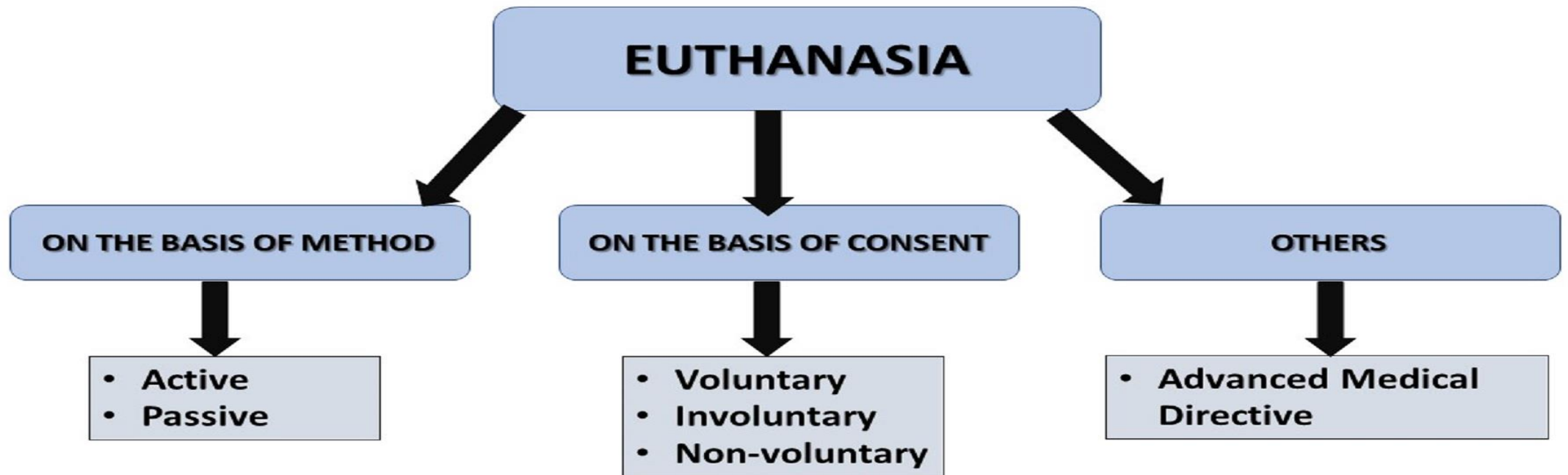




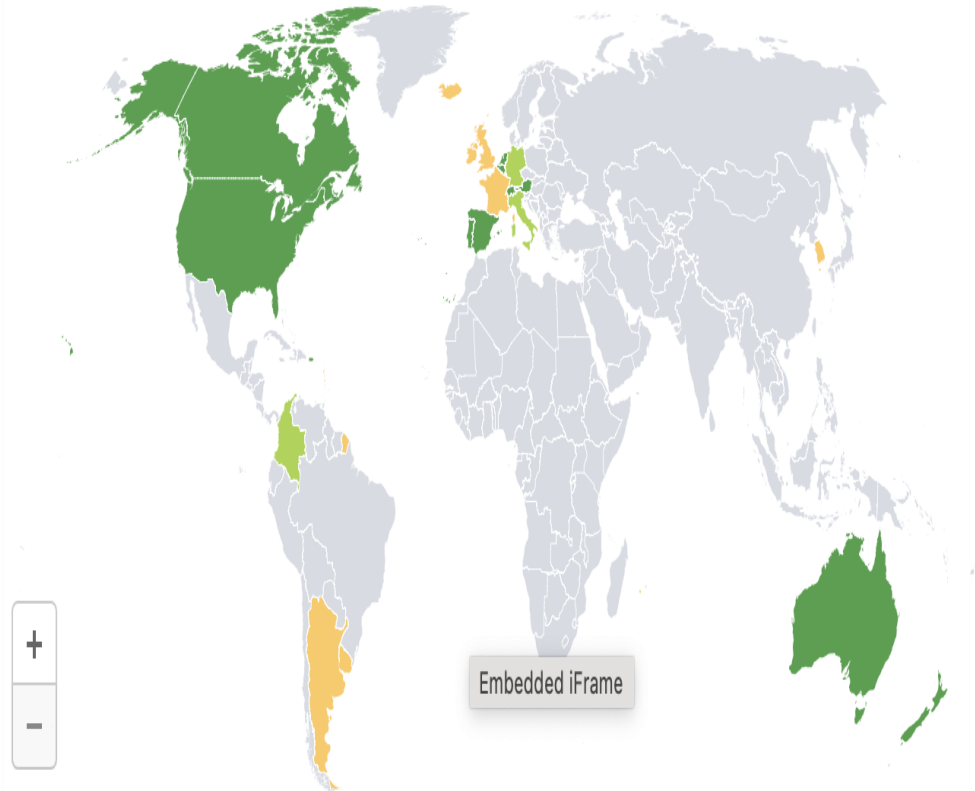
- Medically Assisted Suicide (MAS)
- Voluntary Active Euthanasia (VAE)



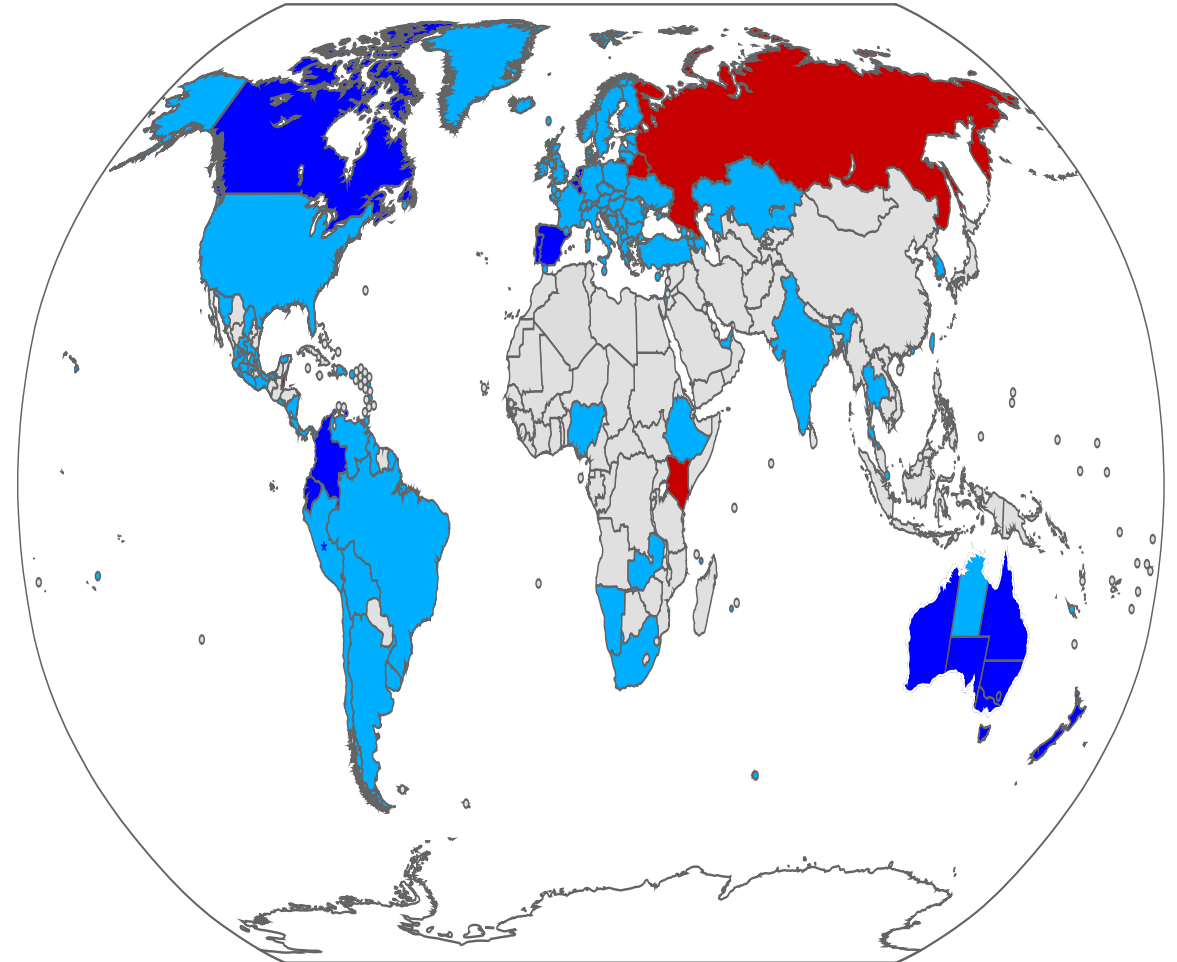


### Countries Legalize MAS

■ Legislated ■ Yet to be legislated ■ Under consideration ■ Not allowed



### Countries Legalize VAE





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# Why Should MAS and VAE Not Be Legalized in Islamic Regions?

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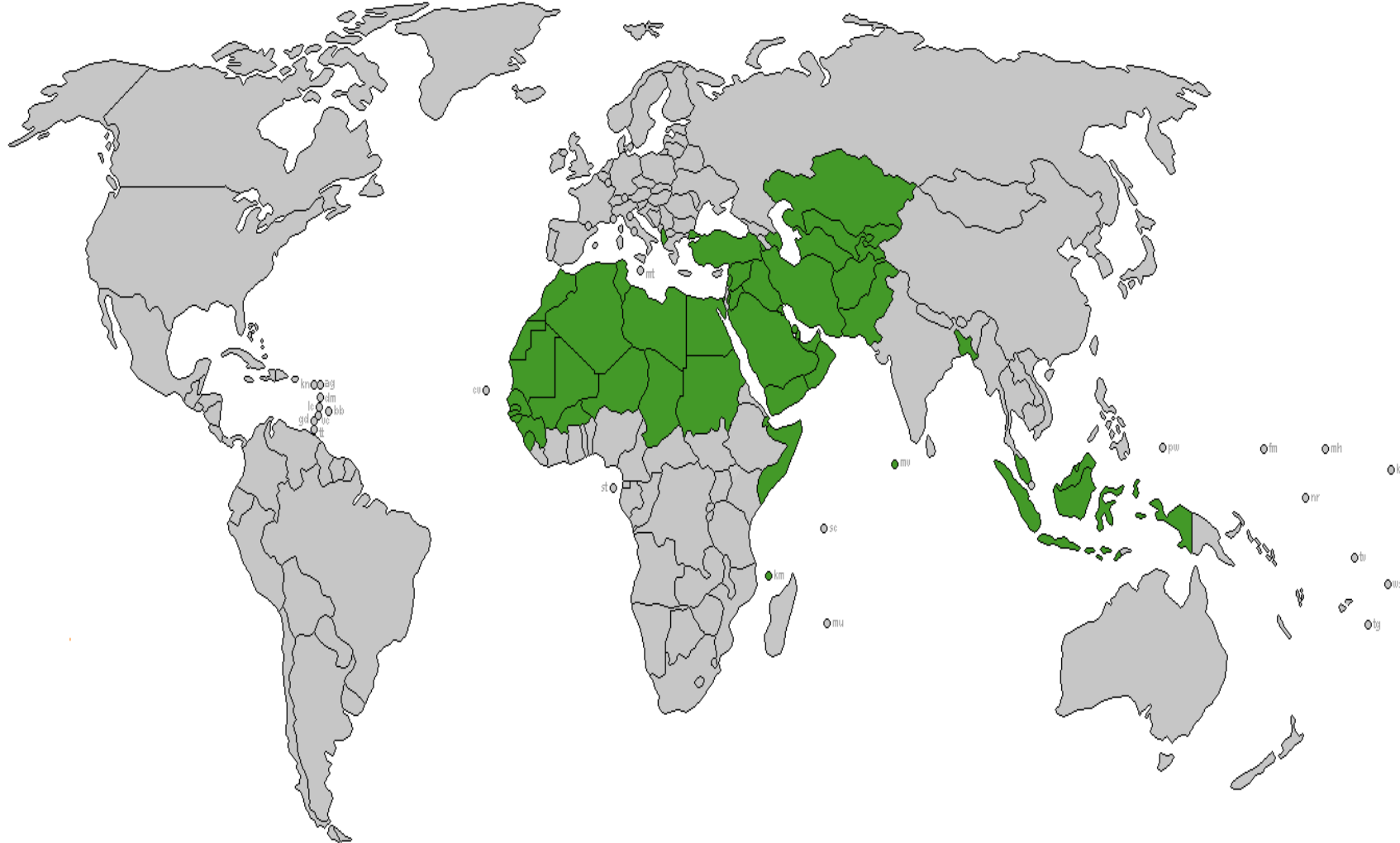
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## Islamic Regions



## “Region”?

- “By region”- where the prevailing moral culture shapes the way of life
- Some individuals in this region may not adhere to this mainstream culture
- Treatment of individuals (e.g., Christians, Buddhists, Hindus) within these regions who do not adhere to the mainstream Islamic moral culture



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# Islamic Classical Moral Convictions on Murder and Suicide

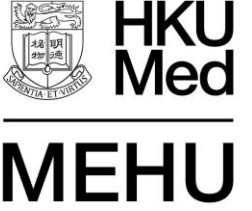
**Quran** - The literal sayings of The God revealed to Prophet Muhammad

**Sunnah** –The sayings, actions, and practices of Prophet Muhammad



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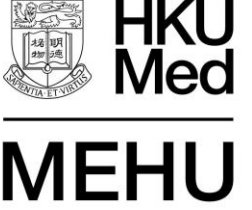
## Quran – Killing and Murder

- 17:33 -“Do not kill the soul which Allah has forbidden, except by right”
- 4:29 –“Do not kill each other, surely God is Merciful to you”
- 5:32- “If an individual kills anyone it will be as if s/he killed all of humanity; and whoever saves a life, it will be as if s/he saved all of humanity”
- 4:30 -“Whoever commits any aggression and injustice, we shall cast him into the Fire”
- 4:93 –“Whoever kills a **believer intentionally**, the Curse of the Almighty are upon him, and a great punishment is prepared for him”



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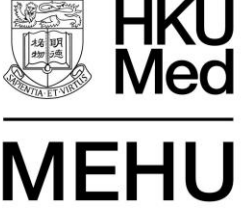
## Sunnah –Killing and Murder

- “Associating anyone with The Almighty God, disobedience to parents, killing a person, and false utterance”



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## Quran - Suicide

- 4:29 -explicitly prohibits suicide -"And do not kill yourselves. Indeed, Allah is to you ever Merciful"
- 3.145 -"Nor can a soul die except by God's leave, the term being fixed as by writing"
- 3.156 -"It is God that gives Life and Death, and God sees well all that ye do"



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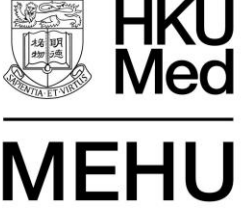
## Sunnah - Suicide

- Taking one's own life, even in times of **severe suffering**, is displeasing to God
- A person commits suicide by stabbing himself will be subjected to a similar punishment in Hell
- A warrior who had distinguished himself in battle but, wounded several times, lost heart and killed himself



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# Contemporary Islamic views on MAS and VAE

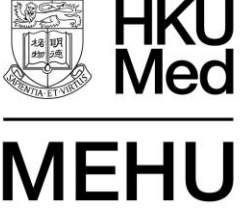
## *Islamic Code of Medical Ethics (1981):*

- Intentionally causing/accelerating death in the medical context is murder
- Muslim doctor should not directly intervene to voluntarily take life of a patient
- Similarly, physicians must not administer drugs that accelerate death, even after an explicit request by patients or relatives
- Clinicians do their best to help incurable patients spend their lives under good care, moral support, and freedom from severe pain or misery



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## *Islamic Code of Medical Ethics (1981):*

- Physician – “an instrument of God” & “a catalyst through God”
- Assisting patient to die or committing suicide would go against fundamental teachings
- Physicians are required to focus on providing high quality care to their ailing patients
- This can improve patients’ illnesses by managing symptoms & providing support
- Alternatives include hospice care, pain management, and spiritual/emotional support
- If such care is not available/does not work well, clinicians may provide high doses of medication to alleviate suffering
- Patients should be provided familial care to alleviate suffering while waiting for the will of the Almighty

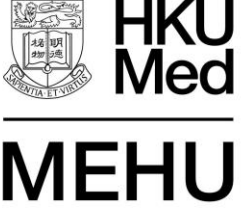
## *International Islamic Code for Medical and Health Ethics (2004):*

- Art. 61 –a physician should not participate in ending patient's life, even requested
- Severe deformity, incurable disease/unbearable pain that cannot be alleviated by usual painkillers
- Physician should encourage patients to endure suffering, reminding rewards
- **This objection applies to –**
  - a) the deliberate killing of a person who voluntarily requests the end of their life;
  - b) physician-assisted suicide;
  - c) the deliberate killing of newborn infants with deformities that may or may not threaten their lives
- Finally, the Code focuses on providing patients with comfort and relief from suffering rather than intentionally ending their life



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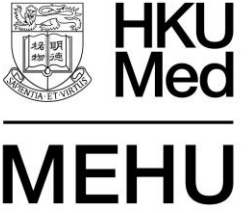
## WHO's Regional Office- *Islamic Code of Medical and Health Ethics (2005)*

- *2nd Principle* –human has right to life, must be respected and protected
- *5th Principle* -“no harm and no causing harm”
- Subjecting a patient to therapeutic interventions that may cause hazards
- Clinicians, **bound by their oath**, preserving life, not terminating it
- Other religious laws also share similar views with Muslims



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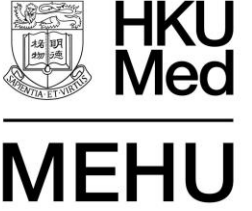
## Islamic Laws Guide Muslims Attitude

- Patients in Islamic regions are guided by Islamic faith that guide their attitude
- Taking active measures to end one's life are not sought by Muslims
- Even suffering associated with severe illnesses, Muslims demonstrating patience and perseverance
- patients in such regions are only seeking quality palliative care
- This aligns with Islamic emphasis on preserving life/mitigating suffering
- Muslims treat their bodies well during lifetime are to be rewarded with happiness (Quran 2:25; 11: 105, 108)
- Legalizing MAS or VAE-as a morally wrong and is unacceptable



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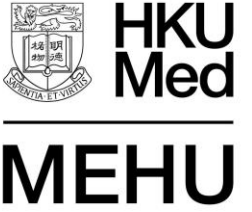
## Concerns with Cultural Minorities

- Muslims view that their ethics concerning MAS and VAE represent a morally true code applicable to all individuals within their regions, irrespective of their religious affiliations
- This inclination is not exclusive to Islamic culture
- Various cultures may all assert that their own ethical framework embodies universal moral truths
- While every moral culture contains authentic ethical guidelines shaping human conduct and legislation, challenges arise when these frameworks conflict particularly on issues such as the justification of MAS or VAE
- Each culture must begin from its unique moral premises and arguments, which may not be shared by others



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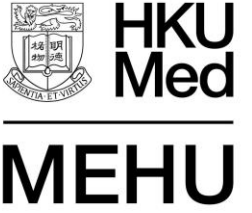
## Concerns with cultural minorities

- However, what Muslims can say to secular liberals living in their regions, although they are very few?
- Secular liberals uphold the principle of **respect for individual autonomy**. They would argue that MAS and VAE should be legalized in Islamic regions for respecting individual autonomy.
- They would add that such legalization does not disrespect those who are opposed to MAS and VAE, because they have freedom not to accept or conduct it.
- They would emphasize that such legalization only shows respect for those who want to accept it, and this is reasonable and legitimate according to their view



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## Concerns with cultural minorities

- Modern cultures prioritize **autonomy and individual rights**
- Other cultures place a strong emphasis on **relationship and community**
- While Western cultures consider the individual as morally fundamental, while **relation-centered** moralities focus on fostering mutual relationships
- Secular liberals living in an Islamic region should follow the old saying of **“when in Rome, do as the Romans do,”**
- As long as basic rights and liberties (including the liberty of leaving the region) is safeguarded
- This emphasizes the importance of **cultural sensitivity and adaptation** when engaging with different communities and environments
- Individuals should abide by the customs and laws of the region they are in, rather than imposing their own cultural beliefs and practices on the majority



## “Thick” or “Thin” Principles

- Liberals advocating for legalized MAS/VAE in an Islamic region should respect and adhere to the prevailing mainstream cultural/legal norms, even if they personally disagree with them
- “Thick” universal bioethics for uniform global application is neither justifiable nor feasible. We should instead pursue a “Thin” universal bioethics
- It is morally legitimate for some regions to legalize MAS and VAE, but it is also morally legitimate for other regions not to legalize them
- These regions should respect each other in relation to their distinctly respective mainstream moral cultures, engaging in genuine cross-cultural dialogue/solution