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Insecurity, demography and religion

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Structure

I. Context: A religious revival?

II. Theories of secularization

III. Research design

IV. New evidence and results

V. Conclusions:

- Affluent societies are increasingly secular
- Yet world has more people who are religious than ever before
- Growing global religion gap – unclear implications

I: Context

The background of the slide is a blurred photograph of a city skyline. A prominent white skyscraper is visible in the center-right, and a blue tower is on the right. The sky is a clear blue. The text 'I: Context' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Context

- Contemporary European events highlight role of religion
 - Debate about religious symbols (headscarves) in France
 - Bans on new minarets in Switzerland
 - Role of multiculturalism in Germany
- Worldwide revival of religion? Myth of secularization? Starke and Finke

Or growing religious gap?

- Religious values remain strong in developing societies with rapidly growing populations, due to high levels of existential insecurity
- Secularization evident in post-industrial societies with shrinking populations
 - Western Europe and Scandinavia
 - Canada, Australia, New Zealand, even USA

II: Theoretical framework



I:Theories of secularization

- **Max Weber – Enlightenment Rationality**

- The loss of faith

- **Emile Durkheim - Functionalism**

- The loss of purpose

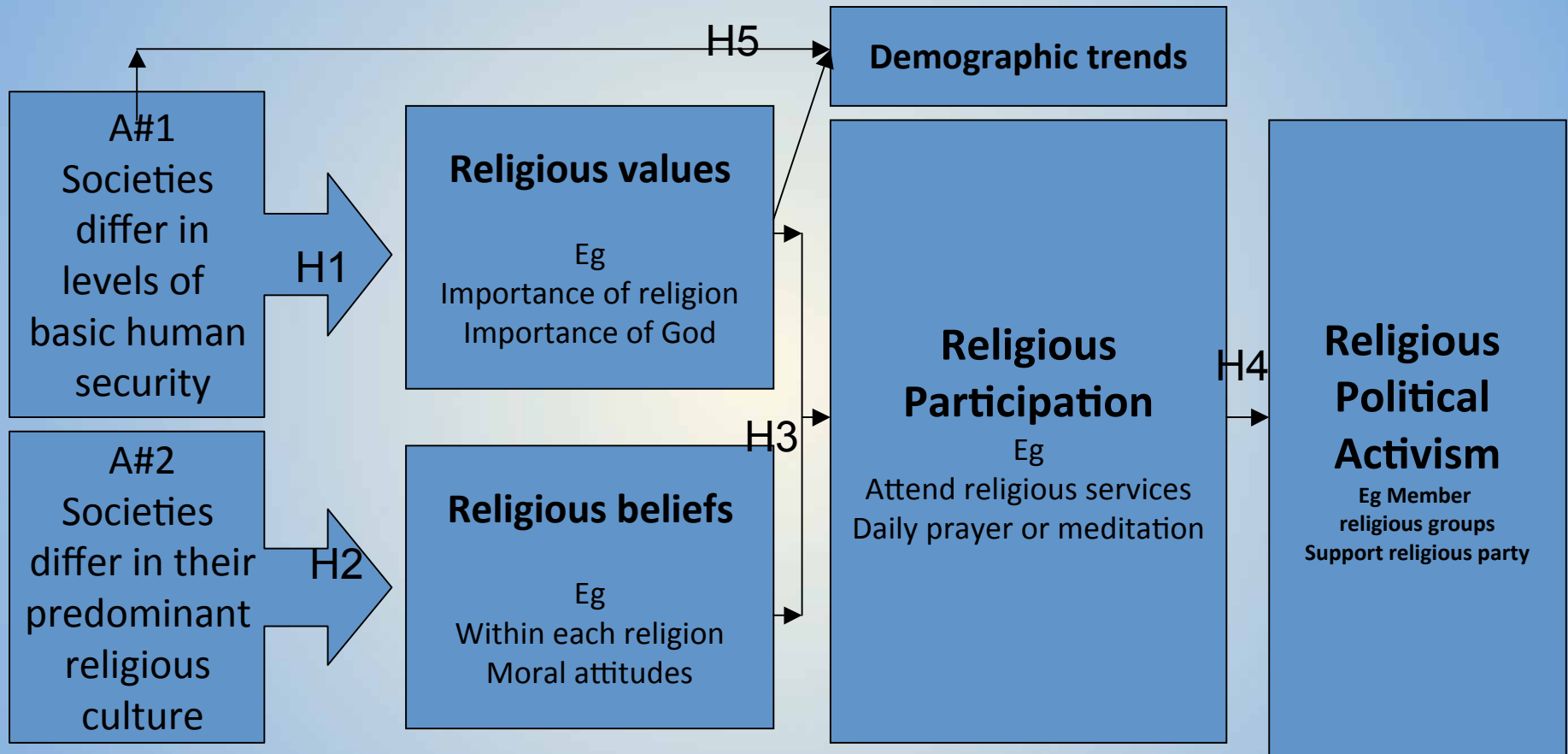
- **Stark and Finke - Religious market theory**

- *“After nearly three centuries of utterly failed prophecies and misrepresentations of both present and past, it seems time to carry the secularization doctrine to the graveyard of failed theories, and there to whisper ‘requiescat in pace’”* Stark and Finke. 2000. *Acts of Faith*.
- Public ‘demand’ for religion is constant
- Supply-side competition among clergy energizes religiosity
- Religious participation explained by religious pluralism and freedom of religion
- Loss of competition

Religiosity and security

- Pippa Norris and Ronald Inglehart *Sacred and Secular* (2004 CUP)
- Existential security diminishes anxiety and stress, promotes feelings of psychological well-being-- which, in turn, reduces the importance of *religious values* in people's lives.

Theory of secularization & security



Issues arising?

- Focus on religious **values**, not residual forms of religiosity – symbolic elements, identities, and social practices remain
- Institutional dimensions of religiosity?
- Post-Christian New Age forms of religiosity?
- Non-transcendent forms of religion?
 - Transcendent religions acknowledge supernatural forces or other-worldly power
- American exceptionalism?
- How is insecurity measured?
 - Multiple forms of vulnerability



III: Research design

Measuring insecurity

- **Objective indices**

- eg Human Development Index, rates of maternal mortality, longevity, material wealth

- **Perceptual indices**

- Gallup World Poll 2007 in 132 nations (N. 142,671)
- Lived Poverty Index
- “Have there been times in the past twelve months when you did not have enough money... To buy food that you or your family needed? To provide adequate shelter or housing for you and your family?” “Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with your standard of living?” “Home has no running water, no electricity and no landline telephone.”

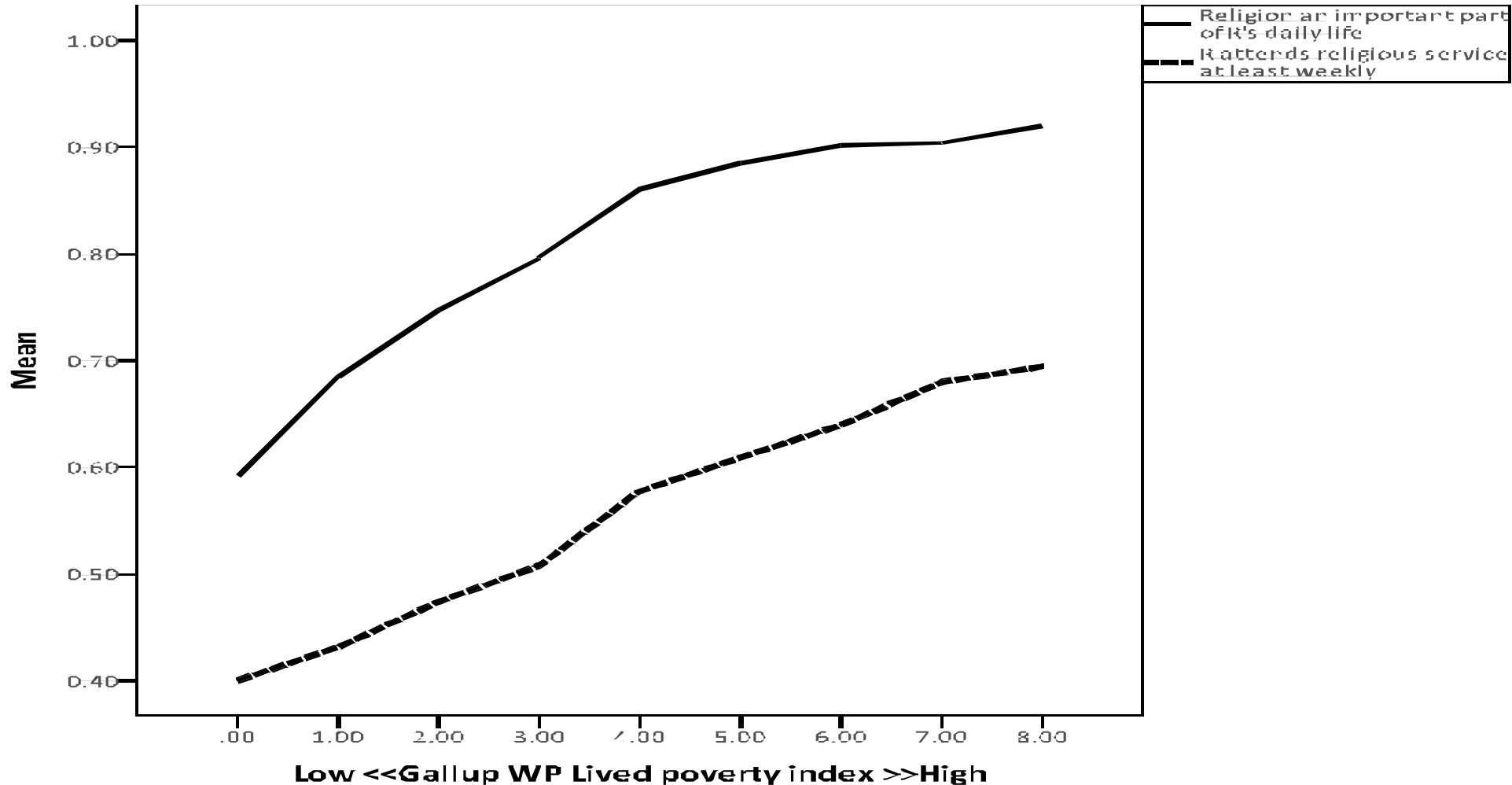
Measuring religiosity

- Gallup World Poll 2007 in 132 nations (N. 142,671)
- Religious values
 - *“Is religion an important part of your daily life?”*
- Religious practices
 - *“Have you attended a place of worship or religious services within the last seven days?”*



III: New evidence & results

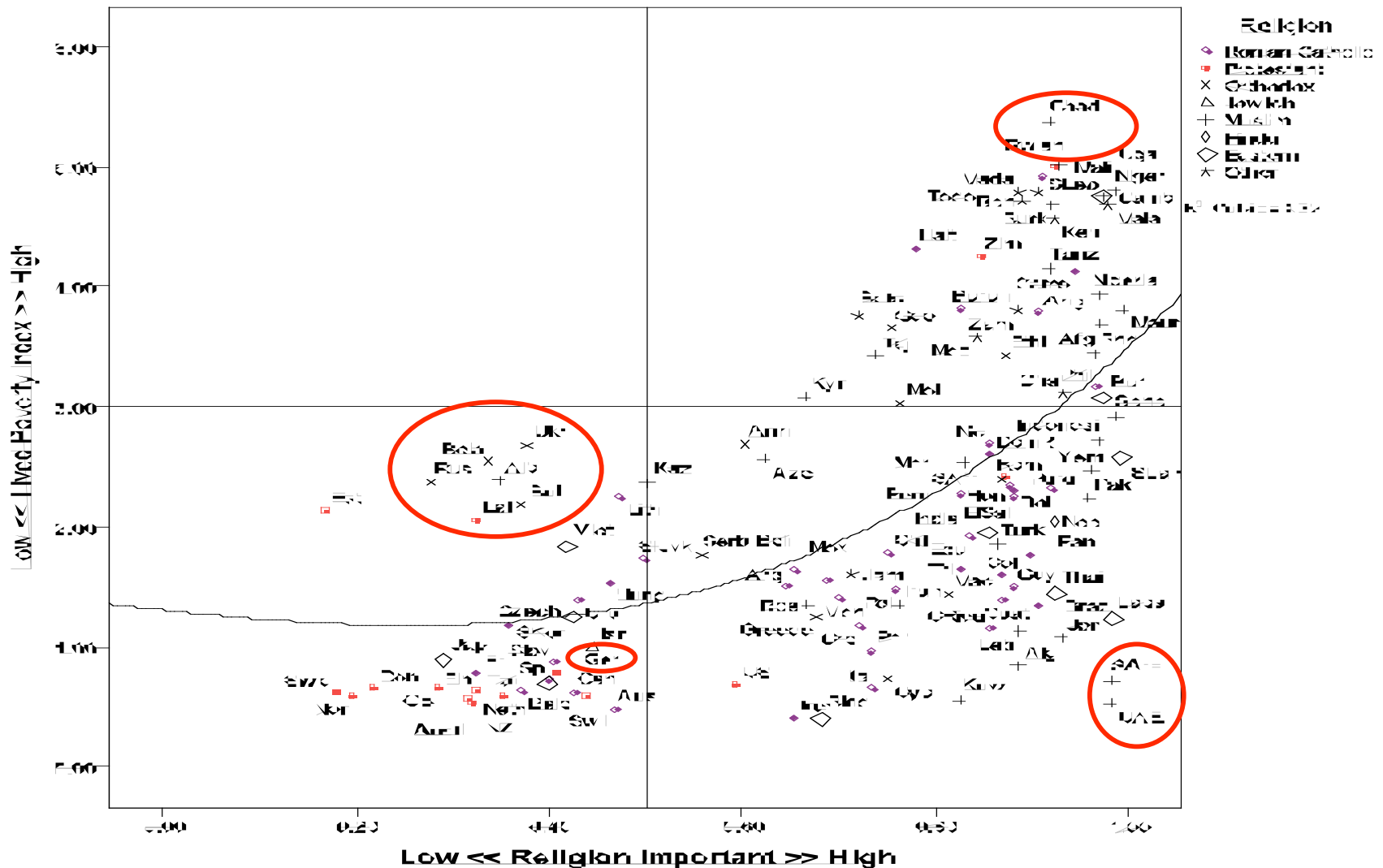
Lived poverty and religiosity



Notes: Religious participation: *“Have you attended a place of worship or religious service within the last seven days?”* Religious values: *“Is religion an important part of your daily life?”*

Source: Gallup World Poll 2007

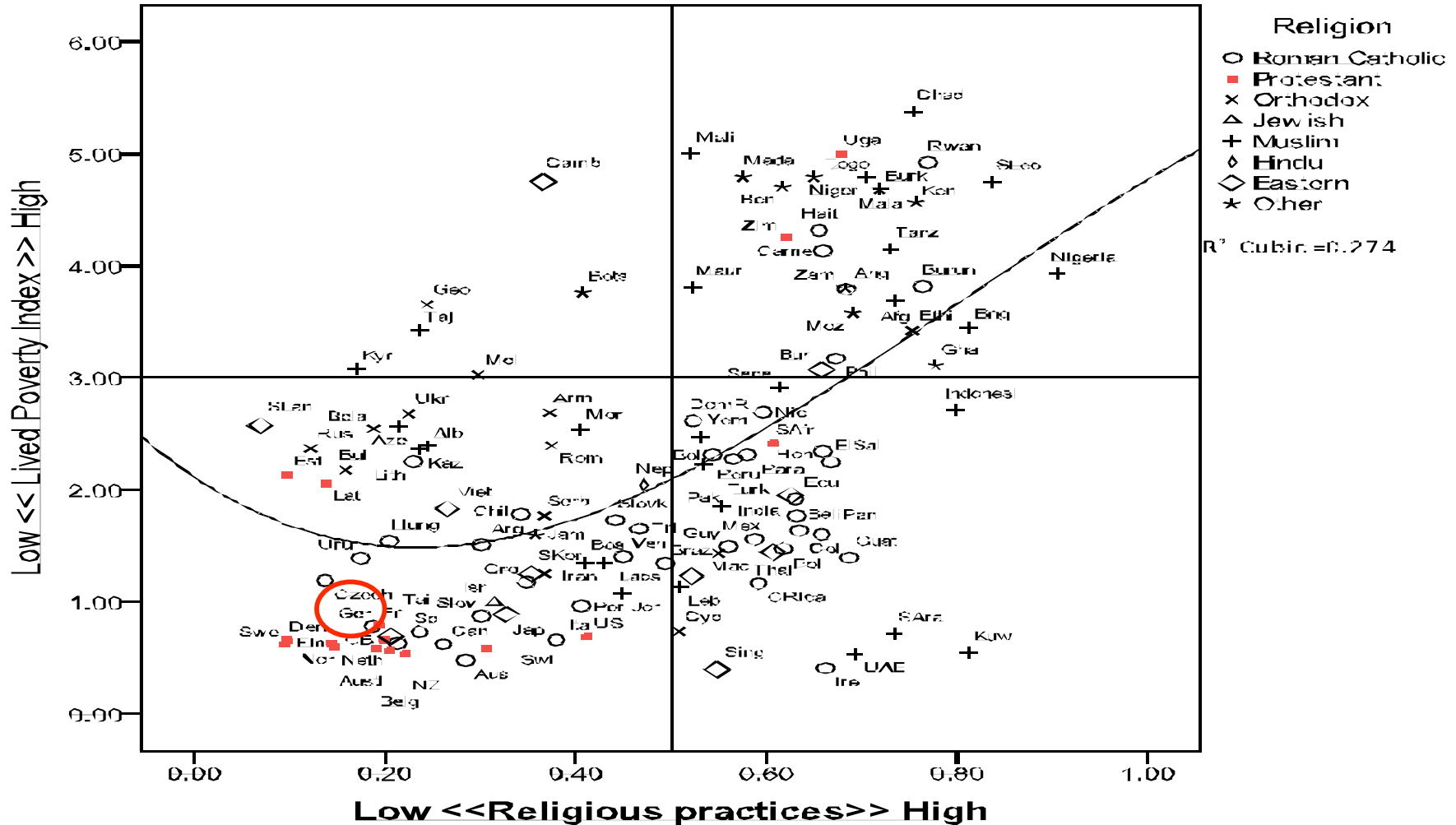
Lived poverty and religious values



Notes: Religious values: "Is religion an important part of your daily life?"

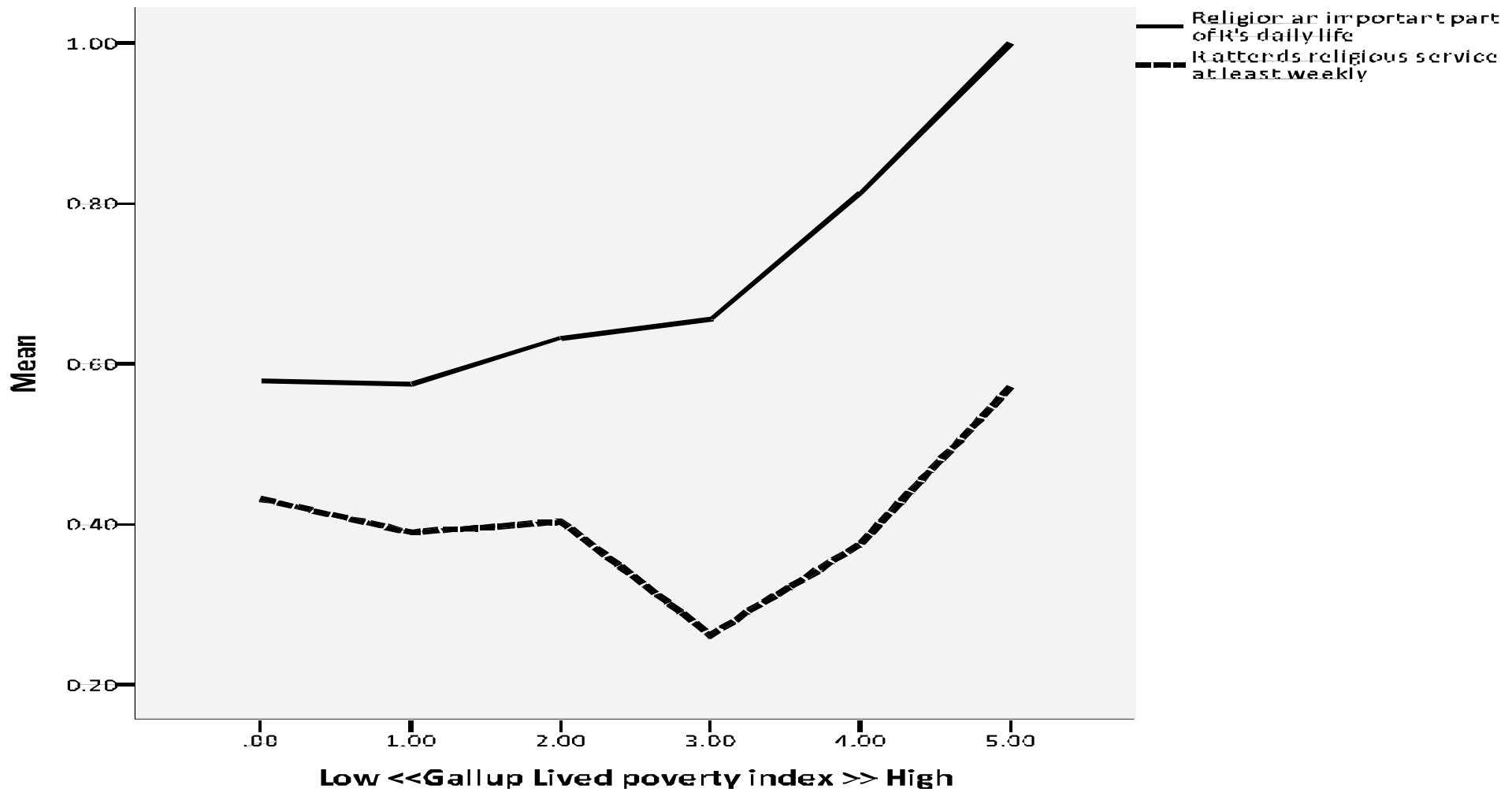
Source: Gallup World Poll 2007

Lived poverty and religious practices



Notes: Religious participation: "Have you attended a place of worship or religious service within the last seven days?" **Source:** Gallup World Poll 2007

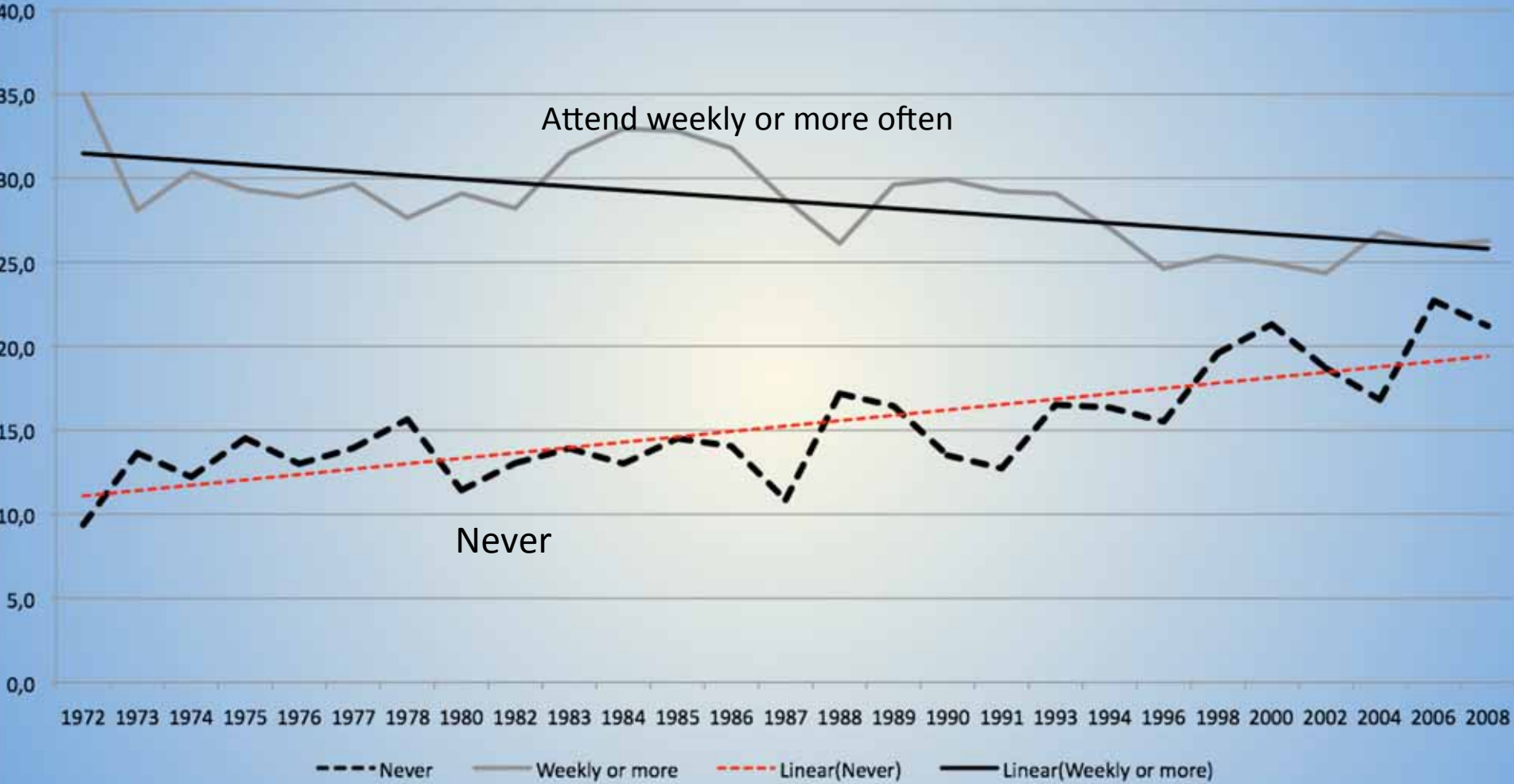
US values exceptionalism? No



Notes: US sample only. Religious participation: *"Have you attended a place of worship or religious service within the last seven days?"* Religious values: *"Is religion an important part of your daily life?"* **Source:** Gallup World Poll 2007

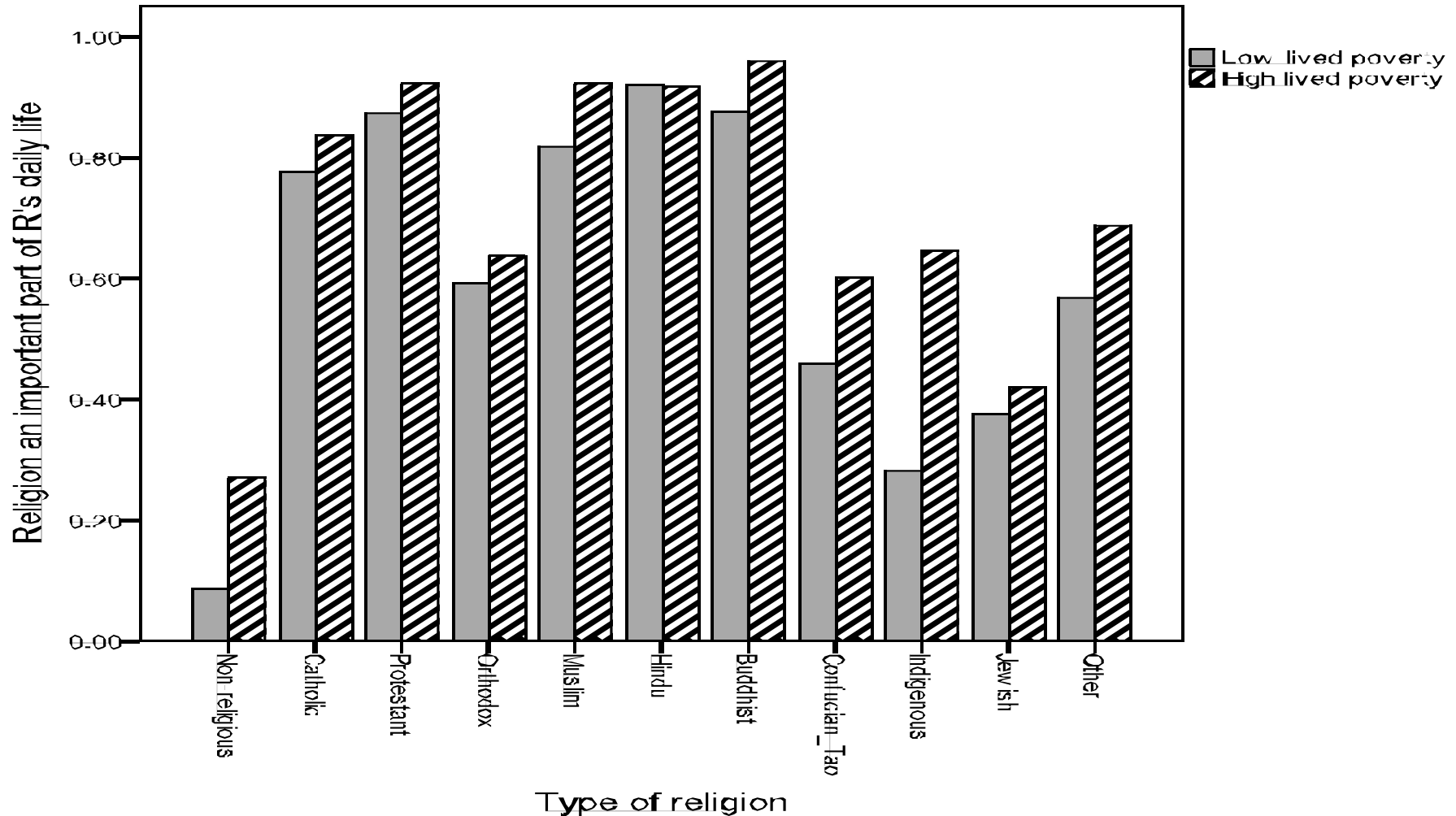
	ALL NATIONS		U.S. ONLY	
	Religious values	Religious practices	Religious values	Religious practices
INDIVIDUAL LEVEL				
Demographic controls				
Age (in years)	-.005***	-.002***	.013***	.008*
	(.000)	(.003)	(.003)	(.003)
Sex(male=1)	-.308***	-.037***	-.561***	-.115
	(.013)	(.012)	(.120)	(.118)
Socioeconomic resources				
Lived Poverty 8-pt index	.272***	.146***	.129*	.114*
	(.004)	(.001)	(.014)	(.059)
Constant (intercept)	.708	.362	.115	.663
Nagelkerke R²	.078	.028	.048	.011
N. respondents	121,658	120,394	1,198	1,203
N. nations	120	120	1	1
Percentage correctly predicted	71.2	57.3	59.2	59.4

Eroding church attendance, US



Note: Q: "How often do you attend religious services?" Never/ At least once a week or more often. **Source:** US General Social Survey 1972-2008 N. 52,510.

A Christian bias? No



Notes: Religious values: *“Is religion an important part of your daily life?”* Type of religion is defined in the survey by the individual respondent.

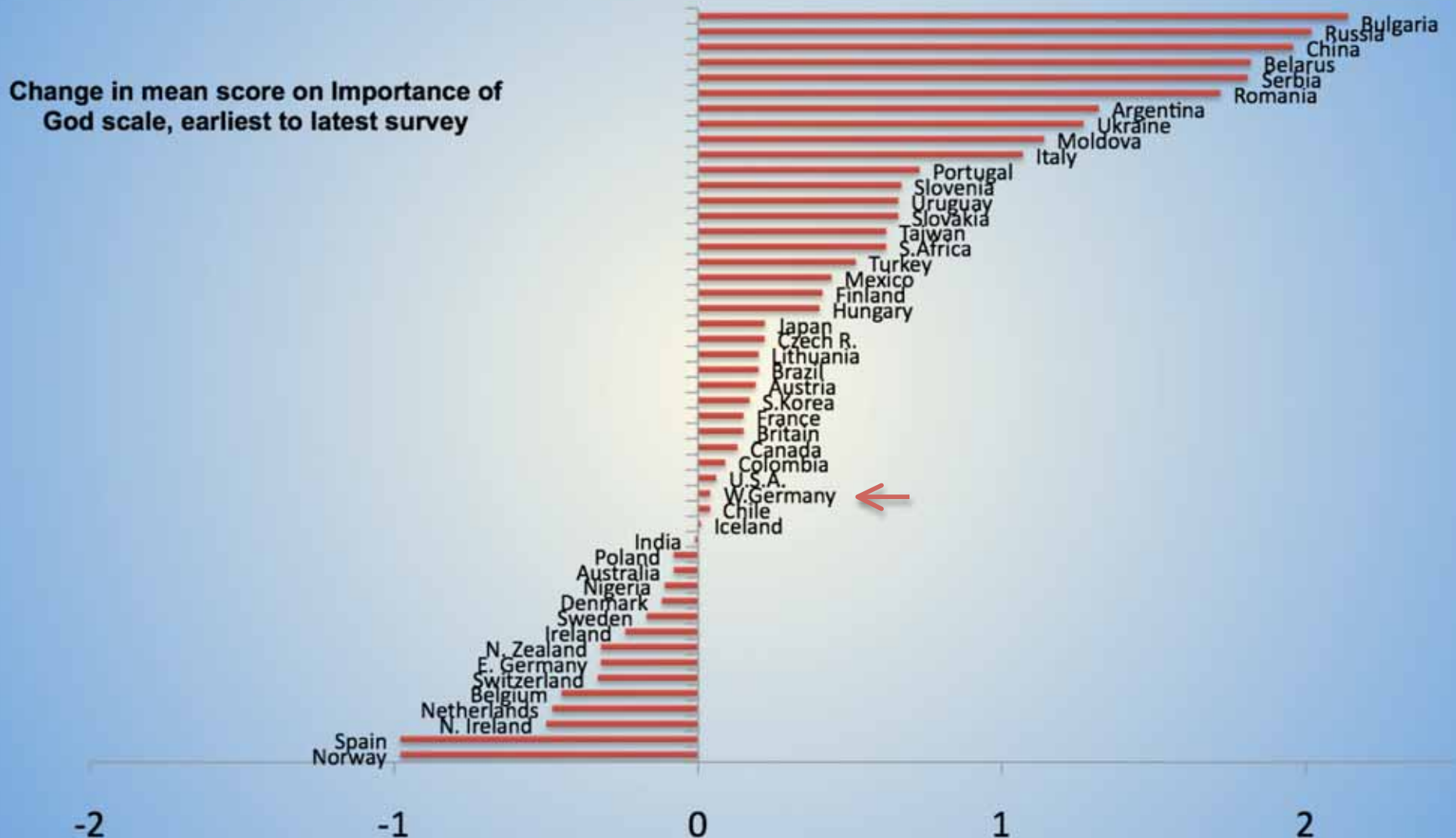
Source: Gallup World Poll 2007

Robust results: Subjective insecurity also confirms link



Note: "Now I will briefly describe some people. Using this card, would you please indicate for each description whether that person is very much like you, like you, somewhat like you, not like you, or not at all like you? V82: Living in secure surroundings is important to this person; to avoid anything that might be dangerous." **Religious values:** "How important is God in your life? Please use this scale to indicate. 10 means "very important" and 1 means "not at all important." **Source:** World Values Survey 2005-7

Changes in religiosity over time



Notes: "How important is God in your life? Please use this scale to indicate. 10 means "very important" and 1 means "not at all important." **Source:** World Values Surveys and European Values Study, 1981-2007.

Religion and demography


	Importance of religion (Gallup poll)	Attendance at religious services (Gallup poll)	N of countries
Total fertility rate per woman, 2005 (World Bank)	.560**	.553**	122
Total fertility rate per woman, 2000 (World Bank)	.680**	.699**	124
Annual population growth rate 2002-2015 (UNDP)	.698**	.687**	120
Annual population growth rate 1975-2002 (UNDP)	.713**	.694**	125
Population ages 0-14 (% of total) 2006 (World Bank 2007)	.733**	.712**	125
Lived poverty index (Gallup Poll)	.541**	.497**	128


Note: All correlations are significant (**) at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). **Sources:** Gallup World Poll 2007, World Development Indicators 2007 (World Bank), Human Development Report 2006 (UNDP)




IV: Conclusions

Conclusions

 Virtually all advanced industrial societies are moving towards more secular orientations.

 Yet the world as a whole now has more people with traditional religious values than ever before

 The religion gap becomes increasingly salient on the global agenda, but the consequences for international conflict remain unclear.

Further details: www.pippanorris.com