

“Religious Revival and Megatrends in Global Security, Economy and Governance”

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In the recent past, two veins in political science have been prospering. One is related to the power shift taking place at the world level due to the rise of Asia and the decline of the West (including the United States, its number-one-power status notwithstanding) in a context of high interdependence among nations, with consequent acute problems of global governance. The other is related to the apparently growing role of religion in a globalized and increasingly populated world and the consequent decline, possibly the end, of the secularist approach to the handling of public affairs, including international relations.

Often the two lines of analysis appear to run independently of each other, as if geopolitics and the institutions of the world were indifferent to the spread of religion, and the so-called ‘God’s return’ was indifferent to the changing fabric of the international system. The purpose of the paper is to try to explore interrelations and, when appropriate, make connections between the two.

Global Trends 1945-2010

Security

To start with, attention will be devoted to the evolution of the international system by looking at a number of relevant broad trends visible in world affairs since the end of World War Two. Matters of war and peace will be dealt with first.

The word ‘war’ needs qualification. The Center for Systemic Peace conducted an in-depth analysis of “armed conflicts”, distinguishing traditional inter-state wars from “societal warfare”, the latter defined as revolutionary and ethnic wars.¹ As can be seen in fig 1, from the 1950s through the 1980s inter-state conflicts, including all wars of independence from the colonial systems, oscillated around a relatively low level in number per year, while civil warfare increased dramatically, though mostly due to the protractedness of existing conflicts rather than the emergence of new ones. With the end of Cold War, inter-state warfare fell further, down to approximately one third of its previous level; while societal warfare, after reaching a peak, began a downward trend equally as dramatic. This continued until 2009, when the summed magnitude reached approximately the same level as in the mid-60s, though with a lower share of inter-state conflicts. Consistent with this picture is that of the number of states experiencing any form of warfare in each year, as in figure 2, taken from the same source.

Let us then take first the currently prevailing societal warfare and look at the data provided by the World Bank's World Development Report 2011 on Conflicts Security and Development.ⁱⁱ As can be seen in figure 3, taken from it, the yearly amount of human casualties from civil wars, which had wildly oscillated from the 1960s to the peak of 1988, has decreased substantially since, more than the number of countries involved, implying a relative scaling down of average massacre. The number of battle-related deaths in 2008 is estimated at 50,000, approximately one third of the average of the 1960-89 interval, while the world population has more or less tripled in the meantime.

Turning to inter-state wars, a valuable source of information is the Human Security Report 2009/10, originating from the Simon Fraser University in Canada.ⁱⁱⁱ Fig 4.1 and fig. 4.2 taken from it allow us to see the marked decline since the mid of the last century both in the number of inter-state conflicts per year including anti-colonial ones, and the number of lives lost per conflict. The combined effect of the two trends is a drop from more than 60,000 battle-related deaths per year in the 1950s to less than 1,000 per year in the first decade of this century. A second useful piece of information coming from the HSR, in agreement with the main thrust of mentioned World Development Report-2011, is the clear correlation between the risk of an armed conflict occurring within a 5-year interval and per-capita income, which is visible in figure 5.

There seems to be consistency among these various data, converging on a discontinuity in the trends at the 1989-91 contingency and suggesting that the end of Cold War brought about a transformation with wider security implications than just the easing of East-West tensions.

If conflicts of various kinds have gone down in number and lethality, we are however reminded of the immanent risk of war by continuing social and ethnic clashes, by the slow moving nuclear proliferation and by the competition for scarce food and resources. Indicative of the remaining risk is what has been happening to global military expenditure. As indicated by the chapter on World Military Spending of Global Issues, during the late '80s and early '90s its cumulative amount worldwide seemed to follow the above trend in hostilities, descending from a peak around 1985.^{iv} But after a plateau at the transition to the 21st century, it began to ascend again to reach and recently surpass that peak (fig 6). To look at the specific contributions that make up such cumulative data would go beyond the scope of this paper. Suffice to underline the huge share by the United States in absolute terms and by the Republic of China in terms of yearly increase.

Economy, Technology and Society

The historical period under consideration shows a similarly interesting tendency as far as the economy and society are concerned, with a significant geo-economic shift taking place during the last decade of the 20th century. Over a pattern of long-term growth interspersed with instabilities, prosperity was at first the privilege of the West, with Japan as its Asian appendix, from the 1950s through the '80s. Then the world scene was taken by the "emerging economies", *grosso modo* in two acts: first by Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, and Malaysia until the Asian financial crisis of 1997-99; secondly by China, India and Brazil from the onset of the 21st century. Globalization had taken off.

Per-capita income has shown a correspondingly unprecedented growth pattern, despite the constant increase in global population (never to be neglected). In particular, the outlook of what a few decades ago used to be called the Third World has changed dramatically, especially during recent years. From 2005 to 2010 half a million escaped absolute poverty, defined as an income of \$1.25 a day or below. Three quarters of these people are from China or India, but the poverty rate of Sub-Saharan Africa has also fallen below 50%. In 2007 the number of those defined as "poor" had

already fallen below 878 million people worldwide, somewhat below Paul Collier's 'bottom billion', a work which came out in the same year. That means that one of the most important Millennium Development Goals set in 2000 by the UN, i.e. to halve the global poverty rate by 2015 from its 1990 level, was possibly reached some eight years in advance. As the Brookings Institution's 'Poverty in Numbers' states, "never before have so many people lifted out of poverty over such a brief period of time".^v

The main engines of globalization are trade expansion and investment liberalization, which have seen impressive growth over the last two decades. Both the merchandise component of the former and its service component are visible in fig 7. Fig 8 moreover shows how Foreign Direct Investment in developing countries has increased since the early '90s.^{vi} Of course neither trade nor FDI, their exponential growth notwithstanding, ensure fair distribution of wealth, but the overall consequence has been an unprecedented build-up of interdependence among states, as said before. Such global development has taken place under Western and above all American influence, and to an extent according to the framework of international institutions born at Bretton Woods at the end of WWII. Later, functional groups such as now the G-20 – offspring of the G-7, again a Western creature that came into being during the '70s to confront economic instability – have become the potential frameworks of the hoped-for global governance.

The economic blossoming in a conspicuous part of the globe has been accompanied by a metamorphosis of the human experience, in a mutual and profound cause-effect relationship. Of the many related transformations, three appear to be of primary importance: the spreading of education and literacy, now visible over two generations or more, the emancipation of women, particularly during the last three decades, and the explosion of the internet since the beginning of the current century. The last development is evident in fig 9, which shows the incredibly rapid spread of internet from end of 2000 to March this year. Ever since the first webpage in 1991 was added to the already rapidly expanding sphere of telecommunications, the geographic distance separating individuals and nations has been losing relevance.^{vii}

As for the changing role of women in society, the decrease in fertility rates and its consequences on the size of the family are just one indicator, but are a very relevant factor in the new form human society is taking. For example, it took 180 years for the British average family to go from five to two children, while the same evolution required 50 years in South Korea and only 20 in Iran. The global number of births per woman and their distribution worldwide for the last forty years can be seen in fig 10. Major differences remain, of course, but with the sole exception of Sub-Saharan Africa there seems to be an overall convergence towards a not so distant zero-growth rate of 2.1 children per woman: Europe increasing its birth-rate towards this level, and everywhere else decreasing towards it.^{viii} The remaining surplus in certain areas joined with the increase in the life expectancy, another important and positive factor of change in global society (the average Mexican lives longer now than the average Briton in 1955), shows that the demography bomb, in this world that has become seven billion strong this very month of October 2011, may be smaller than we thought not long ago but is still ticking.

Yet these trends should be approached with caution. At least three major possible developments may alter them substantially. First, the current mainly Western adverse economic juncture seems to be affecting other parts of the world, including the most dynamic, with the risk of generating a Great Global Recession whose depth, duration and consequences would be hard to predict. The second factor for reversal is half conjunctural half structural and consists of widening income disparity, which is no longer limited to emerging economies and/or authoritarian regimes, but now affects also

advanced and democratic countries, first and foremost the United States. The third factor is mainly structural and derives from the development model that has dominated over the last half century and has been spreading with few or no corrections following the global economic improvement: that is the unequal distribution and/or potential shortage of resources, such as raw materials, drinkable water and clean air. All three, either separate or converging with the demography bomb, could lead to destabilization.

Governance

Historically, advancing human communities have sought ways to develop civil societies and set up forms of government; to exert power, enhance security and administer justice. This changing, increasingly interconnected and interdependent world may not escape this rule. Thus it may be of interest to look at few examples of institutional evolution both within the now numerous and various states that make it up, and in the fabric of their mutual relations.

The first example regards the nature of national institutions. Reference is made here to the aforementioned study by the Center for Systemic Peace, which adopts a distinction between democracies, autocracies and “anocracies”, i.e. “states with incoherent or inconsistent authority patterns: partly liberal, partly authoritarian”^{ix}. The evolution of the numbers of world countries seen to belong to each of the three groups, over the same period 1945-2010 considered above for conflicts, is visible in fig 11. The respective trends seem to indicate again a rather evident shift in the 1980s-1990s transition, with a marked decrease in the number of autocracies, only some of which however have turned into democracies. There is a favorable trend in the spreading of democracy during the past two decades. The CSP study includes a breakdown by mega-regions, including Europe, whose important contribution following the fall of the Berlin Wall could be expected. The lagging behind of regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa, and at least until the recent so-called Arab Spring, the Middle East and North Africa, is not unexpected.

A second case-study concerns the practice of capital punishment. In 1995, as many as 41 nations executed citizens given the death penalty, but that figure gradually decreased to 23 in 2010. The numbers of executed people vary largely from country to country: in 2010 China alone carried out executions in the thousands (exact figures unknown); that is, more than the rest of the world put together. Over a similar time span the number of countries ‘abolitionist for all crimes’ increased steadily, to exactly double from 48 in 1991 to 96 in 2010.^x

A third, unrelated example is the number of peace-keeping operations undertaken by the international community. Fig 12, taken from the Human Security Report 2009/10 shows once more a steep surge after 1989 both in UN and non-UN operations, then a pause – which was accompanied by a difficult reappraisal – leading to the beginning of the 21st century with a slight increase.^{xi} Moreover the recent Security Council resolution concerning Libya contemplated a military intervention by the international community based on the principle of the UN responsibility to protect civilians– an innovative development.

The final example is the International Criminal Court, the first treaty-based such body, established in the framework of the UN to help end impunity for the perpetrators of the most serious crimes of concern to the international community. It is governed by the Rome Statute, which entered into force on July 1st 2002 after ratification by 60 countries. Until now it has been adhered to by 118 states, not

including China and Russia, nor indeed the United States, originally a sponsor of the concept. Thirteen cases have been handled by the ICC so far and increasingly the option of deferral to it seems to have become accepted internationally, including the recent case of Gaddafi and associates, under the initiative of a non-party such as the current US administration. The impact may be deeper than the number of cases tells us. “Time is running out for former government officials accused of murder, genocide and crimes against humanity,” writes Kathryn Sikkink of the University of Minnesota: “From the end of Nuremburg trials in 1949 until the 1970s, there was virtually no chance that heads of state and government officials would be held account for human rights violations. But in the last two decades, the likelihood of punishment has increased...”^{xii}.

However, none of these partial signs of spreading democracy and respect for human life as well as embryonic forms of global governance and rule of law can be termed systematic and irreversible. States remain the dominant actors on the world scene and, whether failed or robust, they claim full sovereignty and reject interference from outside. Both claims however seem to be subject to increased scrutiny on the grounds not only of shared values but possibly of shared interests also.

Perceptions and Realities

The author of this paper was in elementary school during World War Two, and wore the Balilla uniform on Saturdays as prescribed by the fascist regime. He was not aware then of the fact that, on average, every day of that naturally thoughtless life of his was witnessing, throughout the world but particularly in the continent surrounding him, the violent passing away of nearly thirty thousand human beings – combatants, civilians (including several of his age), concentration camps inmates and others.

A generation later, while his kids were going to school, he met a couple who had decided not to have children, because they did not want to generate potential victims of the nuclear holocaust, they – and many with them – deemed probable, to a degree that would make the massacres of WWII pale in comparison. Happily for the rest of us, mutual deterrence did work so as to spare us a nuclear World War Three. However, many killings were perpetrated and many conflicts took place in the shadow of the Cold War, from the last phase of the Gulag and the revolution in China, to the independence wars against decaying colonial powers and wars by proxy involving the two superpowers, let alone the many bloody repressions by tyrants, such as in Latin America and Africa, or civil and military wars affecting the non-aligned countries. Over all, as we have seen above, “societal warfare” increased during the 1945-89 period. Consequently the share of civilian casualties kept growing until the fall of the Berlin Wall.^{xiii}

The 1989-91 transition, seen in retrospect and in the light of the above, was much more than just the end of Cold War and the demise of the Soviet empire, the last of the great 20th century empires – a quick and peaceful demise so different from its illustrious precedents. A great variety of fields were affected. Globalization was allowed by the end of East-West divide and an unprecedented degree of interdependence developed, affecting not only markets and stock markets, but also people, so as to contribute to the advent of what has been called a “fluid society”. Even authoritarian regimes, in Beijing as well as in Cairo, have encouraged access to education and the use of technology – both with constraints, of course. Societies have been undergoing a profound transformation, the aforementioned changing role of women being possibly the most outstanding case.

9/11 was a great shock, above all for Americans, hit as they were by the enemy in their own mainland, a first in history; but for the rest of the world as well. The immediate and widespread claim that world security would not be the same as before seemed to find support in the subsequent terror killings in Madrid and London. But the years following failed to provide confirmation and the recent tenth anniversary celebrations, rich as they have been in images and emotion, did not conceal the fact that the complex picture of global security has not been dramatically altered, intensified personal checks before boarding a plane notwithstanding.

Yet now that is the turn of the author's grandchildren to attend school, the world continues to be seen as a dangerous place. Words such as instability, anxiety, threat, even apocalypse enjoy widespread popularity, notwithstanding the sheer fact that the *yearly* toll of violent conflicts is often well below, relative to the global population, the average *daily* one during WWII.^{xiv} Why is that so? One explanation is that today's conflicts are almost always watched worldwide in detail and in real time, wherever they occur. Wars, sometimes just skirmishes, with houses in flames and corpses on the pavement are brought to our living or dining rooms almost daily – not to speak of the collapsing Twin Towers. The changing typology of violence may also have some impact, with increased cowardly killings of many innocent civilians by fanatics or criminals, while war fighting seems to become more precise, despite frequent reports of “collateral” killings. In a way, child suicide bombers, in their unthinking state, and remotely guided drones, could be seen as epitomizing the two extremes of a new spectrum of means of death delivery which share the feature of seeming to come from nowhere.

Non-conflict generated human life losses, such as those brought about by the apparent intensification and proliferation of natural disasters worldwide, as well as by epidemics, can contribute to the perception of an unsafe world, though in some instances of the latter, as in the case of HIV, the current state of affairs seems to be less tragic than was predicted not long ago.

Then in 2008 came the financial crisis that has turned into today's potential Great World Depression. Is this a new discontinuity, turning matters sour? Will it stay within the economic realm or will it extend to the social one, as contemplated above? Will it even spread to the geo-political realm because of the consequent drop in the perceived advantage of interdependence and of the relatively cooperative approach to international relations, predominant so far, as some authors suggest?^{xv} However important such hypotheses of change may be, they remain at this stage largely speculative. The focus here is on the widespread perception of instability that was already here before 2008, even while the broad trends in the fields of security, economy and governance did not seem to justify it.

The Religious Revival

Short versus Long Term

The diagram of fig 13 shows the number of adherents to the various religions of the world as a percentage of global population in the years 1910, 1950, 1970, 2000 and 2010.^{xvi} That allows for an overall evaluation over a century marked by vast development and change. Compared with the wild variations in numbers discussed in the previous chapter, the initial impression given by such a broad and inevitably rough picture is one of relative stability in quantitative terms, including the last decade or two. As one might expect, there is a slight reduction in the number of Christians, though not after year 2000. Staying with the major faiths, Muslims experience a marked increase and Hindus a more contained one, while Buddhists have, if anything, a small contraction. All this seems to come as confirmation of the fact that worldwide, most people inherit their faith rather than joining

it by choice or conversion. The strongest driver of religious growth is thus demography. Islam is the world's fastest growing religion because Muslim countries tend to be more prolific than their competitors.

The significant changes in trends visible between 1950 and 1970 appear to be influenced by events in China. They are marked by a decrease of so-called “Chinese folk religions” – ethnic religious traditions related to natural or community deities, but including also Taoism and occasionally Confucianism – and an almost equivalent increase in the number of agnostics at the time the atheist Mao Tze Dong revolution was consolidating its hold on the country. It seems that globally the share of agnostics, once removed from that local factor, appears to be on an ascending long term trend over the last century, recently reaching 11.3% globally combined with atheists. Such an increase appears to occur with an underlying rate of growth not far from that of Islam, but unlikely to be similarly influenced by the demographic factor.

The absence of major quantitative discontinuities over the last one decade or two taken into consideration, the religious revival that has received so much attention in the literature may thus be more of a qualitative phenomenon, involving sense of purpose, sense of belonging, practice and militancy. A survey of the vast literature on the subject, admittedly incomplete, suggests that its authors are predominantly western, often sympathetic to religion, and thus inclined to emphasize its revival, occasionally in vindicating terms vis-à-vis secularism. The protagonist of the return is most frequently the Christian God. If Allah plays also an important role, the revival of Islam is often seen as a threat, or at least as a challenge the West is slow in confronting in kind. The Oriental chapter moreover deals preferably with the penetration of Christianity in those countries, while the attention given to the endogenous religious cultures appears to be inadequate, particularly in the light of the growing importance of Asia.

In order to try to quantify the qualitative and thus compare countries or world regions between themselves, one may resort to the survey the Pew Research Center conducted in the years 2007-09 asking the citizens of a large number of countries in various parts of the globe “how important [was] religion in [their] life – very/somewhat/not too/not at all important?”^{xvii}. The percentages of those answering that religion is “very important” in their lives can be seen in fig.14. (It has to be noted that the survey is centered on Sub-Saharan Africa, which is why so many countries of that region are included. Unfortunately others as important as China and Mexico are absent). The fact that the larger percentages correspond to the poorer countries finds confirmation in a Gallup poll published in 2010, which asks respondents whether religion is important or not (thus cumulating the “very” and the “somewhat”) and correlates the response to their per-capita income. The results are shown in the table of fig 15 and suggest a clear reverse correlation between the two magnitudes. With exceptions: as Gallup specifies, “the United States is one of the rich countries that buck the trend”, with 65% of Americans saying that religion is important.^{xviii}

Christianity

Let us stay for a moment with this type of “American exceptionalism”. A detailed and wide-ranging survey conducted by the aforementioned Pew Research Center allows us to see that religion in the United States, both in terms of practice and importance given to faith, has been strong and on the ascendance for decades. Fig 16.1 shows the “very important” share among the American people since the ‘70s, with the data broken down over five generations, while fig 16.2 shows attendance to religious services in the same format. The graph of daily prayer is very similar. The gradual

ascendancy is common to all generations, but is compensated by a significant scaling down from one generation to the next.^{xix}

It is well known that the traditional American religious vitality has received a new thrust from the dynamism of the neo-protestant denominations, evangelicals and pentecostals above all. The entrepreneurial spirit that increasingly animates their way of proselytizing and the well advertised and composite rites taking place in the so-called mega-churches with related community and charitable services, have added to their longstanding and powerful use of TV and now of internet. The almost commercially competitive recruitment of new adherents has as a by-product their high mobility among churches or denominations.

Their influence on the public sphere has been relevant since the times of McCarthy's crusade, but has become more central to national power play over the last two decades. Analyses of this peculiar development are innumerable and commentators now discuss whether the acme of neo-protestant explosion in the United States has been passed or not. What happens from now until the 2012 presidential election will provide us with new clues in this respect.

Dwight Eisenhower is said to have declared that "our government makes no sense unless it is founded on a deeply felt religious faith – and I don't care what it is." More or less in the same epoch the Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce famously stated that "we cannot but call ourselves Christians".^{xx} In a way Eisenhower and Croce expressed the two faces – political and cultural – of the same soft consensus that existed then on religion in their respective countries and more broadly, though with nuances, on the two shores of the Atlantic – a consensus reflected by the nearly unanimous adherence to New Testament creed reported by the polls. The contrast between the subsequent religious evolution in the United States and in Europe – the two halves of the Christian West – could not be more striking, and has been the object of great academic and socio-political attention. While discussing the impact of the changing society on transatlantic relations back in 2004, the present author noted that religion was the main differentiating factor between Americans and Europeans.^{xxi}

There are also differences within the Old Continent, of course. The most Catholic populations, for instance – Italians, Irish, Poles – are closer to their church than others, especially where traditional events are concerned, such as baptisms, funerals and, though less and less, marriages. But if we measure religiosity with the "very important" parameter, the percentages of fig 13 show those differences to be minor, occasionally negligible or even negative. Moreover they may be further reduced by recent developments such as the growing Polish integration with western Europe, the current tensions between Dublin and the Vatican and the increasingly visible divergences inside the church vis-à-vis the Italian political scene.

Nominal adherence to various religions in Europe on the same time intervals that were taken into consideration when discussing the global picture provides confirmation that those which have grown most from 1910 and 2010 are the Muslims, largely as a consequence of immigration in this case. But the share of agnostics and atheists has gone up and with a rate of increase higher than on the global scale – the expected evidence of European secularization – but only slightly higher. It is in terms of practice that in fact the secular trend in Europe is macroscopic. Christians going to Mass every Sunday are a minority, in some cases below ten percent. But Muslim immigrants going regularly to the mosque are also in a minority.

It may be of interest to note however that cumulative numbers of agnostics and atheists decreased more than in the rest of the world during the last decade (2000-2010). If one combines this information with the one provided by the Pew survey on the U.S., which states that the number of polled people describing themselves as “unaffiliated with a religion” grew continuously up to more than a quarter of the “millennial” generation (born after 1981), the conclusion may be that Europe and America are not necessarily on two permanently diverging paths, even in the field of religion. The author had already ventured this conclusion in the above mentioned 2004 essay, describing the two sides of the Atlantic as “not so far apart”, as the title states.

Widening the scope from the US-European core, it is worth noting out of the “very important” percentages of fig 14, that the low religious standards of the Old Continent are joined or even surpassed by such various countries as Australia, Canada, Japan, Russia, South Korea, and even Israel, its current drift toward a religious state notwithstanding. On the other side, the new kind of religiosity – American born and more or less closely associated with the American way of life and entrepreneurial spirit – has been spreading towards other regions of the world, in a process that has been seen as following a hub-and-spokes model.^{xxii} The hub is located in the United States and the spokes stretch toward Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and East Asia above all. It is this very rich ramification that largely substantiates the revival of Christianity that is being talked about and the small increase that is visible in the last portion of the relative curve of fig 13.

Other faiths, whether Christian or not depending on the specific countries, have resented such expansion. Some have tried to adopt the new rival style, others to resist it, others to roll it back. But it this part – and this kind – of Christianity that has apparently had the highest ability to combine with local cultures and traditions, often at the expense of its origins and culture as a number of authors have pointed out.^{xxiii} The result has been the transfer of the vitality of neo-Protestantism to these regions, to such an extent that the Western identity of Christianity is now being questioned.^{xxiv}

Islam

As said before the main driver of the growing numbers of Muslims in the world has been demography. Such numbers are expected to keep rising more than those of other religions and thus their share of the global population will continue to increase, despite the rapid decline of fertility rates in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia, as shown in fig. 10. According to the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, such a share is projected to go as high as 24.9% in 2020 and 26.4% in 2030, compared with 23.4% in 2010.^{xxv} Thus the qualitative aspects of the revival of Islam discussed here rest upon a quantitative factor more than is the case with other faiths. In view of that it may be useful to take note that, while many in the West tend to identify the “Islamic problem” with the Near East and North Africa, none of the five largest Muslim populations of the world is Arab.

This having been said, both Arab and non-Arab Muslims give a largely positive answer to the high-importance-of-religion-in-their-lives question, as we have seen in fig. 14. Moreover, according to Pew, both tend to attribute more importance to their Muslim identity than to their national one, though to a much lesser degree. (Incidentally, among Christians in general, the result is the opposite, with the usual exception of the Americans who are evenly split – 46-46% - between the religious and the national identity).^{xxvi} Thus Islam appears to be a widely spread factor of identity that turns into a stated religious belief.

This observation needs qualification – three to be mentioned here. The first is that doctrine, or *Shari'a*, is not seen as the dominant code of public life and government: it is seen, though with ample nuances, as something to be taken into account when formulating the rule of law. Democracy remains the political formula preferred by most Muslims, but with changes with respect to its Western version and with original contributions from their culture.^{xxvii} This being said about the limits of a potential drift towards religious fundamentalism, a second qualification can be formulated regarding another possible drift, the one towards political extremism, and terrorism at its furthest edge. The aforementioned Pew survey, conducted in a selected number of countries around the world, shows that concern about Islamic extremism is shared by Muslims and non-Muslims almost to the same degree, as can be seen in fig 17, with curious cases such as the Israelis and the Palestinians, or the Germans and the Lebanese, or the Americans and the Egyptians respectively expressing similar degrees of concern.^{xxviii}

The third qualification is about the caution to be applied in extrapolating the current state of affairs into the future. During the recent uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East a relatively young, nationalist, cultivated and non-starving class has emerged that took the Islamist organizations by surprise, at least in the initial phase. Of course, the latter are organized, while the emerging class is not. In addition the religious factor, marginal at the onset, may reassert itself, especially if the Arab Spring ends up in frustration. However, if one looks at the roots of the movement, change in society was the main driver and will not be reversed. It is this change, including its secularist components such as the new status of women, which Islam will have to cope with and probably adapt to. Perhaps Turkey will partially de-secularize while other Muslim countries will de-Islamize. Perhaps some Arab humanism will experience a renaissance out of the identity seeds being sowed. But these hypotheses are too speculative for the chosen character of this paper.

Asian Religions

In fact there is no such thing as Asian religions. There is a vast array of national and transnational beliefs, philosophies and codes of conduct that are transcendental to a greater or lesser degree. Even a concise treatment of them would be beyond the scope of this paper and above all the competence of this author. Attention will be limited, somewhat arbitrarily, to the case of China. The sheer size of its population and its growing geopolitical weight in the current world power shift, referred to at the beginning, make the question of whether there is a Chinese chapter to the global religious revival critical to the present analysis. To take a demographic example, the pentecostals have succeeded in penetrating China marginally, but as a consequence their number there has already exceeded the sum of their adherents in the US, Brazil and Nigeria— just to list their three top success stories.^{xxix}

China is host to a wide variety of religious traditions as well as new religious phenomena, from the already mentioned Chinese folk beliefs including the native Taoism, to Buddhism, Islamism, Catholicism, Protestantism and especially neo-Protestant denominations. As already mentioned, the Western approach to the analysis of the religious evolution of the People's Republic tends to concentrate on the fate of the latter, more or less recently imported faiths in relation to the authoritarian and ostensibly atheist regime. The question is whether, in a post-revolutionary phase, the current partial liberalization of the economy can extend to the religious if not yet to the political domain. Even Falun Gong, a sect advocating meditation associated with slow moving exercise, is given attention when discussing human rights abuses by Beijing.

The PRC government on its part tends to look at religion mainly from the angle of its sovereignty, both territorial and international. Thus Buddhism is above all considered a potentially separatist

threat, regarding Tibet in the first instance, and the same with Islam as far as Xinjiang and Gansu are concerned.^{xxx} Catholicism is associated with a foreign state trying to install a local clerical hierarchy of its choice, contrary to the preferences of a regime bent on tightly controlling the life of its citizens.

Confucianism is not usually listed among religions. It is a philosophy, a teaching of wisdom and a code for exerting power. Its deep roots and influence among people, above all among the establishment may have a more direct impact on the future of the country and of its foreign conduct than that of recognized religions. It might influence their fate as well. As Francis Fukuyama recently wrote “Mao attacked Confucius as a reactionary, but today academics have tried to revive a Confucian approach to international relations”. Then he added: “Contemporary China thus has two alternative traditions, a neo-Maoist one and a neo-Confucian one. ... [The latter] could interpret Confucianism in ways that support liberal democracy; or it could become the basis for a narrow Chinese nationalism”.^{xxxi} This is a double dilemma, the outcome of which will have consequences on the world to come, in cultural and religious arenas as well as in economic and geo-political interplay with the West.

Interconnections

From the above it can be drawn that the global religious landscape is experiencing three major geopolitical transformations: the differentiation between traditional churches and neo-Protestant denominations within Christianity, the new forms taken by the relationship between Islam and Christianity, and the emerging fault line between Abrahamic faiths and Asian philosophical religions, and three major societal transformations: the exponential spread of technology, the new breath of human development and that specific strand of human development that is gender parity. Having noted that very little in all these distinctions appears to be the object of strictly theological disputes, let us briefly go through the six instances.

Europe is the most evident locus of the quantitatively declining traditional churches. It may pretend that it is also the place where a minority Christian spirituality remains strong, but it cannot compete in terms of image with the American “way of faith” now spreading towards other continents, possibly more than the American “way of life”. The consequence is the emergence of a “Southern rim” of the faith in Jesus Christ to such a degree as to put its historical identification with the West into question. Conservatism and fundamentalism do not belong exclusively to one side or the other. They can be part of, say, Roman Catholicism, particularly with the last two popes, as well as of American Evangelicalism: they are different, though they have much in common, including attitudes on abortion, contraception and homosexuality.

Fundamentalism can be a serious point of tension between Islam and Christianity, particularly in this case with neo-Protestant proselytism in areas shared with or bordering Muslim communities. Indicative in this respect is the Sub-Saharan case-study emerging from the aforementioned 2010 survey by the Pew Research Center in the region. The share of Christians who said they favor making the Bible the official law of the land and of Muslims feeling the same about *Shari’a* are given in fig. 18 and show a worrying median of 60% and 63% respectively, with Nigeria, Uganda, Ethiopia and Ghana making for the most polarized situations. Of course this is but one chapter of the complex, often tense, interplay between the two largest monotheistic faiths.

There are plenty of other such interfaith fault lines. The two main ones lie in the MENA region: the issue of Israel, and in the Muslim diaspora linked to migration, with the aggravating factor of the

recent economic downturn. Speaking of Israel, it has to be noted that Hebraism was one of those religions not discussed above, both because of space but also because, as discussed in another essay, the Jewish issue is far more political than religious: blurring the two only makes matters worse.^{xxxii} Speaking of Muslim immigrants in western countries, the well known argument is between competition, occasionally conflict, versus “multiculturalism”, an ambiguous term meaning either dialogue between different cultures or neglect of those differences.

Despite the fact that religious tensions such as those between Islam and Hinduism – another religion not discussed here – could have an adverse fallout on South Asian stability and development potentially spreading to other countries of the continent, Pacific Asia seems to be less affected by this kind of tension than the West is, both within itself and above all in relation to the Muslim world, with potential consequences on the above-mentioned power shift taking place at a world level. Whether and how much such a reading of the state of affairs has to do with local multiform cultural and religious backgrounds, nominally pricing wisdom and harmony, is wide open to discussion. Some authors seem to suggest it implicitly in so far as they attribute to the monotheistic faiths an inbuilt inclination to violence from their founding texts.^{xxxiii} If violence turns out to have a less decisive role in world competition, the complex nature of power and its cultural roots will have to be taken into account.

Similarly open to discussion is the influence of technology on religion. Some say that far from undermining it, this great force of modernity is strengthening religion.^{xxxiv} It certainly helps communication and propaganda: even Hindus have televangelists today. Possibly here the distinction made by Ulrich Bech between religion and religiosity is appropriate.^{xxxv} While the former can now expand thanks to modern proselytism replacing the old missions – associated with now *passé* colonialism – the latter has long been affected by a declining sense of mystery, infinity, eternity and awe – in a word, disenchantment – that science and technology bring to human beings.

In fact many technologies, from medicine to communications, contribute to human development on a global scale, the deadly applications of others notwithstanding. They can reduce suffering, help economic growth, enhance freedom of choice, and at times even contribute to justice, whatever the remaining, often revolting, inequalities extant in the various corners of the earth. Most religions at their roots have to do with misery, pain, despair and injustice of ordinary human life. They provide acceptance of such numerous drawbacks of creation, transcending earthly life and offering compensation in an afterlife. Despite the subsequent convergences and alliances they all made, one way or the other, with wealth and exploitation, power and oppression, such roots did not dry up entirely. Hence the alternative view that technology inevitably affects the importance of the religious lifeline for men.

Of all the forms human development has taken, the most “revolutionary” one with respect to human history is the relative ascent of the feminine gender. The impact on society, including its nucleus the family, and consequently on polity, has been visible for quite some time. A quantitative detector of change is the declining fertility rates seen in fig.10. As can be implied from the differences among world regions in that graph, the decline is related to the spreading of wellbeing, literacy and access to contraceptive technology. To the extent it prevails over longer life expectancy, also due to technology, the desperately needed reduction of population growth ensues. Nearly all religions have been unhelpful on birth control, family planning, contraception and abortion, even in severe circumstances. Despite differences they have often joined against the related provisions in international bodies. In relation to abortion, an example of trans-faith consensus, at the expense of its

own culture, is provided by the Russian Orthodox Church using the “pro life” slogan of the evangelicals – in English.

But the problem of emancipating women for established faith related organizations may be more profound than just their role in human reproduction. It has already been noted amply and repeatedly that nearly all religions were revealed to, or conceived by, men and involved the worship of male gods, though feminine deities are part of polytheistic and some folk religions. Women were ancillary, often subdued. Over the centuries their status has evolved very differently from faith to faith, but generally on a slow path. The picture today is very composite, from women alleged to be adulteresses being stoned in one place, to others becoming bishops in another. Discrimination of various degrees and actions will continue for the foreseeable future and how that will interrelate and interact with evolving religions in the longer term appears hard to predict to this author.

The Secular Age and its Uncertain Fate

Secularism and the Coming about of Today's International System

An empirical reading of history has it that epochs of relative peace in the world were the product of a dominant empire. The time interval under consideration in this contribution begins in a world grappling with the tragic outcome of a clash of nations on a worldwide scale, at the failure of a peace formula based on balance of power, and at the collapse of useless empires. In preparation for all-out war, nationalism had donned the garb of a secular absolute, borrowing from religious rhetoric: the sacredness of the nation, the civil creed, the martyrs dying for their homeland, and above all the pretence that God was on one's own side, epitomized by the Nazi slogan *Gott mit uns*.

The peace that ensued still rested, paradoxically, on a balance of power, but one of a peculiar kind because of the smallest possible number of contenders in the balance – two – and of the nature of the threat they held over each other: total annihilation. Against many odds, as noted before, deterrence was a success: indeed it was the success of the relative over the absolute, of rationality over ideology. Especially in its initial phase, a number of Christian circles and churches, particularly but not exclusively in the U.S., opposed this pragmatic approach because they thought it smelled appeasement towards the godless Communism. While confronting the opposite block through the famous ‘containment’, the West under American leadership, notoriously engaged in a phase of unprecedented international institutions-building. Europe, beginning with *la petite Europe*, did its part by undergoing a process of integration first and expansion later –the greatest achievement in terms of spreading democracy and liberalism in half a century, possibly in history. The defeat of the authoritarian, collectivist and atheist Soviet Union and the collapse of its empire were not the result of Christian West but of a capitalist, liberal and democratic West. Deterrence-based world peace and European unity were major secular achievements, richly contributed to nonetheless by many leaders with deep religious convictions of their own.

As shown above, the post-Cold War period has had a vast impact on world affairs. In the words of Gideon Rachman, “[f]or a tantalizing 20 years , globalisation seemed to promise rising living standards for all nations, and a more peaceful world”.^{xxxvi} The United States was the lonely apex of the world power hierarchy. Probably it was also at the acme of its power history. Unipolarism became the name of the game. Was it an additional confirmation of the empirical equation between peace and empire recalled above? Were the many accusations of American imperialism, so recurrent during East-West bipolarism, including those by Western leftist groups, finally to find vindication?

Indeed, comparisons with previous successful empires, the Roman one above all, enjoyed great popularity.^{xxxvii}

But caveats against the parallel were no less numerous, besides the simple fact that two decades may be too short a time to make an epoch. First of all, Washington had interpreted its leadership of the West and was exerting its role of number-one global power in a way hardly conducive to the ruthless establishment and consolidation of an empire, possibly as a consequence of the very political culture and values of the American people. As already noted, it has been largely thanks to the West-driven global system that a dislocation of world power has taken place over the last two decades so as to gradually reduce American relative prevalence at the advantage of others in different parts of the world. The established emerging BRICs are four countries having in common large populations or large territories or both, but precious little else. Relevant to the subject of this paper, they have no ideological or religious similarities, nor motivations of this kind in their ambitions, and even less reasons to build alliances based on creeds of any sort. But all resented Western influence, in various forms and to various degrees. The current phase of global reconfiguration generates pragmatic convergences among them, occasionally opposed to a West that is nonetheless still needed, and to an America that is still needed. The same applies to the next two in the line of emerging powers, Turkey and South Africa.

The peculiar American way of exerting hegemony has always implied the attempt of spreading its own values – the secular values of freedom and democracy, liberalism and social fairness – occasionally with limited care for the consequences such attempt may have on the national interest according to *Realpolitik*. Another caveat however, is that the said values are being weakened inside the cradle itself. While the gap between rich and poor has narrowed between countries at the world level, internal inequalities have been growing: in the United States as already mentioned, but also in European countries, though to a lesser extent. The strength of civil society, a source of pride for the West, is affected by the consequent decline of the medium class. Moreover the liberal model that has been flagged around the world has proven idiosyncratic towards regulation, with the consequences seen in the financial crisis of 2008. Finally and more broadly speaking, there seems to be a new and growing distrust for both national and international institutions in the West, America included, endangering the very legacy that could compensate its relative decline with a remaining and lasting influence.

The Impact of Religious Revival

Does such an attitude relate to the prominence religion has been gaining in the terms and with the qualifications discussed above? In his book on the post-American world Fareed Zakaria includes a citation that may be relevant to this question. While discussing the popular historical parallel between the United States as a single superpower and the British Empire, he notes: “Britain’s power and reach also made it intoxicated with a sense of historic destiny, a trend fuelled by a protestant revival. The historian Correlli Barnett wrote (in the 1970s) that a ‘moral revolution’ gripped England in the mid-nineteenth century, moving it away from the practical reason-based society that brought about the industrial revolution and toward one dominated by religious evangelicalism, excessive moralism, and romanticism”.^{xxxviii} Romanticism may be somewhat out of fashion, but the rest does ring some bells in our time.

The religions making a return in many parts of the world deal variously with the prospect of the contradictory products of the secular age coming to an end. The dialectics between nationalism and globalism is another outstanding example, besides the aforementioned double-edged technology.

Patriotism can be a bridge between Confucians and the regime in China as well as a rallying factor for Christian conservatives of various denominations in America. The Arab Muslims are in search of an identity rooted both in their religion and their nations, while the Muslim Turks seem to find in a less secular but not Islamic republic a path to an international role to be proud of. The Tibetan Buddhists struggle for regional autonomy, because national independence is impossible. Hindu nationalism is a serious challenge both to the unity of the country and to India's less tense relations with its neighbors. Other instances are at hand.

Nationalism has been always at risk of turning into rejection, even hatred of the 'other', as European history demonstrates abundantly. The 'other' can a neighbor, or an immigrant, or something else again. Conservative and anti-immigration parties have been proliferating and acquiring political influence in several EU member states. Religious differences frequently help xenophobia. Reference to God and Christianity was made in the recently adopted Hungarian constitution, a retrograde text that received negative comments even by the Brussels institutions and the UN Secretary General. The specter of Eurabia has been agitated from within and from without since the times of Oriana Fallaci.^{xxxix} Not only Islamic terrorists but fanatics and fundamentalists of all types are a threat, as Eric Kaufmann points out.^{xl} Recently a Norwegian terrorist, viscerally belonging to Christian civilization, acted to prove him right. The fact that, ahead of his criminal action, he had written online of not having been a religious person in his life may come as a confirmation of the above distinction between religion and religiosity.

The other horn of the dialectic relates to ongoing globalization, which appears to have helped the spread of religions among populations that are communicating and interacting with each other to an unprecedented degree. This is bound to happen at the expense of the cultural and territorial roots of the same religions, as a number of authors have pointed out^{xli}, with the consequent logical tension with nationalism, deeply tied as the latter normally is with either the land or the identity or both. Different cultures, including their religious components, are indeed confronted with the alternatives of coexistence or clash, competition or integration.

The case of China has been already been briefly hinted at. The recent uprisings that have shaken the Arab Muslim world are another case. Not only have they taken the West by surprise, they have shown them in an uncomfortably ambiguous position vis-à-vis the autocratic regimes now being delegitimized by the popular, potentially democratic, movements. Western governments and public opinion were also unprepared for the option of a new kind of third way, alternative to either an Islamism prone to the *Shari'a* law – the nightmarish scenario – and to political regimens and societies bound to follow Western models – the wishful scenario. Whatever the political outcome of the optimistically named 'Arab spring', what is worth watching is the current agonizing confrontation of the original ideas of democracy and justice, that are such as to combine cultural and thus religious heritage with a society that is changing profoundly as a consequence of literacy, economic improvement and globalization. The case of women's empowerment is once more revealing. Tomorrow's Islam will have to have adapted the evolution of society, rather than the other way around. The Europeans may be equipped to understand such metamorphosis better than others, because of the history of their Christianity, following the birth of the Westphalian state, going through the laborious establishment of full democracy and lastly contributing to the process of continental integration.

The Challenge of a New World Order for Reason and Faith, Ethics and Commandments

Militant atheists and militant believers often trade accusations of arrogance. They can both be right or wrong. The fact is that there is no such thing as a divide between a secular evil and a religious good or vice-versa. All religions the author is aware of have awfully bloody histories in their DNA. A secular world on the other hand can be no less violent than a religious one, as the first half of 20th century eloquently demonstrates^{xlii}; or more just, as the example of the Soviet Union among many others shows. The long term trends summarily discussed in the first part of this paper consistently indicate that, over the last two decades and at least until very recently, the world has evolved so as to be less violent, more respectful of human life and possibly more just and susceptible to some rule of law than we are accustomed to from history. Such a relatively positive state of affairs, it must be repeated once more, cannot be assumed to be irreversible and more importantly, is not perceived as such by most public opinion, with possibly the partial exception of those of the emerging economies. The two limitations may not be unrelated: instability generates anxiety.

So the challenge is how to make the trends related to peace and justice within and between nations more stable and more convincing – conceptually, to start with. Concerning the latter, Amartya Sen’s preference for ‘comparative approaches’ to the pursuit of justice over what he calls ‘transcendental institutionalism’, i.e. the seeking of a ‘just’ valid for all, appears convincing to the author. Even more so in view “of the great many changes that can be proposed for reforming the institutional structure of the world today to make it less unfair, less unjust (in terms of widely accepted criteria)”, as he puts it.^{xliii} Thus the alternative between pragmatic or comparative approaches and absolute or ‘transcendental’ ones can apply to the conceptual definition of peace as well, with the former appearing again preferable to the latter.

In so far as he sees a major role for ‘public reason’ in establishing what can make societies less unjust, Sen draws from European Enlightenment, which inspired both the comparative and the transcendental approaches^{xliv}, but combines it with Asian philosophical religions, to start with the *Gita* he extensively refers to. Monotheistic religions, with their various inspirations and denominations, are naturally inclined towards the concept of a ‘just that is valid for all’ – and not just for semantic sympathy for the transcendent. But Christianity coexisted with the Enlightenment and Islam had its own time of Humanism, with Judaism richly interacting with both. All three then lived through the history that ensued, full of shining lights and dark shadows. Thus, moving from the conceptual sphere to the practical one, religions can adapt to change, add to the enhancement of society and provide nourishment to the new international system, i.e. two products of largely secular developments. Their faithful or followers can be helped through the moral choices the non-believers make according to ethics. Or they can contribute to resisting the former and undermining the latter. After two decades so dense with change, the next two may be just as rich with indications with respect to this historic dilemma.

ⁱ Center for Systemic Peace, *Global Conflict Trends: Measuring Systemic Peace*, 30 September 2011 (last updated) <http://www.systemicpeace.org/conflict.htm>

ⁱⁱ World Bank, *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development*, 2011 http://wdr2011.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/WDR2011_Full_Text.pdf

ⁱⁱⁱ The Human Security Report Project, *Human Security Report 2009/10*, Simon Fraser University (SFU), Vancouver, Canada, 2010 <http://www.hsrgroup.org/human-security-reports/20092010/text.aspx>

^{iv} Anup Shah, *World Military Spending*, Global Issues: Social, Political, Economic and Environmental Issues that Affect Us All, 2 May 2011 (last updated) <http://www.globalissues.org/article/75/world-military-spending>

^v Laurence Chandy and Geoffrey Gertz, *Poverty in Numbers: The Changing State of Global Poverty from 2005 to 2015*, The Brookings Institution, January 2011.p.3

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2011/01_global_poverty_chandy/01_global_poverty_chandy.pdf

^{vi} *Human Security Report 2009/10* (Figure 1.4)

http://www.hsrgroup.org/docs/Publications/HSR20092010/Figures/20092010Report_Fig1_4_ForeignDirectInvestmentDevelopingCountries.pdf

^{vii} Internet World Stats: Usage and Population Statistics, *World Internet Usage and Population Statistics*, 13 March 2011

<http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats.htm>

^{viii} Elaboration based on latest available World Bank data

^{ix} Center for Systemic Peace, *Global Conflict Trends: Measuring Systemic Peace*, *op.cit.*

^x Amnesty International, *Death Sentences and Executions 2010*, 2011.p.27-29

http://www.amnesty.org.uk/uploads/documents/doc_21366.pdf ;

The huge number of executions in the Popular Republic of China suggests that a change in that country, following the alleged beginning of a domestic discussion on the matter, would have a huge impact globally.

^{xi} *Human Security Report 2009/10* (Figure 4.3), *op.cit.*

http://www.hsrgroup.org/docs/Publications/HSR20092010/Figures/20092010Report_Fig4_3_UNnonUNPeacekeeping.pdf

^{xii} Kathryn Sikkink, *Making Tyrants Do Time*, New York Times Op-Ed, 15 September 2011

<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/16/opinion/making-tyrants-do-time.html>

^{xiii} It has to be said that with the less clear cut distinction between winners and losers, the amounts of violent deaths are subject to speculation more than those related to the two World Wars

^{xiv} Christopher J. Fettweis, *Dangerous Times?: The International Politics of Great Power Peace*, Georgetown University Press, Washington D.C., 2010

^{xv} Gideon Rachman, for instance, says that the current “positive sum” game on the global chessboard is bound to be replaced by a “zero sum” one. See; Gideon Rachman, *Zero-Sum World: Politics, Power and Prosperity After the Crash*, Atlantic Books, London, 2010

^{xvi} Todd M. Johnson and Kenneth R. Ross (ed), *Atlas of Global Christianity*, Edinburgh University Press, Har/Cdr

Edition, Edinburgh, 2010 http://www.atlasofglobalchristianity.org/images/samplepages_3.pdf

^{xvii} Pew Research Center, *Tolerance and Tension: Islam and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa*, The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 15 April 2010 <http://pewforum.org/executive-summary-islam-and-christianity-in-sub-saharan-africa.aspx>

^{xviii} Steve Crabtree, *Religiosity Highest in World's Poorest Nations: United States is Among the Rich Countries that Buck the Trend*, Gallup Global Reports, 31 August 2010 <http://www.gallup.com/poll/142727/religiosity-highest-world-poorest-nations.aspx#1>

^{xix} Pew Research Center, *Millennials: A Portrait of Generation Next*, Pew Social and Demographic Trends, 24 February 2010.p.85-110 (Chapter 9) <http://pewsocialtrends.org/files/2010/10/millennials-confident-connected-open-to-change.pdf>

^{xx} The above quoted statement by President Dwight D. Eisenhower is taken from a speech he made in 1952, while in 1942 Italian philosopher, Benedetto Croce, published a short text entitled *Perché non Possiamo non Dirci Cristiani* (“Why we cannot but call ourselves Christians”)

^{xxi} Cesare Merlini, *Not so Far Apart: Societal Change and its Impact on Transatlantic Relations*, The International Spectator, vol.30, no.2, April-June 2004.p.61-78

^{xxii} Fabio Petito, *Il Ritorno della Religione nelle Relazioni Internazionali e qualche Riflessione sul Caso Singolare dell'Espansione Globale del Protestantismo*, ISPI Quaderni di Relazioni Internazionali, *Le Religioni nelle Relazioni Internazionali*, n.12, Aprile 2010.p.35-48

^{xxiii} Olivier Roy, *Holy Ignorance: When Religion and Culture Part Ways*, C. Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd, New York, 2010

^{xxiv} Scott M. Thomas, *Religions and Global Security*, ISPI Quaderni di Relazioni Internazionali, *Le Religioni nelle Relazioni Internazionali*, n.12, Aprile 2010.p.4-22

^{xxv} Pew Research Center, *The Future of the Global Muslim Population: Projections for 2010-2030*, Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 27 January 2011 <http://www.pewforum.org/The-Future-of-the-Global-Muslim-Population.aspx>

^{xxvi} Pew Research Center, *Common Concerns About Islamic Extremism: Muslim-Western Tensions Persist*, Global Attitudes Project, 21 July 2011.p.5

^{xxvii} *Ibid.*p.16

^{xxviii} *Ibid.*p.3

^{xxix} Thomas, *Religions and Global Security*, *op.cit.*

^{xxx} Peter Berger, *Confucius and Religious Freedom*, The American Interest, Peter Berger's Blog, 22 June 2011

http://blogs.the-american-interest.com/berger/2011/06/22/confucius-and-religious-freedom/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+PeterBerger+%28Peter+Berger%29

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- ^{xxxi} Francis Fukuyama, *China looks to dynastic past to shape its future*, Financial Times, 13 July 2011 (access restricted)
- ^{xxxii} Cesare Merlini, *A Post-Secular World?*, *Survival*, vol.53, no.2, April-May 2011.p.117-130
- ^{xxxiii} Jan Assmann, *Non Avrai Altro Dio: Il Monoteismo e il Linguaggio della Violenza*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2007
- ^{xxxiv} John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, *God is Back: How the Global Revival of Faith is Changing the World*, Penguin Press, New York/London, 2009
- ^{xxxv} Ulrich Beck, *The Return of the Gods and the Crisis of European Modernity*, Centro Studi sul Federalismo, Lecture Altiero Spinelli, 19 November 2010 http://www.csfederalismo.it/images/pdf/turin-spinelli_lecture_11-2010.pdf
- ^{xxxvi} Gideon Rachman, *Zero-Sum World*, Financial Times, 22 October 2010 <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/2/bcfb2d80-dd62-11d1-beb7-00144feabdc0.html#axzz1bF7M9XOX>
- ^{xxxvii} Cesare Merlini, *US Hegemony and the Roman Analogy: A European View*, *The International Spectator*, vol.37, no.3 July-September 2002 ; Cesare Merlini, *The Lessons of Ancient History and the Future of Transatlantic Relations*, *The International Spectator*, vol.44, no.1, March 2009
- ^{xxxviii} Fareed Zakaria, *The Post-American World: And the Rise of the Rest*, Penguin Books, New York/London, 2009.p.237; Correlli Barnett, *The Collapse of British Power*, Methuen Publisher, London, 1972.p.13-27
- ^{xxxix} *See f.i.*; Christopher Caldwell, *Reflections on the Revolution in Europe: Immigration, Islam and the West*, Doubleday Random House, New York, 2009
- ^{xl} Eric Kaufmann, *Shall the Religious Inherit the Earth?: Demography and Politics in the Twenty-First Century*, Profile Books, London, 2010
- ^{xli} *See f.i.*; Roy, *op.cit.*
- ^{xlii} The second world war was the worst episode in human history in terms of absolute numbers of deaths, though only the ninth when adjusted to world population. *See*; Steven Pinker, *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence has Declined*, Viking Penguin Publishers, London, 2011
- ^{xliii} Amartya Sen, *The Idea of Justice*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2009.p.24
- ^{xliv} *Ibid*; Sen puts the ‘comparative’ approach in line with Adam Smith, Condorcet, Bentham, Marx and Stuart Mill, while the ‘transcendental’ one is following Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and Kant.

Figure 1 : Center for Systemic Peace

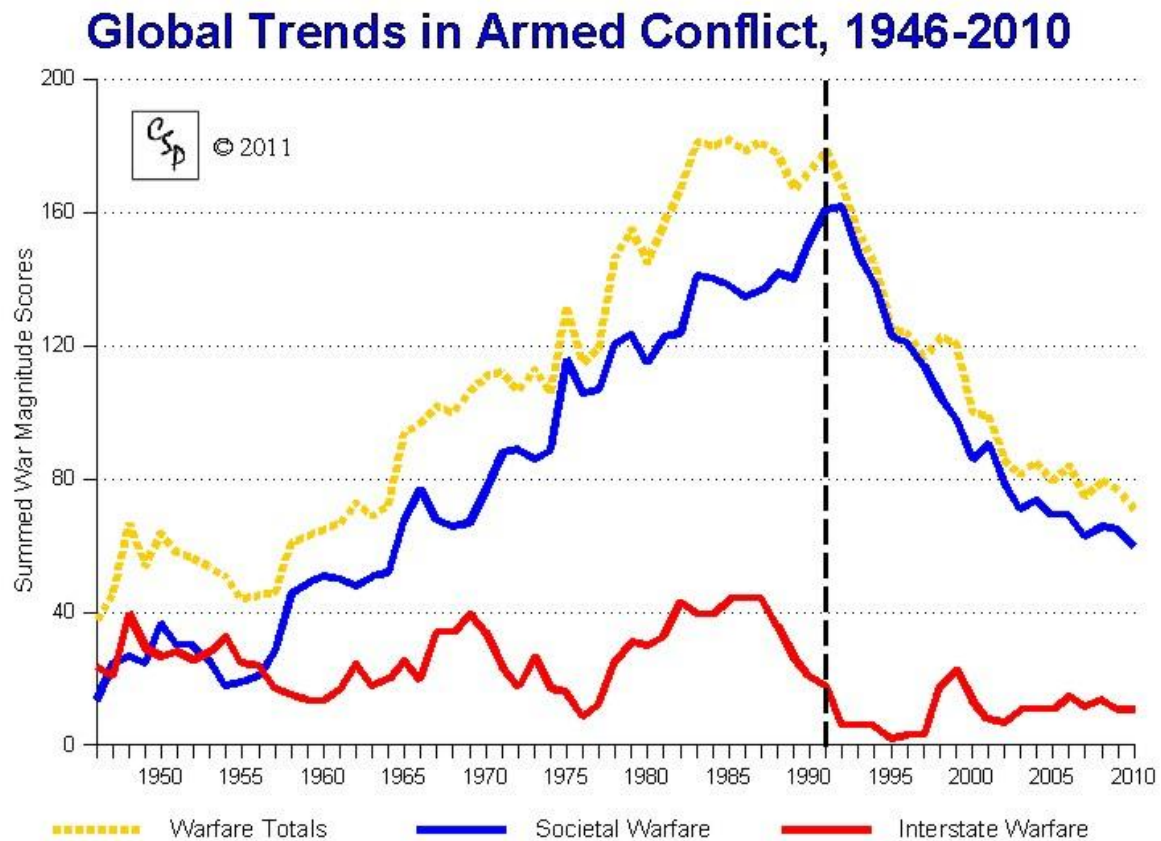


Figure 2 : Center for Systemic Peace

States Experiencing Warfare, 1946-2010

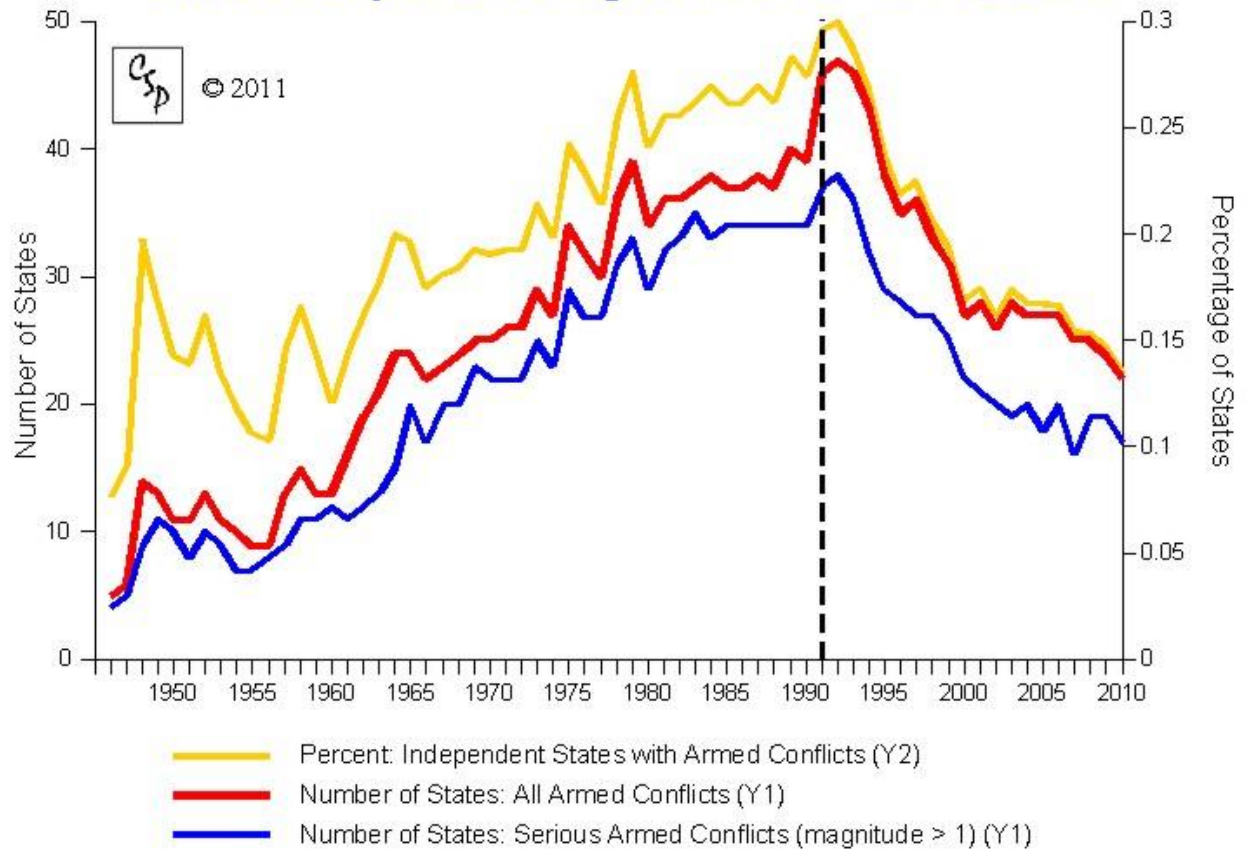


Figure 3: Annual battle related deaths from civil wars, World Development Report 2011 Conflict, Security and Development

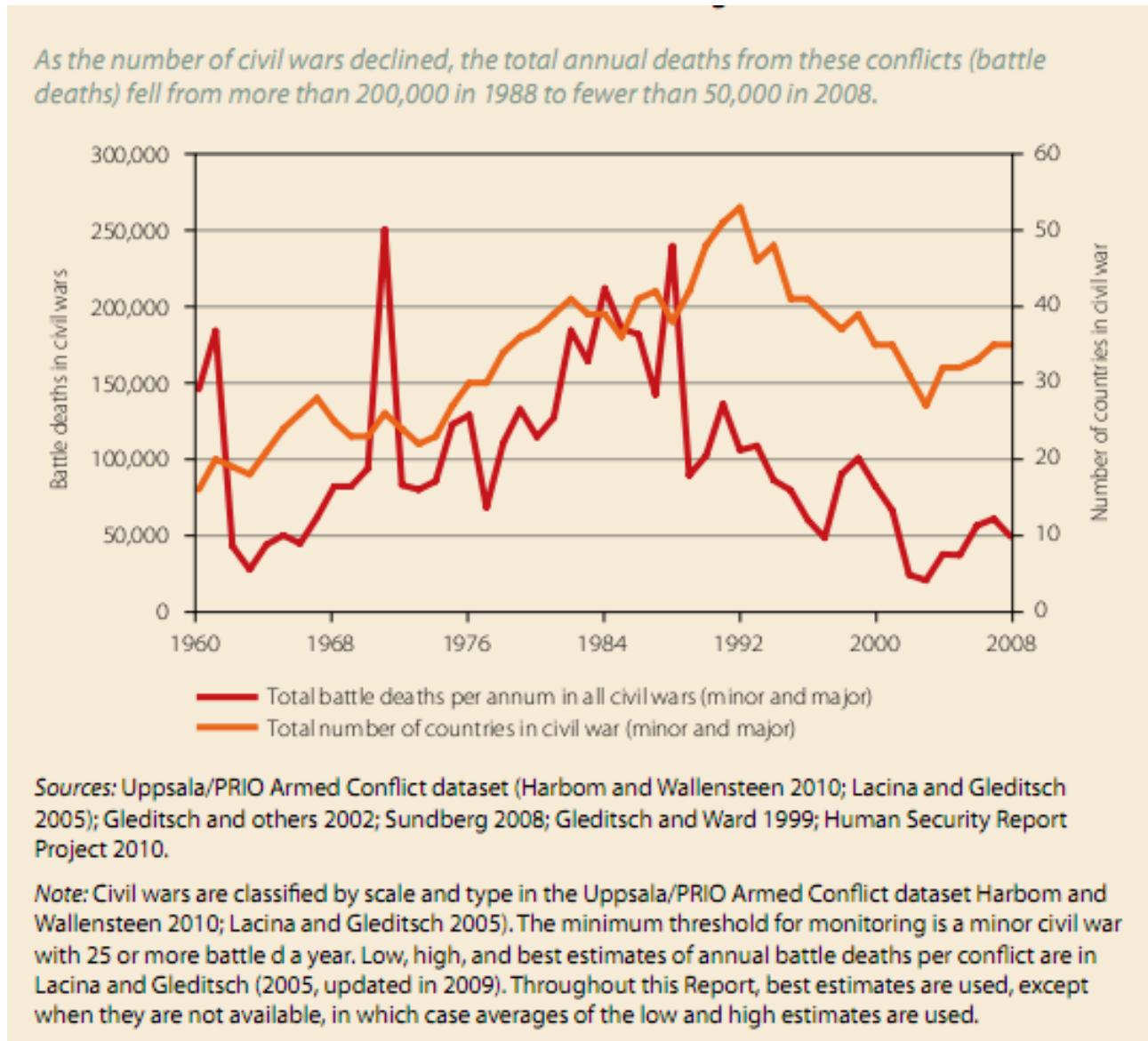
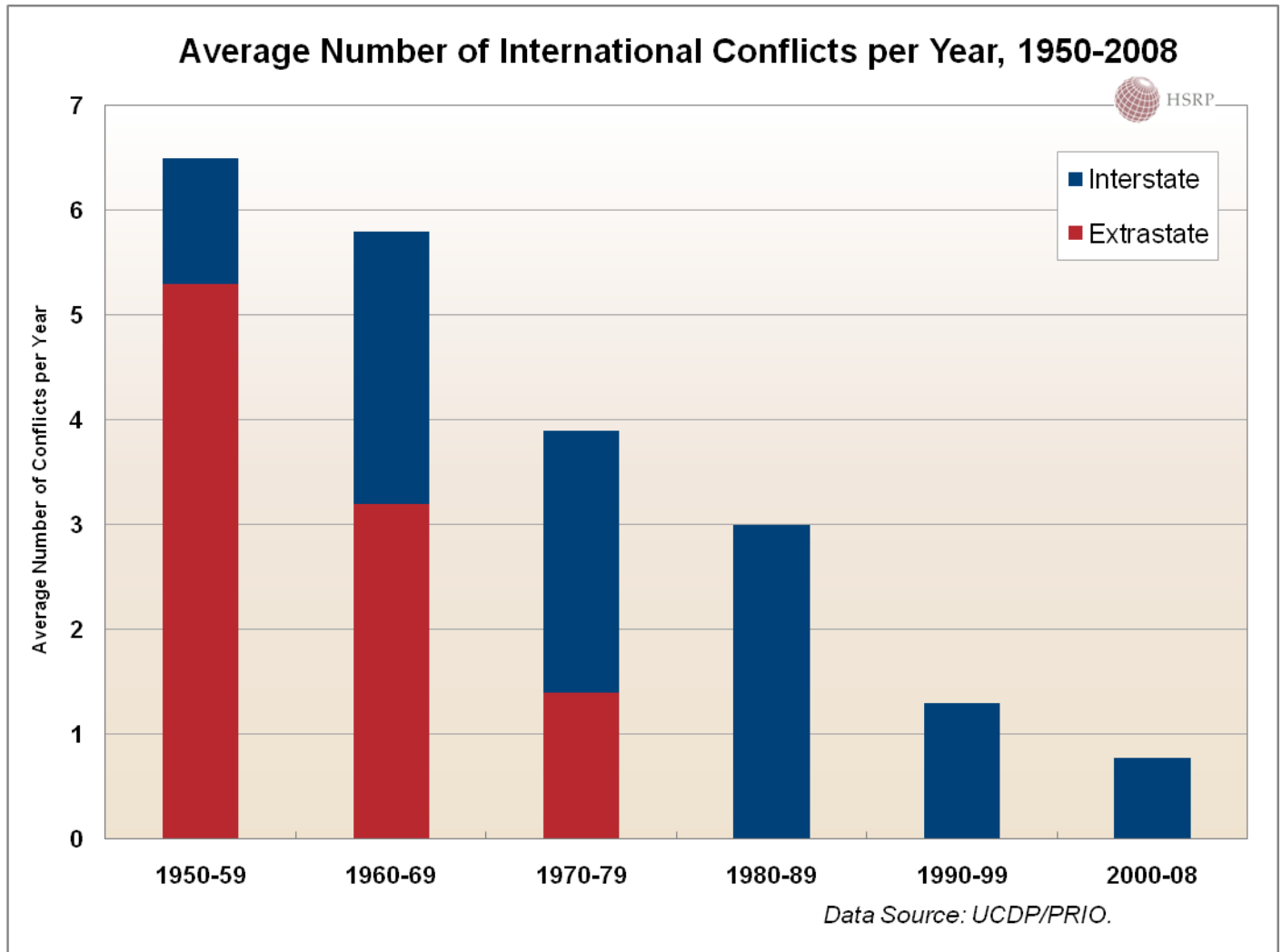
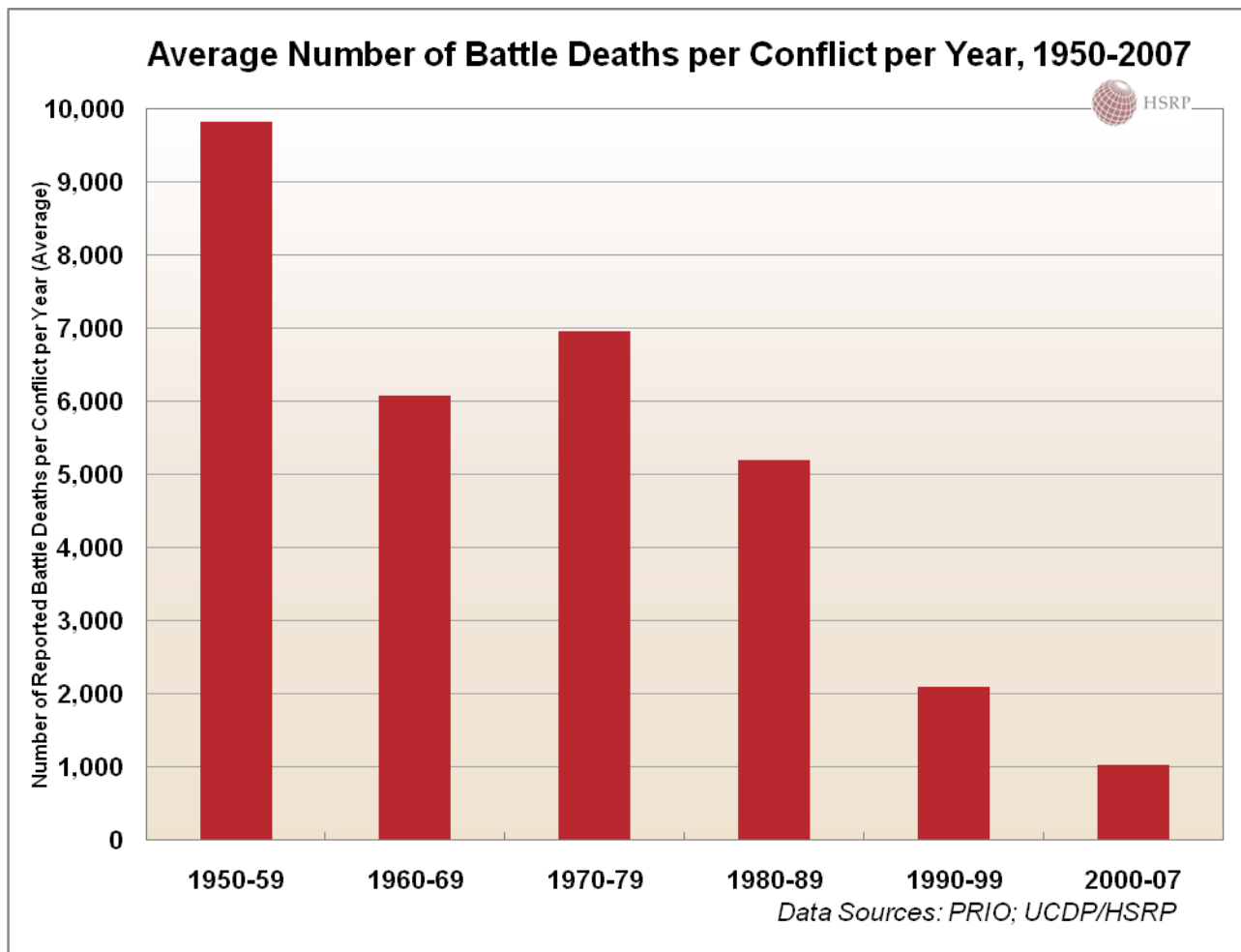


Figure 4.1: Human Security Report 2009/2010



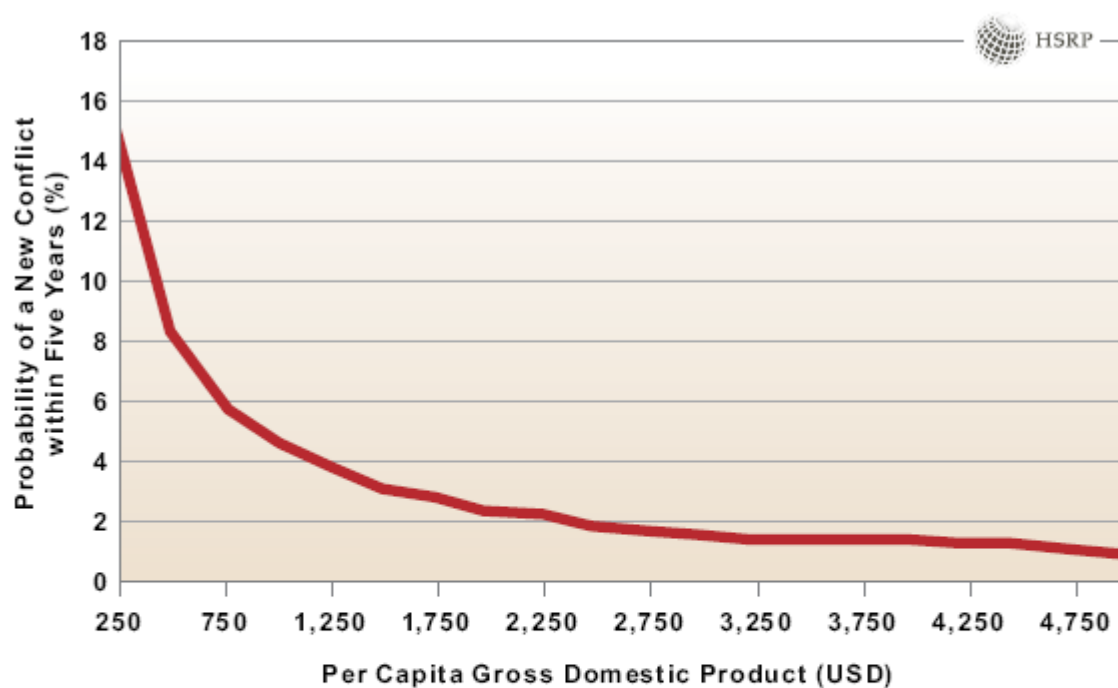
There has been a steady decline in the number of international conflicts—defined here to include interstate and extrastate conflicts—around the world. Extrastate, or anticolonial conflicts, ended in the 1970s

Figure 4.2: Human Security Report 2009/2010



There has been a clear, though far from consistent, decline in the deadliness of armed conflict since the end of the Korean War. In the 1950s, the average armed conflict killed nearly 10,000 people a year; by the new millennium, the average had fallen to just over 1,000.

Figure 5 : Gross Domestic Pruduct (GDP) per Capita and the Risk of Armed Conflict, Human Security Report 2009/10



Data Source: Macartan Humphreys and Ashutosh Varshney.

There is a strong association between levels of economic development and the risk of armed conflict: the poorer the country, the greater the risk.

Figure 6: Global Issues

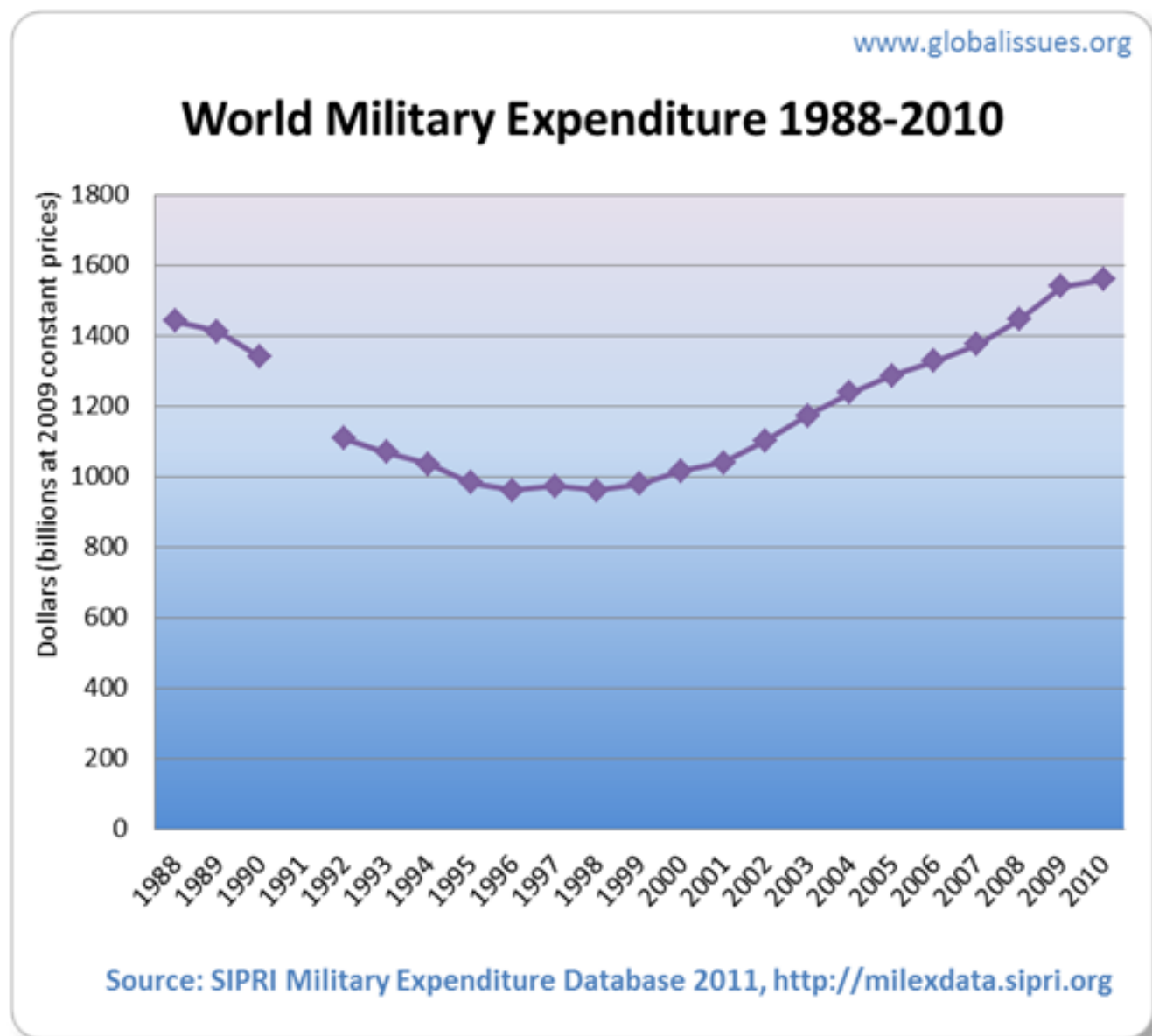


Figure 7: Graph based on latest World Bank data

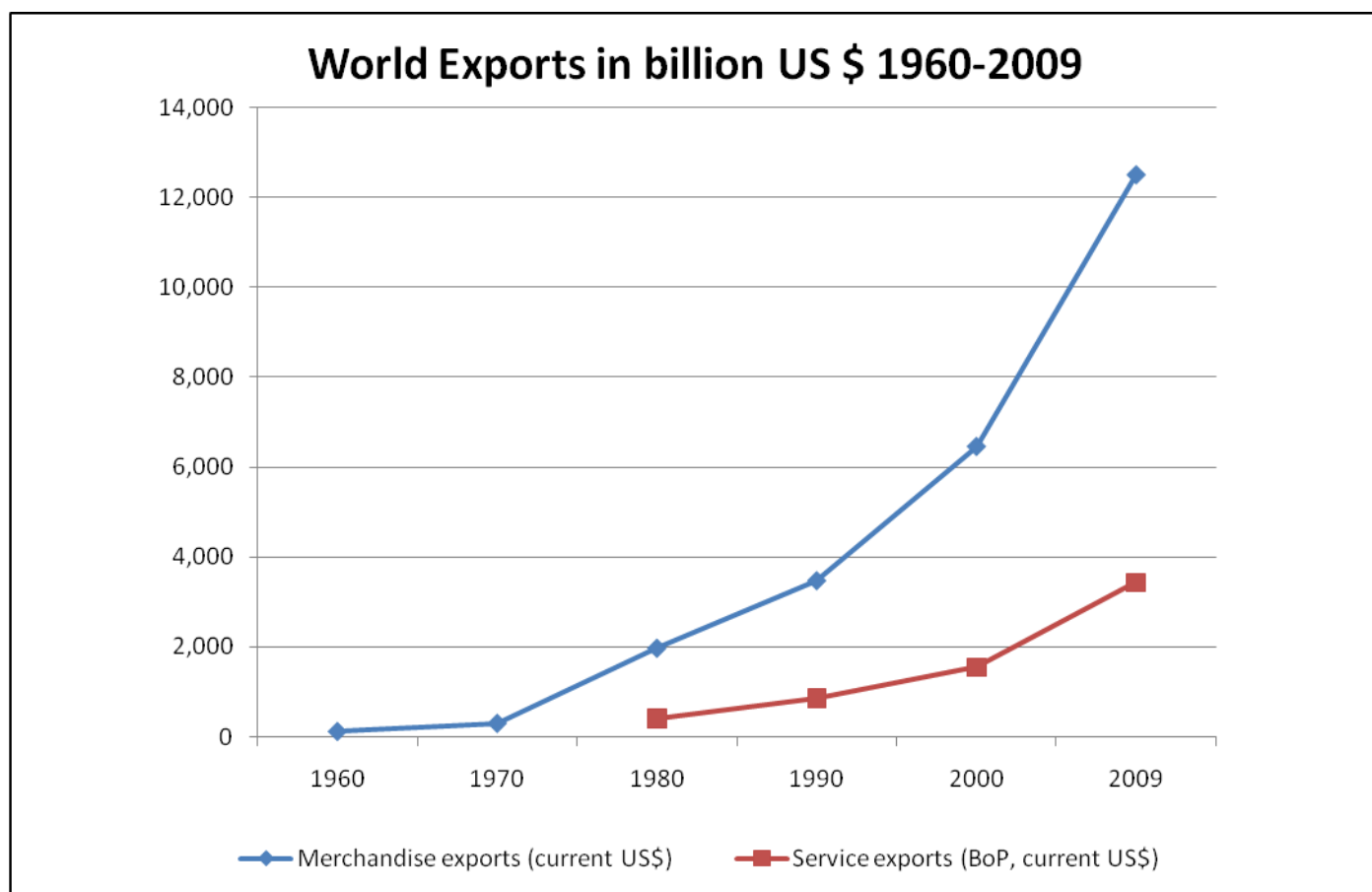


Figure 8: Human Security Report 2009/10

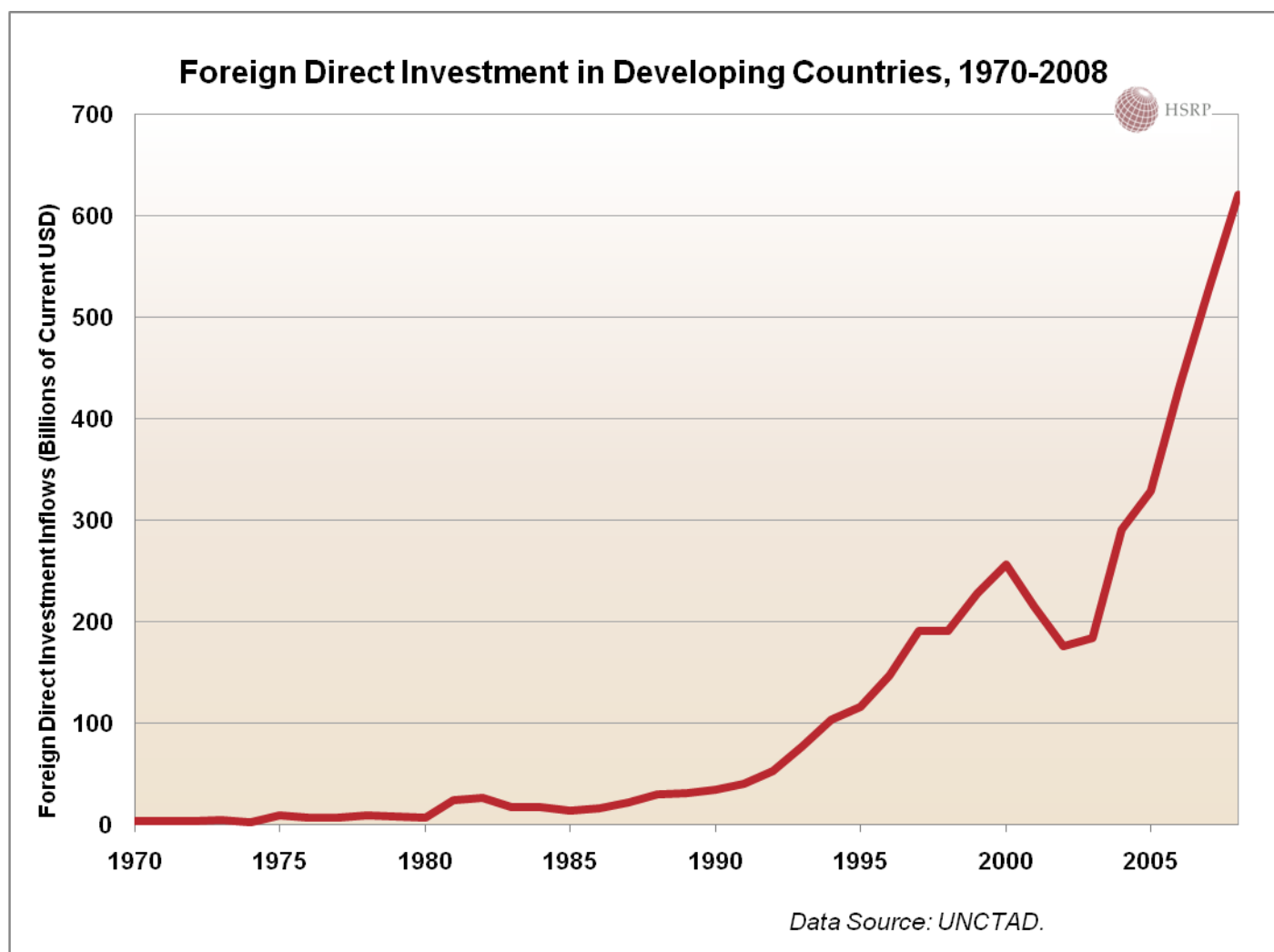


Figure 9: Internet World Stats

World Internet Users and Population December 2000 – March 2011

World Regions	Population (2011 Est.)	Internet Users Dec. 31, 2000	Internet Users March 31, 2011	Penetration % Population	% Growth 2000- 2011
<u>Africa</u>	1,037,524,058	4,514,400	118,609,620	11.4	2,527.4
<u>Asia</u>	3,879,740,877	114,304,000	922,329,554	23.8	706.9
<u>Europe</u>	816,426,346	105,096,093	476,213,935	58.3	353.1
<u>Middle East</u>	216,258,843	3,284,800	68,553,666	31.7	1,987.0
<u>North America</u>	347,394,870	108,096,800	272,066,000	78.3	151.7
<u>Latin America / Carib.</u>	597,283,165	18,068,919	215,939,400	36.2	1,037.4
<u>Oceania / Australia</u>	35,426,995	7,620,480	21,293,830	60.1	179.4
<u>WORLD TOTAL</u>	6,930,055,154	360,985,492	2,095,006,005	30.2	480.4

Figure 10: Graph based on latest World Bank data

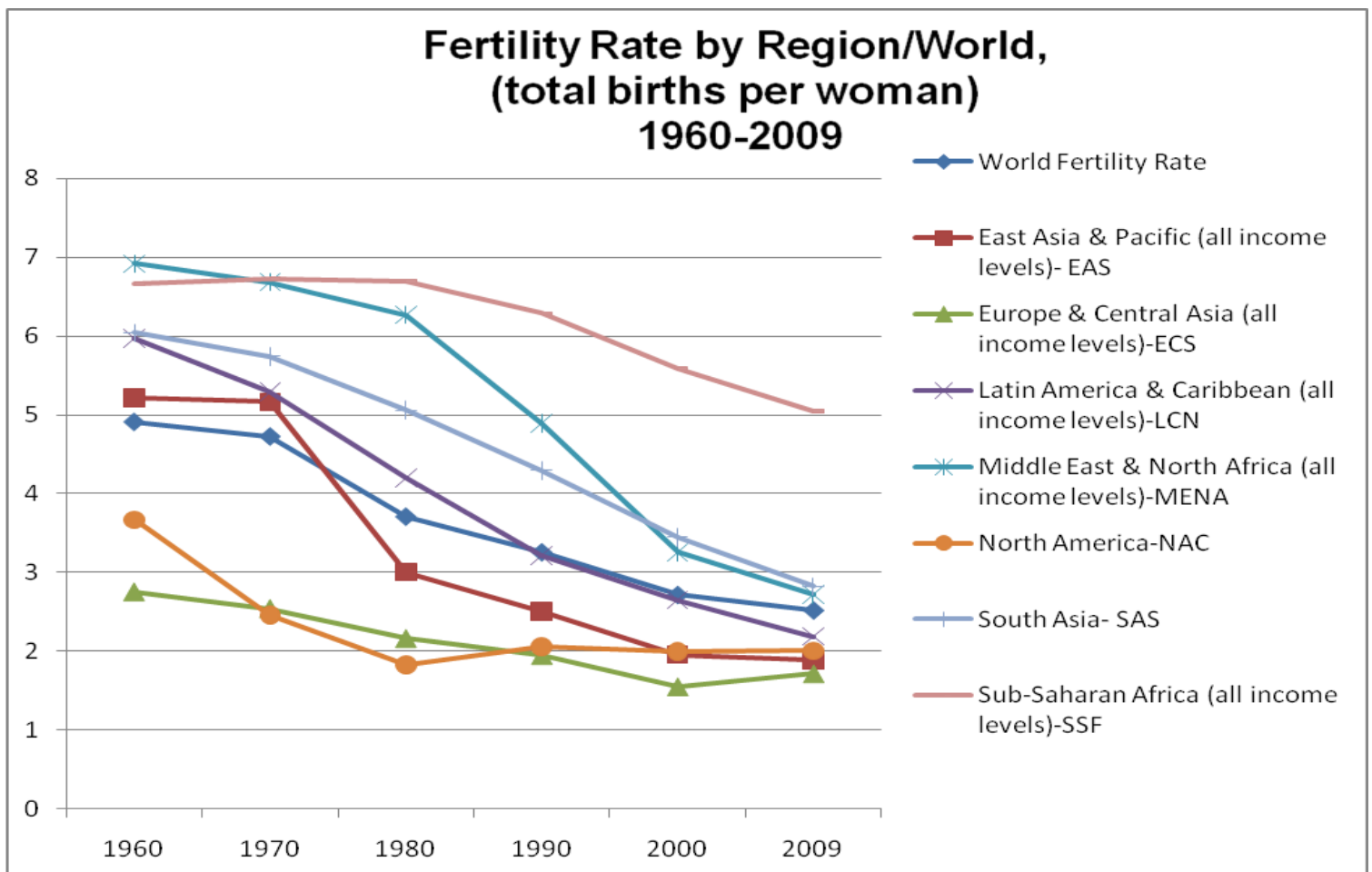


Figure 11: Center for Systemic Peace

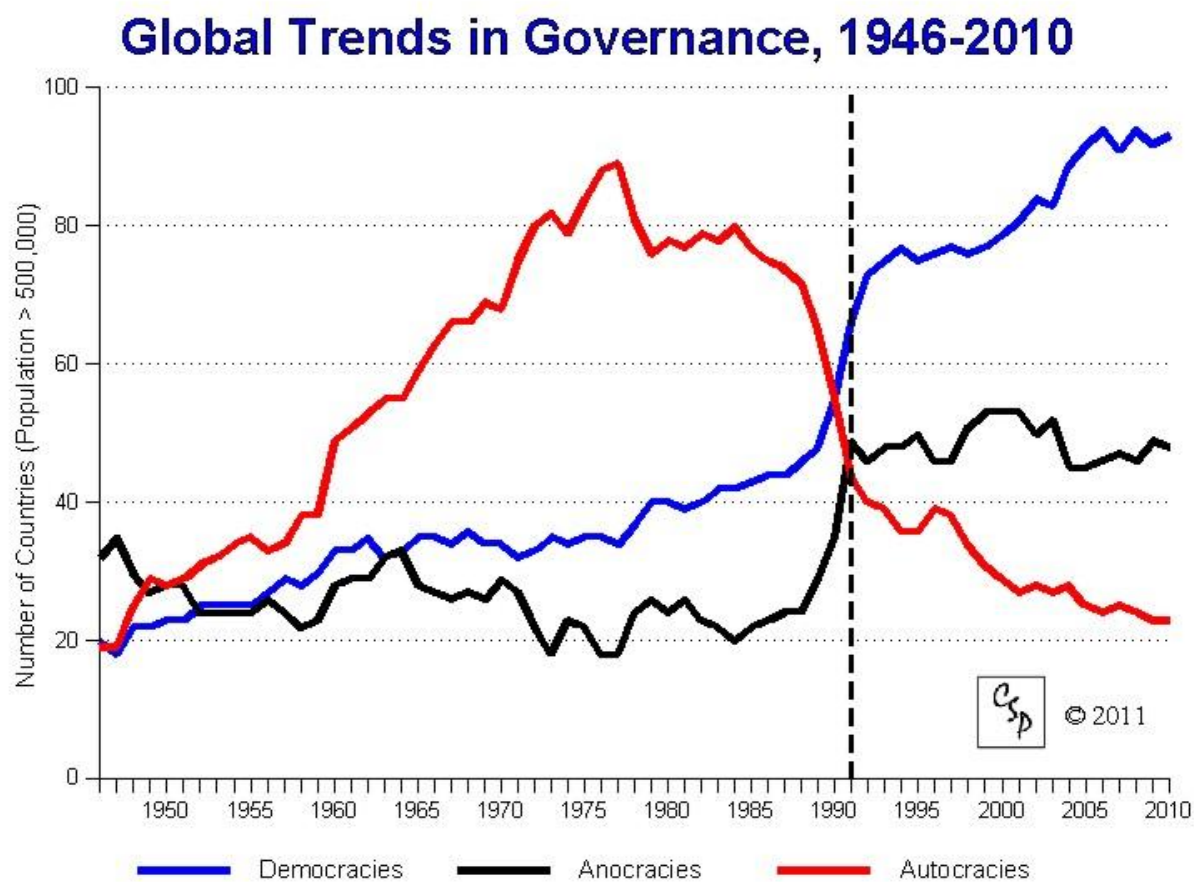


Figure 12: Human Security Report 2009/10

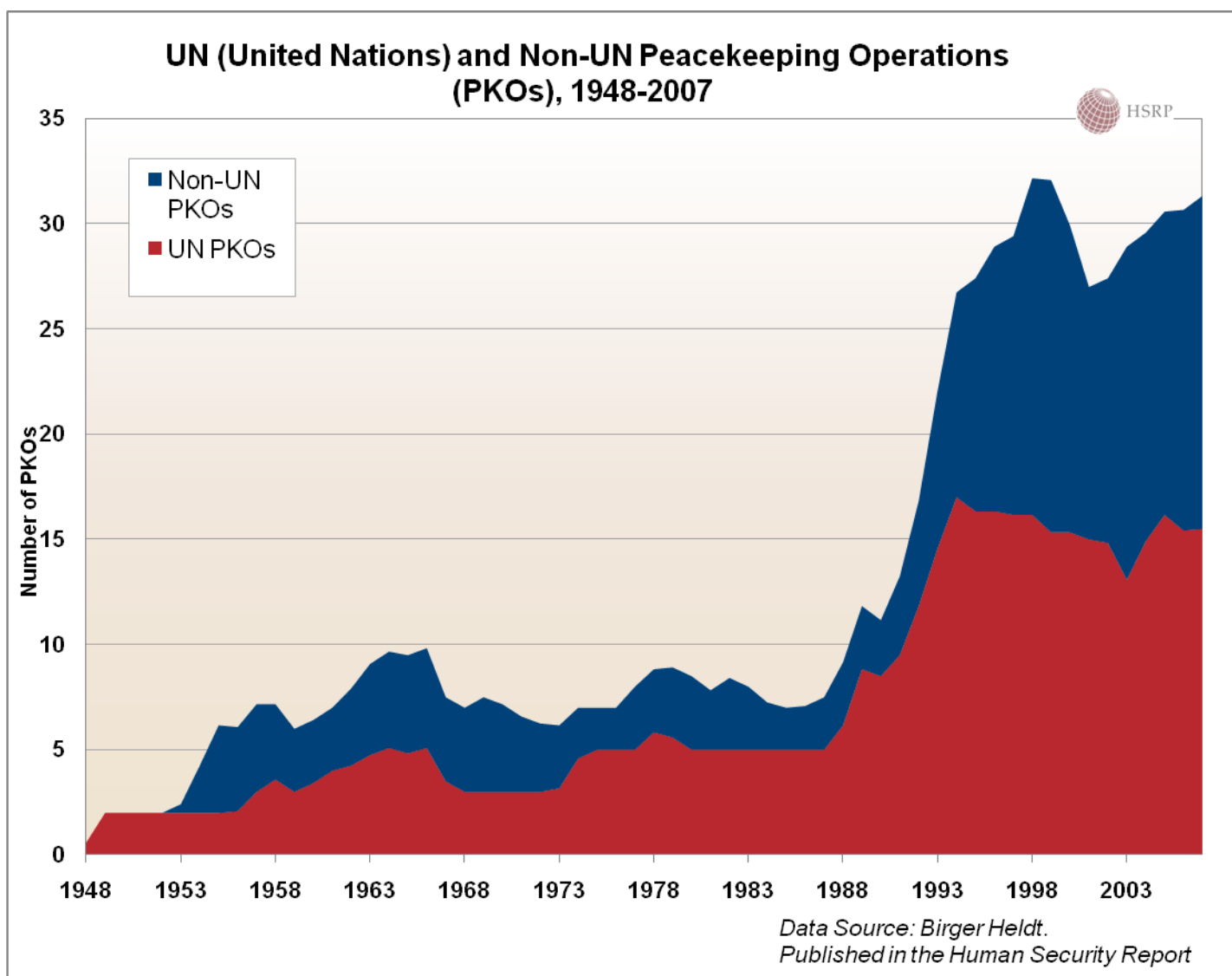


Figure 13: Atlas of Global Christianity

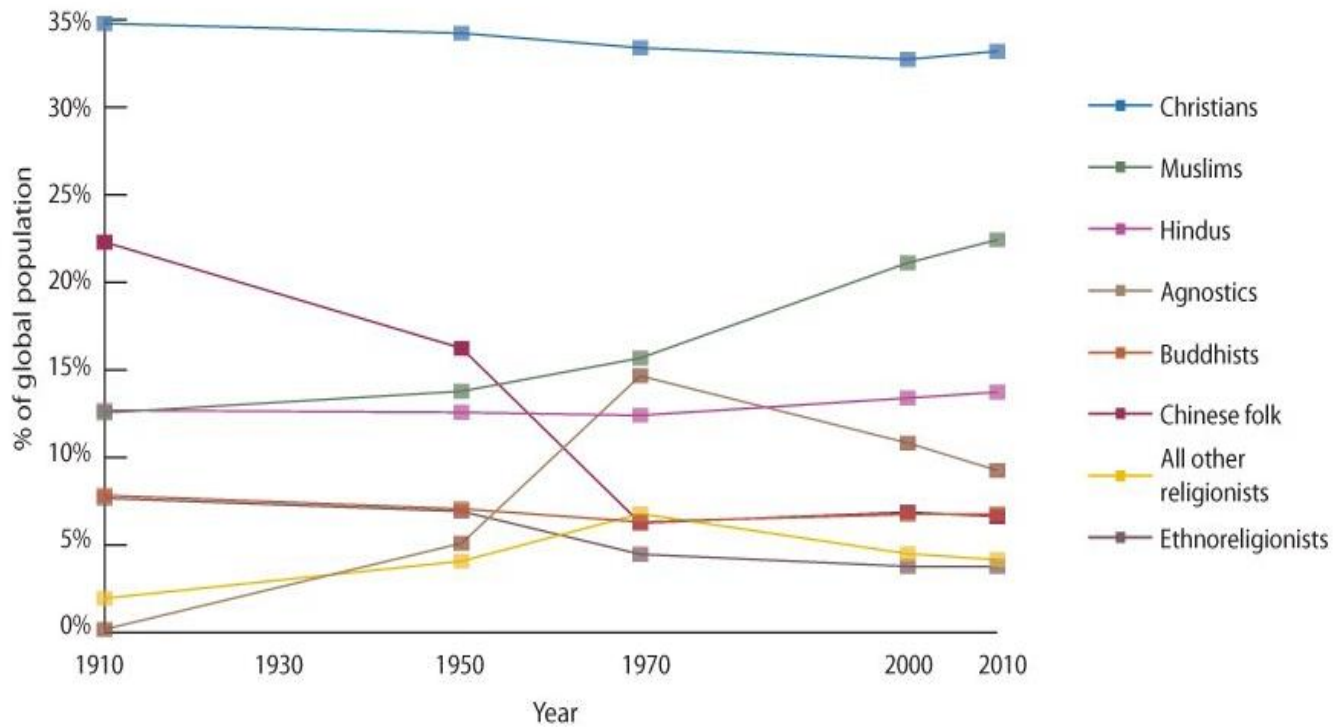
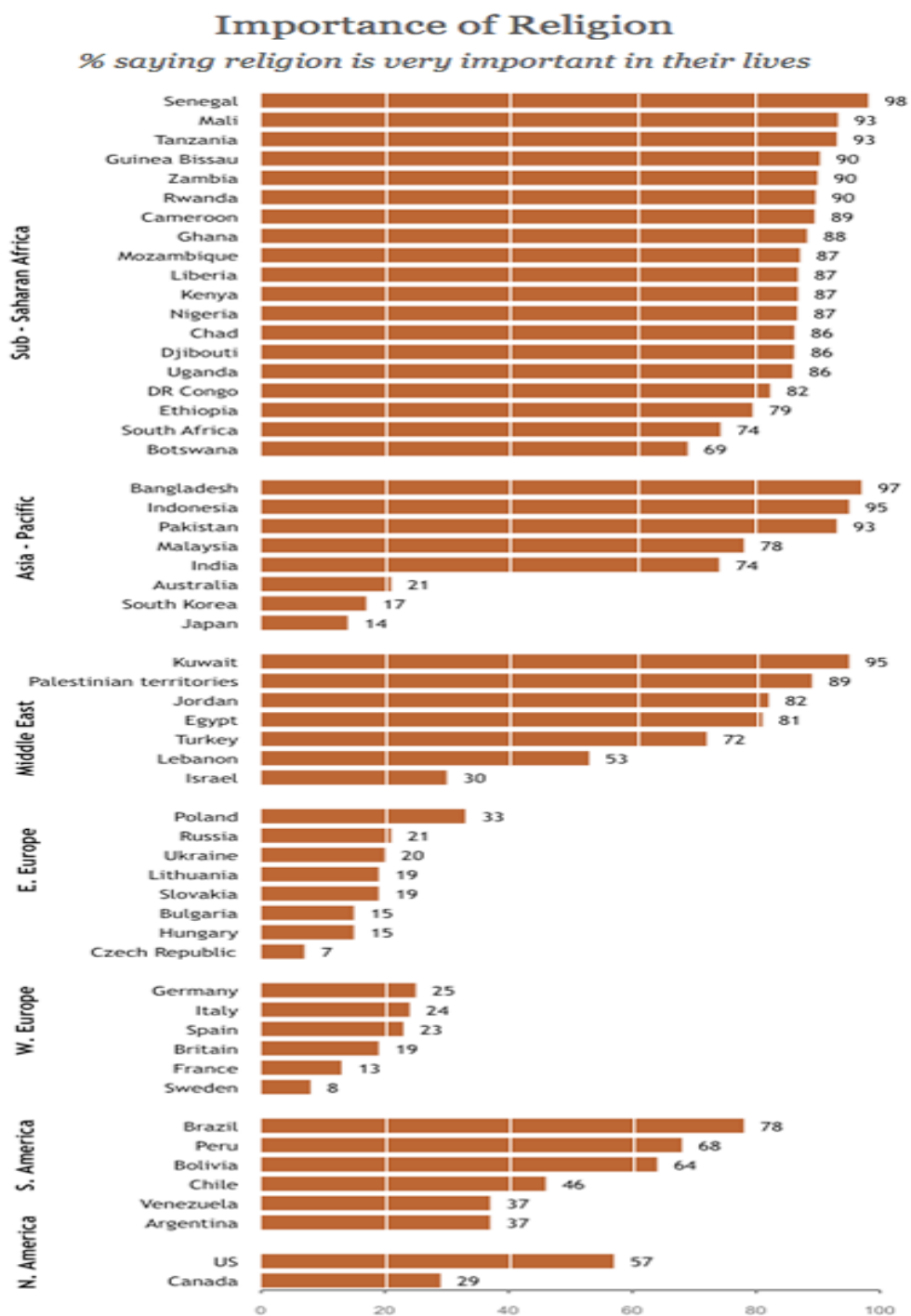


Figure 14: Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life



Q42. How important is religion in your life – very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?

Source for U.S. data: 2009 survey by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life and the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press

Sources for other non-African countries: 2009, 2008 and 2007 surveys by the Pew Global Attitudes Project.

Figure 15: Gallup Poll

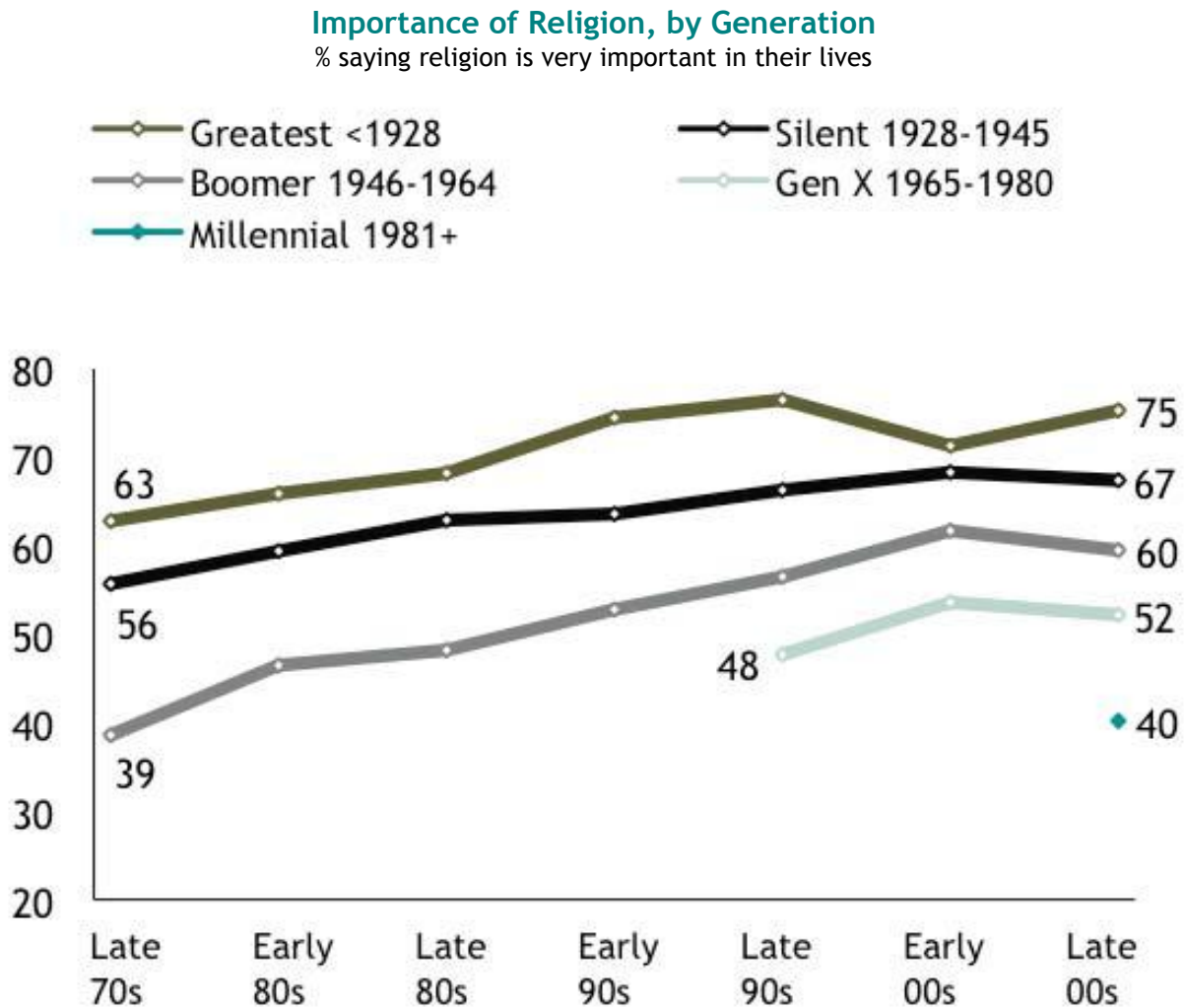
Is religion an important part of your daily life?

Median responses among countries at each per-capita income level

Per-capita income	Yes	No
\$0-\$2,000	95%	5%
\$2,001-\$5,000	92%	7%
\$5,001-\$12,500	82%	17%
\$12,501-\$25,000	70%	28%
\$25,001+	47%	52%

GALLUP®

Figure 16.1: Pew Social and Demographic Trends



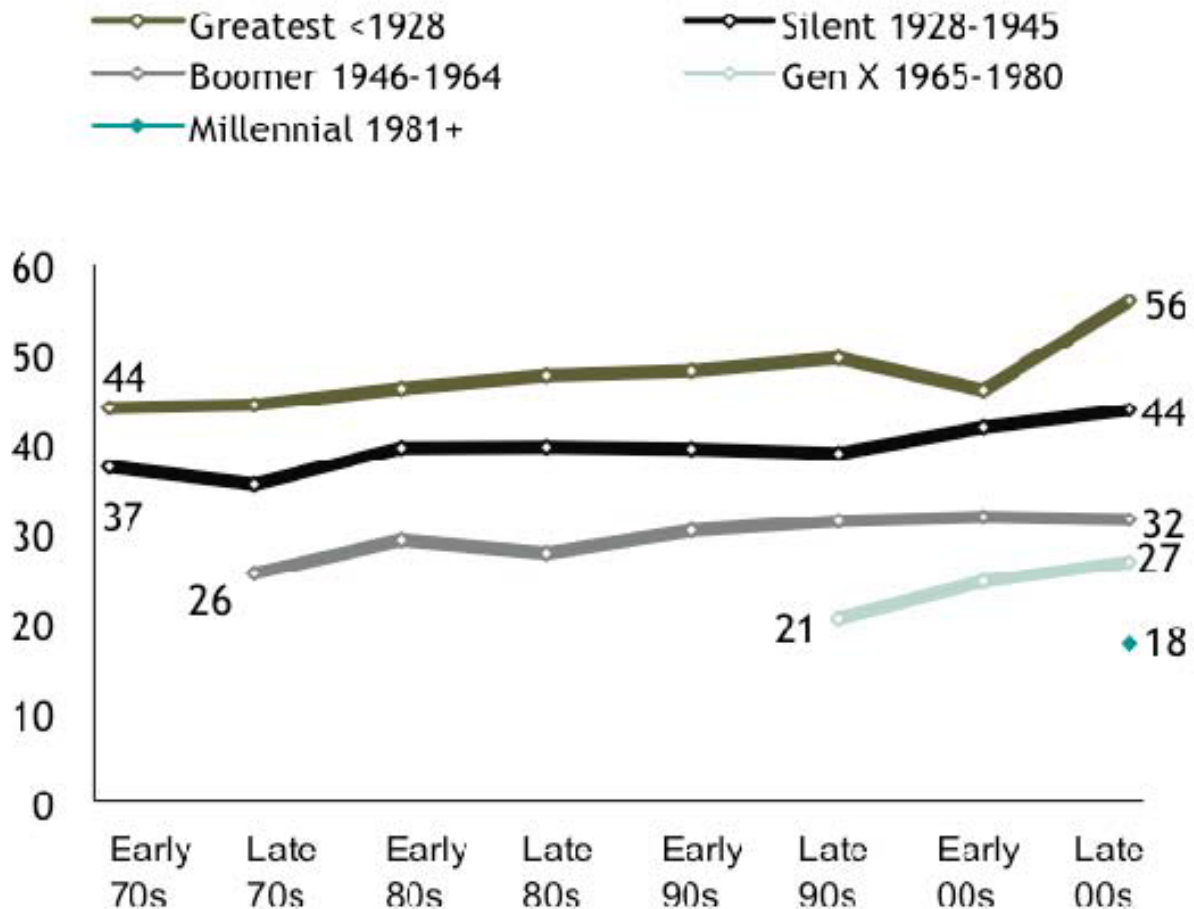
Source: Gallup surveys

Question wording: How important would you say religion is in your [own] life ... [would you say] very important, fairly important, or not very important?

Figure 16.2: Pew Social and Demographic Trends

Attendance at Religious Services, by Generation

% saying they attend several times a week, every week or nearly every week



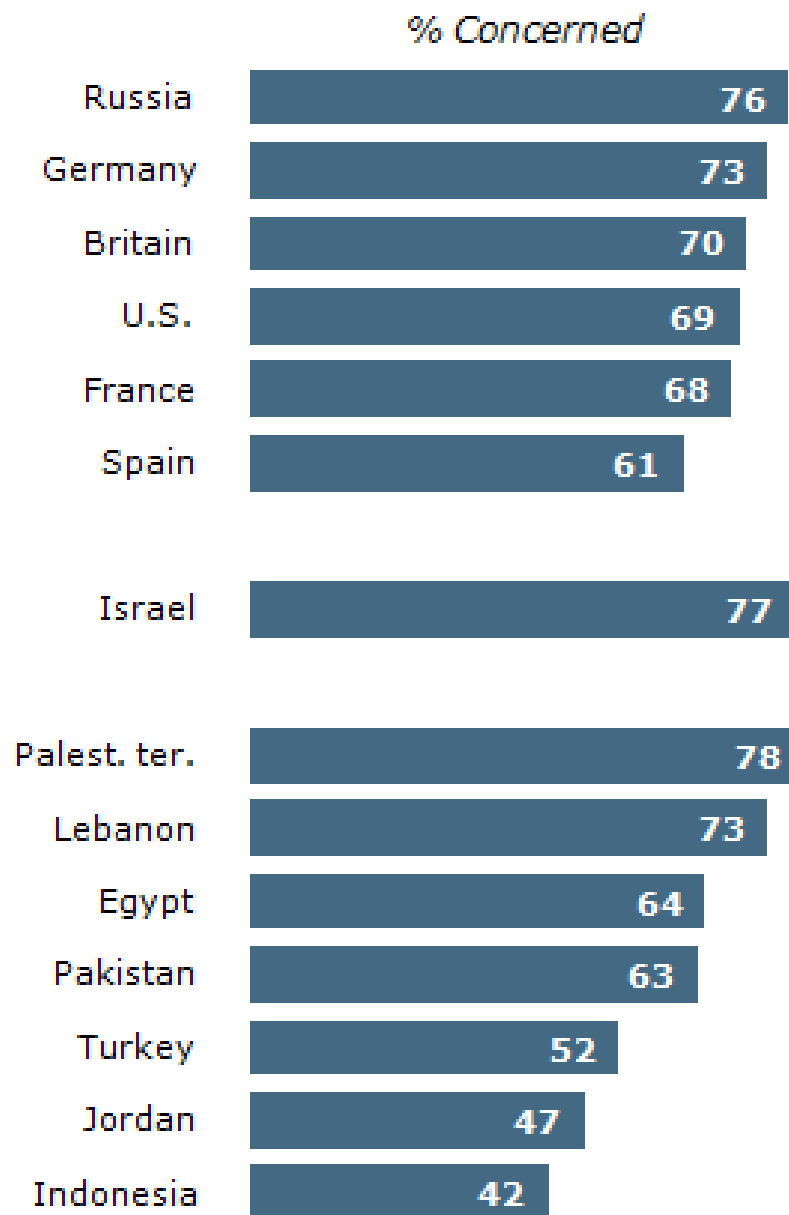
Source: General Social Surveys.

Question wording: How often do you attend religious services?

[RESPONSE CATEGORIES, USED AS PROBES AS NECESSARY: Never, less than once a year, about once or twice a year, several times a year, about once a month, two to three times a month, nearly every week, every week, several times a week.]

Figure 17: Pew Research Center

Widespread Concerns About Islamic Extremism



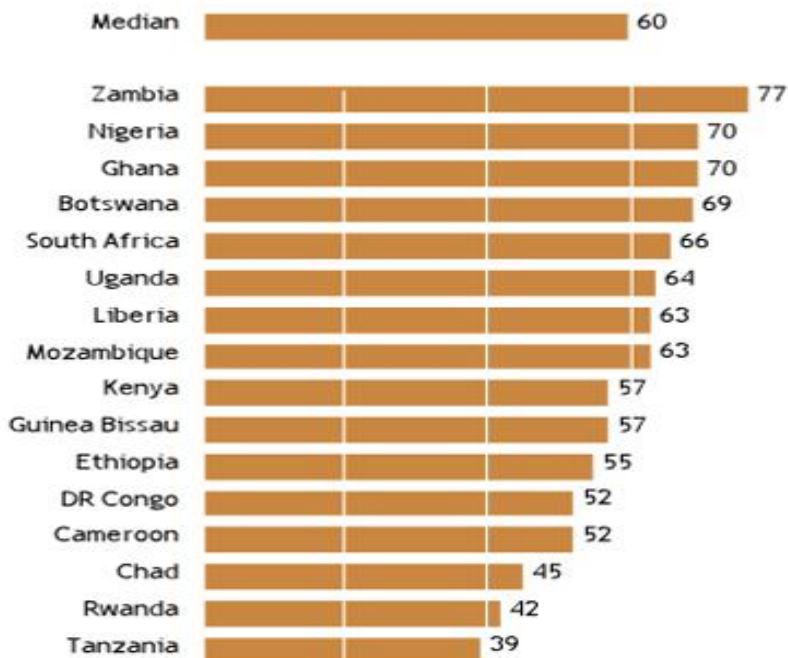
In predominantly Muslim countries, figures are for Muslims only.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER Q44.

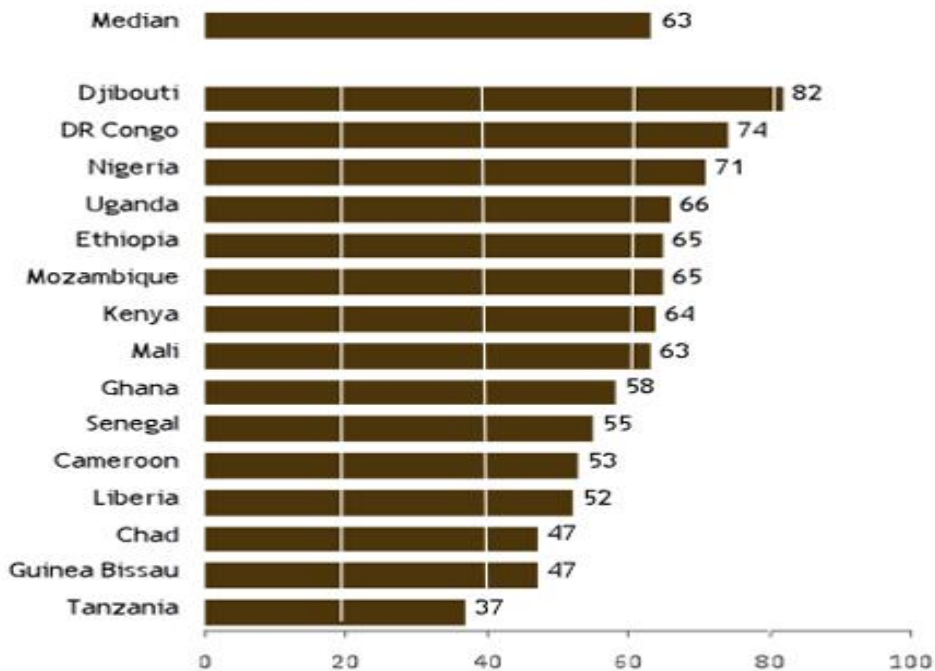
Figure 18: Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life

Support for Biblical or Sharia Law Is Widespread

% of Christians who favor making Bible the official law of the land



% of Muslims who favor making sharia the official law of the land



Q94a, 95a. And do you favor or oppose the following? (ASK IF CHRISTIAN) Making the Bible the official law of the land in our country. (ASK IF MUSLIM) Making sharia, or Islamic law, the official law of the land in our country.

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Figures

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<http://www.systemicpeace.org/CTfig03.htm>

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http://wdr2011.worldbank.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/WDR2011_Full_Text.pdf

Figure 4.1: Human Security Report 2009/10, Average Number of International Conflicts per Year, 1950-2008

http://www.hsrgroup.org/docs/Publications/HSR20092010/Figures/20092010Report_Fig1_1_AverageNumberInternationalConflicts.pdf

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http://www.hsrgroup.org/docs/Publications/HSR20092010/Figures/20092010Report_Fig6_5_AverageBattleDeathsConflictYear.pdf

Figure 5: Human Security Report 2009/10, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per Capita and the Risk of Armed Conflict

http://www.hsrgroup.org/docs/Publications/HSR20092010/Figures/20092010Report_Fig3_6_RiskArmedConflictGDP.pdf

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http://www.atlasofglobalchristianity.org/images/samplepages_3.pdf

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<http://pewforum.org/executive-summary-islam-and-christianity-in-sub-saharan-africa.aspx>

Figure 15: Gallup Poll, Is Religion an Important Part of Your Daily Life?

<http://www.gallup.com/poll/142727/religiosity-highest-world-poorest-nations.aspx#1>

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<http://www.pewglobal.org/2011/07/21/muslim-western-tensions-persist/>

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