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Religiosity, Values, and Acculturation: A Study of Turkish, Turkish Belgian, and Belgian Adolescents

Derya Güngör¹, Marc H. Bornstein², and Karen Phalet¹

¹University of Leuven, Belgium

²NICHD, National Institutes of Health, USA

Abstract

We address the understudied religious dimension of acculturation in acculturating adolescents who combine a religious Islamic heritage with a secularized Christian mainstream culture. The religiosity of 197 Turkish Belgian adolescents was compared with that of 366 agemates in Turkey (the heritage culture) and 203 in Belgium (the mainstream culture) and related to cultural values, acculturation orientations, and ethnic identification. Belgian adolescents showed lower and declining religiosity with age, whereas Turkish and Turkish Belgian adolescents were more religious regardless of age. Acculturating adolescents reaffirmed religion as compared with monocultural adolescents in Turkey. Religious reaffirmation was related to cultural values of interdependence, heritage culture maintenance, and ethnic identification.

Large numbers of immigrants from majority Muslim countries to the North-West of Europe are rearing their children in historically Christian yet highly secularised and increasingly anti-Islamic mainstream societies. Secularisation refers to a robust downward trend in the importance and impact of religion in European majority populations (Gorski & Altinordu, 2008). From a majority perspective, the religiosity of Muslim immigrants appears as a bright boundary that sets them apart from the mainstream and obstructs their adaptation (Allen & Nielsen, 2002). Conversely, from the perspective of immigrants religious traditions and ties are important sources of self-worth, social support, and cultural continuity (Ebaugh & Chafetz, 2000). Against the backdrop of contrasting religious versus secular orientations in immigrant communities in European societies, this study examines the under-researched question of acculturation of religion. Specifically, we ask: how do the children of Muslim immigrants negotiate religion as they engage with heritage and mainstream cultures?

To address this question we examine the importance of religion to adolescents and relate religiosity to their cultural values and acculturation. Our measure of religiosity refers to adolescents' religious attachment, the overall strength of their commitment to a religious way of life and to the preservation of religious tradition. Acculturating adolescents face the task of balancing heritage and mainstream cultural values and identities in their self-development (Garcia-Coll et al., 1996). As a prime source of meaning and belonging, religion constitutes a strong form of culture and a powerful social identity (Cohen, 2009; Ysseldyk, Matheson, & Anisman, 2010). Yet, acculturation studies have largely ignored the religious dimension of minority cultures and identities (Phalet & Kopic, 2006).

Our empirical focus falls on Turkish Belgian adolescents, whose parents originated in a majority Muslim society (Turkey) yet who are growing up in a historically Christian and

highly secularized European society (Belgium). Turkish immigrant workers were selectively recruited from the least socioeconomically developed and most religious rural segments of Turkish society (Phalet & Güngör, 2009). Like their parents, the children of Turkish immigrants in Europe are generally socially disadvantaged and exposed to ethnic prejudice and discrimination (Heath, Rethon, & Kilpi, 2008). In the process of acculturation, these youngsters have to come to terms with very different and often conflicting visions of religion in heritage and mainstream cultures. Catholicism is the majority faith in Belgium and a historical part of Belgian public culture and institutions (Dobbeleare, 1995). As in other West European societies, however, the importance assigned to religion and divine authority is generally low at the individual level, in stark contrast with higher overall levels of religious attachment in Turkey (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). Moreover, public attitudes towards religion (Voas & Crockett, 2005) and Islam in particular (Allen & Nielsen, 2002) are generally ambivalent or negative and sometimes overtly hostile.

Against this background of social disadvantage and public hostility, we expected that Muslim youth reaffirm their religion as a valued part of their cultural heritage and ethnic identity. Although empirical research on religious acculturation in European societies is limited, generational trends suggest the effective socialisation of religion within immigrant families even in the context of a secular environment (Lesthaeghe & Neels, 2000; Maliepaard, Lubbers, & Gijsberts, 2010). A fruitful way to address the question of religious acculturation is to compare the religiosity of acculturating youth with that of same-age peers in both sending and receiving societies. This study uses a two-sided cross-cultural comparison (controlling for parental education as a proxy for selective migration) to assess how religious acculturating adolescents are relative to adolescents in both heritage and mainstream cultural contexts. Accordingly, our first research aim was to establish whether acculturating adolescents reaffirm the religious orientation of their Turkish heritage culture in response to a prevailing secular orientation of the mainstream culture.

Looking beyond levels of religiosity, we also compare associations of religiosity with cultural values in acculturating adolescents with adolescents in heritage and mainstream cultures. Religion is about what is valued in life. As a constituent of culture, it gives meaning and direction to one's sense of self and social relationships (Cohen, 2009). Cross-cultural value correlates of religiosity are well-documented (e.g., Meuleman & Billiet, 2011; Saroglou, Delpierre, & Dernelle, 2004), but religion also reflects culture-specific value patterns. Our study extends the cross-cultural comparison with heritage and mainstream cultures to acculturation context so as to distinguish the value pattern associated with religiosity in acculturating adolescents. If acculturating Turkish adolescents reaffirm religion, their religiosity should mirror a distinctive Turkish value pattern. Our second research aim was, therefore, to test whether Turkish-Belgian religiosity accentuates a Turkish – as distinct from a Belgian – value pattern.

Finally, our study directly measures the acculturation orientations and ethnic identification of a specific group of acculturating adolescents. In the case of Muslim minorities, religion separates culture and identity from the mainstream culture and identity (Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003). If acculturating adolescents reaffirm their religion, more religious adolescents should be more strongly committed to their ethnic identity and heritage culture. Hence, a third research aim was to relate the religiosity of Turkish Belgian adolescents to their Turkish identification and to Turkish and Belgian cultural orientations

This study is the first cross-cultural comparison of religious reaffirmation by Muslim minority youth in Europe. Extending insights from cross-cultural research on acculturation and value orientations to the religious domain, we compare adolescent religiosity and associated value patterns across acculturating, heritage, and mainstream cultural groups, and

we relate individual differences in religiosity within the acculturating group to direct measures of acculturation orientations and ethnic identification.

Cultural Differences in Religiosity

Our first aim was to examine the strength of religious attachment in acculturating adolescents relative to their agetates in both heritage and mainstream cultures. Sustained religiosity in acculturating adolescents is part of a continuing orientation towards heritage culture and identity in immigrant families (King, Furrow, & Roth, 2002). In line with the effective socialisation of core cultural values (Phalet & Schönplflug, 2001), the religious socialisation of children in Turkish immigrant families strongly predicts adult religious identification, belief, and practice (Güngör, Fleischmann, & Phalet, 2011). Also outside of the family, strong co-ethnic ties, which are the rule in Turkish immigrant communities, support religious identification and practice in a secular environment (Maliapaard, Phalet, & Gijssberts, in press). Ethnic reaffirmation also refers to the accentuation of the heritage culture and identity by acculturating persons in response to culture contact (Birman & Trickett, 2001). In support of such reaffirmation in Turkish immigrant families, acculturating adolescents report more conservative values (Nauck, 2001; Phalet & Hagendoorn, 1996) and perceive more traditional parenting (Güngör, 2007) than similarly low-SES Turkish youth in Turkey. Extending reaffirmation to the religious domain, we reason that accentuated religiosity is most likely in less welcoming acculturation contexts, where religious difference coincides with disadvantage and prejudice. Accordingly, European-born Muslims who experience more discrimination report higher levels of (reactive) religious identification (Fleischmann, Phalet, & Klein, 2011). Thus, our first hypothesis predicted higher levels of religiosity among Turkish Belgian adolescents as compared with same-age Belgian and Turkish adolescents. In all three groups, we examined age-trends in religiosity to discern whether religiosity is stable from mid to late adolescence.

Religiosity and Value Patterns

A second research aim concerned the association of religiosity with cultural values in acculturating adolescents. More religious persons more strongly promote some and reject other values than less religious persons. Rokeach (1969) found that more religious persons rank values focused on others' needs and expectations (such as forgiving and obedience) higher, and self-focused values (such as being independent and logical) lower than less religious persons. Schwartz (1992) identified ten distinct value types across a wide range of cultures, which he organized around general self-focused (Power, Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation, and Self-Direction) versus other-focused goal orientations (Universalism, Benevolence, Tradition, Conformity, and Security). In a meta-analysis of studies on values and the subjective importance of religion, Saroglou et al. (2004) replicated Rokeach's classic finding. Across cultures, religiosity was positively associated with other-focused values, particularly tradition and conformity, whereas associations with self-focused values, especially self-direction, stimulation, and hedonism, were negative. An additional analysis of Schwartz's other-focused values across European societies replicated cross-cultural associations of religiosity with these values (Meuleman & Billiet, 2011).

Looking beyond cross-cultural value patterns, we propose that associations of religiosity and values also vary in accordance with different cultural models of interdependence and independence. Models of interdependence in many non-western cultures stress other-focused values: they prioritize social obligations, relatedness to close others, and collective goals. In contrast, models of independence in most western societies stress self-focused values: They support individual rights, autonomy, and some degree of separateness from close others (Kağıtçıbaşı, 2007; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). If religion is culturally

patterned, religiosity in cultures of interdependence, such as Turkey, should more strongly oppose self-focused, and reinforce other-focused, values than in cultures of independence, such as Belgium. Along those lines, Saroglou et al. (2004) reported stronger positive associations of religion with other-focused values in Turkey than in Western European societies, including Belgium. In line with religious reaffirmation, the second hypothesis therefore predicted that Turkish Belgian religiosity is most positively associated with core other-focused values, in line with Turkish interdependence, and most negatively with self-focused values, as opposed to Belgian independence.

Acculturation of Religiosity

The third research aim was to analyse how religious involvement in acculturating youth relates to their ethnic identification and acculturation orientations. Studies of ethnic identity development do not usually distinguish religion from ethnicity (Phinney & Ong, 2007). However, ethnic and religious ties overlap almost completely in Turkish immigrant communities in Europe (Verkuyten and Yildiz, 2007). Maliepaard et al. (2010) found more overlapping ethnic and religious identifications in second- (vs. first-) generation Turkish Muslims. We conclude that ethnic and religious identity development go hand in hand in acculturating Turkish youth.

A well-established bi-dimensional approach of acculturation orientations distinguishes heritage culture maintenance from the adoption of mainstream cultural values, practices, and social ties (Berry, 2002; Ryder, Alden & Paulhus, 2000). Although ethnic identity is closely related to culture maintenance, strong ethnic identification does not necessarily entail high levels of heritage culture maintenance, nor low levels of adoption (Snauwaert, Soenens, Vanbeselaere, & Boen, 2003). As religiosity is part of the heritage culture of Muslim minorities, more religious Muslims were more oriented towards maintaining the heritage culture than their less religious peers (Saroglou & Mathijssen, 2007). In addition, to the extent that religiosity increases the social and cultural distance between Muslim minorities and mainstream society, a strong religious attachment might complicate the development of a sense of belonging in acculturating adolescents. Along those lines, more religious Muslims were sometimes less willing to adopt the mainstream culture (Friedman & Saroglou, 2010; Güngör et al., 2011; Saroglou & Mathijssen, 2007), and they had fewer social contacts with mainstream friends and neighbours (Maliepaard et al., in press). Our third hypothesis stated that Turkish Belgian adolescents who identify more strongly as Turkish, and who value heritage culture maintenance more, will be more religious, and those who value mainstream culture adoption more will be less religious.

Method

Participants

Participants were urban high school students in Flanders, the Dutch speaking part of Belgium, and in Ankara, Turkey. Ankara is similar to Flanders in population size (about 5 million); and both urban areas have attracted large numbers of migrants from socioeconomically less developed rural parts of Turkey. In urban Turkey low-SES parents are usually internal migrants from the same socioeconomically less developed and more religious rural parts of the country where most international migrants also originated. Comparison groups were 366 Turkish (53% boys), 197 Turkish Belgian (52% boys), and 203 Belgian adolescents (52% boys) aged 15 to 20, $M_{age} = 17.30, 17.80, \text{ and } 17.07$ ($SDs = 1.20, 1.46, \text{ and } 1.51$), respectively. Turkish Belgians were slightly older, $F(2, 764) = 15.16, p < .01, \eta^2_p = .04$. Average maternal education was highest among Belgians (more than full secondary) and lowest among Turkish Belgians (primary) with Turkish mothers situated in between (lower secondary education), $F(2, 762) = 53.30, p < .01, \eta^2_p = .12$. Most Turkish

Belgians were born in Belgium (93%) from Turkish-born parents (87%); others migrated at age 11 or younger or had one Belgian-born parent.

Procedure

Participants filled out questionnaires with the approval of their parents or school authorities. They were informed about the general purpose and intended use of the research, the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses, and their right to participate or to decline to participate in any part of the research. Questionnaires were in Turkish for Turks and in Dutch for Turkish Belgians and Belgians.

Measures

For scales that were not available in Turkish or Dutch, translations were obtained through sequential forward- and back-translation from an English source by bilingual native Turkish and Dutch speakers. The (English) source and (Turkish and Dutch) target versions of the questionnaires were compared by multilingual psychologists, and final revisions were made to optimize the linguistic equivalence of the measurements.

Religiosity—To assess the overall strength of adolescents' religious attachment, we used Schwartz' (2003) single-indicator measure of the importance of religion, which showed good construct validity (Schwartz & Huisman, 1995), from his Portrait Values Questionnaire. It describes a hypothetical person for whom "religious belief is important. She/He tries hard to do what his religion requires." Participants indicated how much like them this person was from (1) *very much like me* to (5) *not like me at all* (reverse coded so that higher scores indicate more religiosity). To form a reliable composite measure and to formally test cross-cultural equivalence, Schwartz's measure was complemented with three additional indicators. Participants indicated their agreement with self-descriptions from (1) *I am not religious* to (3) *I strictly follow the rules of my religion*, and how important it is for their parents that "I live according to religious rules?" and their commitment to pass religion on to their children ("I want my future children to live in accordance with the rules of my religion.") from (1) *not important at all* to (7) *extremely important*. Responses on the four Likert scales were transformed into z-scores to reduce method variance.

Values—Cultural values were measured by means of the *Portrait Values Questionnaire* (PVQ; Schwartz, Melech, Lehman, Burgess, & Harris, 2001) which has been used with children and adolescents (e.g., Knafo, Daniel, & Khoury-Kassabri, 2008). We used the 21-item version from the European Social Survey (Schwartz, 2003) which measures ten values: Power, Achievement, Hedonism, Stimulation, Self-Direction, Universalism, Benevolence, Tradition, Conformity, and Security. Most values are measured by two items; universalism has three items. Participants read short verbal portraits that describe a hypothetical person's goals or wishes and that reflect a particular value. For example, the portrait "Being very successful is important to her/him. She/He likes to impress other people." depicts a person for whom achievement values are important. Participants indicate how much they are like this person from (1) *very much like me* to (5) *not like me at all*. All items are reverse coded so that higher scores indicate that a value is more important.

Acculturation orientations—Ryder et al.'s (2000) 20-item *Bidimensional Acculturation Scale* was used to measure the acculturation orientations of Turkish Belgian adolescents towards heritage culture maintenance ($n= 10$ items) and mainstream culture adoption ($n= 10$ items). Twin items for Turkish and Belgian cultures refer to attitudes and behaviours across various domains such as language use, social contacts, and cultural preferences (e.g., "I often participate in Turkish [Belgian] cultural traditions."). Responses range from (1) *completely disagree* to (5) *completely agree*. The scale has been validated in Dutch with

Turkish Belgian adolescents (Güngör, 2007). In the present study, α s for culture maintenance and adoption were .82 and .78, respectively.

Ethnic identification—A 5-item scale, taken from commonly used ethnic identification measures (Phinney & Ong, 2007; Verkuyten, 2007), assessed the centrality of ethnic identity as part of the self in acculturating youth. A sample item is: “Being a Turk is an important part of myself.” Participants rated each item from (1) *completely disagree* to (5) *completely agree* ($\alpha = .71$).

Results

Religiosity: Cultural Differences

To compare levels of religiosity across cultures, we first tested and confirmed via multi-group confirmatory factor analysis that the religiosity measure satisfied the stringent requisite of scalar invariance (equal item intercepts) (Meuleman & Billiet, 2011).¹ When four religiosity items loaded on one common factor religiosity, the final model with equality constraints on item loadings, $\Delta\chi^2(6) = 12.52$, *ns*, and on intercepts across comparison groups showed a good fit, $\Delta\chi^2(6) = 14.83$, *ns*, $\chi^2(18, N = 757) = 63.215$, $p < .001$, $\chi^2/df = 3.51$, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .04, with within-group standardized factor loadings ranging from .53 to .92, $p < .001$. Thus, the religiosity concept and measure shared cross-cultural equivalence across Turkish, Turkish-Belgian, and Belgian adolescents (α s = .84, .77, and .78, respectively). Composite religiosity scores were calculated as the average of *z*-transformed scores on the 4 items.

In view of significant and differential associations with religiosity, the analysis of group differences in religiosity was controlled for gender, age, and maternal education as a proxy for parental socioeconomic status (SES). Only Turkish Belgian boys were somewhat more religious than girls, $r(195) = .18$, $p = .013$. Turkish adolescents of more highly educated mothers were less religious, $r(366) = -.26$, $p < .001$, suggesting an inverse association of religiosity with SES. Finally, only Belgian older adolescents were less religious than younger adolescents, $r(203) = -.26$, $p < .001$. In the absence of significant correlations with age, religiosity in both Turkish groups remained stable through mid to late adolescence.

To test the first hypothesis about different levels of religiosity, analysis of variance compared adolescent religiosity across cultural groups, controlling for gender, age, and maternal education. The analysis revealed significant and large group differences, $F(2, 756) = 135.41$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2_p = .26$. Turkish Belgian adolescents were the most, and Belgian adolescents the least, religious group, M s = .51 and $-.75$, SD s = .57 and .74, respectively. Turkish adolescents were situated in between, $M = .15$, $SD = .76$, being more religious than their Belgian peers, yet less so than Turkish Belgians. The latter finding was replicated with a subsample of Turkish adolescents with similarly low educated mothers ($N = 231$). Turkish Belgians were significantly more religious than this mostly comparable subsample of Turks, $M = .28$, $SD = .73$, $F(1, 423) = 11.53$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2_p = .03$. As expected, acculturating adolescents reaffirm their religious attachment relative to Turkish peers in Turkey. Importantly, higher religiosity in acculturating adolescents is not fully explained by the lower education of their immigrant parents.

¹As the religion item was used to measure religiosity, the other item measuring tradition values was allowed to load on a combined conformity-tradition factor, in line with Schwartz's (1992) assertion that tradition and conformity share a common motivational orientation towards the submission of self to social expectations. One hedonism item with non-significant loadings was excluded; the other hedonism item was allowed to load on a combined self-direction – hedonism factor because hedonism and self-direction share an underlying motivational orientation towards openness to change (Schwartz, 1992).

Religiosity and Value Patterns

To compare religiosity-value associations across cultures, we first tested and confirmed the required metric invariance (equal factor loadings) of the PVQ through a multi-group confirmatory factor analysis (Meuleman & Billiet, 2011). The model with 19 items successfully identified eight values.^{2, 3} The model with equal loadings across the three groups showed good fit, $\chi^2(410, N = 750) = 838.63, p < .001, \chi^2/df = 2.05, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .08$, and the model fit was not significantly worse than that of the baseline model without equality constraints, $\Delta\chi^2(22) = 27.15, ns$. Within-group standardized loadings ranged from .35 to .75, $p < .001$, across items and groups. As “value measures cover heterogeneous aspects of broad value constructs, rather than more homogeneous aspects of a narrowly defined construct” (Schwartz et al., 2001, p. 532), composite value indices fall short of conventional criteria of internal consistency. However, Davidov, Schmidt, and Schwartz (2008) documented the construct validity of the 21-item PVQ on large national samples in 20 European countries (including Belgium).

To test the second hypothesis on differential value associations between cultural groups, item scores were first centred around the individual means over all 19 items to rule out individual differences in response styles or general approach tendencies (Schwartz, 2003). Next, composite indices for the eight values were computed by averaging centred item scores, and their partial correlations with religiosity were calculated in the three comparison groups, controlling for gender, age, and maternal education (see Table 1).

Across groups, adolescent religiosity was negatively associated with self-focused values, and positively with other-focused values. In addition, Fisher r to z transformations of Turkish, Turkish Belgian, and Belgian correlations showed a more positive association of religiosity with tradition-conformity as core other-focused values in Turkish Belgians than in Belgians, $z = 1.53, p = .06$. Turkish-Belgian religiosity was also more positively correlated with security, yet less positively with benevolence values, than religiosity in Turks, $z = 2.13, p = .02$, and $z = 2.22, p = .01$, respectively. Belgian religiosity differed from Turkish religiosity in these values, $z = 1.69, p = .02$, and $z = 1.8, p = .04$, respectively. As predicted, a negative association with self-direction-hedonism as core self-focused values was stronger in Turkish than in Belgian adolescents, $z = 2.38, p = .02$. Unexpectedly, a Turkish Belgian association was similar to the Belgian, hence weaker than the Turkish, association, $z = 1.53, p = .04$. Yet, the negative association between religiosity and self-focused achievement values was stronger in Turkish Belgians than in Belgians, $z = 2.95, p = .002$, and in Turks, $z = 3.47, p < .001$. Turkish and Belgian religiosity were unrelated to achievement values (see Table 1).

In sum, more religious Turkish Belgians reaffirmed a cultural model of interdependence by endorsing core other-focused conformity-tradition values more, and self-focused achievement values less, than did more religious mainstream adolescents. The fact that Turkish-Belgian religiosity was more strongly associated with achievement (negatively) and security values (positively) than in Turkey points to the accentuation of other-focused values by more religious acculturating youth in line with interdependence.

²RMSEA below .05 in combination with SRMR values below .09 indicate excellent fit; values below .08 and .10, respectively, indicate good fit (Byrne, 2001).

³All factor loadings were significant at $p < .001$; the tradition item loaded on a combined conformity-tradition factor, the hedonism item on a combined self-direction-hedonism factor. Power, Achievement, Stimulation, Benevolence, and Security factors consisted of 2 items, Self-Direction-Hedonism, Universalism, and Conformity – Tradition factors contained 3 items.

Acculturation of Religiosity

Our third hypothesis concerned the association of religiosity in acculturating adolescents with their ethnic identification and acculturation orientations. Table 2 shows partial correlations, controlling for gender, age, and maternal education. As expected, adolescents' religiosity was positively associated with their orientation towards the heritage culture and identity. More religious Turkish Belgians were more involved in the maintenance of Turkish culture, and they were also more strongly committed to their Turkish identity. We found no support for the predicted negative association of adolescents' religiosity with their willingness to adopt the Belgian culture.

Discussion

We asked the key question what happens to adolescents' religious attachment in the context of acculturation when heritage and mainstream cultures diverge in their religious orientations. We focused on religiosity and associated values and acculturation orientations among acculturating Turkish Belgian adolescents with a highly religious Islamic heritage culture (Turkey) who grow up in a highly secularised and increasingly anti-Islamic European society (Belgium). Our research aimed to establish and elucidate religious reaffirmation in acculturating adolescents by way of two-sided cross-cultural comparisons with most like (same age and similar SES) adolescents in both heritage and mainstream cultural contexts. Moreover, we extended cross-cultural comparisons beyond different levels of religiosity to differential associations with cultural value patterns, and supplemented group differences with direct measures of acculturation orientations and ethnic identification in the acculturating group. The cross-cultural findings establish and elucidate the reaffirmation of religion by adolescents in a highly secular and generally less welcoming acculturation context, where religious difference is marked by disadvantage and prejudice.

In line with the first hypothesis, Turkish Belgians were reportedly the most, and Belgians the least, religious group, after taking into account their gender and age and maternal education. Heightened levels of religiosity relative to both heritage and mainstream cultures accord with our expectation that religious traditions and ties are reinforced in response to a prevailing secular orientation in European societies. Notably, Belgians were the only adolescents to become less religious with age, possibly reflecting their enculturation into a predominant secular orientation. This result contrasts with sustained religiosity into later adolescence for both Turkish samples, in line with a prevailing religious orientation especially in the less educated families of internal or international Turkish migrants.

Our second hypothesis examined implications of the apparent reaffirmation of religion by acculturating adolescents for value patterns associated with religiosity. The findings mostly supported reaffirmation, but they also added some qualifications. In line with a Turkish cultural model of interdependence, we predicted that more religious Turkish and Turkish Belgian youth alike would be more strongly committed to other-focused values, and more opposed to self-focused values, as compared with more religious Belgian youth. More religious adolescents across cultural groups favoured other-focused conformity-tradition values more (relative to less religious peers), as expected, but Turkish Belgian religiosity was most strongly associated with conformity-tradition values. Conformity and tradition generally encourage the restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to violate social expectations or cultural traditions. As adolescence is a time of heightened concern with belonging and acceptance in like-minded groups, the common cross-cultural pattern suggests a developmental role of religion in the maintenance of social relationships and group cohesion (McCullough & Willoughby, 2009), which may be reinforced in the context of acculturation. However, we also expected a stronger devaluation of self-direction – hedonism as core self-focused values among highly religious Turkish and Turkish Belgian

adolescents relative to their Belgian peers. Expectedly, more religious Turkish adolescents were more opposed to self-direction and hedonism than were more religious Belgian adolescents, but religious Turkish Belgians, like Belgians and unlike Turks, were rather less opposed to self-direction and hedonism. The latter finding contradicts the expected reaffirmation of interdependence and suggests instead decreased conflict between being religious and pursuing personal pleasure and choice, in line with a cultural model of independence. More religious Turkish Belgians and Belgians alike favored other-focused benevolence values less, and security values more, strongly than did more religious Turks. Saroglou et al. (2004) reported weaker associations of religion with other-focused values in socioeconomically more developed countries, including Belgium. Thus, religion might lose its interpersonal solidarity function in the social welfare systems of European societies (Saroglou et al., 2004), yet still provide a sense of security in a culture of independence where social relationships are chosen, hence less stable, and more culturally diverse, hence more tense (Roccas & Schwartz, 1997). In the context of acculturation, more religious adolescents devalued achievement or personal success. Apparently, they were less oriented towards demonstrating competence or meeting standards of excellence in the Belgian mainstream society. In light of this finding, religious reaffirmation might be understood as a reactive return to tradition in the face of restricted opportunities for success in less welcoming receiving societies.

In line with our third hypothesis on religion and acculturation, religiosity was part of Turkish Belgian adolescents' ethnic identification and their orientation toward maintaining their heritage culture. In combination with enhanced conformity–tradition values in more religious adolescents -- these findings corroborate religious reaffirmation, and they highlight the key role of religion in accentuating the heritage culture and consolidating the ethnic identity of acculturating adolescents. In the absence of a negative association between religiosity and mainstream culture adoption, more religious Turkish Belgian adolescents may still experience some degree of conflict with mainstream cultural values as evident from lower achievement values.

Our study has a balance of strengths and limitations. First, we limited the study to Turkish Belgian adolescents. They represent one of largest minority groups with a majority Muslim background across Western European societies. Future comparative studies might include other religious minorities and less socially disadvantaged Muslim minorities to test the boundary conditions of increased religiosity in acculturating adolescents and related processes of religious reaffirmation in response to culture contact. Our study is cross-sectional, and longitudinal studies could elucidate the implications of sustained religiosity for adolescent development and adaptation in acculturation contexts. Religious reaffirmation by acculturating adolescents also invites future research into the interplay of religion with more general processes of acculturation and self-development in adolescence and the transition to adulthood. As our findings show, cross-cultural perspectives on religion, values, and acculturation can contribute to understanding the role of religion in the social and self development of acculturating youth.

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Table 1

Partial Correlations between Religiosity and Values in Turkish, Turkish Belgian, and Belgian Adolescents, Controlling for Adolescents' Gender and Age and Maternal Education

	Turks (N = 359)		Turkish Belgians (N = 187)		Belgians (N = 194)	
	<i>R</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Self-focused values						
Power	-.10	.05	-.13	.08	-.02	.78
Achievement	.07	.22	-.24	<.001	-.06	.38
Stimulation	-.04	.47	-.02	.77	-.15	.04
Self-direction-Hedonism	-.34	<.001	-.19	.01	-.14	.05
Other-focused values						
Universalism	.04	.40	.09	.20	.02	.83
Benevolence	.15	.004	-.05	.52	-.01	.84
Tradition-Conformity	.22	<.001	.30	<.001	.15	.03
Security	.02	.68	.21	.004	.17	.02

Note. Similar patterns of associations were found with zero-order and partial correlations.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and Partial Correlations between Religiosity, Acculturation Orientations, and Ethnic Identification among Turkish Belgian Adolescents, Controlling for Adolescents' Gender and Age and Maternal Education (N = 197)

Variables	<i>M^a</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range	Correlations (<i>p</i>)		
				1	2	3
1. Religiosity	.51	.57	-1.70-1.40	-		
2. Heritage (Turkish) Culture Maintenance	4.05	.61	2.00-5.00	.39 (<.001)	-	
3. Mainstream (Belgian) Culture Adoption	2.91	.65	1.00-4.33	-.12 (.10)	-.16 (.03)	-
4. Ethnic Identification	3.86	.76	1.20-5.00	.37 (<.001)	.64 (<.001)	-.10 (.18)

Note. Similar patterns of associations were found with bivariate and partial correlations.

^aHigher scores reflect stronger agreement with the attribute measured.