

DO EASTERN RELIGIONS PROMOTE POLITICAL PASSIVITY?
RELIGION AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN SOUTH KOREA AND TAIWAN

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ABSTRACT

Max Weber theorized that East Asian religions promote passivity while Western religions promote action. Using data from the 2005-2006 wave of the World Values Survey, I compare the effects of Buddhism, Taoism, Protestant Christianity, Catholicism and Taiwanese folk religion on political participation in South Korea and Taiwan. I find that religious affiliation is not associated with significant differences in political participation in either country. However, attending religious services of any religion is associated with higher levels of political participation in Taiwan, but not in South Korea. Upon further analysis, my findings suggest that Taiwanese attend religious services for social purposes while South Koreans attend religious services for answers to existential questions. The highly social nature of Taiwanese religion promotes political participation.

INTRODUCTION

Do some religions encourage political participation more than others? Drawing on Weber's typology of religions, I test whether "this-worldly" religions encourage political participation more than "other-worldly" religions. Furthermore, I investigate how the relationship between attending religious services and political participation may be mediated by religious doctrine.

Most studies of religion and politics concern are limited to Judeo-Christian denominations in the Americas and Europe. Very few scholars have conducted quantitative research on the relationship between religion and political engagement in East Asia. There are several reasons to expand research on the relationship between religion and political participation to East Asia. Huntington (2006) suggested that Asian cultures are fundamentally different from Western cultures, and that these cultural differences affect attitudes towards governance and democracy. Although Huntington's theories have been criticized as essentialist, many studies show that different societies have different political cultures. For example, according to Park and Shin (2006), the "Confucian tradition of hierarchical collectivism" discourages South Koreans from rejecting authoritarianism and encourages them to believe that the family is the ideal model for the state. Since religion is an important component and carrier of culture, studying how religion affects political participation in Asia will help us to understand the mechanisms by which Asian culture may influence political culture.

Furthermore, while many have studied the relationship between religious social activities and political participation, there is a lack of research on the role of beliefs. By comparing how people of different religions participate in politics we can hold the social effects of religion

constant and better understand what kinds of beliefs encourage political participation and what kinds of beliefs discourage political participation.

Finally, a cross-national comparative approach to religion and political participation allows us to examine how differences in political, social and historical context influence whether religious groups encourage or discourage political participation.

THEORY AND CONTEXT

Weber's typology of religion

According to Weber, there are two fundamental directions which religions take towards the world as a way to reconcile normative expectations with actual experiences. Weber defined the "world" as consisting of human beings' everyday life on earth. One direction religions can take is towards the world, a direction Weber refers to as *this-worldly* and *ascetic*. Weber wrote: "Only activity within the world helps the ascetic to attain that for which he strives, a capacity for action by god's grace" (Weber 1963: 169). The ascetic uses his actions within the world to demonstrate that he has attained god's grace. He strives to become an instrument of god within the world. In contrast, followers of other religions are oriented away from the world, and orientation Weber calls *other-worldly* and *mystical*. The contemplative mystic, who Weber associated with most Asian religions, seeks awareness of a reality which transcends politics, economy and other practical workings of society. The mystic believes that "contemplation is primarily the quest to achieve rest in god and in him alone. It entails inactivity, and its most consistent form is entails the cessation of thought, the nemesis of everything that in any way reminds one of the world, and of the course the absolute minimization of all outer and inner activity" (Weber 1963: 169). Weber also noted that some mystics rely on magical rituals to

attain their goals. The use of magic is other-worldly because it is an appeal to supernatural forces rather than striving to attain mastery over one's own daily behavior.

Weber believed that most Western religions are ascetic and this-worldly while most Asian religions are mystical and other-worldly. He wrote: "The decisive historical difference between the predominantly oriental and Asiatic types of salvation religion and those found primarily in the Occident is that the former usually culminate in contemplation and the latter in asceticism" (177). Furthermore, in "the Occident . . . even religions of an explicitly mystical type regularly became transformed into an active pursuit of virtue, which was naturally ascetical in the main." Western attempts at mysticism invariably evolved into "the demonstration of grace through conduct" rather than the contemplation characteristic of Asian religions (177). Weber theorized that these religious differences led to broad economic and political differences between Western and Asian societies, writing that in Asia, "The social world was divided into the strata of the wise and educated and the uncultivated plebeian masses" (1960: 343). Neither the elites nor the masses possessed the ascetic, this-worldly necessary for active and consistent involvement in politics. Weber maintains that politics, being concerned with the distribution of power, have "but one psychological equivalent: the vocational ethic taught by an asceticism that is oriented to the control of the terrestrial world" (1963: 236).

In summary, Weber's description of Western and Asian religions suggests that followers of Western religions will be more oriented towards "activity in the world," and will therefore be more willing to participate in politics than followers of Asian religions, who are theoretically more oriented towards contemplation, magic, and retreat from the world.

Social Capital

An alternative theory regarding the influence of religion on political participation is that the social networks, civic skills and organizational resources provided by religious organizations influence political participation far more than official religious doctrines. Like Robert Putnam (2000), I use the term “social capital” to refer to the many social benefits that religious organizations and religious activity provide.

Organizations and groups are resources that can be mobilized into political action (McCarthy and Zald 1977). Many scholars have documented the crucial role of Black churches in the civil rights movement and more contemporary community activism (for ex. Morris 1984; McAdam 1982, Harris 1999; Patillo-McCoy 1998). In addition to providing activists with leadership structures, financial resources and cultural repertoires, churches and other organizations provide a social space which allows people with similar interests the opportunity to recognize their common cause (Tilly 2008).

Attending religious activities generally leads to more network ties (Putnam 2000). These network ties facilitate political participation because many social movements recruit a majority of their participants through preexisting social networks (Snow et al. 1980, Diani 1997). Even non-political groups such as sports clubs and religious congregations provide a network through which activists can reach potential new participants and recruit them into activities and political organizations outside the realm of the original group (Ohlemacher 1996; Becker and Dhingra 2001).

Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) showed that religious organizations provide opportunities to learn civic skills, and possessing these skills encourages political participation. Different religious denominations provide their congregations with different amounts of civic

skills. Protestants practice certain civic skills in church, such making presentations or planning meetings, three times as much as Catholics (327). Churches are especially important for underprivileged communities that lack opportunities to learn civic skills elsewhere. Learning civic skills is partly what leads religious people to participate in politics more frequently than non-religious people in the United States.

Central Hypotheses

Weber's sociology of religion and the more recent social capital theories pose distinct theories about how religion affects political participation. According to Weber, this-worldly religious doctrines promote activity in the world and are therefore conducive to political participation. Other-worldly religious doctrines discourage activity in the world and hinder political participation. In contrast to Weber, social capital theories ignore the role of doctrine and instead focus on how religious *communities* promote political participation. Religious communities facilitate the networking, identity formation and civic skills which are necessary to political participation. Attending religious services is one of the main ways that people participate in religious communities.

Weber's theories pose the first two central hypotheses of my paper, while social capital theories pose the third hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: People who are affiliated with this-worldly religions are more politically active than people who are affiliated with other-worldly religions.

Hypothesis 2: Frequency of attending religious services is more strongly associated with political participation for people who attend religious services of this-worldly religions than for people who attend religious services of other-worldly religions.

Social capital theories pose the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: Frequency of attending religious services is positively associated with political participation for followers of all religions.

Asian and Western religions in local context

Weber's assertion that Asian religions are other-worldly and Western religions are this-worldly requires some revision. Every major religion can be interpreted in many different ways. We may find that the local interpretation of an Asian religion is this-worldly while the local interpretation of a Western religion is other-worldly.

The social effects of religion, such as providing social networks and civic skills, can also vary between religions and places. For example, some religious organizations may have a democratic form of governance, and thus provide the congregation with civic skills they can use outside of the organization. Other religious organizations may have an authoritarian form of governance which does not provide opportunities to learn civic skills. Some religious organizations may provide many opportunities for socializing with fellow believers, thus strengthening network ties, while other religious organizations may give less opportunities for socializing and promote individualistic worship instead. Thus, every religious group's organizational culture can change the way membership in that group affects political participation.

Finally, the historical relationship between a religious group and the state can affect the religious group's attitude towards political participation. In this next section, I will explain how the local manifestations of various religions may affect political participation.

South Korea

[Insert Figure 1 here]

Protestant Christianity

The official doctrine of most Protestant Christian churches around the world is that salvation comes from believing that Jesus Christ is the son of God and that he died to redeem human beings from their sin. Many Protestants believe in a personal god who works through humans who have been “saved.” One’s behavior in the world is the evidence of one’s salvation. Thus, Protestants strive to behave as if they are god’s instrument. This entails attaining rational control of the world. According to Weber, Protestantism’s rational, this-worldly orientation is more conducive to political action than any other kind of religious doctrine (1963: 236). At the same time, according to Jeong (2010: 146), “Korean Protestantism deliberately assumes the form of a magical religion, prioritizing present rewards and exaggerating the impression of God’s ability to improve living conditions.” Many Korean Protestants engage in a ritualized practice of donating money to the church while asking for specific blessings from God. Thus, Korean Protestantism differs from Weber’s ideal characterization of Protestantism. Rather than simply see themselves as God’s instruments in the world, many Korean Protestants rely on God to provide them with worldly blessings. This may hinder political participation since Korean Protestants may choose to petition God to change the world rather than enact political changes themselves.

However, it should also be noted that Protestantism is connected with political discourse in South Korea. After the period of Japanese colonization and the Korean War, Protestant Christianity became tied with South Korean nationalism. Korean nationalists saw Protestant

Christianity as not only more “modern” than Buddhism, but also symbolically more distant from Japan.

South Korea’s current president, Lee Myung-Bak, is extremely vocal about his belief in Protestant Christianity. It has been estimated that he won 80 percent of the Protestant vote. However, in 2005 and 2006, when the second wave of the World Value Survey was conducted, the South Korean president was the atheist Goh Kun. Thus, although Korean Christians have long been active in politics, they cannot be said to be overwhelmingly influential in determining who is elected.

Roman Catholicism

Roman Catholicism is a highly institutionalized form of Christianity. Official Catholic doctrine holds that the Roman Catholic church is the only “true” Christianity community. In *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* Weber maintained that Catholicism could never inspire the same level of worldly activity that Protestantism could (2009: 114). He theorized that while Protestants feel constant anxiety about salvation which pushes them towards constant activity, Catholics only act as directed by their priest. Furthermore, acting out sacred rituals, especially the ritual of confession, relieves the Catholic’s anxiety about salvation and renders further action unnecessary. Thus, while Catholicism does not encourage flight from the world, it does not necessarily encourage action within the world. Weber never makes clear whether Catholicism is other-worldly or this-worldly.

Historically, the Catholic Church in South Korea has come into conflict with the Korean government more often than other religious organizations (Jeong 2010: 149). In the 19th century Catholics were persecuted by the government for refusing to practice ancestor worship. During the authoritarian regimes of the 1970s and 80s, the Catholic Church supported the democracy

movement. For example, in 1974 a group of Catholic priests formed the Catholic Priests' Association for Justice (CPAJ) to protest the military dictatorship which ruled South Korea at the time. As far as politics is concerned, the Roman Catholic church champions many political causes, and the Roman Catholic church in South Korea is no exception. For the purposes of this paper, then, I classify South Korean Roman Catholicism as a this-worldly religion.

Buddhism

In South Korea, *Seon* is the dominant Buddhist order, and it closely related to Chinese and Japanese Zen traditions. Zen is the most contemplative and individualistic form of Buddhism. Zen Buddhism prescribes meditation to achieve enlightenment. Enlightenment, put simply, refers to perfect awareness of the true nature of reality.

Zen Buddhist doctrine encourages the cessation of desire. Rather than change one's environment, practitioners are instructed to concentrate on changing their own minds. Zen masters claim that one's reality is generated in the mind, and only by changing one's mind can one change his or her reality.

Perhaps because of its individualistic, intellectual and introverted orientation, there are relatively few Buddhist charity organizations or colleges. Although approximately 25 percent of South Koreans are Buddhist, only 14 percent of religion-based charity organizations are Buddhist (Jeong 2010: 147). Furthermore, there are only four Buddhist-founded colleges in South Korea, compared to 201 Protestant colleges (148).

Weber's conceptualization of other-worldly religions is very applicable to South Korean Buddhism because South Korean Buddhism emphasizes contemplation and retreat rather than engagement with the world. Furthermore, the fact that there are relatively few Buddhist auxiliary organizations, such as charities and schools, gives Korean Buddhists less opportunities

to join social networks and learn civic skills. In contrast, Protestant and Catholic doctrine and the large number of Protestant and Catholic auxiliary organizations should encourage Protestants and Catholics to participate in politics. Thus, I hypothesize that Protestant Christians and Roman Catholics participate in politics more than Buddhists in South Korea.

Taiwan

[Insert Figure 2 here]

Protestant Christianity

In Taiwan, the Presbyterian Church, a Protestant denomination, is well-known for challenging the Nationalist Party's martial law and contributing to the democracy movement in the 1970s and 80s. Aside from the Presbyterians, however, most Christian churches in Taiwan were influenced by Taiwan's authoritarian environment and stayed out of politics (Kuo 36).

Buddhism

Popular Buddhism in Taiwan is strongly influenced by Pure Land Buddhist theology. Pure Land Buddhism prescribes ritualistic chanting and faith in various Buddhist deities as a way to guarantee rebirth in an other-worldly heaven, called the "pure land" (Sharot 2001: 87). Since Pure Land Buddhism focuses on magical rituals to prepare for the afterlife, rather than worldly action to demonstrate attainment of salvation, one would expect Pure Land Buddhists to be more disconnected from worldly politics than most Western religions. Pure Land Buddhism's other-worldly beliefs are modified by humanism, however. In Taiwan, most Buddhist orders, no matter Zen or Pure Land, can be considered to be "humanistic" orders of Buddhism (Kuo 2008: 16). Humanistic theology applies Buddhist principles to work, family, environmental protection, and international relations. However, humanistic Buddhist leaders in Taiwan rarely address politics and some popular Taiwanese Buddhist organizations continue to ban laypeople from running for office. Kuo (2008) attributes this to the fact that most Buddhist organizations came

to Taiwan during President Chiang Kai-Shek's authoritarian regime. These organizations distanced themselves from politics in order to prevent repression.

Taoism

Of all the religions in Taiwan, Taoism is one of the most difficult to define. Taoism "has no single founder, such as Jesus or the Buddha, nor does it have a single key message, such as the gospel or the four noble truths" (Miller 2003: ix). Modern Taoism in Taiwan mainly consists of deity worship, birth and death rituals, and fortune-telling (Kuo 2008: 57-58).

Kirkland (2004: 149) maintains that Taoist leaders espouse the notion of heavenly mandate. Throughout history Taoists have almost invariably acknowledged the authority of government leaders. Taoists have occasionally advocated the overthrow of extremely corrupt regimes, but have historically refrained from engaging in more commonplace political criticism.

Taoist temples are very independent from one another and are usually governed by committees consisting of lay believers (Kuo 2008: 62). Lay believers elect each other to the governing committee. Most temples do not employ full-time priests, and will instead hire priests for annual ceremonies. These priests are hired to perform rituals, and have no governing role in the temple. Thus, Taoist temples are governed in a very egalitarian and democratic way.

Mazu

Mazu is sometimes considered to be a native Taiwanese folk religion, although it was first practiced on China's southeastern coast. Mazu religion is based on making offerings to the sea goddess Mazu. The emphasis on ritualized offerings makes Mazu a magical, other-worldly religion. Furthermore, the Mazu religion inspires very little organized community life compared with other religions. Interaction between followers of Mazu is limited to an annual pilgrimage festival in which the faithful, organized under the banners of their respective hometowns, visit

various shrines (Sharot 2001: 84). During the rest of the year, followers of Mazu do not regularly interact with each other and attend temple to worship independently (Kuo 2008: 81). This lack of institutionalized social life puts Mazu religion at a disadvantage in terms of facilitating political participation.

After taking the unique Taiwanese forms of Buddhism, Protestant Christianity, Taoism and Mazu into account, the dichotomy Weber drew between Western and Asian religions requires some revision. Since Taiwanese Buddhism applies Buddhist principles to daily social life, it can be considered to have a somewhat this-worldly orientation. Furthermore, Taiwanese Buddhism, Taoism and Protestantism all have social structures which create social capital. Thus, based on both doctrine and social structure, Buddhists and Protestants may participate in politics at similar rates. Taoists may participate in politics less than Buddhists and Protestants because of Taoism's emphasis on magic, as well as its concept of heavenly mandate.

Of all the major religions in Taiwan, Mazu is the least conducive to political participation. Mazu's beliefs are almost entirely related to deity worship rather than worldly action. Furthermore, followers of Mazu typically visit temples individually and rarely participate in communal religious activities. Thus, I hypothesize followers of Mazu will participate in politics less than Buddhists, Taoists and Protestants.

DATA AND METHODS

This study uses the 2006 wave of the World Values Survey. In each country at least 1,000 people were surveyed. This study compares two countries: South Korea and Taiwan. Both of these locations have large numbers of Christians, Buddhists, and followers of other religions. This provides a large enough sample of religious believers to make comparisons between the effects of Eastern and Western religion. Furthermore, there are differences in the

religious composition and political context of the two countries, which allows us to explore how religious doctrine may have different effects in different contexts. For example, approximately 45% of South Koreans are Protestant or Catholic, while less than 5% of Taiwanese citizens are Protestant or Catholic. If these Christian religions encourage political participation in both countries then this makes a stronger case for the role of doctrine in political participation.

Dependent Variable

The main dependent variable is an index of extra-institutional political participation. The index combines answers to three questions which ask respondents whether they participated in a particular form of political activity in the five years prior to being surveyed. The three kinds of political activity the index variable accounts for are attending peaceful demonstrations, signing petitions, and joining in boycotts. Those who did not participate in any of those activities received a score of 0, those who participated in one of those activities received a score of 1, those who participated in two of those activities received a score of 2, and those who participated in all three of those activities received the maximum possible score of 3.

I do not include voting in my index of political participation. Several studies of the relationship between religious activity and political participation have found that church attendance is positively related to voting but not to protest (Inglehart and Norris 2004; Verba, Schlozman and Brady 1995). Since participating in protest, demonstrations or boycotts demonstrate more physical and psychological engagement in politics, using an index of these forms of political participation as the dependent variable measures a deeper level of engagement in politics than simply voting. The aim of this study is to test how different religions encourage or discourage this deeper level of engagement in politics.

Independent Variables

In order to measure religious affiliation, I used the question “What is your religion?” For each country, I created dummy variables for each religion that was claimed by at least 50 respondents. Membership in each religion was coded as 1 while non-membership in that religion was coded as 0. People who were members of religions which were claimed by less than 50 people in the sample were consolidated into the category “Other Religion.” When I conducted multiple regression I used Buddhists as the reference group in South Korea, and Protestant Christians as the reference group in Taiwan. Using those religions as reference groups allowed me to test whether Eastern and Western religions affected political participation differently.

In order to measure frequency of participation in religious services, I used the question “About how often do you attend religious services these days?” Responses to this question were coded into an ordinal variable with six categories representing frequency of attendance.

Control Variables

It is possible that some people have a “joining personality” and are more likely to join in religious activities and political activities because of this personality, and not because religious activity facilitates political participation. Accounting for membership in organizations partly accounts for a joining personality. I created an index variable which accounts for one’s level of activity within non-religious organizations. Passive membership in each kind of organization was accorded a score of 1 and active participation in each kind of organization was accorded a score of 2. Since ten kinds of organizations were asked about in the World Values Survey, the highest possible score in this index is 20 and the lowest possible score is 0.

In the multiple regression, I include a variety of variables which previous studies have shown may affect political participation. Verba, Schlozman and Brady (1995) showed that

people with higher socioeconomic status tend to participate more in all kinds of political activity. Therefore, I measure education and income. I also account for other basic demographic variables which may affect political participation, such as age, gender, and the size of one's town. Since one's political stance can differentially affect one's level of political participation at different times, I account for which political party respondents support. In South Korea, the base category is the Grand National Party, which was the most popular party at the time of the survey. In Taiwan, the base category is made up of respondents who do not prefer any particular party.

In Taiwan, where different subethnic groups have distinct histories of political involvement and often speak different languages, I account for the language the respondent most often speaks at home. Mandarin is the base category. Since the World Values Survey has no ethnicity question to measure which subethnic group the respondent belongs to in Taiwan, I use language spoken at home as a proxy for subethnicity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Bivariate Analysis

[Insert Figure 3]

Of the major religious groups in South Korea, Protestant Christians are the most politically active while Buddhists are the least politically active. About 49 percent of Protestants participated in a demonstration, petition or boycott in the five years before they were surveyed. Catholics participated less, at a rate of 42 percent. Those who claimed no religion participated at a rate of 38 percent. Buddhists participated at a rate of 36 percent, which is about 25 percent lower than the rate at which Protestants participated in politics. Binary logistic regression shows that this difference is significant at the 1% level when the dependent variable is dichotomous, measuring whether the respondent participated in at least one kind of extra-institutional political

activity in the past five years. Thus, bivariate analysis shows some support for Weber's theories about religion. South Korea's version of Zen Buddhism emphasizes contemplation and retreat from the world. Protestant Christianity, on the other hand, encourages the faithful to make themselves instruments of God in the world. This may explain why Protestants are more likely to participate in politics than Buddhists.

[Insert Figure 4]

Most people in Taiwan participate in politics at approximately the same rate, regardless of their religion or lack thereof. About 15 to 17 percent of Protestants, Buddhists, Taoists, followers of other religions, and those with no religion participated in a demonstration, petition or boycott in the five years prior to being surveyed. Followers of Mazu participated at a slightly lower rate of 11 percent. In general, Taiwanese participate in politics much less than South Koreans.

Since Buddhism in Taiwan is humanistic and emphasizes social concerns, it is not surprising that Buddhists participate in politics at about the same rate as Protestants. However, the fact that Taoists participate in politics at about the same rate as Protestants challenges Weber and others scholars' theories about how religion doctrine affects behavior. Weber claimed that Taoism's emphasis on magic precluded an emphasis on practical, rational activity in the world. Furthermore, several scholars have noted the Taoist concept of "heavenly mandate," which should inhibit Taoists from active involvement in politics. Perhaps the civic skills provided through Taoist temples' democratic organizational structure counteract any negative effects Taoist doctrine may have on political participation.

When the dependent variable is dichotomous, measuring whether the respondent participated in at least one kind of extra-institutional political activity in the past five years,

binary logistic regression shows that Buddhists participate in politics significantly more than followers of Mazu. However, when using least squares regression and the dependent variable is an index variable accounting for the number of ways respondents participated in politics, there is no significant difference in political participation between Buddhists and followers of Mazu. Furthermore, whether the dependent variable is dichotomous or an index, there is no significant difference in political participation between Protestants and followers of Mazu.

Multivariate Analysis

Religious Denomination and Political Participation

[Insert Table 1]

In table 1, I use Buddhism as the reference category in order to compare the effect of Buddhism with the effects of Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. The dependent variable is an index of political participation, which measures how many kinds of political activity the respondent participated in during the five years prior to being surveyed. Model 1 shows that Protestants may participate in politics slightly more than Buddhists, with a p-value of 10%. However, even this weak relationship disappears when holding basic age, sex, income, education and size of town constant. This lack of a significant difference between Protestant and Buddhist political participation contradicts Weber's theories about how religion should affect behavior. Although Korean Buddhism emphasizes contemplation rather than action, Buddhists are not less politically active than Protestants when holding basic demographic variables constant.

Income is positively related to political participation in South Korea. This corresponds with Verba, Schlozman and Brady's SES model of political participation, which states that people with higher social-economic status are more likely to participate in politics. Being female is negatively related to political participation, but there is a ten percent chance that this

relationship is not statistically significant. When membership in non-religious organizations is accounted for, membership becomes the sole predictor of political participation.

Frequency of religious attendance and membership in religious organizations are both unrelated to political participation in South Korea. Thus, social capital theories, which claim that participation in religious activities should encourage political participation, do not hold true in South Korea. Neither attending religious services nor one's religious affiliation are significant factors related to political participation in South Korea.

[Insert Table 2]

In Taiwan, there is no significant relationship between what religion respondents belong to and their level of extra-institutional political participation. Mazu's mystical beliefs and individualistic style of practice do not cause followers to participate in politics any less than Protestants, Taoists or Buddhists.

Age, education, and membership in non-religious organizations are positively associated with political participation. When holding party support and religious participation constant, people who mainly speak the Taiwanese language at home are less likely to participate in politics than those who mainly speak Mandarin at home.

In Taiwan, frequency of attending religious services is positively related to participation in politics, even when holding membership in non-religious organizations constant. This suggests that it is not simply a "joining personality" which leads to a correlation between religious participation and political participation in Taiwan. Furthermore, religious activities do not only promote political activity by creating social networks through which religious people can be recruited into politically active non-religious groups. Rather, the religious activity itself may encourage political participation in more direct ways.

Religious attendance and political participation

Why is there a correlation between attending religious services and political participation in Taiwan, but not in South Korea? Further analysis shows that religious services may play a more social role in Taiwan than in South Korea.

[Insert Table 3]

In Taiwan, frequency of attending religious services is associated with strongly agreeing that friends are important. In South Korea, however, the relationship between frequency of church attendance and how much one values one's friends is reversed. People who attend religious services rarely are more likely to strongly agree that friends are important, while people who attend religious services often are more likely to only somewhat agree that friends are important.

Instead of highly valuing friendship, South Koreans who attend religious services often are more likely to think about the meaning and purpose of life. In Taiwan, however, there is no relationship between attending religious services and thinking about the meaning and purpose of life. This suggests that Taiwanese primarily attend religious services to socialize and cultivate friendships while South Koreans attend religious services for answers to spiritual questions. This may explain why attending religious services is related to more political participation in Taiwan but not in South Korea.

My findings partially support social capital theories which maintain that religion encourages political participation. In Taiwan, increased attendance of religious services is related to increased political participation. However, this relationship does not exist in South Korea. This suggests that religious services serve different purposes for different people. In

Taiwanese society, religious services are primarily social activities. They allow participants to socialize with one another and build up the social networks which lead to recruitment into political activities. In South Korea, however, people attend religious services because they are looking for answers to existential questions. When South Koreans attend religious services, they may interact with other attendees less, or their interactions may be more limited by religious guidelines than interactions at Taiwanese religious services. South Koreans may be less likely to talk about politics when interacting with other people at religious services. Instead, their conversations may be more oriented towards spiritual issues.

Another possible reason religious attendance and political participation are unrelated in South Korea is that South Korea has a thriving civic society outside of the religious realm. In Taiwan, where people participate in politics at about half the rate of South Koreans, religious services may be one of the only places where political mobilization can occur.

CONCLUSIONS

Followers of inner-worldly religions do not participate in politics any more than followers of other-worldly religions. Weber's belief that this-worldly religions maximize action while other-worldly religions minimize action does not hold true, at least in the realm of politics in the two countries studied.

In his 2010 address to the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, Mark Chaves maintained that consistency between religious beliefs and behavior is actually quite rare. He cautions against subscribing to "the fallacy of religious congruence." My study supports Chaves' assertion. Although there are significant differences between different religious doctrines, these differences in doctrine don't appear to cause significant differences in behavior, at least as far as political participation is concerned. Social capital theories, which posit that participation in

religious communities should encourage political participation, are much more promising than Weberian theories about how religious doctrine should influence behavior.

It is a mistake, however, to assume that participation in religious communities always promotes political participation. Attending religious services is not related to increased political participation in South Korea, and this is likely related to the fact that people in South Korea seem to attend religious services for answers to existential questions rather than opportunities to socialize. More research is needed on what kinds of religious activities promote political participation and how the motivations of religious service attendees affects the kinds of benefits they receive from attending religious services.

One shortcoming of my research design is that the index of political participation is not comprehensive. The World Values Survey does not include many common measures of political participation, such as donating money to a campaign or contacting public officials. This may have affected results in Taiwan, where most people do not participate in the kinds of political participation measured in this study. However, the fact that no significant relationship between religion and political participation was found in South Korea, a country where demonstrations, petitions, and boycotts are common, suggests that religious affiliation is, in fact, not a reliable predictor of political participation.

Figure 1

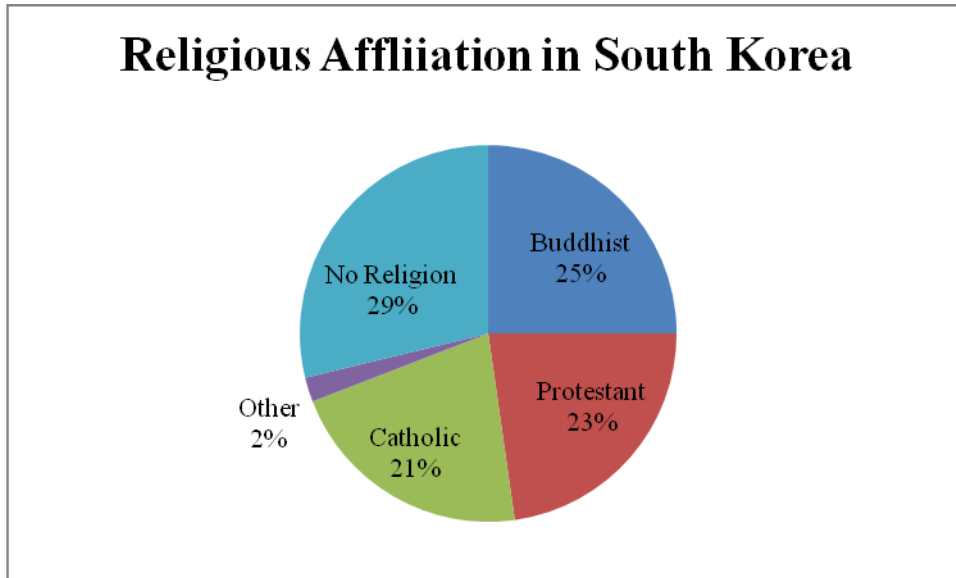


Figure 2

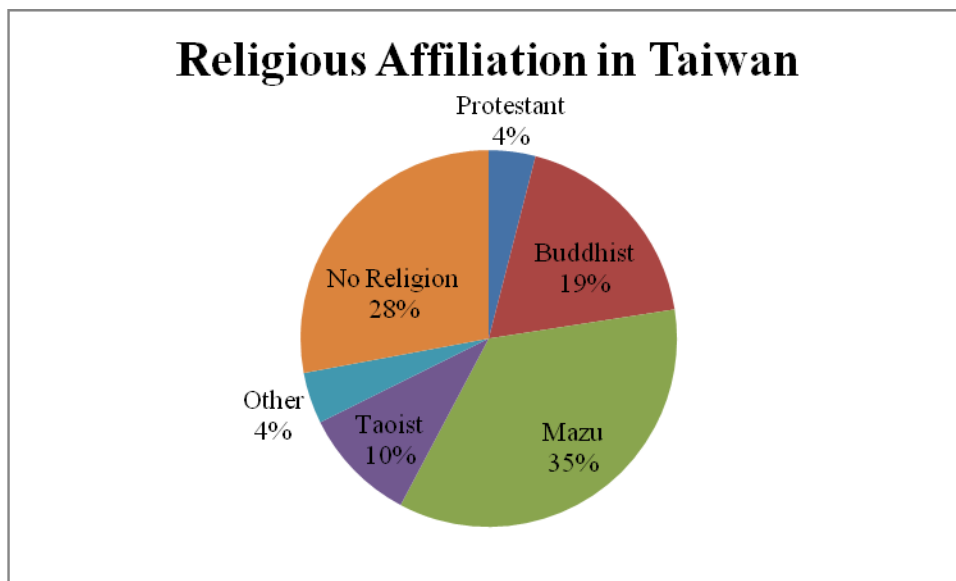


Figure 3

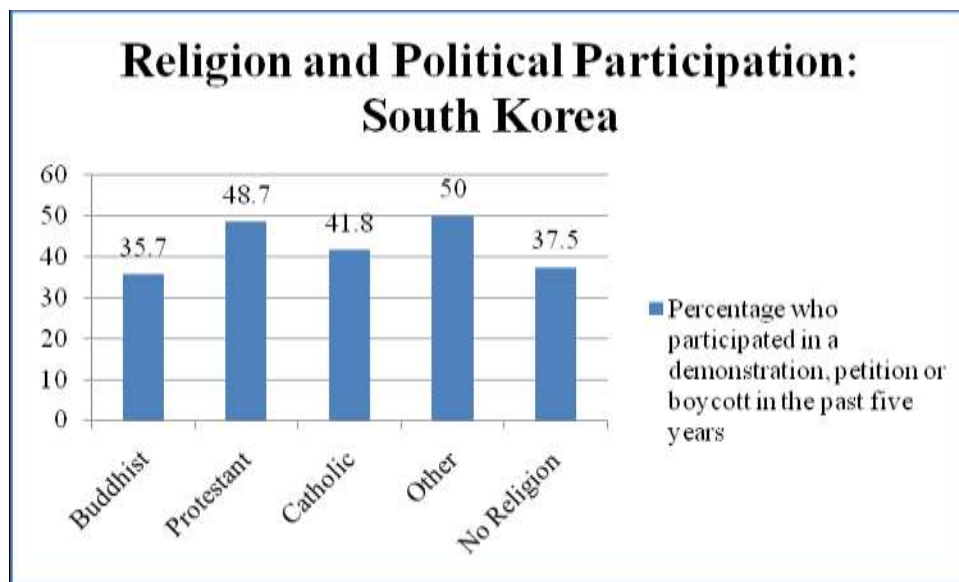


Figure 4

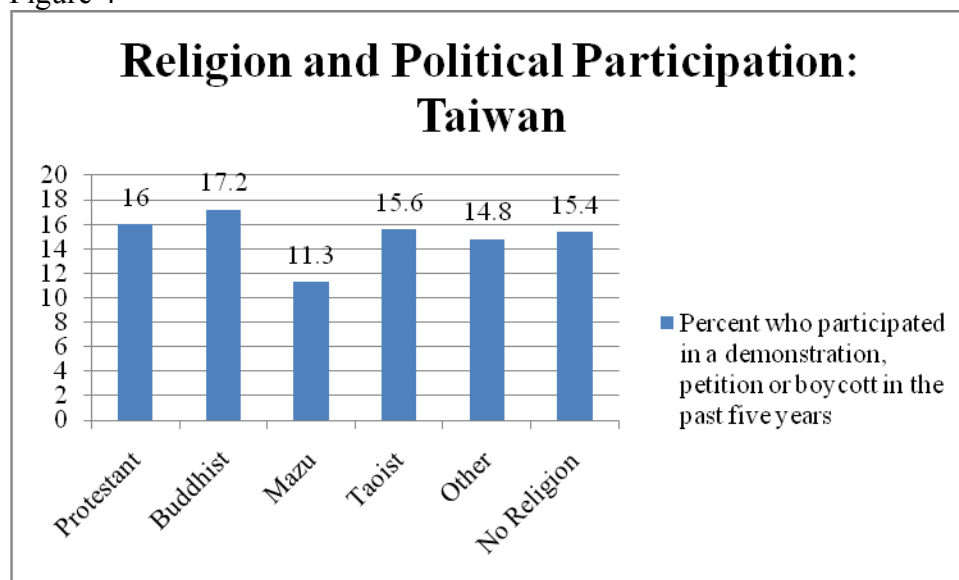


Table 1 Religion and Political Participation in South Korea

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
Protestant	.121	.065	.108	.066	.075	.077	-.035	.262
Catholic	.044	.066	.026	.066	.014	.069	.097	.173
Other Religion	.020	.164	-.007	.164	-.003	.164	.174	.369
No Religion	-.015	.061	-.022	.063	-.034	.069	.128	.159
Age			.002	.002	.002	.002	.002	.002
Female			-.077 [†]	.046	-.060	.047	-.062	.048
Education			.016	.015	.011	.015	.012	.015
Income			.027*	.013	.018	.014	.017	.014
Size of Town			.011	.014	.016	.014	.015	.014
Religious Attendance					-.013	.017	.008	.035
Membership in Religious Organization					.047	.041	.034	.042
Membership in Non-Religious Organizations					0.049***	.010	.049***	.010
Korea Party 1					.052	.058	.050	.058
Korea Party 3					.037	.096	.046	.097
Korea Party 4					.093	.066	.099	.066
Korea Party 5					-.055	.160	-.053	.161
Protestant X Attendance							.011	.049
Catholic X Attendance							-.021	.040
Other Religion X Attendance							-.050	.091
No Religion X Attendance							-.071	.054
Constant	.522	.045	.186	.193	.169	.198	.101	.226

† p<10% * p<5% ** p<1% ***<.1% Results are from ordinary least squares regression. Coefficients are in the first column of each model, and standard errors are in the second column of each model. Buddhism is the reference category for religion. Korea Party 2 is the reference category for political party.

Table 2 Religion and Political Participation in Taiwan

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
Buddhist	-.047	.092	-.011	.092	.089	.097	.235	.219
Taoist	-.050	.099	.029	.099	.149	.106	.316	.231
Native Religion	-.111	.088	-.030	.090	.128	.100	.315	.213
Other Religion	-.058	.116	-.025	.115	.039	.116	.337	.264
No Religion	-.002	.090	.022	.089	.161	.100	.324	.213
Age			.006***	.001	.004***	.001	.004***	.001
Female			-.002	.034	.001	.034	.000	.034
Education			.054***	.008	.048***	.008	.047***	.008
Income			.010	.010	.007	.010	.007	.010
Size of Town			-.010	.015	-.008	.015	-.007	.015
Taiwanese Language			-.063	.042	-0.099*	.043	-0.099*	.043
Other Language			.070	.063	.028	.062	.026	.062
Religious attendance					.038***	.012	.073 [†]	.039
Non-Religious Organizations					.043***	.009	.044***	.009
Religious Organization					.024	.036	.022	.038
DPP					.269***	.078	.274***	.078
KMT					.112	.073	.115	.074
Other Party					.031	.073	.035	.073
Buddhist X Attendance							-.027	.045
Taoist X Attendance							-.035	.051
Native Religion X Attendance							-.043	.043
Other Religion X Attendance							-.074	.058
No Religion X Attendance							-.032	.046
Constant	0.280***	.084	-0.32 [†]	.171	-.600*	.199	-.77*	.264

† p<10% * p<5% ** p<1% ***<.1% Results are from ordinary least squares regression. Coefficients are in the first column of each model, and standard errors are in the second column of each model. Protestant Christianity is the reference category for religion. No party preference is the reference category for political party.

Table 3: Factors Explaining Attendance of Religious Services in South Korea

		Agree That Friends Are Important	Thinks About Meaning and Purpose of Life
Frequency of attending religious services	Pearson Correlation	-.101**	.186*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	1200	1199

Table 4: Factors Explaining Attendance of Religious Services in Taiwan

		Agree That Friends Are Important	Thinks About Meaning and Purpose of Life
Frequency of Attending Religious Services	Pearson Correlation	.074*	.040
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.159
	N	1227	1225

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