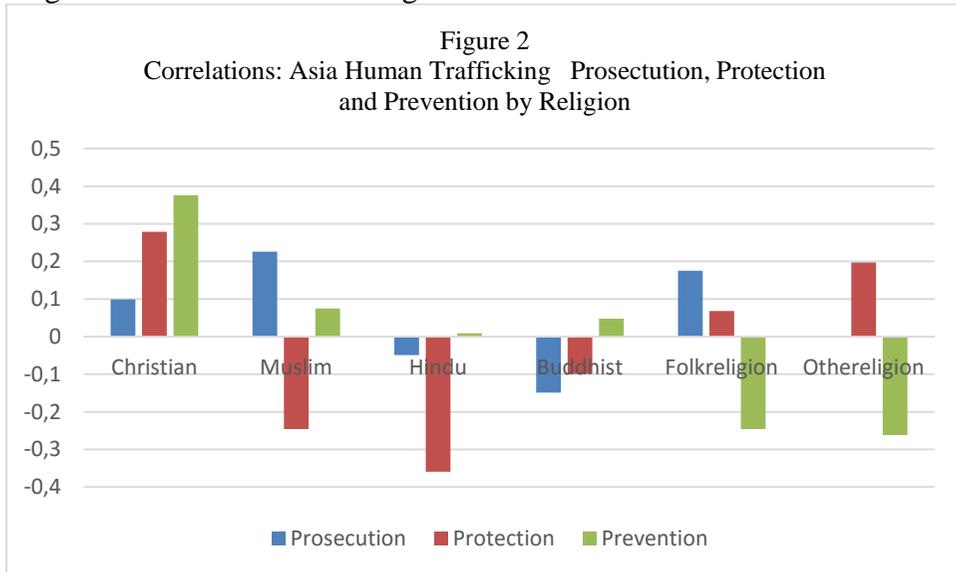


Statistical significance ( $p < .05$ ,  $N = 18$ ) was found with Folk religion and gold-related trafficking.

### Asian 3P's Intervention by Religion

Muslims in Asia are supportive of all 3 P's. Thus, an anti-trafficking appeal in Asia should encourage Muslims participate in prosecution and prevention campaigns, with a focus on the strongest area, prosecution. But

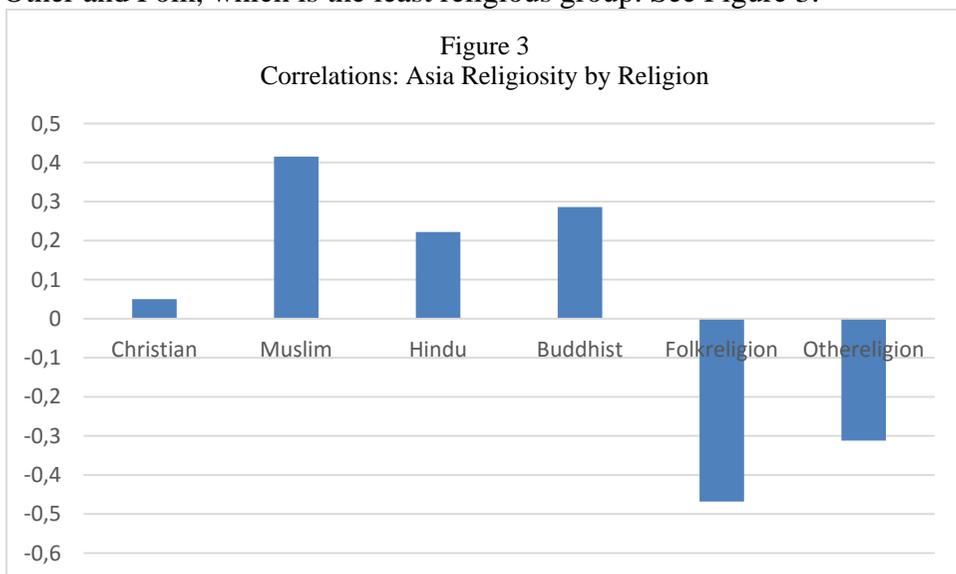
overall, prosecution-oriented appeals should be made to Muslims, Folk religions and Christians. See Figure 2.



No statistical significance was found among any religion for any of the three anti-trafficking interventions in Asia (N = 18).

### Asian Religiosity by Religion

Muslims are the most religious group in Asia, followed closely by Buddhists. Hindus are the next most religious group, followed by Christians, Other and Folk, which is the least religious group. See Figure 3.



Statistical significance ( $p < .05$ ,  $N = 16$ ) was found only for Folk religion.

### **Asian Interfaith Alliance Opportunities**

Folk and Other had the only positive correlation between their population percentages in Asia. They appear to thrive together, such that the more Folk the more Others. Accordingly, there is a possibility for those groups to collaborate on an anti-trafficking campaign.

### **Asian Social Marketing Strategy Recommendations**

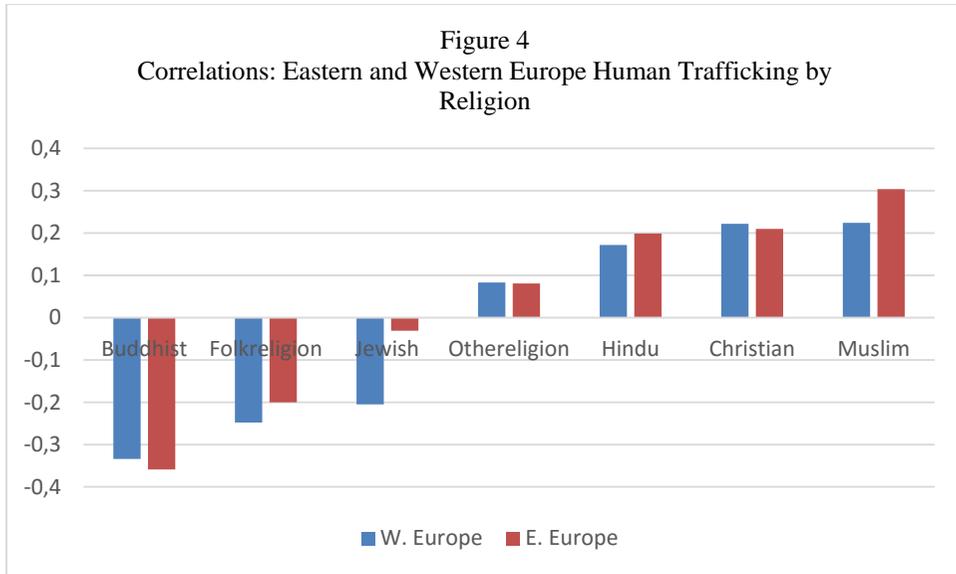
Social marketers should target Christians and Muslims for Fishing, Hindus for overall trafficking, Buddhists for rubber and child soldiers, and Folk for gold. In addition, they should target Christians to intervene against trafficking by using all 3P's, and Muslims and Folk for prosecution campaigns. Others should be recruited for protection efforts. However, as Muslims, Hindus and Buddhists are the most religious in Asia, they should be the primary targets for religion-based campaigns in Asia.

## **Europe**

### **European Trafficking by Religion**

The TIP report does not mention gold, rubber, etc. in connection with Europe. Accordingly, only overall human trafficking in Europe is presented in this discussion. To facilitate social marketing efforts, we divided Europe into East and West according to the traditional use of the terms. Thus, Eastern Europe generally consists of those nations formerly associated with the Soviet Union.

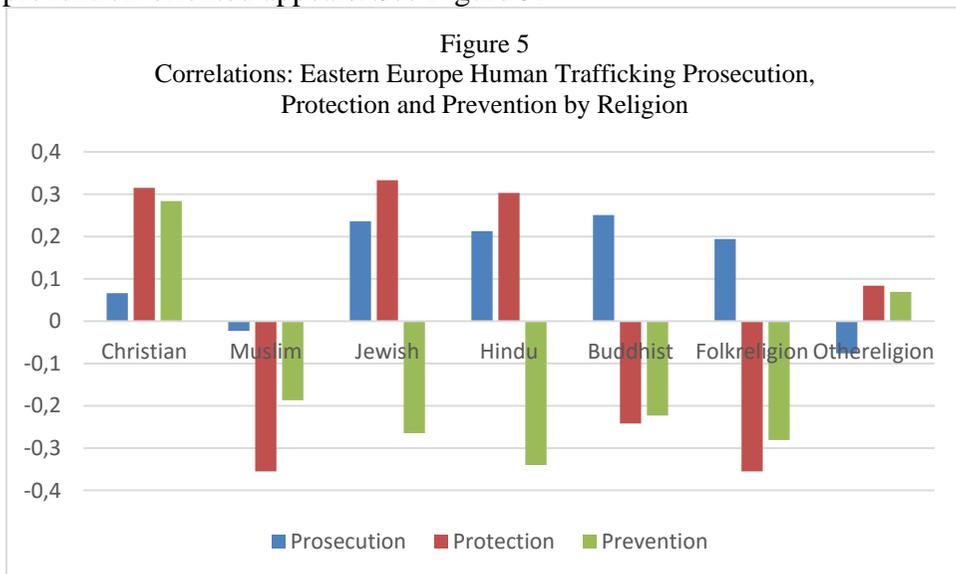
As Figure 4 indicates, there are slight differences for most religions when comparing East and West Europe. The largest difference is between east and west Jewish, and east and west Muslim groups. The strongest opponent of human trafficking is Buddhists, followed by Folk, Jewish, Others, Hindus, Christians and Muslims. Thus, anti-trafficking campaigns in Europe should mostly target those groups with the strongest positive correlations. See Figure 4.



No statistical significance was found for any religion for any type of human trafficking in Eastern Europe (N = 26) or Western Europe (N = 16).

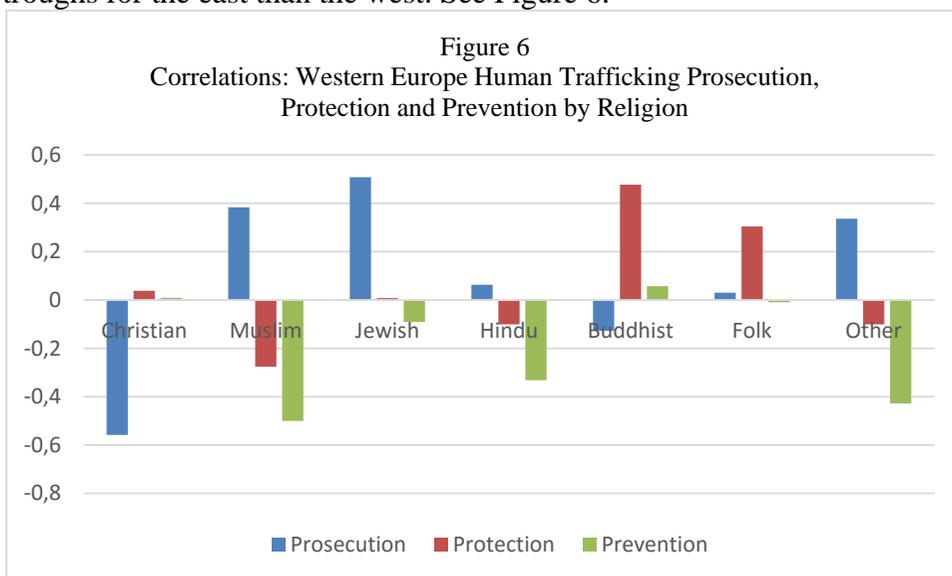
### European 3P’s Intervention by Religion

As Figure 5 indicates, the most likely religions in Eastern Europe to participate in prosecution campaigns would be Buddhists, Jews, Hindus and Folk religions. Christian, Jewish, and Hindu groups would be likely to support protection efforts. Christians and Others would be likely to support prevention-oriented appeals. See Figure 5.



No statistical significance found for any religions in Eastern Europe (N = 26) for any of the three anti-trafficking interventions.

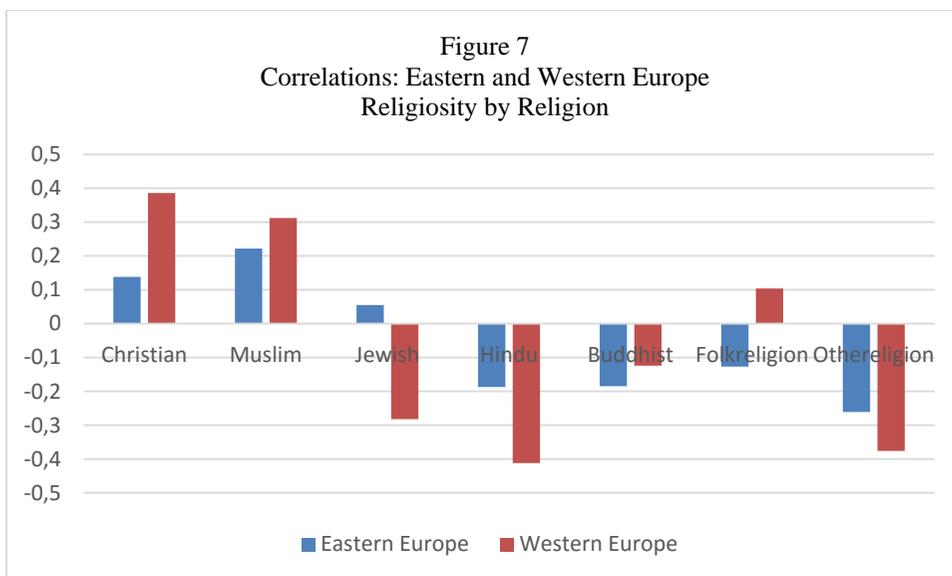
Western Europe differs from Eastern Europe in several ways. Christians in Western Europe do not support any of the 3 P's, and they are negative for prosecution. Muslims in Western Europe are more likely to support prosecution. Jewish and Hindu groups in Western Europe are less supportive of protection and prevention than they are in Eastern Europe. Thus, overall, Eastern Europeans across religions seem to have stronger feelings regarding the interventions, whether for or against (positive or negative correlations). This is evidenced by the higher peaks and deeper troughs for the east than the west. See Figure 6.



For Western Europe statistical significance ( $p < .05$ ,  $N = 16$ ) was found among Christians and Jews for prosecution, and prevention among Muslims.

### European Religiosity by Religion

Western Europeans Christians are the most religious among all of the major religions. This is consistent with the location of the Vatican in Rome. Christian religiosity is followed by Western and Eastern European Muslims, and Eastern European Christians. Eastern European Jews and Western European Folk are slightly religious, while the others tend to be unreligious. See Figure 7.



For Eastern Europe (N = 26) and Western Europe (N = 16) no statistical significance was found among any religions for religiosity.

### European Inter-faith Alliance Opportunities

Eastern European Christian, Hindu and Jewish group percentages are positively correlated, suggesting that they do not try to avoid each other. Thus, the three groups can potentially unite in their anti-trafficking efforts. Muslims, Buddhists and Others are positively correlated, as are Hindu, Buddhist, Folk and Jewish groups.

Western European Christians and Buddhists, and Muslims and Jews are positively correlated. However, the coefficients are relatively low (below .1). Therefore, they are not likely to form strong anti-trafficking coalitions.

### European Social Marketing Strategy Recommendations

Christian, Muslim and Hindu groups do the most trafficking in Europe, while Jewish, Folk and Buddhists do less of it. In Eastern Europe social marketers should target Christians, Jews and Hindus to develop protection strategies, and Jewish, Hindu, Buddhist, and Folk to participate in protection campaigns. Jewish, Muslim and Other groups should be recruited to participate in *prosecution* campaigns in Western Europe, and Buddhists and Folk should be targeted to support *protection*. No religions in Europe appear to be good candidates for *prevention*-based campaigns.

Western European Christians are the most devout, followed by Western European Muslims. These are followed by Eastern European Muslims and Christians. The remaining religious groups in Europe are

relatively unreligious. Therefore, they should be low-priority targets for a religion-based anti-trafficking campaign in Europe.

### Summary

Overall, the data indicates opportunities to focus on certain religions in Eurasia with religion-based anti-human trafficking appeals, depending on whether the social marketing campaign focuses on protection, prevention or prosecution. Human trafficking interventionists should pay careful attention to whether the target nation is in Eastern versus Western Europe, or in Asia, and specifically which religions are being identified for assistance in opposing human trafficking.

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