

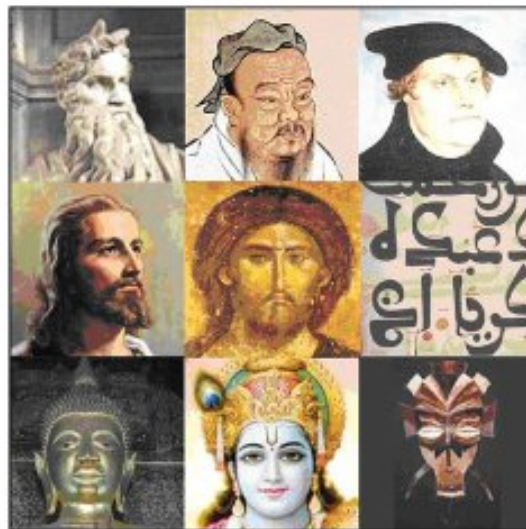
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RELIGIONS AND DEVELOPMENT



What impact have the nine major religions had on the creation of wealth?

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Fascinating facts are backed up by exhaustive research. This important book belongs in every economics reference library. I recommend it to anyone with an interest in comparative religions and economics. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. An Important Book By Author: Dr. Rodrigue TREMBLAY Religions and Development This is an important book and it should be required reading for those who wish to understand how religions influence societies, their cultures and their economic development. On the question of the influence of different religions on economic development, Xavier Couplet and Daniel Heuchenne (Religions and Development, 2009) have found that in 2007, on average, a Protestant "produced" 2 times more wealth than a Catholic, 4 times more than an Orthodox, 13 times more than a Muslim, 18 times more than a Buddhist, 25 more than a Hindu and 42 times more than an animist. This a conclusion that quantifies Max Weber's thesis that European capitalism became more dynamic following the Protestant Reformation, after the adoption of the Protestant work ethic (The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (Die protestantische Ethik und der 'Geist' des Kapitalismus), 1904). I have reached the same conclusion in my recent book "The Code for Global Ethics, ISBN: 978-1616141721). Here is what I wrote: "Innovations are, by definition, the leaven of economic growth, and they can only flourish if a high degree of freedom of thought and freedom to innovate prevails. Institutional or ideological barriers to innovation and dynamism translate into barriers to economic development and economic prosperity." (p. 158)... "With the notable exception of Calvinist Protestantism, most religious systems reject worldly affairs and frown upon the pursuit of profit, income, wealth and economic possessions. The Christian Bible (New Testament) teaches, for example, that "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." (Matthew 19:24, Mark 10:25, Luke 18:25)... This message is one of deprivation, poverty and self-imposed sacrifice, all accepted in order to be prepared for a better life in the hereafter. There is no admonition to pursue earthly prosperity, whether this takes the form of a higher income, better housing, improved health, or more advanced education." (p. 159)-Dr. Rodrigue Tremblay is the author of The Code for Global Ethics, Ten Humanist Principles, Prometheus Books, 2010, 300 p.

What impact have the nine major religions had on the creation of wealth? In 2007, on average, a Protestant "produced" two times more wealth than a Catholic, four times more than an Orthodox, thirteen times more than a Muslim, eighteen times more than a Buddhist, twenty-five times more than a Hindu and forty-two times more than an animist. Why? Strangely, no Nobel Prize winners have given their opinion on this worrying situation. A few years ago some economists began researching "neuroeconomics", which aims to study, through neuroimaging, the behaviour of individuals faced with the market. These new researchers aim to reveal the underlying motives for the sometimes irrational decisions made by consumers. Anyone would think that these eminent researchers had never left their own religious, cultural environment. If they had, they would know that religions, by virtue of their obligations and restrictions, condition the "neurons" of individuals to the extent that they cause them to make completely irrational decisions.

About the Author An economist by profession, Xavier Couplet has furthered his interest in Third World topics at MIT. He works for international organizations in countries of diverse faiths. He has investigated the multiple interactions of religions with development for more than thirty years. Daniel Heuchenne (dagger;) held a doctoral degree in applied sciences and had a work experience spanning twenty years in developing countries. Upon his return to Europe he undertook further training in ethnology, philosophy, linguistics, and psychoanalysis in order to compile the vast amount of information collected on the field.